

**Sothall and Beighton Patient Forum**  
**Minutes of the meeting Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 at 6:30pm**



**Chair:** Rosemary Welch (GP)  
**Practice staff:** Dr Deirdre Leonard, Dr Alison Rainford and  
Dr Andy Hilton CEO of PCS  
**Minutes:** Pam Williams (Admin)  
**Members Present:** DR, SR, CL, JW, AT, JM, RE & PH  
**Apologies :** Michael Lyall (Practice Manager), DH, JF, SS, JE, MH & LH

Dr Rosie Welch informed the meeting that she would be in the chair as Michael Lyall was absent due to illness.

1. **Dr Welch** introduced Dr Andy Hilton who would be addressing the meeting and gave a brief outline of what would be discussed.
  - a) The age of the partners at the practice who are all coming up to retirement age.
  - b) Dr Welch explained that there is a major recruiting problem and has been for a while and we have been unable to secure new partners to the practice. Because of this the practice is hoping to amalgamate with PCS (Primary Care Sheffield). We were about to join forces with Mosborough just as 'lock down' happened but this fell through.
2. **Dr Andy Hilton** then explained the role of PCS. He introduced himself and said that he had been a GP for over 20 years and was still a doctor 1 day a week. PCS came about after the government were discussing bringing in big companies to run surgeries such as Virgin and Sainsburys. PCS are acutely aware of delivering NHS services. He explained that all GP surgeries in Sheffield were a part of PCS and that they currently manage 7 practices in Sheffield. PCS are interested in Core values. Also under their remit is Extended Hours, Physios, Sexual Health and Domiciliary Home Care. The landscape of General Practice is extremely challenging with demand and expectation having gone up and years of under resourcing workforce (not enough doctors being trained). The biggest threat to the NHS at the moment is crumbling under demand due to under resourcing. PCS are interested in continuity of care and for them to do the 'backroom stuff'. We should not see any change in staffing and patients will probably not notice any changes in the practice. The partners at the practice at the moment will become salaried GPs and under PCS contracts until they decide to retire. This is the best way of maintaining core practice. PCS are not buying out the practice but amalgamating.
3. **Patient Questions** – It was asked whether anything is standardised within all the practices they run. One of the first things to be altered which has been mentioned at a previous meeting is the telephone system. The new system however has more features/benefits than our current one and links up to SystmOne. Looking at efficiency with systems – there has been lots of digital technology introduced since the pandemic, we are hoping to move forward with this. A member of the patient forum asked if there would be training for patients who are not 'technically savvy'. This has been an option in the past and can probably be introduced but Dr Hilton explained they do not want to cause any inequality and would take all this into account.

4. **Summary** – The reason for this amalgamation is a positive move, more to maintain services. Patterns of working may change but staffing should not change, the contract of hours will stay the same.  
Extended hours provided by the PCS are at Crystal Peaks and Jordanthorpe and patients also have the option of NHS111.  
Forum response – They are hopeful that this is a good move so there is stability.
5. **Phone message** – A member asked if this was going to be changed as the message is too long. This will all be reviewed with the new telephone system.
6. **Staff Issues** – Dr Claire Nash is going on maternity leave in May.  
We have recruited an ANP who starts at the practice in April, working 3 days per week.  
Michelle Oates has now become a Nurse Practitioner; she was previously a Practice Nurse.  
We still are recruiting for doctors but are having regular locums to cover at the moment.  
A member of the forum asked why we are not managing to recruit and wondered if we should be offering more incentives.
7. **Flooring** – We have had new vinyl flooring in the waiting room and in the next few weeks it will be fitted all down the corridor, all clinical rooms will then be up to standard.
8. **Lighting in carpark** – This is ongoing and in hand.
9. **Side Gate** – This is the pharmacy's responsibility (Weldricks), they should be opening the gate each day. Members of the forum voiced that they thought the service from the pharmacy had improved.

There being no further discussions, the meeting closed at 20:05

**Next meeting** – Provisionally Wednesday 5 April 2023, 6.30pm – 8:00pm