



**CIRENCESTER HEALTH GROUP
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

Report of the Virtual Meeting held at 1400 on Thursday 18 March 2021

- Present:** Bruce Evans, Dawn Holland, Gill Scott, Graham James, Lian Franklin, Nigel Collins, Philip Young, Sue Dunham, Ursula Evans, Dr Will Norman, Kim Hill (GRCC, but IT problems).
- Apologies:** Chandra Verma, Eleanor Fletcher, Pat Ayres, Susan Witts, Louise Fletcher (GRCC).

1. CHG News – Dr Will Norman, Sue Dunham.

- The Merger – minimal progress on a new building, which will need CCG approval before April 2022, when CCG is phased out and hospital and community services become integrated. Awaiting report from district valuer.
- Staffing - pretty much up to capacity, one nurse resigned, now recruiting.
- Continuity of Care review (mentioned at January meeting) is a massive project, using the RCGP toolkit as a guide, which is just starting – nothing to report yet.
- Additional funds have been allocated to the Primary Care Network (PCN) - new investment is now via PCN as opposed to individual practices - and will be used to employ extra staff. Specifically, a Care Coordinator, who will aim to ensure patients receive the care they need: eg after discharge from hospital; or cancer patients get their two week appointments and their treatment is kept up to date; chase things up if something is missed. This should enhance what is being done now. Currently recruiting and the position should be filled in weeks/months.
- As usual there are some new trainees.
- Vaccinations
 - The PCN, comprising the five local practices, has been carrying out vaccinations at Cirencester Hospital. Working together in this way has proved very effective and demonstrates the advantages of cross-working for big projects.
 - The local surgeries have no control over the vaccination invitation letters sent out by NHS. Sometimes these arrive before the surgery contact and sometimes afterwards. Patients can choose which to accept and where to go. Patients should not need to go to regional hubs unless they choose to do so. Surgeries are still phoning patients to ensure that no-one is missed but try to avoid changing existing appointments.
 - Second round vaccinations are going well, first and second jabs are not done on same day, both jabs must be of the same vaccine. Will be mainly AstraZeneca from now on as there are few Pfizer left, which must be saved for those who had that brand before. Patients who had their first jab before Christmas have had their second; those done in late December were being done in the current week; and those done in early January will be contacted from 22 March onwards (tend to organise 1-2 weeks in advance).

Questions from patients:

- Covid-19 Are vitamin D supplements useful?
Valuable to everyone, especially older people, particularly when using sunscreens which block natural vitamin D production or during lockdowns when people spend more time indoors. Whether it is useful for Covid is unclear but it does contribute to making people as healthy as possible, which is beneficial in that respect. Also useful in pregnancy.
- When will asthma clinics and annual “MOT” blood tests start again?
The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) is a system for the performance management and payment of general practitioners (GPs) in the NHS in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. It was introduced as part of the new general medical services contract in April 2004, replacing various other fee arrangements. During the pandemic QOF has been suspended. These services have not stopped but have been reduced and only about a third of the usual number of recalls have been carried out, which have concentrated on chronic disease. Recalls will be reinstated in full from 1 April 2021.
- When will online access to patient medical records be available?
Medical records should be available online now, especially the Summary Patient Record. However, there is some debate about the detailed Patient Record, plus there is limit to how far back the electronic version can go. If it is not visible it can be requested via: ‘SystemOnline’, ‘Account’, ‘Manage Online Services’.

2. **Newsletter Issue 3 February 2021:** Released online – no new PPG membership nominations or other feedback.

3. **Any Other Business**

i. Several patients have raised concerns about the introductory message on the telephone. Eg i) the excessive length of the preamble; ii) the abrupt and aggressive statement “*if you are calling enquiring about Covid vaccinations, put the phone down now*”. It was pointed out that if taken literally “put the phone down now” would mean the caller would miss information about what to do next.

The suggestion that the obligatory message(s) about recording calls etc could be displayed on the website was discussed but it was decided that this would be impractical.

It was agreed that the introductory message will be reviewed and improved where possible. **Action: SD**

ii. Incoming email to the PPG address is forwarded to NC. Because the address is in the public domain it receives many scam/phishing messages, which are then passed on to NC. There have only been three messages from patients and none after November 2019. It was agreed that the email address should be removed from the website and it will no longer be routinely monitored (beyond occasional checks). **Action: SD & NC**

iii. CDC have just announced their “*Cotswold Leisure Strategy*”. It has been suggested that there are parallels with the *Healthy Living* event we were planning before Covid struck. Members agreed to read it and discuss it at the next meeting in May. **Action: All**
See: <https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/a-new-vision-for-leisure-in-the-cotswolds#>

4. **Time and Date of Next meeting: 1400 Thursday 20 May.**