**Sothall and Beighton Patient Forum**

**Minutes of the meeting Wednesday 8th December 2021 at 6:30pm**

**Chair**: Michael Lyall (Practice Manager)

**Practice staff:** Dr R Welch, GP Partner

**Minutes:** Michael Lyall

**Members Present:** CG, JM, CF, JS & AF

**Apologies :** SS, CA, KT, PH & DR

ML opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and confirmed the group’s agreement with the content of the minutes of the 13/10/2021 meeting

**1.Flu vaccines:** as previously discussed we have been administering Flu vaccines at Sothall since mid-September and are now getting towards the end of the season. An automated appointment booking system via SMS message has reduced the impact on reception and been very successful. We are now mopping up a few that have been missed, normally we would call those without SMS access early in the season however we have been finding this very difficult due to staffing issues. At this stage anyone who is eligible [Flu vaccine - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/) can call the surgery and we will book you in at a suitable time. We have sufficient stock in surgery to administer to anyone eligible. ML explained that we have already ordered next years flu vaccines. There were some delays to the start this year as we were hoping to co-administer flu and Covid-19 boosters, but this proved logistically too difficult

**2. Covid19 booster vaccinations** are being administered at Beighton Health Centre, we are currently administering only Pfizer vaccines however we could receive Moderna in the near future. Booster vaccines can also be administered at any of the national vaccine sites, Patients will receive invitations directly; eligible cohorts are continually being updated see [Coronavirus (COVID-19) booster vaccine - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-booster-vaccine/) for more information. ML explained that there have been several complaints from patients who are frustrated that they can’t see Beighton on their invitations. ML explained that there are two booking systems in operation. If you receive an invitation from the National booking service this will allow you to book online for one of the many national vaccination sites (not Beighton Health Centre). NHS England have suggested that we move to their National booking service however we are continuing with our own system using ‘AccuBook’. We are doing this to ensure the most vulnerable patients are called to a local centre, we are aware that we are behind the National Booking service and would advise patients who can travel to one of these sites to do so.

**3. Staffing update;** **Staffing update** since our last Forum meeting

* **Physician Associate**, we have a newly qualified full time Physician Associate who has started with us at the end of November. Samia Farhad is a great asset to our team and will slowly help to increase our capacity.
* **Reception team**, we have had a challenging time managing our reception team recently, our reception manager has taken a position (Care Co-ordinator) within our Network. As we were already recruiting, our team is struggling to keep up with demand as they also try and provide high quality training for our new staff. Towards the end of W/C 29/11/2021 we had to take the rather drastic measure of transferring all of our calls to Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. We are very confident that this situation is temporary and would ask that patients bear with us at this time. Patients can help by checking our self-help pages [Patient Portal - Self Care Forum](https://www.selfcareforum.org/resources/patient-portal/#commonconditions) before calling the surgery also ordering repeat prescriptions via the NHS app [NHS App - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-app/) as this frees up valuable reception allowing them to answer incoming calls. Due to timescales for recruiting and training we are anticipating gradual improvements until around February when we hope to be fully staffed with trained Receptionist / care Navigators.

**4. Quality Improvement work,** we are currently investing time to improve our appointment system. Although we can’t create more capacity, we are looking at improving the ratio of appointment types. We are in the early stages of measuring and matching capacity and demand. We are hopeful that this work will make it easier for patients to get the appointment which is most appropriate to their needs. We suspect this work could take some time to complete and will almost certainly require regularly reviewing

**5. Veteran friendly accreditation** [Veterans' healthcare toolkit: The Veteran friendly accreditation (rcgp.org.uk)](https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=12533&chapterid=285).We are very proud to have been accredited as a veteran friendly practice. It’s not common knowledge however veterans are sometimes able to access additional support especially where their condition is linked to previous service. We are sharing information on social media and would like all veterans to mention their status when they next visit. This service does not fast track veterans through the NHS as all NHS care is based on a patients Clinical Need. It can help clinical staff to understand the patients needs which may be more complex depending on their service experiences

**6. Extended Hours Provision**, we discussed this service at our last meeting with a view that its implementation was almost imminent. For numerous reasons this has been delayed, it may be that this service is linked to the Extended Access (very similar) scheme to provide a more joined up service. The UK Government are currently applying pressure on General Practice to speed up the Covid booster programme which would be hampered if we were also providing usual services outside of core hours. I anticipate that this provision will return in some form once we are in a more stable position.

**Other business**

**7. Beighton Health Centre**, Michael explained that when we consolidated services in Sothall we told our patients that we were very optimistic that valuable services would use the Beighton building improving the care of our patients. Although progress has been incredibly slow, the site has made an excellent Covid vaccination site. Our Network District Nursing team have moved into the building and there is a lot of work now, looking at providing other services from this site.

**8. Omicron Covid-19 variant**, there was a discussion around the latest news regarding this variant. Michael explained that it is a worrying variant and that unfortunately we are currently often receiving our information via BBC News and are therefore not necessarily better informed than the public. Having said this there are real concerns, we have been taking very careful precautions to keep our patients and staff safe. Michael explained that some patients are finding this frustrating stating that they don’t need to wear masks anywhere else and feeling that we are being too cautious. Michal explained that the two main reasons for this caution is that we often have very vulnerable patient in the practice, also any Covid spreading through the practice will lead to staff absences affecting service provision.

**9. Question time style network event**, on Tuesday 1st December one of the Network GP’s, Dr Ben Allen from Birley Health Centre organised a Network wide virtual Patient Participation Group meeting loosely styled on the TV programme Question Time. This event was not particularly well attended, luckily one of the forum members attended and fed back. Dr Allen was very helpful and insightful, but this could not be said of the entire panel. Michael will share any further planned events however it was not felt to be an overall success as often questions relate to individual practices as opposed to Networks

**Next meeting** – ProvisionallyWednesday 2nd February 2022, 6.30pm – 7.30pm

There being no further discussions, the meeting closed at 19.45

The patient Forum, formally known as the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is an excellent way for patients to engage with the practice and influence improvements. It allows the opportunity for patients to openly discuss issues they feel could be improved as well as providing the practice the opportunity to discuss these issues. We are always actively looking for new members. Meetings are usually every two months, usually at 18:30 – 20:00 on a Wednesday evening. There is no formal commitment to attend meetings regularly and there is always an opportunity to shape the meeting agenda even if you are unable to attend. The only criteria for becoming a Forum member is that you are a registered patient at Sothall Medical Centre. If you are interested in joining this active, friendly group please visit our website and complete the very simple application form [Sothall Medical Centre](https://sothall.net/)