**PPG MEETING 2024**

ATTENDEES: DB, SA, IS, MK, OK, Dr Ismat, Dr Syed, Fawzia, Salma

Apologies: MH, LA, SJ, Dr Imam

Fawzia commenced the meeting by presenting herself as the new Practice Manager to the PPG group and extending a warm welcome to the new members. Subsequently, all members introduced themselves and the GPs also provided brief background information about themselves.

FA went through the actions from the previous meeting with the members and informed them of the changes that have been made to the practice.

**New phones system:** New phone lines have been implemented, and since their introduction, we have received considerable positive feedback. Patients are experiencing shorter wait times in the queue and can more easily secure appointments through the online triage system. Fawzia solicited opinions from the members regarding the phone lines and any potential areas for improvement within our practice. **IS** expressed that he finds it significantly easier to obtain appointments via the triage system, which is particularly beneficial for him as a working individual who assists many community members in accessing healthcare. **DB** acknowledged the quality of the service but noted that the online triage form is somewhat lengthy, posing challenges for non-English speakers who struggle to navigate the system. She mentioned that many women seek her assistance in this regard. **DB** suggested that it would be advantageous for such patients to have the option to call the practice directly to schedule appointments. Fawzia clarified that while the triage system is the preferred method moving forward, patients still have the option to call the practice. Receptionists can conduct the triage on their behalf or provide guidance over the phone. Additionally, patients are welcome to visit the practice, where staff members can assist them in using the online triage system. Fawzia informed the members that the transition to a fully triaged system is ongoing, and this change has not occurred overnight; a successful six-month trial was conducted in 2023, leading to a gradual implementation of the online system for both appointments and administrative requests. She also noted that patients over the age of 70, as well as children and individuals with severe health conditions, are permitted to call for appointments.

**Phone Modifications:** Following the previous meeting, the members expressed a desire for modifications to the messages on the phone lines. Fawzia communicated to the members that their feedback has been acknowledged and the messages have been updated accordingly. Additionally, a test result option has been introduced which is accessible after 11 am. During the last meeting, the members also requested a phone line option for prescriptions. Fawzia clarified that this request has not been implemented, as repeat prescriptions cannot be processed over the phone. Patients are advised to either email, consult their designated pharmacy, or submit a written request in person for their prescriptions. However, patients aged over 70 who are housebound are permitted to request their medication via phone.

In the prior meeting, members expressed difficulties in securing appointments during the busy periods of 9 AM and 3:30 PM. Additionally, due to work obligations, some patients are unable to make calls at designated times. In response to this, we have decided to release all urgent appointments for the entire day in the morning, which has garnered positive feedback from our patients.

Dr Syed expressed his satisfaction with the community members who assist patients unable to utilise the online triage system. **IS** proposed that a message be disseminated to all patients outlining the triage process and informing them that if they encounter difficulties completing the form, they may contact the practice or visit the surgery during less busy times, where receptionists will gladly assist them. Patients with learning difficulties are encouraged to call for support from the staff. **SA** recommended the creation of posters in various languages to facilitate understanding of the process. **IS** also suggested minimising the amount of text on the homepage of the website.

**Prescription Requests**: **SA** noted that Asda is no longer requesting medication on behalf of our patients, emphasising that patients now bear the responsibility of ordering their medications directly from us. This change eliminates intermediaries and helps prevent overstocking, as patients will be aware of their actual needs, given that some items are not required monthly, while pharmacies may reorder regardless of necessity. **DB** remarked that she finds it easier to place orders through the NHS App or via email, as she receives prompt responses from reception.

During the previous meeting, members conveyed their difficulties with pharmacies when attempting to obtain their medications. Fawzia had a discussion with our in-house clinical pharmacist, who subsequently contacted a member of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) responsible for pharmacy relations who has now resolved this and the members mentioned that it is easier to place medication orders. **DB** suggested that improved communication from pharmacies would be beneficial, particularly in notifying patients about any issues or delays in their medication orders, ensuring that patients remain informed. Members have been informed that they can give feedback directly to their pharmacies.

Fawzia informed the members of staff that we now have a suggestions box in reception as per the request. At the last meeting the members suggested that we have a makeover of the practice we have painted the whole practice and got rid of the old seating. The members suggested that we should get a little play area for the children however there’s a health and safety and hygiene risks.

In the last meeting the members suggested that we set up an email address etc for patients so that they are able to give their feedback or put their suggestions through to the PPG group. IT said that we are unable to do that so , However a text is sent to all patients after their appointments for feedback. We will also set up a link on the Home page of the website which will include a form and on a monthly basis we will have a meeting with the PPG chair who we need to choose and go through the suggestions.

Fawzia subsequently inquired whether there were any additional matters the members wished to address. **DB** expressed that patient triage services should be accessible in multiple languages to ensure inclusivity for all patients. She also noted that the form requires an excessive number of questions. In response, Fawzia clarified that the form is not created by their team, and the questions are designed to enhance their understanding of the medical issues faced by patients. **IS** contributed by stating that he works in IT and mentioned that there are developments underway for the NHS app, which will incorporate a feature similar to Google Translate.

Dr Syed discussed the GP survey, clarifying its purpose to the members and indicating that our performance meets or exceeds the national average. This survey encompasses feedback from both administrative and clinical staff. DB proposed that distributing printed feedback forms could encourage patients to respond. Additionally, a suggestion was made to display a poster to raise awareness. **IS** recommended incorporating a message on the phone lines, prompting patients to complete a brief survey at the conclusion of their calls, which could enhance our feedback results. **DB** suggested a workshop for our patients could be beneficial. This would allow us to demonstrate how to utilise the app effectively and help them download it.