

BRIDGEWATER SURGERIES PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

MID – TERM REPORT June – December 2019

At the June AGM the Committee members were elected: Russell Cleaver (Chair), John O'Connor (Secretary), Phil Soskin, Denis Micallef, Frances Kipping. During the half-year, Denis Micallef resigned and Penny Allum and Rupert Staveley-Taylor were co-opted. The Committee has met 3 times and has continued to be supported by Lisa Mackin (Joint Practice Manager).

SUPPORT FOR THE PPG

There was disappointment that only 12 attended the AGM and the Patient Survey also showed very limited interest. In trying to address this, it was agreed to extend PPG publicity through notice boards (now achieved in Bridgewater House) and holding an open patients Meeting in January.

PATIENT SURVEY

Work continued on the analysis and presentation of the Spring 2019 survey of 263 patients. Tables of the findings, which showed an overall satisfaction level of Excellent or Good experience totalling 90%, have been posted on the practice website and PPG notice boards. Comments submitted by patients have also been carefully reviewed and presented in a 'You told us..We've Acted' format' and is now in the public domain. The main patients' concerns were around delay accessing surgery receptionists by phone and having quicker GP appointments. This served as useful information for the practice management who continue to address both these issues as 'work in progress'.

PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (PCN)

An NHS England initiative, this is a new arrangement bringing together groups of general practices to form a primary care network, offering a more personalised and co-ordinated service to local populations. Bridgewater Surgeries has now joined with New Road and Baldwins Lane surgeries, together with Garston Medical Centre to form The Grand Union PCN. In July the PCN organised an information event at Bridgewater House for some 90 patients who could have a high risk of developing a future cardiovascular disease. The PPG were invited to have a presence and spoke about the benefits of exercise including parkrun.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING, ACTIVE WATFORD & THREE RIVERS AND PARKRUN

As the PPG is keen follow up ways of promoting personal health and well-being which could lessen GP workload, it continued tracking the progress of social prescribing, which has now been incorporated within the Primary Care Network. Interestingly, a National Academy for Social Prescribing, to promote social prescribing schemes across the NHS has recently been set up. Locally, the PPG met the Get Active Specialist who runs the Active Herts & Three Rivers project which is a free programme aimed at working with inactive, unmotivated individuals to support them become more active. In the first half of 2019 this practice made 55 referrals to this service. As a registered 'parkrunpractice' and promoted by the Royal

College of General Practitioners, this practice (encouraged by the PPG) plans to repeat its promotional parkrun (5k) in May 2020, building on its first effort of May 2019 when about 12 practice staff took part. In 2020 the PPG will be working on ways to publicise and encourage patients to take part – run, jog or walk! Usefully, one of the other PCN practices, New Road, is also a registered ‘parkrunpractice’ with a website link to Rickmansworth parkrun.

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRACTICE WEBSITE

Apart from the Spring Patients Survey, the main ways of communicating with patients about PPG activities has been through the practice website and, much more recently, the Bridgewater House notice boards. Whilst the website has been updated to include information such as the Annual Report and the Patient Survey, there is still scope for the PPG link to be displayed more prominently, also to extend the information to including, for example a link to Cassiobury parkrun. Finding more effective ways of communicating with patients remains a PPG challenge.

NETWORKING AND THE PRACTICE PATIENT GROUP INCENTIVE SCHEME

The Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) continued to organise and facilitate regular meetings within SW Herts to update PPGs and other interested health organisations on current national and local NHS developments and initiatives. At one of these sessions, we were given the opportunity to talk about our work in promoting parkrun. The PPG was very interested to learn of the CCG’s initiative to promote the effectiveness of PPGs through an incentive scheme, to be launched early in 2020. Briefly, patient groups will be financially rewarded if they reach clearly identified levels of activity and attainment. The scheme aims to encourage and reward practices for routinely asking for and acting on the views of their patients. The PPG will keenly address this challenge when full details are available.

CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) VISIT, DECEMBER 2019

Further to their visit in June 2016, the CQC, at short notice, descended on the practice on 5 December. To date, their report has not been received – the status of the practice is therefore currently GOOD! PPG involvement was minimal – they asked for PPG personnel details but made no contact. During their inspection they only requested to see the last set of PPG minutes. The Bridgewater House PPG notice boards were updated!

CONCLUSION

Although the merged Bridgewater Surgeries is now nearly 2 years old, there are management capacity and associated issues still to be worked through, and the Patient Survey was useful in flagging these up. In recognition of this, a Property Manager starts early January which ease management pressures which will in turn benefit the PPG. Useful progress has been made with limited resources but with more patient support and a stronger relationship with the practice, much more can be achieved in the second half of the PPG year.

Russell Cleaver, PPG Chair