

FELL COTTAGE SURGERY
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP
MONDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2017 AT 6.30PM

In attendance:

Patient Representation: Mr. FG
 Miss MH
 Mr. TS
 Mrs. BL
 Mrs. CH
 Mr. SC
 Mr. JB
 Mrs. AW
 Ms. FH

Practice Representation: Alison Arnell (Senior Receptionist)
 Dr. Keya Bose (GP Partner)
 Sue Harrigan (Practice Manager)
 Lesley Stipetic (Nurse Team Leader)

After a round of introductions, the following topics were discussed:

Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising:

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

The following matters were raised:

- Clarification was requested about the 'Hub'. It was explained that this is a Gateshead service which offers routine GP appointments from 8am to 8pm Monday – Friday and also sessions at weekends. This is located at Prince Consort Road Medical Centre and also Blaydon Primary Care Centre. Staff in the surgery are able to access the appointments and book these for our patients. Nurse appointments are also available. There is still a Walk-In Centre at Blaydon and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but the purpose of the 'Hub' is to improve patient access.
- Clarification on eligibility for a shingles vaccination was requested. It was indicated that the eligible age groups are identified by the Department of Health each year. Patients who are in the appropriate groups will receive a letter inviting them to attend for the vaccination. Some patients cannot have the injection as it is a live vaccine and may be contraindicated in some cases. If unsure, it was advised that the patient checks with the Practice.
- At the previous meeting the question was raised about provision of an opaque bag for samples, rather than the clear ones currently used. This had been

looked into but no change had been implemented as they were significantly more expensive than the bags presently used. The GPs were issuing sample bottles to patients in the consulting room now rather than sending the patient to the desk to request one. Patients appreciated that this was a cost to the Practice but requested that it be looked into again.

- It was indicated that there is an antibacterial foam dispenser next to the auto arrival screen in reception.

Additional Items:

The Patient Representatives were invited to raise any queries they may have. The following matters were discussed:

- Flu Vaccinations – Patients weren't aware that there was a financial impact on the Practice when flu vaccinations were given in pharmacies. It was accepted that it was sometimes easier for patients to visit the pharmacy and some mentioned that they had thought they were reducing pressure on appointments by going elsewhere.
- Recall Letters – a question was raised about the recall letters. It was indicated that three letters will be sent out to a patient and then they will stop. This does not mean the patient cannot attend for their review if there is a delay in arranging it.
- Well Woman/ Man Clinic – it was mentioned that there is no longer a specific Well Person's clinic. This was changed to address the issue of patient access and choice. Patients are advised that they are still able to make an appointment with a member of the Nursing Team if they wished to have their height, weight and blood pressure checked
- Children's Corner – the Practice was asked to consider setting up an area for children so that they had something to do whilst waiting to be seen. It was mentioned that toys and books had been removed in line with guidance during the Swine Flu outbreak. It may be possible to obtain washable or wipe clean books. This will be looked into further.
- Bereavement Services – following the recent suicide of a young man from Gateshead, a question was raised about support for parents in such a situation. Dr. Bose stated that a GP would make contact to offer emergency support to the family. If the young person is known to Children and Young Persons Services they will also contact the family. AW mentioned that she works with Age UK who have a Bereavement Service and she kindly offered to drop in some leaflets and posters. There is also the CRUSE bereavement service which offers support to those who have lost a child [as well as adults]. It was suggested that people may benefit from talking to others who have suffered a similar loss e.g through specific support networks.

- Mental Health Services – this discussion was connected to the discussion around bereavement. Questions were raised about the availability of support for young people in crisis. The available services were outlined but it was accepted that the patient has to be willing to accept support or, regrettably, they cannot be helped. No matter how hard the Practice and other services try, they cannot force patients to engage but they will not give up on them.
- Hepatitis Vaccines – there is still a national shortage of vaccines but it is anticipated that this will be resolved by next year. It was mentioned that there is also a shortage of pneumonia vaccine at present. The Practice is awaiting further information from Public Health England but is currently following a strict criteria for the administration of Hepatitis vaccines.
- Reception Desk – a request was made for a buzzer or bell to be installed at reception, for occasions when the desk is unmanned. Alison stated that staff in the back office are able to see patients at the desk, via the CCTV monitor so they will come through as soon as possible. As this situation does not happen very often it was suggested that a bell could be placed on the desk during the absence of the person covering. This will be considered.
- Prescriptions & Review Dates – It was mentioned that reviews of medication will often depend on the medication. We have tried to move long term condition reviews to the patient's birth month, on an annual basis. Some medication will require the patient to be reviewed more frequently.
- Telephone consultations – It was indicated that telephone consultations have been very helpful for some patients. Unfortunately, not all patients are aware of the availability of this option for communicating with a GP.
- Telephone Message – It was pointed out that the recorded message was still making reference to the closures in July and September. Alison apologised as she should have re-recorded the message but this had been overlooked. She is planning to include future closures on the new message. Patients felt that they had to listen to a lot of information before they were able to make their line selection.

Dr. Bose thanked everyone for attending and for bringing up such useful topics for discussion.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be scheduled for late January 2018.

SBH
14.11.2017