

# Ambrose Avenue PPG

## Minutes of June 25, 2018, meeting

**Present** Roly Buss (chair), Ray Hardisty (secretary), Mary Russell, Mavis Knight, Pam Robertson, Paul Murthwaite and Elaine Hippisley

**2 Apologies:** Linda Meredith, Marilyn Rivett, Clive Swift and Irene Swift.

**3 Meeting delay:** Ray apologised that his personal circumstances had led to the meeting being held a fortnight later than programmed. He explained that Marilyn was particularly unhappy and felt that if the paperwork had been available in advance the meeting could have gone ahead on its original date with another member taking the minutes.

Members discussed the situation and Ray's personal involvements and felt they should look among themselves for a possible minutes secretary.

Ray reported Marilyn had also suggested that the regular slot next month should be delayed but members felt it was best to get back into routine, especially as there were a number of important issues between now and September.

**4 Funeral feedback:** Ray reported that Reserve Member Andrea Anderson had represented the PPG at Gwen Standen's funeral which had included the hearse driving past the elephant enclosure at Colchester Zoo and an after-service reception hosted by the staff. Gwen had visited the zoo weekly.

**5 Minutes:** The record of the meeting on May 14 was agreed.

**6 Practice Report:** Elaine reported:

a) Ear Syringing: There had been understandable rise in queries from patients about the removal of the ear syringing service. She explained the Practice was not contracted to provide it but had traditionally supported patients with the procedure and added a general background to how GP Practices are funded.

Not carrying out ear syringing would free up some 492 appointments a year for other services. Ear Syringing had a 3% DNA rate.

Patients requested syringing were being offered a self care leaflet.

Ray reported he had received three calls from patients protesting that the self care alternative was not suitable for them due to age, infirmity or simply something they were unable to do as they lived alone. A fourth patient had raised a clinical issue over an infected ear.

Elaine commented that the final patient would, of course, be seen as a medical issue was involved. The other three should explain their difficulties to the surgery as there was the possibility of referral to other services.

Mavis requested the Practice make alternative service details available to patients, even if a cost was involved, as she knew many patients who would struggle to clean their own ears out. Elaine said she would see what she could do.

Members also discussed raising the issues over ear syringing with the Clinical Commissioning Group and urge the Commissioners to fund the service. Ray was requested to take the matter up through the Health Forum.

b) Appointment Triage System: A new on-day system of appointments from September 1, involving GPs calling patients over the phone rather than seeing them at the surgery was outlined in the hopes of generating more consultations for patients. Those who needed to be seen physically after triage would still be seen at the surgeries, but later in the day.

Hopefully the system would provide 6 extra appointments per GP per day.

Members welcomed the extra contacts but said there was an obvious need for patient education about the changes. Elaine and Paul agreed to liaise with Ray about posters, flyers and general outreach.

c) Extended hours: September 1 would also see the national extended hours service come into force with daily weekday evening appointments and appointments on Saturdays and Sundays. Negotiations among the COLTE group Practices had indicated Tollgate surgery would be a hub along with Wivenhoe and Creffield. Staffing and booking procedures were still being discussed.

Members again pointed out the need for patient education on the big changes and said more would have to be done than relying on the web site.

d) Flu Vaccine: Elaine reported that supplies of vaccine the Practice had chosen for the Over 65s and the one for all other patients were unlikely to be both available until the end of the month. However, delaying the traditional Flu Day could lead to patients having jabs from other NHS services like pharmacies. The dilemma was still under review.

e) Clinical Pharmacist: A nurse practitioner was leaving and the plan is to replace her with a Clinical Pharmacist from September.

**7 PPG Membership:** Ray reported

Active 14, Reserve 14, Supporters 281. Total 309. Increase of one.

## **8 Newsletters:**

Newsletter for June would involve updated content on ear syringing.

## **9 Suggestion boxes**

No comments

## **10 Outreach.**

Feedback issues

Tollgate:

- a) 4 patients praising the surgery
- b) Request for speed humps in the Tollgate car park. (Members would note any further requests but no action at the moment).
- c) Parent with baby sent to the Walk-In Centre by a receptionist but Walk-In centre does not deal with children aged under 1. (Elaine said this was a training issue which she would take up)
- d) Request for Practice to think about a walk-in surgery. (Elaine said this had been considered in the appointments review but the GPs had opted to trail triage).
- e) Patient referred to liaison difficulties with the reception team and prescription teams over a prescription review. (Elaine requested PPG members taking note of such issues to take a few more details than usual as it was difficult to sort out individual cases involving two teams without some personal information).

## **11 North East Essex Health Forum.**

The agenda for the June Local Health Matters public meeting was tabled.

## **12 Newsbreaks**

Ray mentioned details of press releases from the NEECCG and CHUFT available from him if members wanted.

He also tabled a flyer on an Open Afternoon at the closing Essex County Hospital.

## **13 Coffee Mornings**

Ray agreed to meet with Elaine to discuss arrangements for possible GP referrals to coffee mornings.

## **14 Outcomes**

- a) Explanation of funding arrangements for the Ambrose Avenue Practice.

b) Hearing of a new appointment system promising that six tra patients per GP would be able to consulted each day.

c) The likelihood of Tollgate being a hub in the extended hours service.

d) The possibility of a Clinical Pharmacist joining the Practice staff.

**15 Next meeting**

Monday July 9 at 6pm in Tollgate Surgery meeting room.