



## **Sothall and Beighton Patient Forum**

### **Minutes of a meeting 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 at 6:30pm**

**Chair:** Spencer Oates (Deputy Practice Manager)

Dr Tim Williams (GP)

**Minutes:** SO

**Members Present:** KS, JS, CW, SS, CA, DH, MT, BT, TS, JM, AW, JW, (apologies to anyone not marked as attending as the sign-in sheet went out late and some people had already left).

**Apologies:** CL, AF, PH

SO opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and confirmed group agreement with the content of the minutes from the last meeting, and opened up the agenda to anyone else that may have something they would like to discuss.

#### **1. Sheffield PPG Network Update**

A brief update of the recent meeting of the Sheffield PPG Network included the use of Falkland House PPG as a case study example of good practice. SO highlighted that he had looked at the work undertaken by this PPG and there was very little difference between this and our own forum. Thank you to everyone and the hard work is very much appreciated!

#### **2. Height/Weight Machine for the Waiting Room.**

At a previous Patient Forum meeting regarding easing the workloads of our clinical team, the forum mentioned that it would be a good idea to look at a machine for the waiting room that would measure people's height and weight before going in for their appointments. This would free up some time during review appointments as the clinical staff would already have the information ready to interpret. Members of the forum offered to look into fundraising opportunities for this as the approximate costs would be £2,500. Since then the surgery has been given the opportunity to apply for this from a pot of money made available to the practice from savings made on the prescribing budget. This bid had been sent across and the surgery was awaiting a response, and there should be more information for the next meeting.

#### **3. Update and Feedback on Telephone System.**

During the round of 'any other business' at the start of the meeting, several patients raised various issues they had with the telephone system:

- a) Telephones closed at lunch
- b) Length of time to be answered
- c) No appointments when getting through, told to ring back.
- d) Recorded message directing to website when queuing on the telephone.

The surgery recently implemented a brand new telephone system with built in auto attendant and queuing system, as a result of discussion with the Patient Forum.

- a) Patients asked why the telephones were closed over lunch when sometimes this was the only time patients could contact the surgery, if working themselves. SO

explained that this was so the reception staff could have their lunch hour also. A patient asked why the reception staff couldn't stagger their lunches to allow for the telephones to remain active during this period. This is a very difficult to achieve solution as staggering lunches of 5 members of staff would potentially mean that there were reduced numbers of staff answering the telephones before 12pm and after 1.30pm (the busiest times). This could ultimately lead to longer waiting times for those calling during these periods, and effectively make the situation worse.

- b) Patients asked why they were waiting up to 30 minutes to be answered when in the queuing system. The telephones were active between 8.30am-12pm and 1.30pm-6pm, and hundreds of telephone calls are answered every day by 4 members of the reception team. The practice budget, as it stands at the moment, did not allow for recruitment of further members of staff and it is unsure whether this would actually help the situation. The aim is to work smarter not necessarily harder, as the team is already stretched to capacity. Patients asked if there were any times that the telephones were not as busy as others and the practice agreed to collect this information and bring to the next meeting.
- c) Patients asked why they couldn't get an appointment when they got through and subsequently asked to ring back the next day. The surgery offers same day, 1 week and 2 week appointments across the clinics that are bookable in advance. This ensures that every day some routine appointments are bookable for these time periods. Every day the surgery offers same day triage calls with our clinical team for those patients that are clinically urgent for the same day. All patients that need to be seen on the same day are offered this opportunity, if they are not suitable for Care Navigation, many of which can be sorted over the telephone.

The surgery also offers telephone follow-up appointments with its GPs for those patients that do not need to attend surgery and have been asked to contact a GP for follow-up. The surgery is in agreement with its patients in that it wishes it could offer more pre-bookable appointments but unfortunately in order to manage increasing demand with an inability to increase appointment capacity, the surgery needs to work differently to provide a service that is safe for both clinician and patient alike. One patient asked if there was any chance of including 'contraceptive' appointments on the online booking system – this would be looked into and fed back to the forum.

- d) One patient informed the forum that they were 'sick of hearing the recorded message directing people to the website' when queuing in the telephone system. Patients were generally using their mobiles to make the call therefore could not do as suggested and check the website. The recorded message was introduced to inform patients who were queuing that the surgery website contains a symptom checker and links to NHS information regarding common conditions. This was so patients may use this to read up on self-managing their conditions and may find answers to questions that they would usually have contacted the surgery about.

This message is not targeted at anyone in particular and is a blanket informational message to all patients.

All the comments regarding the telephone system will be taken on board by the surgery and used to improve our new system.

#### **4. New Surgery WiFi**

As part of a modernisation drive by the CCG and Embed (IT Services) the surgery will be having patient WiFi installed within the next couple of months. The exact installation date is still unknown as this date has been moved on multiple occasions by the installers. The surgery hopes to have this in place by the end of the month, and more information will be available as the surgery is informed. One patient pointed out that as we were encouraging patients to go online and providing WiFi then we needed to change the information on the Jayex board as this told patients to 'please ensure mobile phones were switched off'. SO admitted this was an oversight by the surgery and would ensure that this message was changed to 'silent' rather than 'off'.

#### **5. Increasing PPG Demographics.**

In order for the surgery to gain balanced feedback from the patient forum, it would be helpful to try and increase the number of meeting attendees from different demographic backgrounds. One patient suggested we undertake a collection of data from patients on their awareness of the Patient Forum. This was a very welcomed idea and would be organised with the surgery.

#### **6. Flu Clinics 2018/19**

Well, it's nearly that time of year again! SO informed the forum of the problems that occurred as a result of the recommended vaccines being changed after they had been ordered. SO has secured the new vaccines for this year and the surgery would be holding a Saturday flu clinic again, after the huge success of last year's. The plan is to hold this on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018. DH and CA both offered to help out on this day and this is very much appreciated.

#### **7. Change of Name**

After recent discussion surrounding the idea of an all-inclusive patient group that is for all patients registered at the surgery. It was deemed that the name and 'sign-up' process for the PPG may put some people off joining. The idea of it being a 'group' could imply that you had to formally become a member and then attend every meeting. It was decided at a recent meeting that Sothall and Beighton Patient Forum would be a more inclusive name. Therefore, as of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 the PPG would now be known as Sothall and Beighton Patient Forum (SBPF). This was agreed by all attendees and will be changed with immediate effect.

## **Any other business**

### **a) Plants in the waiting room.**

The issue of the plants in the waiting room offering a privacy solution for the front desk was raised again. SO explained to the group that the purpose of the plants were to provide privacy at the front desk whilst still allowing reception to monitor the waiting room. JW suggested that we could look at a more solid screen solution with a wall-mounted mirror to allow monitoring of the waiting room. The surgery would consider this as an option and feed back to the group.

### **b) Not all items being delivered when ordering prescriptions.**

One patient informed the meeting that they had requested their repeat prescriptions via the local pharmacy and when they were delivered not all items were sent. This has happened on more than 1 occasion to the same patient. It was not 100% certain where the root of this problem lies, but SO offered to contact the patient when they were due to submit their order so he could follow the process through and see where the issue lies.

### **c) Diabetes Education Sessions**

One patient asked about these sessions as their husband started attending and then they were stopped. SO informed this patient at the end of the meeting that due to increasing commitments the diabetes education facilitator had to stop providing these sessions and focus on her main day-to-day workload. This meant that the sessions would not be provided in the same current format. The intention was provide more 'healthy lifestyle' information sessions to cover multiple long term conditions, and also to provide this at a neighbourhood level, with several local GP surgeries being involved. This was still at an early stage but was looking promising.

### **d) New Waiting Room Presentation**

One patient had created a more inclusive and inviting presentation to be displayed on the surgery's waiting room information screen, explaining the patient forum. Feedback was gained from the forum regarding this and action points would be followed through. Generally the forum thought the presentation was excellent with tweaks to be made regarding the use of the words 'group' and 'PPG'. It was explained that this presentation was created well before the name change.

There being no further discussions, the meeting closed at 19:40.

**Next meeting Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018, 18.30 at Sothall Medical Centre.**