

# PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP (PRG) MEETING MINUTES

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015**

## **Present**

Thecla D'arcy, Elisabeth Dewhurst, Sean Hall, Andrew Hogg, Maureen Joy, Robin Simmonds, Michael Simms, Val Tompkins, Kathleen Warnes, Gillian Wordsworth

## **Staff**

Linda Marquis:	Practice Manager
Lynsey Wayte:	Assistant Practice Manager
Helen High:	Medical Secretary (minutes)
Lynda Wilson:	General Assistant (minutes)
Karina Kennell	Guest Speaker

**Apologies:** *Elva Lake, Paul Farmer, Carol Palfrey, Philip Rawlings, Noeline Rycroft*

## **Presentation**

Linda advised the group that Jess Payne, our apprentice healthcare assistant has won 2 awards. She has won Apprentice of the Year for Clinical Healthcare from Great Yarmouth College and also the overall Apprentice of the Year from the college. Jess was presented with flowers, a cake and some vouchers by Linda. The group congratulated Jess on this outstanding achievement.

## **Presentation by Karina Kennell from the Alzheimer's Society**

The group were given a very informative presentation by Karina, who is the Advocacy Manager for the Norfolk/Suffolk Alzheimer's Society.

The Alzheimer's Society is the leading national organisation for patients with dementia and their carers. She is keen to make people aware of the services that are available. She spoke to the group about 'dementia friends' which is an initiative to make people more aware of dementia and how people with dementia can be helped. There are also 'dementia advisors' who ideally are the best people to contact after being given a diagnosis of dementia. Emotional support can be provided to help patients with dementia or their carers who are struggling to cope. They can provide face to face support and help with benefits and form filling etc. The advocacy service provides help in a specific issue that needs resolving. They can help liaise with other organisations, such as the community nursing team and help to take pressure off of the carer. They can also advise on issues regarding safeguarding.

Their key message with dementia is that the person should be embraced not the disease.

For further information please go the Alzheimer's Society website at <http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/> or contact them by telephone on: 0300 222 1122.

### **Practice News**

Linda advised the group that from 01.07.15 herself and Dr Kemp had become practice partners. Therefore all the doctors and the practice manager are now partners. The group congratulated Linda on this.

### **PRG Resignations**

Linda advised that Mrs Bingham who had been a member of the group for some time had resigned as she was moving away. Linda had sent her some flowers to thank her for all her hard work for the group and her participation with the patient newsletter.

### **Previous minutes**

The previous minutes were agreed.

**Disabled parking and car park signage:** Linda advised that there are some problems with the patient car park sinking and extra disabled parking cannot be created until this issue has been addressed. At the present time there are ongoing discussions between the landlord and insurance company.

**Font size on callboard:** We have been trying to resolve the issue of making the font size on the callboard larger to assist patients to read it more clearly. As this appears to be a software issue, we have still been unable to modify this but we do have an engineer coming out to look at this in the near future.

**Out of Hours Service:** Linda advised the group that this service which is currently provided by Medicom, will be taken over by IC24 on 01.09.15. The call centre is based at the Broadland Business Park. They have already been providing a service to other parts of the country including Great Yarmouth and Waveney. There will be no change to the number that patients call for this service, it will continue to be 111.

As this service is changing, the proposed visit to the 111 service will therefore not take place, neither will the proposed presentation to the PRG group. It is hoped that the new service may speak to the group at a future date.

**Telephone consultations:** Lynsey advised the group that the protocol regarding telephone consultations has been reviewed. We now ensure that a telephone consultation is appropriate, eg that it is suitable for a consultation that does not require examination. Patients will be given a time that the doctor will call them but are made aware that this is an approximate time, as sometimes due to emergencies and clinics overrunning the time of the call can be delayed. If the call is likely to be severely delayed, a receptionist will contact the patient to make them aware of this. The telephone number that the patient would like to be contacted on is confirmed with them at the time of arranging the appointment. The GP will make one call but if they do not make contact with the patient, they will leave a message. A further consultation will have to be arranged by the patient.

### **Previous minutes (contd)**

**Patient Reference Group leaflet:** Helen and Lynda have designed a leaflet to be given to patients who enquire about the patient reference group. A draft copy of this was distributed to the group for their feedback, which was very positive.

We have left a section on the leaflet, where we propose to have various comments from existing members about the group. If you would like to add a comment to the leaflet, please get in touch with Helen.

**Corkhill Award:** Linda advised the group that unfortunately our PRG's entry into the competition did not win a prize. Linda thanked Mrs Rycroft and the other PRG members who helped her, for their hard work into submitting an entry.

**New law regarding medications and driving:** Linda advised that all the doctors are aware of the change of law regarding certain medications and driving. A medicine box was handed around the group which shows the new labelling printed on the box, which states 'new advice for drivers - see leaflet inside'. Further information regarding this is appended to these minutes.

**Alternative medicine fund:** Linda has contacted the CCG for clarification as to whether alternative treatments are funded on the NHS. They advised that essentially the view is that no complimentary treatments will be funded until such time as there is a clear evidence basis for their effectiveness, which currently does not exist except for some limited evidence for acupuncture in pain relief.

### **Patient Feedback**

#### **Complaints**

Linda advised that the practice had received some complaints but as these related to individual cases, they could not be discussed due to confidentiality issues.

#### **Patient Suggestion Box**

Linda advised that we have received more suggestions from the suggestion box regarding providing magazines, toys, hot drinks and a sandwich vending machine. These issues have been previously discussed at PRG meetings and as previously stated, we cannot accommodate these requests due to health and safety issues and the risk of contamination. We have added a slide to the slideshow in the waiting room highlighting how germs can be spread and the danger of toys being left on the floor for people to slip on.

Mrs Warnes suggested that it may be useful to have an article about this in the patient newsletter and it was agreed that this would be very beneficial.

***Outstanding Action: Lynda to write an article about why the practice does not provide magazines, toys or drinks in the waiting room.***

## **Patient Suggestion Box (contd)**

Other suggestions included (as they were written):

*“Bigger chairs in waiting room with higher arms so easier to get in and out of”*

The group agreed that a few of these style chairs in the waiting room would benefit some patients.

***Outstanding Action: Linda/Lynsey to investigate providing larger chairs with higher arms for waiting room***

*“Provide seating for the disabled in the reception area or somewhere while waiting. Sometimes it takes a long time to be seen and standing is very painful”*

The group agreed that this would be a good idea. Linda advised that she is in the process of finding a chair that could be attached to the lower reception desk, which can fold flat but pulled down if required.

***Outstanding Action: Linda to continue to find a suitable fold down chair for use at the reception desk.***

*“More info about Medi Ride run by NN Com. Transport to take people to doctors, hospital etc”*

Lynsey advised that we do have leaflets about this service and it is now also advertised on the television screen in the waiting room.

*“Give the patients longer if they are late for their appointment. Instead of 5 mins give them 10 as the doctors and nurses never run on time”*

Linda advised that we have discussed this problem on several occasions before. It has been agreed that 5 minutes is the cut off point. If a patient is late for their appointment and the clinician were to wait for them, this would have a knock on effect on possibly the whole day's clinics, causing further delays for patients. Unfortunately clinics do sometimes run late as a result of emergencies or patients requiring a longer time than their allotted appointment time.

*“Would be nice to have some minor things done. For example, some things that we are referred to hospital for could be done here just as well. Need counselling, physiotherapy etc”*

Linda agreed that the surgery would like to be in a position to offer patients more services at the practice. We do currently have some health professionals visit us, such as the health trainer, the diabetic eye screening and some mental health services. If there are future opportunities for health professionals to see patients at the practice, we would be keen to accommodate this wherever possible.

*“Doors that open for you like at North Walsham”*

Linda advised that although the main front doors of the practice did not open automatically, there is a sign by the door and an intercom. This allows patients to speak to a member of the reception team if they require assistance entering the building. We are always happy to assist patients in this way.

### **Patient Suggestion Box (contd)**

*“Less heat in waiting room”*

Lynsey advised that we do try and ensure the heating setting is appropriate for the weather.

Linda reiterated that if a patient leaves their name on a suggestion slip, that she does write to them to advise that their suggestion will be discussed at a PRG meeting and thanks them for their comment.

### **Friends & Family Test**

Since the last PRG meeting, we have had 8 Friends & Family Test cards completed. From these, 4 patients were extremely likely to recommend the practice, 2 were likely, 1 neither likely or unlikely and 1 extremely unlikely.

The comments on the cards were also discussed.

### **Open Evening**

Linda advised that the practice will be holding another open evening on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September, most likely from 4.30pm to 7pm. The practice will be open to the general public and there will be the opportunity to meet staff, including the doctors, other health care professionals and see displays throughout the practice. Representatives from the carer support service, Medi Ride, health trainer and the district council will be attending. The Appleyard will also be open to the public and will be hosting a “lung lounge”.

The PRG have been involved with the last 2 open evenings and it was felt that it would be beneficial to have their presence there again to speak to people regarding their role within the PRG.

Linda asked the group for their suggestions regarding the open evening and members who would be willing to volunteer to attend the event (not necessarily for the entire event). We would be grateful if any members would like to volunteer to help in any way at this event to contact Helen.

Helpful suggestions included advertising the event in libraries, the tourist information hut, inviting a representative from the mental health service, pulmonary rehabilitation, first responders, midwife and community matron.

***Outstanding Action: Linda to look at advertising the open evening in the library and tourist information office.***

***Linda to invite mental health representative, pulmonary rehabilitation representative, first responders, community matron and midwife.***

### **PRG Attendance**

Helen advised the group that we have some PRG members who do not respond when they are invited to meetings or attend meetings. The group were asked whether they would be happy for us to write to members who did not attend 3 consecutive meetings and had made no contact. It was emphasised that this did not apply to members who were unable to attend meetings for other reasons. The letter would suggest that they might find it more beneficial to join the virtual group but if no response was received, we would remove them from the PRG, making it clear they would always be welcome to join again.

The group had slightly dividing opinions about this issue but it was agreed that they would be willing for Helen to write to them.

***Outstanding Action: Helen to monitor and write to PRG members who do not respond to meeting invites and miss 3 consecutive meetings.***

### **Entrance to Patient Car Park**

Linda advised that there have been a number of incidents recently where cars have become “stuck” on the corner of the car park, where there is gravel and large stones. Linda asked the group for their comments as to how this could best be resolved. A discussion took place regarding this. The consensus was that a large white concrete bollard should replace the existing stones.

***Outstanding action: Linda to explore the possibility of a concrete bollard.***

### **Medicine Support Service**

Lynda advised the group that we had been contacted by the Medicine Support Service. This service is for patients who support people in their own homes by providing medicines management and support. They are looking for feedback from PRG patients who would be willing to comment on current services who either manage their own medicine or care for someone with a complicated medicine regime.

If any member is interested, please contact Jo Clapham at Norfolk County Council by email at [jo.clapham@nhs.net](mailto:jo.clapham@nhs.net)

### **Staff Changes**

Linda advised that Amy will shortly be returning from maternity leave. She confirmed that Anna and Caroline are now permanent staff members. We are currently advertising for a new apprentice as India has now left. The group were also very sad to hear that Lynda will be leaving us.

A discussion took place regarding staff training and career progression. Mr Simmonds asked that it was minuted that the practice provided excellent training for staff to enable them to progress in a health career.

## **Any Other Business**

Mrs Joy advised that when visiting the surgery recently, she checked in at the self-check in and was aware that there were 4 patients ahead of her. She waited for some considerable time over her allotted appointment time, before checking with the receptionist as to why she had not been called, as she had seen no other patients go in to see the doctor. She was informed by the receptionist that the doctor was doing telephone consultations. Linda apologised for this and advised that the receptionist would usually have informed her of the delay.

Mr Simmonds voiced his concerns over the last minutes which detailed the abuse of practice staff by patients. The group were concerned that this is an ongoing issue. Linda confirmed that staff do have a panic button and will call the police if necessary. Mrs Wordsworth advised that she had been in the practice on 2 occasions when a patient had been very abusive to practice staff and praised the staff who dealt with these incidents in a calm and professional manner.

Lynda advised the group that she would like to write an article for the next patient newsletter about her time with the practice (in place of a PRG article) and the group felt this would be a good idea.

Mr Simmonds wanted to commend the practice for the excellent care he had received from them recently. Mr Simms also praised the practice for how the practice staff had gone out of their way to help his wife.

Mrs Tompkins asked who organises a first responder. Linda confirmed that this is done by the 999 service, who will send a first responder to an emergency situation if appropriate.

Mr Hall asked what it meant for the mental health service in Norfolk now that it was on emergency measures. Linda advised that it would receive support from outside agencies and management restructuring. There will be changes to the service from the autumn and there will be more trained staff to triage patients.

Mrs Warnes asked how the cuts to the CCG will affect practice services. Linda advised that the CCG do not hold the practice budget and that most services will continue for the next 4 years. However the budget that the practice does receive is very squeezed.

Mrs Warnes asked if the practice was still experiencing a large number of patients not attending their appointments. Lynsey advised that this was still continuing although we did not have any figures available. We no longer write to patients who have missed their appointment as this proved ineffective and costly. We do phone some patients who have memory problems to remind them of forthcoming appointments. In addition, if a patient requires lengthy appointments with more than one clinician, we also phone and remind them the day before.

## **Date of Next Meeting and Venue**

The group were asked for their feedback regarding the new meeting venue. It was agreed by all that it was more suitable and they were happy for further meetings to be held there

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 10.30am.