

Report from the Patient Participation Group Meeting of 19th September 2017

At the meeting held on 19th September 2017 the following subjects were discussed:

Matters Arising from the meeting held on 16th May 2017

The practice manager raised with the partners the result from the 2016 GP Patient survey which was lower than all the other results ie *71% of respondents said the last GP they saw or spoke to was good at involving them in decisions about their care at the Partnership Meeting in May.*

No other partner would be attending the PPG meeting in Dr Sharma's absence. Dr Sharma is the GP Lead for the Patient Participation Group.

The partners have advised that it is the practice manager's role to escalate any points the PPG raise if they want something brought to staff attention. In addition, the Operations Manager now attends these meetings from Reception.

Request from the Group for all patients to have a copy of their referral letters : the practice manager had consulted other practice managers in the Bromley area who confirmed they do not routinely give these to patients. There is a cost implication that it is difficult for a small business to bear for postage of all referral letters and some practices charge for copies of letters. The partners have agreed that any patient wanting a copy of their referral letter could have it.

Friends and Family Test analysis compared to other practices: The group heard the figures from July 2017 (the latest data available) for a number of nearby practices. One local practice reported 100%. Discussion was had as to how this was possible. Practices may manage the Family & Friends Test differently to the London Lane Clinic which gives out forms randomly. (Though, in April 2017 the London Lane Clinic scored 100%.) When a patient answers "Don't know", this counts against the practice. It was pointed out this analysis is shown on-line and would affect how people view the practice and could influence those who wish to register.

Issues raised

Proposed changes to NHS prescriptions in Bromley – "Over The Counter" medications

There was a lengthy discussion on the proposed change to procedures from NHS England and separately from the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group regarding the prescribing of simple drugs for acute conditions, eg. paracetamol. There was a discussion as to who makes the decisions over this - whether local commissioners (Bromley CCG) or NHS England - as all areas are not affected by this.

A poster and leaflets are in reception which ask patients for their views on the proposed changes. The deadline to give feedback is 7th October. There was a discussion about those who will suffer having to pay for items bought Over The Counter. Only 20% of patients pay for medication. This change would mean that

the elderly, those on benefits children and other categories who receive their prescriptions free of charge, would have to start paying for certain medications over the counter.

Dr Sharma said this will aggravate the patients, but the doctors have to do what the commissioners ask of them.

It would appear that the responsibility for whether people receive a prescription under this new procedure will lie with the prescribing doctor. It was agreed that there were various issues surrounding the responsibility of the doctor to do that and also the ability of people to be able to pay.

Repeat prescriptions

One member raised the matter of repeat prescriptions going from being issued for 6 months to 2 months. Dr Sharma advised that in the last 12 years 6 monthly prescriptions have never been issued. 3 monthly prescriptions however, were reduced to 2 monthly following guidance a few months ago. This meant that people with repeat prescriptions were now paying more for those drugs.

This change was due to the element of waste. Also, Dr Sharma said that some medications need to be monitored more frequently so are issued monthly.

Bromley Council withdrawing funding for Carers Bromley

Bromley Carers, the charity which has carried out much valuable work in Bromley in supporting those who care for others, has had its funding withdrawn by Bromley Council from 30th September 2017.

The London Lane Clinic will continue with the practice's carers' coffee afternoons. There have been two coffee afternoons so far. One member fed back that the carers who attended the last coffee afternoon wanted to meet again. The turnout for the second meeting was better than the first and the attendees were very positive. The carers felt like it was a self-help group and were learning from each other.

There is a petition to sign regarding the withdrawal of funding from Carers Bromley.

Overhanging shrubbery over the parking bays in the patient car park

A member of the group said that two parking bays were not usable because of overhanging shrubs.

Posters in the waiting room

One member of the group felt there were too many posters. The practice manager had reviewed the posters on the front door following the previous occasion when she had raised this issue. Only one could be removed as all the others were essential - such as the opening times, no smoking sign, Pull sign etc. She also talked about the posters that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) expects surgeries to have such as the interpreter services, PPG publicity, complaints etc. The surgery could have had a lower CQC rating if they had not fulfilled the requirement to display these. She also agreed there are a lot of posters at the moment as the surgery has just commenced the annual flu vaccination campaign.

Action Plan

Action: to find out when and where the CCG meetings are held and notify the Chairman.

Action: To ensure no shrubs are preventing patients from parking in the car park.

To be actioned by the practice manager