



# Chapel Row Surgery - Patient Participation Group

Meeting Held via ZOOM on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021 @ 7:30pm

<b><u>Present:</u></b>	Erica Tipton	Dr Lennox (GP)	
	Barry Dickens	Paul Gomm (Practice Manager)	
	Elaine Wells	Quentin Webb	

## Action

### **APOLOGIES:**

- Michelle Walker sends her apologies as she is unable to attend this meeting
- Jo Corrigan sends her apologies as she is unable to attend this meeting
- Glen Higgins sends her apologies as she is unable to attend this meeting

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true representation of that meeting.

### **MATTERS ARISING:**

#### **Surgery Main Entrance Entry:**

- Erica Tipton (ET) advised that some patients have expressed to her some upset at not being able to come into the surgery.
- Dr Lennox responded by saying that the Practice is adhering to advice given by NHS England regarding patients in a GP Surgery and for reasons of infection control.
- Dr Lennox advised that throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, the practice has been seeing patients inside the surgery building, but that this has to be carefully controlled for the health and safety of our patients.
- Firstly we wish to avoid the possibility that an infected patient may infect other patients with COVID-19 and controlling how many patients we have in the surgery at any time, helps to ensure patients are kept safe.

- Additionally, if a patient were to bring COVID-19 into the surgery building and staff were infected as a result, the impact of this could mean that we have insufficient staff to operate the surgery and the surgery could close temporarily as a result, which would have a serious adverse impact on our patients.
- So, by keeping patients in the building to a minimum, this helps to protect patients and the service our staff provide to the patients.
- Dr Lennox advised there has only been 1 case of a COVID-19 infection in the practice and we were able to manage this successfully so that no other staff were infected.
- During the COVID-19 Pandemic on 2020, the practice split the Reception staff and the Dispensary Staff into 2 separate teams so that if one staff member became infected, we could isolate that team and carry on providing a service with the remaining team.
- Dr Lennox advised that now all staff have been double vaccinated and in line with current Government and NHS England guidance, we have reinstated full staff teams across all departments at the practice.

#### **Practice Dispensary:**

- ET advised of a recent situation where a patient who needed an urgent x-ray, left a message to request this with a member of the Dispensary staff and this request took some time to action.
- Dr Lennox replied to say that the practice has now recruited a second member of the Dispensary Team who serves patients at the Dispensary Window, an additional to our Dispensary Team.
- Dr Lennox advised that our practice, and this also applies to many other practices in our area, are experiencing a huge increase in demand for patients.
- Many patients are presenting with issues which have effectively been on hold for the past few months / year and the clinicians at the practice are busier now than they were before the initial COVID-19 Lockdown in March 2020.
- This additional patient demand is causing knock on demand issues for our Dispensary, in addition to the medication supply issues which continue to cause an additional strain on the service we provide to our patients.

#### **Vaccinations:**

- ET asked for an update on COVID-19 Vaccinations and Dr Lennox advised that our local Primary Care Network teams are working on the final second COVID-19 vaccination clinics currently and we are now preparing for the COVID-19 Booster vaccination programme which will take place in the Autumn / Winter of 2021.
- Chapel Row Surgery has signed up to provide the COVID-19 Booster vaccinations, but there is a great deal of detail yet to be discussed, agreed and advised to practices.
- Currently we have not been told of the following detail:
  - We do not know which vaccination manufacture will be provided
  - We do not know if this can be given in individual surgeries or if it will have to be provided at pre-agreed vaccination sites
  - We do not know if patients can receive a different vaccine manufacture than they were originally given
  - We do not know if it will be allowable to give the COVID-19 Booster AND the Seasonal Flu vaccine at the same time and on the same day

- There is a lot of fine detail still to be discussed and agreed and then advised to practices for the COVID-19 Booster Programme, but as soon as we are made aware of the agreed details, these will be published for patients to see and a public information campaign is likely too.

## **AGENDA ITEMS:**

### **Surgery update:**

- Dr Lennox advised that the surgery front door is now open for patients and clinicians are still seeing patients at face to face appointments.
- The Practice remains keen to use the electronic patient enquiry / request system currently operating via the surgery website, as this allows our clinical staff to assess and prioritise patient requests and thus we are better able to respond to their queries.
- The Practice will continue to operate a combination of methods for patient requests to maximise our availability to patients.
- To add some further resource to the clinical team at Chapel Row Surgery, we have been training some Foundation Year 2 Doctors over the past couple of years and we have 2 new Foundation Year 2 Doctors joining the practice this week, for the next 4 months.
- These trainee doctors are already well qualified and see patients under supervision by our existing Doctors.
- Barry Dickens (BD) asked if patients have been agreeable to seeing trainee doctors and Dr Lennox replied that this scheme has been very popular with patients to date, with some Trainee Doctors building a list of patients who prefer to see the trainee doctor.
- Dr Lennox stated that patients will always have choice of whether to see a Trainee Doctor or not.
- BD asked if Physicians Associates were also used at Chapel Row Surgery and Dr Lennox advised that we have had 1 Physicians Associate working with us in 2020 and so our involvement with this scheme has been quite small to date.

### **Practice Triage:**

- ET asked a question on behalf of another patient regarding Triage and who does this work.
- Triage is the system of assessing the patient's request to be seen and deciding which clinician would be the best and most appropriate person to see the patient.
- This ensures that the patient is seen by someone who can deal with their enquiry and thus not incur an additional appointment, which may cause delays.
- The patient who posed the question was concerned at the level of medical qualification the person operating the Triage system has.
- Dr Lennox replied to say that during 2020 and early 2021 2 Doctors have been operating the Triage system, but that while they are spending time doing this, they are unavailable to see patients and thus for a GP to operate the Triage System, this is not an efficient use of their time and also results in delays to see a GP.
- During the latter half of 2021, it is the Doctors intention to provide detailed training to our Reception Staff to allow them to operate the

Triage system, thus providing more time for our Doctors to see patients and treat their queries.

- The Practice will maintain the range of clinicians whom a patient can see, adding additional flexibility and availability for patients.

#### **Patient Panel:**

- ET advised there have been 2 recent meetings and a major focus has been on the Health & Wellbeing Strategy in conjunction with West Berkshire Council.
- As part of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the 3 local areas of West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham are being merged into 1 area.
- In addition, the 11 priorities for the 3 areas have been reduced to 3 - 5 priorities for the future.
- All agreed that communication and information are key with this.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

##### **Home Visits:**

- ET raised another patient query regarding a 93 year old lady patient in Beenham, who was refused a home visit.
- Dr Lennox and Paul Gomm are both very keen to hear more detail about this issue, since Home Visits are still taking place and it is not Practice Policy (or indeed any expectation) that a patient would be refused a Home Visit.
- Dr Lennox ET to reply to the enquirer to ask them to contact the Practice so that this Home Visit Refusal can be looked into.

**ERICA  
TIPTON**

##### **Surgery Car Park:**

- ET advised that a patient has complained about the untidy and unkempt look of the practice grounds and car park.
- In particular the complainant has sited the rock salt bin outside the front door of the surgery to be in need of a clean and adds to the unkempt look of the surgery and grounds.
- The Practice Manager Paul Gomm (**PG**) is extremely disappointed and upset at these unwarranted and inaccurate comments regarding the practice grounds.
  - PG has spent a great deal of money, time and effort finding a gardener who maintains the grounds to a very high standard.
  - The lawns are mowed regularly, the shrubs and bushes are trimmed and kept back from the car park pathways and the grounds are looking neat, tidy, presentable and attractive and are looking better than they have in years.
  - From time to time there is an odd piece of litter left in the car park by users of the car park and PG often retrieves this himself.
  - Being at the front of the surgery, the rock salt bin is exposed to sunlight all day long and has thus faded in colour a little since it was first installed. However, the bin is not damaged, defaced or unkempt in any way and is a bin designed for its purpose.
- Dr Lennox asked if the complainant would be willing to volunteer to help maintain the surgery premises and grounds to improve the areas they feel are inadequate. ET will respond to the complainant.

**ERICA  
TIPTON**

**Integrated Care System (ICS) / CCG:**

- BD asked about how the ICS is developing currently and Dr Lennox responded to advise that the current Berkshire West CCG (based in Reading) is being dissolved and will be replaced from 1 April 2022 by the new Integrated Care System which covers the Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (BOB) areas.
- The ICS will work towards all parts of the healthcare system - Primary Care (GP Surgeries), Secondary Care (Hospitals), and Social Care to work together to cover all the healthcare needs for the area they represent.
- In addition to this there are local integration board meetings to focus on the local areas they represent.

**Patient Data Sharing:**

- Dr Lennox spoke about the recent decision by NHS England to delay the introduction of a system to share patients' data for Research purposes and this is to allow more time to consider the implications of this and to communicate better with the general public about data sharing.
- Further information is expected.
- BD advised that the Parish Council may be able to get involved as a link to local people if required.

Meeting closed at 8:10pm

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

**No date for next meeting set**

**AGREED ACTION POINTS:**

<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>AGREED ACTION</u></b>
Home Visit Refused	ET to speak with patient and ask them to contact the surgery so the Home Visit refusal can be investigated
Surgery Grounds Unkempt	ET to speak to complainant to ask if they would be interested in volunteering to tidy up the areas of concern to them

**END OF MEETING MINUTES**