**Minutes of PPG Meeting 21 March 2024**

**Present**: Colin Berthelsen, John Grossman, Dr Liz Hermaszewska, Sharon Pink, Susan Smee, Stefan Sieradzki

**Apologies**: Jan Choopani, Mary Egan, Caroline Field, Mary Perkins

* The meeting warmly welcomed new members Sharon Pink and John Grossman, who were asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
* PPG members introduced themselves ahead of Colin explaining the history of PPGs and the role of the MW PPG, including how it has evolved and how it benefited from having Dr Liz attending the meetings. He mentioned that we had lost the Treasurer role as the PPG was no longer raising money for the surgery and to cover costs, but agreed expenses were covered by the practice. He then shared his findings on how other PPGs function.
* Following introductions, members discussed the role of different levels of the groups that the practice belonged to and how any changes there might affect the surgery. Firstly, there is the North Connect Primary Care Network (PCN) which consists of seven local surgeries to include Mountwood, spread across Northwood (4), Eastcote (1), South Ruislip (1) Harefield. Then sitting over the top of PCNs are the larger ICBs and we are part of the North West London Integrated Care Board which consists of Hillingdon, Harrow, Brent, Ealing, Hounslow, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster. This covers over 2,000,000 patients and is one of 42 ICBs across England.
* Dr Liz joined the meeting and shared surgery news starting with recent events held at the surgery and organised with PPG input and attendance. This started with a presentation by Parkinsons Society, followed by MHA Northwood Live @ Home (a charity) who organise help and events for elderly patients. Next came the MS Therapy centre, and we look forward to next month receiving a presentation from Alzheimers Society. About 60 dementia patients have been invited by the surgery and about 12 have replied to date. Patients are asked to book a place. It looked as though this event will be well attended. Dr Liz searches the database to locate patients and match them with the presentation ahead of sending a text invite to relevant patients to contact the practice and leave their details. Given that Mountwood has approaching 12,000 patients it is cost effective to work in this manner rather than taking the blanket coverage route.
* The prospect of holding evening PPG meetings were discussed again and Dr Liz suggested PPG, we could hold the PPG AGM during one of the summer months in the evening and advertise widely and if successful possibly holding quarterly evening meetings, with others during the afternoon. Dr Liz felt it was an opportunity to get more engagement from new members, to present achievements, events, etc, and for everyone to engage in discussion about the Practice. It should be fun and interesting.
* Dr Liz outlined the recent hub related policy changes, namely that the ICB was going to take over responsibility for ‘on the day’, urgent patient care requirements in October if the PCNs had not made sufficient strides to do this locally from April. News broke the day before our meeting that the protests from patients, practices, etc, had forced the ICB to delay their intentions for a further year. Dr Liz outlined the practical difficulties of separating out ‘on the day’ urgent care away from GP surgeries, to leave surgeries to manage chronic and long term care . Mountwood now has the Pembroke Centre (Ruislip Manor) to send patients to with simple straightforward issues – about 4 appointments a day per GP surgery. to be shared by all the GP practices in North (Hillingdon) Connect hub, on a first-come-first-served basis. This works better than the hub policy (ICS) to be brought in by the government/NHS, since it allows the surgery to triage the issues that could be passed to a hub. The proposed government hub changes still involved 10-minute appointments. Another trend promoted by the government was for patients to not necessarily see a doctor but perhaps sometimes a less fully qualified medical specialist.
* Regarding the GP contract - BMA is balloting members - a new GP contract imposed by the government, which comes out every April offered a 1.9% uplift to surgery funding . This is not enough to keep up with inflation, so surgeries will have to reduce costs. The contract is likely to be rejected, with many surgeries suffering financial difficulties and some closed already. Dr Liz made it clear that the funding was for all surgery running costs and salaries for all staff.
* Dr Liz had been contacted by a care company Home Instead who are prepared to run mini clinics at surgeries about providing care in patients’ own home. These clinics would be generic i.e. not specifically focused on what Home Instead provides, apparently. This would include advice about practical help, as well as financial assistance. Such a clinic might take place in May / June at MW.
* Colin informed the meeting about the next PCN Health Open Day to take place on 5th April at St Helens school. Invitations have been sent out and Colin hopes to find someone there who might be able to do a prostate presentation at MW.
* Dr Liz invited all members to come forward with any contacts they may have to do health related presentations at MW. The next event at MW will be on April 17th at 10 am in the MW upstairs meeting room. Stefan to confirm audio visual requirements with our guest presenter and check their functioning / availability in the meeting room.
* Colin was hopeful about his pursuit of an AIDS presentation.
* Dr Liz felt that it was challenging to secure a presentation every month and would be happy with something like one every two months or so. She was open to PPG members pursuing any health-related presentation subject, be it exercise or diet or other lifestyle subject.
* New members spoke of their reasons for joining PPG. Sharon had ideas about improving communication including leaflets, posters as well as online. Dr Liz suggested Sharon might write to Dr Liz with her ideas. John, having had experience of running a 12,000-patient dental practice, had some ideas to share about improving admin and interaction with patients. Further John felt older patients had concerns about the future of the NHS, etc, that he felt needed to be aired and addressed. Sharon expressed another concern about the use of trainee doctors in surgeries, the extent of their expertise, etc. Dr Liz spoke about GP registrars, who were all fully qualified doctors who had worked in hospital and were now at various points in their 3 years of training to be GPs, and of physician associates who had 2 years of training, and had breadth but not depth of knowledge. Sharon felt the MW website might usefully clarify matters regarding these roles. Dr Liz talked about the extent of such roles in the practice. John asked for a list of surgery doctors being on the MW website. It might be the list needs updating as might other aspects of the website. Before Dr Liz had to leave, she said she was happy to hear about suggestions on how to improve the website which was dishearteningly time-consuming to maintain.
* Regarding events, John was concerned about reaching not just patients who have been diagnosed, but also those who were not. This was certainly the case with prostate cancer – men should be informed of the importance of testing, etc. This led to the meeting discussing difficulties of reaching patients given costs to the surgery. There are no real alternatives for the PPG with all mass forms of messaging being unavailable due to privacy issues (apart from the cost - £440 for a simple, single text going out to all patients). Regarding larger venues to get more patients to attend, John felt there were venues in Northwood which could be available at a modest cost.
	+ This is exactly the purpose of the quarterly **PCN Health Hub event** .
	+ The next one is on 05/04/24,10am-15:30pm at St Helen's School, HA6 3AS.
	+ Free BMI & BP checks, - looking for undiagnosed high blood pressure, Talks by specialist GPs on managing high blood pressure, diabetes and your general wellbeing! https://rb.gy/x258yk
* Family and Friends data was discussed of which there was very little lately, being dependent on patients actually filling forms in. The new telephone system was taking a lot of calls particularly given issues with PATCHS.
* Susan felt the PPG had made some progress lately, in many ways thanks to Dr Liz representing the practice in an open-minded way, other members very much concurring.
* There were further discussions about information about the doctors at the surgery that patients might legitimately expect to have access to on the MW website. This was a communications issue that might benefit from comparison with other surgeries, and perhaps a photograph. Colin did point out that some staff in the past could have been happy about their picture being displayed as this might lead to being recognised outside of the surgery..
* The changing role of practice doctors was discussed, particularly how it affected patients, for example the common occurrence of part-time working by doctors. Perhaps the practice could communicate better regarding doctor availability.
* The need for PPG to create posters for events was discussed given that the surgery produced posters anyway for the same events.
* The PPG warmly welcomed the constructive contribution new members had made.

**Next Meeting: Thursday 18 April 2024 at 2:30pm.**