

Markyate Surgery Patients' Participation Group

Minutes of the meeting held at The Methodist Church, Wesley Road
on Tuesday 26th February 1 pm

Present: Corinne Ireland (Chair), Aban Sepai (Practice Manager), Denise and Maria (all 3 representing the surgery), Julian Taunton, Sheila Pilkinton, Dawn Stafford

Apologies: Tom Hodgson, Anneka Kuiper, Sheila Russell

1 **Introductions**

2 **Minutes of last meeting** – Minutes agreed as true record.

Matters arising – Still unable to initiate the LCD presentation inviting patients to join the PPG as surgery still waiting for their systems to be updated.

Suggestion Box – the surgery to implement.

3 **Practice Manager update** – Aban said nothing had changed from last update. Elspeth had left and she was now the Practice Manager. When Corinne asked whether she was to be the permanent replacement she said yes.

4 **Queries from last minutes** – Aban Sepai

a) *questioning technique* – this is an attempt to signpost patients to the most appropriate help for their needs but if a patient, in spite of the advice of the receptionist wishes to see the doctor their wishes are respected. We also discussed confidentiality and both Denise and Maria pointed out that patients can use the window round the corner if this is considered necessary either by the receptionist or the patient.

b) *'huge turnover of staff'* - it was agreed that this was an unfortunate phrase but we did agree that there were quite a lot of changes in staff and that there were some disadvantages to this for example we all find a familiar face reassuring when we are feeling unwell or worried about our health. There is also the added burden of training new people. However there are also some advantages to recruiting new staff with new and fresh ideas.

New initiatives – Aban agreed to try again organising one or two consultant lectures to present to the public with the PPG committing to attend and help with publicity.

5 **New Building Update and interim measures to alleviate lack of space issues.** Aban had been unable to get any information on progress or date of completion. However she was sure that pursuing the request for a portacabin for the interim period was not viable as it would be too costly (£20,000) at a time when the new build has been agreed. The surgery say they manage quite well and the Doctors swap rooms if and when they need to for a patient who cannot go upstairs. This swapping round, of course, incurs a time penalty. It was confirmed that there will be a pharmacy within the new build.

It was proposed that we might be able to get the Parish Council to support us in finding out progress of the new development, issues about parking and suggestions for supporting the surgery with their lack of space issues until the development is complete. *Julian to draft a letter.*

- 6 **Blood tests** – it was agreed that the surgery did and would take into account patients family circumstances when referring them to hospital. Also at the moment they are negotiating with the L & D to have a plebotomist to come to the surgery to do the blood tests. Dr Sepai has advised as many patients as possible to write to him and complain about having to go to hospital for blood tests. It was suggested that we might write a strongly worded letter from the PPG and also for maximum effect, write individual letters too. Stressing the rural nature of where we live would also be important. *Corinne to draft the proposed letter from the PPG.*

- 7 **Waiting times for patients** – 40 and 50 minutes to see the doctor is not uncommon. Of the 10 people Corinne has spoken to, none found this very satisfactory. Others did report recent improvements in waiting times. The fact that we are now told when there is a delay and how long that is likely to be is definitely an improvement. The surgery says 'the doctors are always aware of the time patients have to wait and do their best at all times'. Patients are generally very satisfied with the consultation when they see the doctor. *Corinne to continue to record patients comments.*

- 8 **Communication to patients/updates** – Aban showed us the 'Information for Patients' booklet they produce bi-monthly or when they have a number of changes to add. It was pointed out that this was fine for patients who regularly attend the surgery but no-one else. It was suggested that the Chemist and Nisa were places we could also supply with a small batch each time it is renewed. *See e-mail from Aban dated 27 February giving reasons why this may not be possible.* It was also suggested that the surgery could make sure that Surcham Court and Caddington Hall are kept up to date if they don't already do so.

- 9 Corinne handed out the Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group leaflet in an attempt to help to set the scene of how this will take over from the PCT. We also briefly talked about the various events that are being held to encourage us all to have our say in the future way the NHS is run and the services we need provided. It is difficult for us to keep abreast of all the events that are taking place which brought us back to the need for increasing the members of the PPG. She also explained that she is a member of the Dacorum Patients Group which along with other members try to address the most pertinent health issues that come to our attention. Corinne also mentioned the NHS Constitution Consultation which invited us all to have our say but she had only heard about it at the Dacorum Patients Group AGM on 17th January (along with other members) and the deadline for responding was 28th January – no time at all to give a truly considered response let alone pass it to other interested parties for theirs. *Corinne agreed to draft a poster to display locally to try to encourage a wider membership of Markyate Surgery PPG.*

- 10 PPG Terms of Reference – agreed to looking at and updating at the next meeting. Also to give ourselves time to discuss the way forward. What are our future aims?

- 11 Date of next meeting **11th June at 1 pm at Markyate Surgery.**