**Patient Forum Minutes – 27.2.23**

**Attendees: Sheila Harris, Patricia Thomsett Jones, Colin Hartley, Paul Burton, Mr & Mrs Graham, Moyra & Jackie Carey, Linda Chapman, Alan Prior, Edwina Prior & John Surridge**

**Lesley Betts – Practice Manager**

**Rebecca Seaman – Assistant Practice Manager**

**Apologies: Steve Mahoney & Iris Connaughton**

1. **Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting**

Becky and Lesley have looked at the minutes from the last full meeting, which was in October, and they could not find anything. The group did not have anything that they wanted to raise either.

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

Lesley updated the group on our current situation. We have a new salaried GP who has just started, Dr Dey. He is working five sessions a week, and this replaces the sessions that we lost when Dr Singh retired. He will work all day Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

We still have an advert out for another salaried GP, but so far we have not had any applicants. When this job posting closes, we will then advertise again for an Advanced Clinical Practitioner, as we like to alternate these positions so that we look more attractive, and not like we have several vacancies.

Lesley told the group that Dr Viney is still on long term sick and we do not have a planned date for his return.

Dr Hoffmann is retiring at the end of May.

The PCN have recently tried to recruit a Clinical Pharmacist for each practice, but they did not have any applicants who came to interview. They were initially hoping for five Pharmacists, so they are back out to advert.

We have recently recruited our own Pharmacy Technician for 31 hr per week. This role really supports the GPs and takes away from them a lot of medication related queries/problems. Amanda previously worked in Boots in Deal, so some patients may be familiar with her.

Until Dr Dey started, we had to turn off eConsult to be able to cope. This has now been turned back on, and is available from 8am-10am each day. We find eConsult extremely useful and do not want to turn it off, but unfortunately we have not been given access to a demand management feature that exists, andtherefore we are not able to control how much demand we get through eConsult.

We are still implementing the BMA’s Safe Working Guidelines, which limits the number of patient contacts each GP has in a session, in order to protect both the GPs and the patients. This means that they have no more than 14 contacts per clinical session and a session is a half day.

We have changed some internal working processes and we are currently in the process of upskilling our admin team who process incoming documents, so that they are able to read the letters and action some tasks which would have been previously done by a GP. This work is being led and supervised by Dr Eastbrook and all of the admin team keep a folder of letters that they have actioned, and then 1 in 10 of these is checked by a GP, to ensure the appropriate course of action has been taken.

One of the group asked about “Clear my desk”, something that we mentioned at a previous meeting. Lesley said that she has chased the company about this multiple times, but no one has come back to her. Clear my Desk would have done similar to what we are asking our admin team to now do.

1. **Ideas for future speakers**

The following speakers were suggested for the future;

1. Age Concern
2. Deal Community Centre
3. Social Prescribers
4. **Q&A Session**
5. **What is the reporting time for tests?**

This varies on the test and how busy that department is at the time. If a result is abnormal, they will phone the practice to inform us of that result, they will not wait for it to go through the system. They will also document the name of the person taking the result and enter this into their records.

1. **What is happening with blood tests at Deal Hospital**

We have not heard anything since when we last spoke to the group about this.

1. **What services are provided at Deal Hospital**

Deal Hospital still have an in-patient ward, x-ray, the Urgent Treatment Centre and also the Enhanced Access appointments are provided there. We know that the social prescribers tried to rent a room at the hospital, but unfortunately the amount that KCHFT charged was unrealistic.

1. **What is happening with our telephone system?**

It should be better now. After numerous phone calls, and being told there is not a problem, the engineer then realised that they had changed a setting which meant that patients were getting cut off, this has now been rectified. If you choose the appointments option, you will get a ringtone if you are one of 8 people in the queue. If there are more than 8 you will get the engaged tone.

Lesley told the group that we had to change our phone provider during the pandemic, as the old one did not have “apps” to allow people to work from home. Since then the Government have decided that all GP Practices have to have internet phone systems anyway, as they deem this to be better.

1. **Do we still do an “MOT”**

Patients aged over 40 yrs are invited for a health check every 5 years. These are not based in the practice anymore, but when you are invited, you should be able to go somewhere fairly local.

1. **Why do I get a message saying that I need a medication review, and then I get told I don’t need one**

Patients may get a message saying that they need a medication review, but this may not always be needed. When a drug is added to a patient’s repeat list, for safety, it only allows the drug to be issued so many times before it needs to be updated by a GP. When it gets to the point that it needs to be updated, you may see a message that you have reached your maximum issues, but if it is a low risk drug that you have been on for a long time, you may not need a review and it will just be updated. If a GP felt that you needed a full medication review, you will be invited for this.

1. **Any other business**
2. **PCN Representative**

Sadly Cynthia Rosser passed away recently. Cynthia was our PCN representative for the practice. We asked the group if anyone was willing to represent the Balmoral Group going forward, and if they are, they should let Becky or Lesley know (John Surridge has agreed to take on this role).

1. **Lesley’s Retirement**

Lesley will be retiring in September and the partners have asked Becky to take on the role of Practice Manager, which she is very excited about.

1. **Date of the next meeting**

26.6.23 @ 1.15pm