

Patient Participation Group Virtual Meeting

16th December 2020 2.30 - 3.30pm

Those present : Claire (Chair), Debbie (Practice Manager), Danielle (Vice Chair), Margaret (Treasurer), Pauline (Notes-taker), David, John, Gerith, Margaret S-T, Jane, Venetia, Nigel and Beth.

Claire welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced new member Jane who was one of the volunteer Door Marshals for the 4 month period during lockdown 1.

Apologies were received from Teresa.

Claire said how fortunate they were to have Debbie joining the meeting at such a pressured time with the COVID vaccination programme beginning to get underway.

The Notes from the last meeting were read and agreed and Claire thanked Pauline for taking them again - it was a great help and very much appreciated.

Margaret gave a report on the PPG accounts:

The accounts for the financial year ending April 2020 were ratified.

Since May 2020 income £330.77 (donations from masks, fleeces and money from the (pre-pandemic) book stall.

Since May 2020 expenditure £2,054.44 (For flooring Downderry, cabin equipment, fleeces and 2 Zoom licences)

The combined balance of the Current Account and the Savings Account was £2,771.22.

There was a further agreed expenditure of £247.50 for paediatric oximeters at a cost of £247.50 to be paid out very soon. Claire added that as a result of her application for a donation of £1500.00 from St Germans Parish Council, a cheque for the PPG had been received at the practice for £500.00. An additional amount of up to £1,000.00 would be made available to the PPG by St Germans Parish Council should it be needed, for extra equipment during the pandemic.

Discussion then followed about access to the PPG bank account because when it changed over to online banking this year the signatories except for David had been lost and Margaret was the only person able to access online banking. Danielle and Gerith both offered to become additional signatories making it 4 members in total. This was agreed by the group to ensure business continuity, and Margaret agreed that she would make the necessary arrangements with the NatWest Bank. Margaret then suggested and it was agreed, that the online banking details should be held securely at the practice by the Practice Manager.

Margaret agreed to make arrangements for Gerith and Danielle to become signatories and provide a copy of the PPG online banking details to the Practice Manager.

Claire thanked Margaret and invited the first question for Debbie.

Danielle - How and when will our community receive their COVID vaccinations?

Debbie explained that the East Cornwall Primary Care Network had been working very hard to provide suitable sites for all the patients of East Cornwall and submitted applications for two sites which had been used for large scale flu programmes. The PCN received notification of the first COVID vaccine delivery for 17th December. Unfortunately at the same time NHS England advised that the proposed sites were not suitable. There were further changes in guidance and as a result of this challenging set of circumstances, and putting the safety of patients at the forefront of the plans, the PCN board made the very difficult decision to postpone the roll out of the Pfizer vaccine, for East Cornwall. Everyone was devastated that this decision had been made as so much effort had gone into getting everything prepared in a very short time frame. So, unfortunately, at this stage they are unable to advise when vaccine roll-out will commence for our community. However, on a positive note Derriford and Treliske Hospital have started vaccinating patients over 80 years of age, they are also inviting care home staff and NHS staff for vaccinations.

Venetia asked - Having not been able to do any fundraising ourselves this year - could the PPG have a collection box - one in each surgery? Venetia added that she would provide posters explaining they were for PPG medical equipment funds. Claire added that she would like to have the PPG pull-up banner in the main surgery - if possible.

Debbie was happy to agree to both, providing gloves and hand gel was used when handling money. Claire offered to help Venetia with posters if she had a problem with printing.

The next question was - had there been a reduction in telephone calls to the surgery since the Nut Tree articles went out asking people not to ring the surgery unless absolutely necessary; and instead advising patients to use E - Consult, Patient Access or by using the surgery email?

Debbie said sadly no, they were still receiving a huge amount of calls every day and use of the alternative methods of contact hadn't increased although registration with LIVI had noticeably gone up.

It was then asked - what impact the cabin had made on the practice, the staff and patients. Had there been any feedback?

The GPs use the portacabin to see patients presenting with winter bugs. The dispensary pick up room in the cabin was working well and had received positive feedback from patients. It had helped them to be more efficient in the main dispensary as there were less interruptions. In turn this had eased some of the pressure at reception as the doorbell wasn't constantly ringing. There had been a few IT issues to overcome; the wi-fi kept cutting out on the computer so they were looking into hard wiring cable from the main building. They also purchased a new payment machine as the existing one had a poor signal. However, on the whole it had been really positive for the practice and they were all delighted with the outcome.

Claire wondered what plans were afoot for using the new storage unit that arrived with the cabin, and how did they intend to utilise the space in the surgery that would be freed up?

Debbie said they were not using the storage container yet, but it had always been a long term plan. They intended in time to move medical records out of the main reception area to

free up much needed space. This would enable them to change an administration room into another clinical room. However, this couldn't happen until the unit was secure and alarmed. The current alarm system would need to be upgraded to support a wi-fi alarm signal, additionally they would need to refurbish the main office and clinical room. With the COVID vaccine rollout due imminently it wasn't high on the list of priorities; they were also awaiting the outcome of a funding application.

Claire was delighted she had been offered her Flu vaccination in January being part of the new 50 - 64 year cohort. Debbie explained that they were initially only able to obtain 120 vaccines for this cohort of about 800 patients. They now had managed to secure a further 150 vaccines and so had been contacting patients again to organise the appointments in January.

Lastly the practice recently welcomed to the team Marcia Henning a Healthy Lifestyle Advisor who works on a Thursday afternoon. She offered patients smoking cessation, healthy weight and free NHS Health Checks (to those in eligible groups between 40 – 74 years of age with no underlying health conditions).

With no further questions, Claire thanked everyone for their attendance and tremendous support for the practice through such a challenging year.

Christmas and New Year wishes were warmly exchanged by all.