**Patient Forum Minutes – 05.02.2024**

**Attendees: William Graham, Maureen Graham, Iris Connaughton, Patricia Thomsett-Jones, Judith Hardy, Mary Venables, Bill Venables, Linda Chapman, Sheila Harris, Moyra Carey, Jackie Carey, Steve Mahoney & Michael Emson**

**Rebecca Seaman– Practice Manager**

**Angela Hill – Quality Coordinator**

**Apologies:, Edwina Russell, John Surridge, Adrian Rudge, Marion Vause**

1. **Matters Arising from the last meeting.**

Becky noted that she had nothing to discuss. The members did not have anything to discuss either.

1. **Update on the current situation at Balmoral Surgery.**

We have recruited a new salaried GP, Dr Amy Camm who is working 8 sessions per week. The feedback from the patients who have seen her has been very good. We were fully staffed for two days and then Dr Cornelius Osondu resigned. He lives in Ashford and wants to work close to home as he has a young family and commitments. Dr Osondu leaves at the beginning of March. We put out an advert for another salaried GP immediately and we are seeing someone tomorrow for an informal interview. We also ask potential GPs to work a locum session for us before committing. We want a GP to be the right fit for us and vice versa.

We have also recruited two additional posts; an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ACP) and a Paramedic. Becky’s vision when taking over as Practice Manager was to create a minor illness team who could see patients for issues such as coughs and colds which would free up the GPs to see patients with more chronic illnesses. We want to move these GP appointments to 15 minute slots as when looking at our data, this is the average length of a GP appointment. At present the GP appointments slots are 10 minutes. The ACP and the Paramedic will concentrate on looking at the eConsults that come in daily and triage these to the correct practitioner in the practice. eConsults are contractual and even though we can limit the time this service is available each day, we cannot estimate how many we are going to receive. The ACP has a keen interest in Learning Difficulties and Dementia and she has done a lot of work in care homes.

As well as the new ACP and new Paramedic we also have a trainee ACP.

The Primary Care network (PCN) have been allocated a pot of money for additional roles to support all of the practices in Deal & Sandwich. One of those roles is that of the Clinical Pharmacists. Previously they have been concentrating on their contractual targets with the care homes but they now have time to spend in the practices dealing with complex medication changes and reviews. They will also be able to assist with the eConsults.

The Home Visiting Service and the PCN Enhanced Health in Care Homes team have taken a lot of pressure off GPs in the past couple of years in regard to carrying out home visits.

1. **Enhanced Access.**

We have discussed this in previous meetings. Up until a year or so ago practices opened earlier in the mornings or stayed open later in the evenings to provide Extended Hours. Then the Government changed the contract for practices to be open and provide a service 8-8 Monday to Friday and Saturdays. Many practices at that time could not take this on. Deal & Sandwich PCN sub-contracted CHA to do this work that is now called Enhanced Access and they delivered this from Deal Hospital with appointments all bookable via the GP Practices. This is separate to the UTC which you can be seen at if you ring 111 or, where capacity allows, you can walk in and ask to be seen. The UTC was previously Minor Injuries.

Our PCN have decided to try and work a bit smarter and more collaboratively with each other and the first project will be to take the Enhanced Access provision back into the practices from 01.04.24. The appointments will still be bookable via your GP practices but you could be offered an appointment at another practice in Deal or at Sandwich Medical Practice. Each practice will open one late evening per week, for Balmoral it will be Mondays. Fridays and Saturdays will be worked on a rota basis. There will be appointments with GPs and First Contact Physiotherapist who can refer patients for scans or to hospital as well as for further physio treatment. GPs in practices feel that a lot of what they see could be dealt with by a First Contact Physio.

We will continue to sub-contract to CHA for them to provide the nurse at Deal Hospital on a weekend.

There will be Data Sharing Agreements in place for practices as they will all have access to other practices patients. The IT was not available to do this years ago.

1. **Ear Syringing.**

The nurse appointments at the weekend provided through Enhanced Access by CHA at Deal Hospital were not been fully utilised so the practices agreed to train the nurses and buy the equipment for them to do ear syringing for patients. The PCN then decided to take Enhanced Access back in house. Our new HCA is now seeing patients for ear syringing. We will look at the demand and then review.

1. **Wellbeing.**

We talk a lot about the stresses in Primary Care and we are trying to do as much as we can to look after our staff at Balmoral.

On our last half day closing afternoon we held a wellbeing session for all staff including doctors and nurses, management and admin. All of the staff mixed and chatted to staff they may not have had conversations with before. Becky gave a presentation about wellbeing, advising staff of the resources that are available. We are very lucky that all of the staff here do look out for one another. The session also included a bake off. Most of the staff attended and they all said how much they enjoyed it so it was a great success. We are planning another wellbeing session in the summer with a BBQ and badminton in the garden and some yoga.

Becky explained that we have a Zero Tolerance policy at the practice and we write warning letters to patients if they verbally abuse staff or cause disruption. The doctors and the management team fully support staff and if a patient is being rude to them on the phone they can advise the patient that they are going to terminate the call.

1. **AOB.**

One attendee asked why we are still sending letters requesting patients to come in to see the GP or the nurse for routine check-ups? Most of the staff do now send text messages where they can. Some patients do not have mobile phones. Becky will remind staff to send a text message where possible.

**The next meeting will be Monday 10.06.24 at 1.15pm**