

Sherwood Medical Partnership : Farnsfield Patient Group

Minutes of the meeting held at Farnsfield Surgery on 3rd February 2015 at 6.30pm.

Present: Matt Doig (Practice Manager), Dr John Porter, Dr Thillan Bartholomeuz, Mrs Jane Porter (Surgery Admin.), Martyn, Nick, Mick, Robin, Chris, Margo, Marilyn, Carl, Jackie, Roy.

Apologies: John, Una.

Matt welcomed everyone to the meeting & introductions were made. Special thanks to Dr Bartholomeuz attending for the first time and to new volunteer Robin.

Practice news / updates

Staffing

In response to a request from the PPG at their last meeting the Practice is producing a booklet with photographs of all the new Doctors and a little bit of information about them to keep patients better informed.

After an extremely challenging time the Practice is looking forward to improved consistency of care for patients moving forwards. Dr Shoeb is due to take up her permanent position in Farnsfield at the beginning of March and will consult four days weekly. She has already done a number of locum sessions for us and proved very popular with staff and patients alike. Dr Porter will continue to consult for three days weekly and Dr Bartholomeuz and Dr Marshall will do two days (Dr Bartholomeuz will also consult at Clipstone Medical Practice). Dr Hirsh will hold surgeries every Friday at the Farnsfield site as she does now and Dr Das will continue to provide regular Friday minor surgery & joint injection clinics (some of these procedures would previously have required hospital visits so convenience for patients is greatly improved). Registrars will continue to consult in Farnsfield but the Practice is hopeful that the number of locums required should be significantly reduced in the future.

A new Location Manager, Clare, has been appointed for Farnsfield and she will take up this position in March. Allison feels the time is right for her to step back from this role after 27 + years as Practice Manager. She will continue as medical secretary, managing referrals and working in reception as before. Diane, who was sharing the location manager role, will also continue as a receptionist but will be further developing her skills as a health care assistant.

Sherwood Medical Partnership is in the process of advertising for additional Practice Nurses. It is planned to have an extra 3-4 days of nursing time at Farnsfield (doubling present capacity) and also to increase the phlebotomy service to cover an additional 2 days. Once new clinicians are in place the Surgery will begin to invite patients for annual long term condition reviews as previously discussed.

Prescriptions

The IT merger of Clipstone and Farnsfield Surgeries was relatively smooth. As a result both sites can now use the same, now improved, system to manage repeat prescription requests. There is a dedicated prescription team and 24 hour phone line with an answer machine out of hours so that patients can order whenever they wish. Patients need to allow 48 hours for their prescriptions to be

processed. Sherwood Medical Partnership will continue to promote on line ordering as the most efficient method of ordering repeat medication but the introduction of a dedicated prescription line should greatly reduce the number of phone calls coming to the Surgery front reception desk with obvious benefits for both staff and patients.

Managing the merger

Obviously there are on- going issues as a result of the merger and the attempt to combine both Surgery's working practices to the same level. Monthly staff meetings are held at both Surgeries to review the progress of changes / issues. The partners also hold regular monthly meetings.

Internal Modifications at Farnsfield Surgery

Sherwood Medical Partnership has successfully bid for £40,000 to increase the amount of clinical space in the Surgery. The plan will be turn storage space at the bottom of the building into an extra consulting room and to develop the phlebotomy / midwife / health visitor room into a fully equipped treatment room (necessary with the additional nurse time for the future). Although this finance has only just been confirmed it will have to be spent by the end of March. Unfortunately this will be very disruptive again for a short time but should be well worth it for the future and reflects the partners desire to improve / extend clinical services in Farnsfield.

Phlebotomy

At the last meeting members of the PPG had expressed concern about the length of time required to wait for a Phlebotomy appointment (unavoidable at the time due to staff ill health). At present appointments are booked approximately one week ahead. Matt agreed that it would be beneficial to advertise in the waiting room that bloods can be taken at Newark Hospital or Kings Mill Hospital if the appropriate ICE form is completed. This will ease pressure on appointments until the new members of staff are in place and may be more convenient for some patients.

Merger with Rainworth Surgery

Matt apologised for not discussing the proposed merger with the Rainworth Surgery at the last PPG meeting. Although Sherwood Medical Partnership and Rainworth Surgery had approached the CCG and NHS England with this proposition prior to the meeting, NHS England in particular had expressed some concerns about the pace of change for the Practice. They instructed that nothing be discussed with the PPGs at that time.

A decision to merge has now been taken but initially this will be a business arrangement only, with separate contracts for the Rainworth and the Sherwood Medical Partnership, separate Doctors and clinical staff, but a sharing of administrative / managerial roles in the future. There are no plans for clinicians to share patient care at present but they will have a shared ethos of providing high quality patient care. Rainworth will need to increase the number of GP appointments available to their patients (an extra day a week) as part of the merger. These merger arrangements could be subject to review in the future.

Rainworth, a Practice of 6,000 patients, is facing the retirement of their senior partner, who has been with the Practice for 25 years. The remaining partners find themselves in a situation similar to the one facing the Farnsfield Practice last year. They recognise both the need to be part of a stronger organisation moving forward and in order to satisfy patient demand, and the necessity of being attractive to other Doctors who will want to work under this new model.

The PPG expressed their desire to be kept fully informed regarding future changes, openness being essential to ensure that patients will have faith in the process. There is a concern that bigger will not necessarily be better and the PPG emphasised the need for both quality clinicians and receptionists. Matt emphasised that the aim is to maintain culture and feel of each individual Surgery moving forward with individual patient groups etc. . but to ensure that administrative organisation and support is also of the highest standard.

One member of the patient group queried whether the Sherwood Medical Partnership could be pressurised by NHS England to take over other, less well performing, Practices. However, Matt explained that would be a very different scenario. The partners are anxious only to work with those who share their ethos and with whom they feel they can work well.

Open sessions for patients to discuss all aspects of the Sherwood Medical Practice / Rainworth merger with clinicians and Matt will be organised at each Surgery site as happened previously. Thursday 12th February has already been arranged at Rainworth with dates for Farnsfield and Clipstone to follow shortly. These dates will be advertised on the Surgery website.

Enhanced Services Update

Saturday morning surgeries (every 3rd Saturday) are proving extremely popular. The Practice has been able to secure additional funding so that additional appointments (now three GPs) are available during the busy winter season.

The Practice is aware that the Farnsfield phone lines are still under considerable pressure. The introduction of the specialist 24 hour prescription line will hopefully help to ease this situation once patients are familiar with it. Also the receptionists continue to promote online ordering which is the easiest method for most people. There are plans to upgrade the phone system as part of the Surgery refurbishment. There will be 4-5 lines in and a queuing system in place for better management of telephone calls.

The PPG wondered if there were any plans to expand online services. In particular they felt it would be useful if they could view on line test results eg. Bloods, X-rays, scan results. Matt explained that this could be possible in the future.

Date of next meeting

A provisional date was set for the next meeting: Tuesday 14th April starting at 6.30pm.

Thanks to everyone for attending.