

## **Patient Participation Group – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016 Minutes**

### **Present**

Patients: Mr & Mrs Rogers, Mr & Mrs Addy, Mrs H Durn, Mrs S Hodges, Mrs S Netcott, Mr R Hussey, Ms S Baghirathan, Mr A Akbar

Staff: Dr J Parrott (GP), Mrs A Toumi (Practice Manager), Ms H Stewart (PA to the Practice Manager)

Apologies: Mrs S Packer, Mrs A Neate

### **Items discussed**

#### **1. Agenda items raised by PPG members:**

#### **2. Agenda items raised by the Practice:**

- **New building update** – Mrs Toumi discussed some recent developments in the new building and some future plans. The car park was agreed to be a very positive addition. It was commented that it could be very full at times. Mrs Toumi acknowledged this and said that if this began to pose a problem for patients when trying to park, a monitoring system could be implemented to ensure that the car park was not being used inappropriately.

The pedestrian gate onto Fishponds Road will hopefully be opened within the next week or so. There have been delays to this as it was necessary to source the correct handrails and surfacing for the pathway leading up from the gate to the Health Centre, for health and safety reasons. Now that these issues have been addressed, we need to test the functioning of the gate and then we will be opening it.

A second application has now been put in for the pharmacy on site. The practice is very hopeful that this one will be successful, but it has to go through a long-winded process to get to this point. If everything goes well, approval should be granted in July and the Pharmacy could then be open by September. This has been very frustrating for the practices as this represents a significant amount of income lost, but we are hopeful progress can be made soon.

We are very close to getting the touchscreens up-and-running. There have been many delays to this and the practices are very frustrated by the time it is taking to get this set up. We appreciate the difficulties this causes for both staff and patients and are working on this as a priority. The TV screens in the waiting areas are nearly ready to start displaying information – they should get going in the next couple of weeks. We will be looking to display information about useful services for patients as well as health messages. Mrs Toumi confirmed that we can add information about local services, but that we can only add a certain amount of information and cannot update it all the time. Mr Hussey queried whether or not we could display messages about delays to appointments on this screen. Mrs Toumi said that unfortunately we would not be able to display this on the screens, but this information should be shown on the touchscreens when patients check-in, once we get them up-and-running.

Mrs Toumi also confirmed that we now have wi-fi and are aiming to play music in the waiting room soon.

Mr Akbar mentioned the lights in the car park being on quite late in the evening. Mrs Toumi confirmed that they are set to turn off at a certain time, and that they are controlled by light sensors which switch them on when the light fades.

- **New appointments system** – Dr Parrott acknowledged that patients can sometimes find it hard to get through to the surgery and to get an appointment, and explained that this was the reason for the changes we will be making to the appointment system from Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May. The new system will be based on triaging. This means that when the patient first contacts the surgery a receptionist will ask if they mind providing some further detail about their clinical need – this will be voluntary, but will help to ensure that the most appropriate and efficient method is chosen to deal with the patient's need. If the patient feels that they need to see a GP that day, they will be added to a list for the on call GP to call them back. The GP will discuss their need with them and either deal with it over the phone, or book an appropriate appointment for them (which could be with either a GP or a Nurse). The hope is that this will lead to a greater number of issues being dealt with over the phone (which is easier for the patient and releases GP appointments which would otherwise have been used), but still ensures that patients who need to be seen will get an appointment.

Ms Baghirathan commented that she has tried to get a Nurse Practitioner appointment for her daughter, but was told that she could not book for another couple of weeks unless she called on the day to request an appointment. Mrs Toumi stated that we have a reduced Nurse Practitioner capacity at the moment as one of our Nurses has recently left, but we have advertised and interviewed for a replacement, made an offer to the applicant and are awaiting a final decision from her. Once this position is filled, we will be able to expand our NP provision again and allow for advance booking. Dr Parrott stated that in the meantime we are having to ensure that NP appointments are available to book on the day so that the triaging GP can book patients into them if necessary.

The same day appointments will all be available in the morning, but there will always be emergency slots available in the afternoon if necessary. There will be a greater number of book ahead appointments available, up to 1 week in advance, so that patients who do not need to be seen on the day can book one of these – appointments to be booked ahead will be released each day.

Mr Akbar felt that the plan would work if we had a lot of people to answer the phones. Mrs Toumi confirmed that we would have as many people on the phones as we could, but that there was a limit to the number we would be able to arrange for. She also commented that it was hoped that the numbers calling in the morning would reduce if patients who did not need a same day appointment could call later to get one of the book ahead appointments.

Dr Parrott confirmed that we will have no more Open Surgery at 12.30pm each day. This will allow us to add extra appointments onto each GP's morning session.

Mrs Hodges queried whether or not with this system patients would be able to book to see a certain GP. Mrs Toumi confirmed that for on the day appointments this could not be guaranteed – the patient would have to talk to whichever GP was on call first and then this GP could book the patient with the requested GP if appointments were available. A patient can always request a specific GP when booking in advance, and this will be accommodated wherever possible.

Mr Akbar queried how the telephone triaging would work for patients who do not speak good English. Dr Parrott talked about a service we use which provides interpretation by phone. To use this service during a phone consultation, the GP would call the service and select the appropriate language, then the interpreter would call the patient so that all 3 were on the line at the same time. Mr Akbar asked if family members or children ever acted as interpreters. Dr Parrott said that we would always try and avoid using a child as an interpreter, and that family members could interpret if appropriate, but only if they were likely to be unbiased about the topic of discussion. It was also confirmed that someone can authorise someone else to collect results on their behalf, and this would be recorded on the patient's record so that staff were aware.

It was acknowledged that there would most likely be some teething problems with our new system and that some ongoing changes would likely be necessary, but everyone present generally felt that these changes would be positive and improve patient access to the clinical help they needed.

- **East Trees Health Centre Community Open Day** – Ms Stewart talked about the upcoming Community Open Day being held at the Health Centre in conjunction with Maytrees Practice on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May. The aim of the day is to promote the Health Centre to the community, and to raise people's awareness of ways to boost their health and wellbeing. There will be stalls, activity demonstrations which anyone can take part in (zumba, tai chi and line dancing!), food tasters, health checks and a smoothie bike! For more information please see the website ([www.easttreeshealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.easttreeshealthcentre.co.uk)); a flyer for the event is enclosed with these minutes.

It was confirmed that this will not be the official opening of the Health Centre. Mrs Toumi explained that this has been delayed until the Pharmacy is open.

- **Early morning appointments** – Mrs Toumi explained that there are two parts to this proposal.

One is that we need to increase our 'extended hours' (i.e. appointments offered outside of our core opening hours), and that we would like to do this by offering GP appointments between 7.30am and 8am on a Wednesday morning. Only patients who had booked appointments could access the building at this time, as is already the case for our Monday evening and Saturday morning appointments.

The second was that in order to further increase the availability of appointments earlier in the day for those patients who work or have to get their children to school, we are considering starting GP sessions at 8.30am each day instead of 9am. This would mean opening the doors and taking calls from 8.30am, and also bringing forward the final appointment time for each GP, making 7.20pm our latest appointment on a Monday and 5.50pm the latest appointment Tuesday to Friday. A GP would of course still be available if needed up until our doors closed at 6.30pm.

The practice is proposing to survey a sample of patients about this change to gauge patients' thoughts, and would need to negotiate these arrangements with staff as it would obviously require that GPs and reception staff start earlier in the day. The PPG members present felt that this would be a positive change and improve access to appointments before work and school.

### 3. Any other business

- **Healthwatch event for PPG members** – Healthwatch are a national organisation with regional teams, who gather feedback from patients on the health services they have used and work to make their voices heard and advocate for improvements on their behalf. They will be holding an event about PPGs, to gather feedback on what works well about PPGs, what could be improved and where PPGs could go in the future. Any PPG member is welcome to attend – it is taking place 10am-12pm on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June at the Vassell Centre in Fishponds. Further details are enclosed with these minutes.
- **Altercation in waiting area** – Mr Rogers mentioned that he had witnessed an incident in the waiting area, where a patient had been behaving in an intimidating manner, and he felt that there had been the potential for aggression to have taken place against the reception staff who were dealing with the patient. He queried whether there was a system in place by which staff could call for help from their colleagues in such situations. Mrs Toumi confirmed that we do have panic buttons and also alert systems in our software to inform other staff quickly and discreetly if assistance is needed, and that these systems are used effectively by staff. She said that in this case the receptionists must have felt that they could handle the patient safely on their own, and Mr Rogers agreed that they had indeed dealt with the situation well, he had just been concerned for their safety. The design of the front desk was discussed as well – it is not as closed off as the old building, but it is deeper to prevent someone leaning over and extra partitions have been added to the lower desk to stop someone climbing over it.
- **Dementia research project** – Ms Baghirathan talked about a research project she is currently involved in. She has worked in the area of dementia awareness for a few years, and has recently been employed by UWE to work on a research study looking at the experiences of Chinese, Caribbean and South Asian people with dementia (and their families). She will be conducting one-to-one interviews with people, and also group discussions where appropriate. She would like to talk to as many people as possible before the end of August, as she will then be writing up the results to be completed in October. The project is

currently only funded for 8 months by the Council, but the team will investigate funding options to see whether or not further work (for example, with other communities) can be carried out. Once the findings have been written up, they will be shared with service providers such as the Dementia Wellbeing Service (which provides a lot of dementia services in Bristol) and also small community groups where people with dementia might feel most comfortable but which do not perhaps currently have the training or the resources to fully support these people.

Further details, including contact information, is included with these minutes.

- **Room bookings** – Ms Baghirathan queried how people could look into booking rooms in the Health Centre. Mrs Toumi confirmed that there was information on the Health Centre website ([www.easttreeshealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.easttreeshealthcentre.co.uk)) about the rooms, the costs and the availability.

**Thank you to everyone who came along!**