

## Minutes of PPG meeting 20.5.13

8 Members of the group had indicated that they would be able to attend. Unfortunately several were prevented from doing so. The 3 of us who were present( 2 group members and Fran Duggan, representing the practice) had a useful meeting and good discussion but we agreed that it would be better if we had a greater number of people who were interested in the PPG in order to have better attendance without putting individuals under pressure.

### Communication and promoting the PPG

In order to organise this meeting, we had sent out a letter to try and establish the best date and time for the meeting and had then also phoned group members to confirm the date and time and sent an e-mail. Fran had hoped to discuss with the group the best method of communication at this meeting.

**Action** Fran to try to establish the preferred communication methods for PPG members before the next meeting

We also talked about how we communicate more effectively with patients. We have been pleased with the improvements that we have made over the last year especially with the use of the text messaging service which has been popular and effective. We had agreed at the last meeting that we needed to raise the profile of the PPG and the virtual PPG. One of the receptionists is going to start to promote the PPG and virtual PPG. We also discussed how to improve the impact of posters and advertising. Fran had been in contact with the square mile project in the hope that a graphic design student might want to volunteer to design some posters and displays for the waiting room. We also felt that despite having only recruited a few patients to the virtual PPG we should be contacting them for their ideas and input and should let them know that about the meetings and get feedback on the agenda items discussed.

However we also felt that it was better to have enthusiastic members who care about the practice and wish to continue to see services improve than reluctant group members. We agreed that we are very fortunate with the range of expertise and experience within the group already.

**Action** Fran to ensure virtual PPG as well as PPG members are aware of the meetings and have access to the minutes.

Fran will organise further promotion of the PPG and virtual PPG.

### Missed appointments

As a practice we have been very pleased with the continued reduction in missed appointments.

We attribute this to the introduction of the text messaging services, both confirming appointments and sending reminders.

A paper looking at missed appointments nationally, suggested that the rate of missed appointments varied between 4.2% and 11.8%. Interestingly it also showed that of those people who missed GP appointments, 75% miss one appointment, 20% miss two appointments, and 6% miss three appointments. At the last business meeting we agreed that we would like to start to write letters to patients who persistently miss appointments. As a practice we have always been concerned that vulnerable patients who may be struggling to cope and miss appointments are not sent a letter which might upset them. We agreed that reception would be informed by the patients GP if they felt that it was appropriate for them to receive a letter following 3 missed appointments. By doing this we felt that we would be unlikely to send a letter to anyone who we knew might be unduly upset by this. The PPG has always been more in favour of this than we have been as a practice, however at the last meeting we felt that it was important to contact patients who persistently miss appointments. We do not want the letter to sound punitive and have tried to phrase the letter in a way that we hope will encourage people to appreciate the problem that missed appointments causes in terms of managing the service.

The letter is attached to the minutes and we would appreciate the opinion of other group members before we instigate this system.

#### **DNA statistics since April for doctors' appointments**

Month	Appointments offered	Number of DNAs	% DNAs
March-12	2677	291	11.90%
Apr-12	2010	189	9.40%
May-12	2664	214	8%
Jun-12	1804	93	5.2%
Jul-12	1918	152	7.95%
Aug -12	1967	137	7%
Sept-12	2067	161	7.8%
Oct-12	2964	239	8.1%
Nov -12	2971	210	7.1%
Dec-12	2511	159	6.3%
Jan- 13	2695	172	6.9%
Feb-13	2663	199	7.25%
		195	

March-13	2502		7.53%
April-13	2460	131	5.3%

We had the opportunity to view the data from the appointment audit that had been carried out recently. There is another meeting for all practice staff this week to discuss the changes in the appointment system and see if this has improved availability. However it should be noted that we have had staff shortages that have impacted on the appointment system recently.

We discussed whether PPG group members could attend any of the business meetings, in order to have a better understanding of the issues that the practice is facing. It was also discussed whether we could make use of particular skills that group members have in terms of IT and improving our data monitoring and on line facilities. We were aware that we need to be careful about data protection issues with both of these suggestions, but appreciate the value of making use of the expertise available.

**Action** Fran to discuss with the partners.

### **On- line facilities**

We have discussed promoting the on-line facilities in terms of ordering prescriptions and booking appointments at previous meetings. We had sent out text messages about these services but still feel that there is more that we could be doing to improve and promote the services. Fran discussed the possibility of on-line registration which would be particularly beneficial for students. However there are a lot of problems associated with this both in terms of the technical aspects but more importantly that fact that the registration will not be accepted without a full address and students are not given their complete address until they arrive at university.

We agree that this would be valuable to pursue.

**Action** Fran to explore the options.

We would like to have more group members available when we discuss what areas we wish to look at next and review our action plan.

**Next meeting** It was suggested that we meet in early July. Fran will get in touch with group members to agree a suitable date. Monday was felt to be a better evening for the meeting.

