## Patient Participation Group Covid - 19 Meeting

## 28th May 2020 11.00am

## An Informal Meeting - held by video link

Note-taker: Pauline

## Those present : Claire (Chair), Debbie (Practice Manager), Danielle (Vice Chair), Margaret (Treasurer), Gerith, Venetia, David, Beth, Pauline, John, Margaret S-T and Teresa \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Claire welcomed everyone and thanked Debbie for making the time to answer our questions on Covid - 19 and the impact it has had on the Practice and patients.

*Danielle asked - as the wait for prescriptions was now 7 working days - was this caused by the extra workload due to Covid-19.*

Debbie explained - our main wholesaler is struggling to deliver our orders in a timely manner due to medication shortages and staff being off sick / isolating or furloughed at the depot.  It is therefore taking sometimes 3 – 5 days to get some medication delivered.   Hopefully this won’t go on indefinitely and once the deliveries start to come in a bit faster they will be able to complete and process the orders in a more timely fashion.

*Danielle asked if the staff were well.*

Debbie said that herself and several other staff have had to self - isolate due to household members with symptoms; another member of staff had chosen to shield, otherwise everyone had stayed well.

*David asked - when was it appropriate to contact the surgery as the perceived message is that the surgery were too busy dealing with Covid-19 ….how can we overcome this?*

Debbie explained that the Doctors were not seeing anyone with Covid-19 symptoms at the surgery and that they and the Nurses were busy looking after non Covid patients either by telephone or online consultation. If patients needed to be seen face to face then they would be invited into the surgery and staff then wear full Personal Protective Equipment. Blood tests and other procedures were also being carried out by staff wearing full PPE.

Debbie was unsure how they could make it clearer that the Practice was open and caring for patients - maybe putting a message on the Practice Facebook page or by sending text messages to patients.

*Venetia asked if there had been any cases of Covid-19 diagnosed at either of the surgeries.*

Debbie said that there had been two positive cases confirmed, but no deaths.

Pauline told the meeting that both she and John had been asked to participate in the government sponsored survey for Covd-19 which involved blood samples and nose and throat swabs to be taken every month for 12 months. They were amongst 20,000 other participants across the country.

*Claire asked on Nigel’s behalf if QLS had been able to obtain the necessary amounts of PPE.*

Debbie confirmed that it had been a struggle, but they had sufficient for all staff. The Doctors were wearing face shields as well as face masks . She also explained that every patient visiting the surgery now would need to wear a face mask or face covering. Margaret then queried if the surgery was providing face masks to anyone who did not have one and it was explained that volunteers were making masks that would be available. Some of the masks being made could be washed at 60c and reused and patients were being asked to make a small donation towards them. Paper disposable masks were also available. Margaret asked Debbie ‘why was everyone having to wear masks now’ and was told that the Practice are following the National Guidelines and it was possibly also because more and more people were going out.

Claire told the meeting that the requests for delivering prescriptions had increased significantly over the last two weeks and Debbie explained that more patients may be asked to shield as the government is updating the list of shielding patients weekly.

*Claire asked on behalf of Nigel - if from recent experience, the Practice would be using more on line / telephone consultations and if so, would there be any consultation with patients?*

Debbie explained that whilst the pandemic was still on, then this would continue but that it had proved so successful it could change the way things happen in the future and that feedback so far had been good. Debbie went on to say that the video link was now direct to the surgery and not through Patient Access which was a much better system. Claire also asked how many patients had used E-Consult and LIVI. Debbie confirmed that 35 had used E-Consult and whilst 159 patients had registered with LIVI only 8 had actually used the service - so no huge increase as a result of Covid - 19.

A question was raised regarding Care Workers in the community and were they working as normal and were Doctors visiting care homes. Debbie confirmed that there was a video link to the one care home in the Practice catchment area and that Dr Carty as the care home Doctor had made two visits; both times he had been in full PPE kit. As far as she was aware Community Carers were still working as normal.

Margaret wanted to know what would happen to volunteers carrying out the social distancing and policing the door when the weather became bad. Debbie explained that the surgery was looking at how to progress in the future and that they were thinking of obtaining a second hand porta-cabin for the collection of prescriptions.

Gerith asked for clarification on the number of days patients need to allow for prescriptions to be processed because she is often asked at the door and there seemed to be some confusion amongst patients if they need to allow 7 days or 7 working days. Debbie (after checking with Dispensary), confirmed it was 7 working days for the moment.

Venetia said she was doing well after her accident and asked if she could get any advice and more physiotherapy exercises in the present situation. Debbie said the physiotherapist at the Surgery was still working and can give video link advice to patients.

Jessica Hirons the Social Prescriber is also working, but from home, and has been in contact with everyone on the shielding list.

Danielle asked for some advice regarding an elderly patient she was concerned about and was told that Jessica would be able to put her in touch with people who could help. David added that there was also a support system in the community and details could be found on Downderry and Seaton Residents Association website.

Teresa our newest member and a ‘Dementia Champion’ was warmly welcomed to the group. We look forward to working together in the future.

Debbie was thanked again for sparing the time to attend the meeting, Claire for arranging the meeting and we all thanked the Practice for the care they continue to provide for us all.