

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting Minutes

On: 16th December 2020 at: 6pm until 7.30pm

Method: via Zoom

Current Number of PPG Members: 130

Invites sent for via preferred method of communication: 130/130

Initial request to join: 16/130

Attendance: 9/130

Apologies: 2/130

Amersham Vale Staff Present: 3 – Lianne Auguste (LA) – PPG Admin Lead, David Piercy (DP) – Quality and Compliance Manager, Marian Negoita (MN) – Nursing Admin Assistant.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

- *Host:* LA

2. STAFFING

- *Staff on Sabbaticals:*
 - Dr S Wessely until September 2021
- *New Staff:*
 - *Two new receptionists: Leonie and Maddie*
 - *Administrator: Marian – Nursing Admin Negoita – introduced self to the group*
 - *New GP: Working Wednesdays.*
 - *Nursing: Nurse Roye, who is the Advanced Nurse Practitioner*
 - *Students: Deanna, training to be a Physician Associate*
- *Staff Leaving:*
 - *Pat Dada, Practice Nurse – retiring end of January 2021. Will be greatly missed*
 - *If anyone knows of any nurses looking for another job, or like to work in Primary Care, please get them to forward their CV to us.*

3. QUESTIONS (with answers) RECEIVED PRIOR TO TODAY'S MEETING

- **Questions surrounding COVID vaccine:**

1) Are unpaid Carers going have access to the vaccine as a priority group like care workers along with the people they care for?

Ref: [COVID-19 Greenbook Chapter 14a \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612209/COVID-19_Greenbook_Chapter_14a.pdf) Page 8-9-10

Possibly, depending on the type of carer you are, as per the Green Book definition:

“Adult carers - Those who are in receipt of a carer’s allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.”

Table 2 – Priority groups for vaccination advised by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation

Priority group	Risk group
1	Residents in a care home for older adults Staff working in care homes for older adults
2	All those 80 years of age and over Frontline Health and social care workers
3	All those 75 years of age and over
4	All those 70 years of age and over Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals (not including pregnant women and those under 16 years of age)
5	All those 65 years of age and over
6	Adults aged 16 to 65 years in an at-risk group (Table 3)
7	All those 60 years of age and over
8	All those 55 years of age and over
9	All those 50 years of age and over

You will fall under the current Priority Group 6 – so no idea when this will happen, could be from mid 2021 – or 2022. We simply don’t know how long it will take to vaccinate everyone in the priority groups before Group 6

2) Covid-19 Vaccine: When can I get the Pfizer or Astra-Zeneca Covid-19 vaccine?

I understand the distribution follows a clearly stated priority hierarchy. My age group: 60-65 with no underlying health issues.

As above, Priority GROUP 7

3) General COVID – put question out there? Any further questions

➤ Other questions, not COVID related

1) eConsult: How can I save my inputs in a pdf or any other format?

I had two incidents recently when I filled out the online forms online and at the end I was advised to call 111 or the Practice. I wished to forward my inputs to the Practice but I could not find the way to

save my answers. It would be great to find a way to forward my inputs to the Practice, so when I call for urgent attention the information is available for the doctors and nurses.

Unfortunately, you cannot save an eConsult response, until you have submitted it and request to get a copy of it sent to your email.

If the eConsult is asking you to call 111 or the practice, the eConsult is over, and will not be submitted to the practice nor will you get an email copy. The reason for the “call 111 or the practice” is a SAFE mechanism so you get help sooner, than later, as the last question you answered has raised a red flag that you may need help sooner. The reason that you cannot submit it or continue the eConsult is as a practice we have until the end of the next working day to review your eConsult, so that message appears to get you help sooner, otherwise there may be a delay in getting the appropriate help.

You can click to go back to the last question, to change the answer; but we highly discourage this as true answers to the questions are the only way you will get the correct help, and we cannot be accountable for you providing wrong answers to avoid the SAFETY that eConsult has implemented. You may think it's no big deal, but eConsult has a medical team behind it creating the templates for you, so changing an answer, just to submit an eConsult to the practice is not safe for you or for us.

2) Understanding blood test results: Would it be possible to provide the healthy range data in blood test results in addition to my data?

I have received a discharge letter from St Thomas' Hospital's annual monitoring with my latest blood test results. It took me quite a while to look up all the parameters online and find out the healthy range. It would be great to add the healthy range to the results or a link to my blood tests' explanations with the results on NHS Patient. I understand this is a long-term and resources intensive addition.

Blood test requests from the practice – on NHS app and patient access – already has the “normal ranges” inputted.

We cannot provide health ranges from hospitals, you would need to contact them directly.

You can request a copy of your blood test results and this too, will show the normal ranges, only for the blood tests that the practice has ordered.

Problem is; depending on what LAB is used to process the samples, the “normal ranges” varies considerably; so googling may give you the wrong answers.

Also, normal ranges also depends on age, gender and co-existing conditions.

As you may have a “normal” blood test figure, but when you look at the overall patient, and their history and demographics, it may not be normal.

For example, a person with diabetes, a number of 46 shows good control.

But a number of 46 to a person without diabetes, this is bad.

We would always say, ask for a call back from the doctor/ hospital who requested them if you want to know what the numbers mean.

3) Copy of my medical data online: How can I get access to or get a copy of my medical data stored online?

I would be interested in seeing some of my previous blood test results I may have not noted down for myself.

To gain access to your medical notes online you would need to make a request in writing to the practice.

Requests are usually upheld within 30 days. A doctor has to authorise and removed any third party information.

You will require Patient access to access this at the moment, this means you would need to bring photographic ID into the practice. We are currently looking into how we can incorporate it into the NHS app for our practice.

4) Apps: Would it be possible to provide a simple explanation on the Practice's website on how the three apps (eConsult, Ask NHS, The NHS) are linked, in addition to the useful explanation of their functions?

All the APPS have their own dedicated webpage on our website; which indicates their uses, unfortunately they are all individual apps, with different functions, so you would need to review each one individually but today we have added to the NHS APP webpage that it now linked to eConsult. FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE APPS BY VISITING THE TAB "ONLINE SERVICES" on our webpage

NHS APP – function is similar to Patient access:

You can book appointments online (just not at the moment due to COVID), can cancel appointments, request repeat medication, amend your personal details, also review your medical records, such as blood test results, problems etc.

NHS APP, also links to eConsult >

As most of you know, eConsult can be a pain, when you have to enter all your personal details, each time you submit one, but with NHS APP, accessing eConsult this way it pre-fills all your data to save you time.

eConsult – it's a way to get help or advice, from the surgery, from a doctor, nurse or admin for queries related to your health, to private work requests, sick notes, annual reviews etc.

We aim to respond to your eConsult by the end of the next working day.

ASK NHS APP – This is an app, similar to eConsult, but you can book telephone appointments online with a doctor directly if available, or after using the triage aspect / symptom checker. The symptom checker, will ask you a load of questions, similar to eConsult, and will provide you with an outcome; re. go to a pharmacy, call 111, call 999, call the surgery, or to book a telephone/video appointment with the practice/doctor VIA THE APP.

In future, we are hoping to allow patients to book nurses appointments via this method, as well as more doctor appointments, video appointments.

ASK NHS APP you can now self-refer to PHYSIO FIRST without the need to consult a doctor, so if you have back pain, hip pain etc, go on ASKNHS app and book an appointment with Physio.

Also, there are talks, it may be used to book your covid vaccine appointments in the future, when this will be, we do not know.

Each app / services has its PROs and usages and we encourage the use of all three.

4. QUESTIONS (with answers) ASKED DURING TODAY'S MEETING

- 1) A person in my building has tested positive for COVID-19, and has been isolating for 5 days (without letting us in the building know) I am concerned, please advise, do I need to get a test?**

Do you have symptoms of COVID, loss of taste/smell, a new continuous cough or a temperature? (NO) No need to request a test, but you can call 119 and ask.

Have you been in close proximity (less than 2 metres) with the person for more than 15 minutes? (Yes, less than 2 metres, delivered post and we chatted at the door, but was for less than 15 minutes)

Outcome: you do not need to isolate, unless you develop symptoms, any concerns, call 111 or 119 for a test

(the above advice was checked with the COVID Lead Nurse CP 17/12/2020 – stating correct advice)

- 2) Are there any issues about someone who has had the virus needing to wait at all before having the vaccine?**

We do not know the answer to this question; but will add to minutes once we know the answer

(the above was discussed with the COVID Lead Nurse CP 17/12/2020 – stating at the moment this is not a contraindication, so patients can have it no matter when they have been diagnosed as COVID positive. When you have been COVID positive, your body starts to create immunity so having the vaccine will help increase the immunity against the COVID virus)

- 3) (One PPG member had connection problems, and left the meeting, on leaving posted a question in chat part)**

I brought this up at a previous PPG meeting – I was wondering how the practice is getting on with the changes it was making to the patient forms with regard to transgender inclusivity – I remember one of the changes was recognising non-binary gender rather than just male or female. Thanks for all your great work!

Our electronic New Patient Questionnaire Form was updated to reflect inclusivity for the LGBTQ+ community.

We added the questions:

- Gender: Male (Including trans men) Female (including trans women) Non-binary, and other
- Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth? Yes / No
- Preferred pro-noun:

- Sexual Orientation: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Heterosexual/Straight, Other
We changed the question surrounding smear tests - use to say for “female patients”, we have changed it to say “Note: a person with a cervix aged 25-64yrs is eligible for a smear test, regardless of sexual orientation and activity.”

As discussed before, the NHS system, unfortunately only accepts FEMALE or MALE as a gender, otherwise registration gets rejected from PCSE. [Primary Care Support England - Primary Care Support England](#)

We have made complaints, but we were advised, due to RECALL for screening purposes it is important to know the GENDER as FEMALE or MALE at this time.

For example;

A Trans-man is still eligible for a smear test; if the cervix has not been removed.

A Trans-women is still eligible for AAA screening [Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

We do understand the frustration of the NHS system not catching up to the speed which changes occur for inclusivity, but this is out of our control and our voice has been added for changes to happen soon.

In light of this; the question re. gender will need to be changed to say:

- Gender: Male or Female (we need to know a gender to register you as a patient to our surgery)

But we will add keep the additional questions with an extra question:

- What is your preferred gender?
- If applicable for RECALL purposes, what was your gender identity that was assigned to you at birth? Male / Female (We need to know to ensure we add you to a search to ensure you are recall for screenings at the right time in your life)
- Preferred pro-noun:
- Sexual Orientation: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Heterosexual/Straight, Other

We can add this PREFERRED gender and pronoun to your notes to alert everyone who accesses your notes at the surgery.

The electronic New Patient Questionnaire, will be updated in due course, an external company is in charge of this form, and it can take up to 6 months for these changes to occur due to COVID.

We will be undertaking a review of our current service provision as we are aware that the healthcare experience of our transgender population is not as good as it could be. We are working with the LGBT foundation. to improve this and one of our nursing staff will be undertaking a practice improvement project to review this in detail. She would like to contact any members of the Trans community who would be willing to be part of a focus group for this purpose. This project is intended to begin early in the New Year.

(the above advice was also checked with the Nurse CP 17/12/2020 – stating correct advice)

5. AOB (Any other business)

We have been asked to ask members of the PPG if they would like to be a member of the Lewisham and Greenwich trust

You will find all the information you need by going to their website

www.lewishamandgreenwich.nhs.uk/our-members

6. QUESTIONS POSED TO THE GROUP by MN

Question 1:

Given the information available in the public eye about the Covid-19 Vaccine, would you be prepared to take the vaccine?

9 patients answered

6 answers were positive, so they will take the vaccines, and some of the feedback was:

- “I have some scientific background so I think I understand how the vaccine works so I have no problem in taking the vaccine”
- “I have a friend that work in a clinical setting who sent me a lot of information about the vaccine and I feel reassured enough to trust the vaccine”

3 answers were negative:

- “I feel the vaccine may have been rushed and I am waiting for more details about the side effects before I will take a decision to have it, so until then I will not take it.”

Question 2:

For those of you that visited our practice since the Covid-19 pandemic, do you feel reassured about the Covid-19 measures we have in place in the practice to keep patients safe?

4 patients responded that they have been into the practice for appointments or flu vaccination and all of them felt very safe within our practice.

7. ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Two patients raised a point about the phone waiting at the reception. Patients are waiting more than 30 -40 mins and they been cut off afterwards or they think they have been answered and the receptionist has put the phone down and that when they call the practice they are in reception and can see two receptionist on the desk not answering the phones.

DP explained that receptionists on the front desk are they to deal with patients that are walking through the door. We have telephonist in the back answering the phones, so you will not see these.

DP also mentioned that we as a practice are looking at different telephone providers as we are aware that our current phone system is not up to standard.

MN added that on rare occasions we may be short staffed because of sickness, self-isolation rules or staff waiting for Covid-19 test results so could be a reason for delay in answering.

8. END

Next meeting to be held in March 2021, invites will be sent out nearer the time.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

