

# **Ambrose Avenue PPG**

## **Notes of September 23, 2020, briefing**

### **Outline:**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic restrictions the PPG had not met face to face or online since early March. Contact had been maintained by email and telephone. This briefing was called on Zoom mainly to update members on the planning the Practice was following to administer the annual flu jabs under very changed circumstances.

### **Secretary update**

Ray reported that basic links had been maintained between members by email and phone only. Early checks had shown that most of the members were not willing to meet on social media platforms.

The NHS nationally had informed Practices that patient liaison was not a priority during the crisis but he said our basic contacts with two senior members of the Ambrose Practice had been maintained throughout.

In addition Roly and he had mt with Helen Moucher, online, in August for an initial flu vaccinations update.

Kevin had also maintained his role on the local social media platforms on behalf of the PPG.

### **Zoom**

Ray said he had called the briefing on Zoom because, through membership of another organisation, he had the capacity to do so. It was free to use and access was available on all digital equipment linked to the internet, including phones.

He said further meetings could be arranged if wanted.

### **Practice Update**

Elaine outlined changes that had taken place with regard to screening provision at the Tollgate surgery for receptionists.

She covered the early centralisation of all services at Ambrose and the various precaution measures that had been instigated to protect staff and patients from Covid.

All initial contact with patients was then, and still is, either by phone or the we site. If patients could be dealt with at a distance they were, but facilities had been organised to see patients face to face where necessary.

Matters had eased over time and a number of activities were now being held at Tollgate but with restricted access controlled by staff.

She said Helen was now more in touch with day to day Practice matters and would provide a further update to be circulated.

Elaine also mentioned she was due to retire at the end of the year, so further staff changes were inevitable.

### **Member Comments and Queries**

Members expressed their gratitude for continued help given by the Practice during very difficult circumstances.

They asked a number of questions on behalf of patients.

During the replies Elaine mentioned that the surgery had to contend with three patients who had turned up at Ambrose with symptoms and another was discovered during a home visit.

### **Community Social Media**

Kevin reported that the Practice had fared well on social media with far fewer negative comments during the pandemic than had been posted earlier this year.

### **North East Essex Health Forum**

Ray reported that the Forum committee had maintained its monthly meetings on social media and special newsletters had maintained contact with all members throughout.

The PPG Liaison Groups in Colchester and Tendring had also kept meeting on social media.

Local Health Matters public meetings had not been possible to maintain in anything like normal format. The Forum was currently circulating members with video updates they could access. Questions etc were being taken by email.

### **Colchester General Hospital .... Governor elections**

Ray mentioned that members of the public to stand as governors were currently being sought and advised where the necessary paperwork could be found.

## **The Future**

Members said they had found the briefing useful and Zoom easy to use and agreed, unanimously, that full PPG meetings should start again, online, from October on the usual day and time.

Helen's September 25 update

As from Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September we will have one chair placed in the porch at Ambrose. We cannot place two chairs due to social distancing and patients should be coming to the practice alone unless it is a child or a patient that requires a carer, in which case the patient should use the chair. Thank you for raising this as we value patient feedback to help us improve our service.

- As from the 1<sup>st</sup> October the waiting rooms at both practices will be open but patients will not be able to just walk in as they will still need to use the intercom and have a temperature taken before entry. Patients should not turn up more than a couple of minutes early for their appointments as we have to maintain social distancing in the waiting rooms to protect all patients and staff.
  - We have to offer 25% of our appointments online. We currently only have online appointments for flu vaccinations, however as we have now moved into phase 3 and are now carrying out the majority of our services again we are looking to offer more appointments online again such as cervical smears, asthma reviews and blood tests.
  - All staff now entering the building are having a temperature check on entry
- If there is anything I have missed out, please let me know.

Many thanks

***Helen Mouncher***  
***Operations Manager***