Patient Participation Group Update

During the pandemic the Group has continued to operate, although it has been restricted, as some of our members have found it difficult to access the on-line platform ‘Microsoft Teams’.

To keep all members involved, whether able to join the meetings using Teams or not, we have continued to share the monthly agenda, minutes of the meetings, and general information circulated by the CCG & ‘Together We’re Better’.

In the first lockdown, from March 2020, we took a little time to adjust to the new circumstances of not being able to meet in the Coach House, on a monthly basis, ‘face to face’. We had to cancel the 2020 AGM in June, but, by July 2020, we had organised a number of our members to meet via Teams, facilitated by our Patient Services Manager Mrs Rachel Hurst.

Members have represented the PPG on the Patient Locality Group, the CCG Patient Congress and the Local Representatives forum ‘Together we’re Better’ via Teams meetings. Any information resulting from these meetings has been circulated to members.

The work of the Practice has had to adapt, and we have been involved and consulted at all stages, recognising the pressure all the staff have been under. This pressure intensified from January 2021 when the Covid Vaccination programme commenced locally and many Practice staff were involved, together with a number of volunteers from the PPG, to help at the PCN Vaccination Centre at Park Medical Centre.

The group has discussed with the Practice Managers ways in which we may be able to try to increase the number of face-to-face appointments, while following NHS and BMA guidelines.

The PPG discussed with Practice staff regarding the full re-opening of the Practice reception area. This came after a period during which entry through front door was monitored by the receptionists, to ensure maximum safety for both patients and staff

We aim to help to encourage patients to resume a more “normal” relationship with the Practice.

There have been concerns across the Patient Locality Group that, throughout the pandemic, reception staff have experienced a much higher level of abuse from patients, particularly over the telephone when booking appointments. We are working hard on trying to encourage our patients to Respect the Practice Staff, using posters at the surgery, and the Practice Facebook page and website.

Despite the announcement that many Covid Restrictions will be lifted on 19th July 2021, at the surgery the recommendation for staff and patients to wear Face coverings will remain, and the surgery will continue to offer Remote Consultations initially, and provide Face to face consultations as required, has been the case throughout the pandemic, as is clearly recommended in the NHS guidance we follow.

We have postponed the 2021 AGM until September, in the hope that we can resume our meetings in the Coach House: We have missed seeing those members who could not join the meetings on Teams, and look forward to resuming our discussions in the near future.

On Behalf of the Patient Participation Group and Moorland Medical Centre.

July 2021