

Minutes of Patient Participation Group Meeting held on Zoom at
6.00 p.m. on Thursday, 3rd June, 2021

Present: Helen Boto (HB) Chair, John Fryatt (JF) Vice Chair, Janet Harper (JH) Secretary, Jenny Randall (JR) Treasurer, Ann Rooney (AR), Kate Dawson (KD), Catherine Aldridge (CA), Gwen Cooper (GC), Mary Mannion (MM), Barrie Harper (BH)

Apologies for Absence: Sue Wathen, Mary-Anne Burch, Sam Adams (Practice Manager), Tony Boto, Ann Robinson, Christine Warren

1. Minutes of Last Meeting on 1st April, 2021:

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the last meeting.

2. Practice Manager's Report:

SA had emailed earlier in the afternoon and apologised for not being able to attend the meeting, but he had prepared a short report (figures based on Friday 27th May), to be read in his absence and is summarised below:

The Practice list stood at 10,202.

There had been 3 complaints in the last quarter, relating to clinical diagnosis and the lack of access to the surgery (this complaint was made before the doors were fully opened on 17th May).

The new international GP, Dr. Ligia Costa Rocha, had completed her induction period and was now working at The Cottons, alongside her trainer, Dr. Perera.

Negotiations were also under way to take on a salaried GP, Dr. Hirsch, who it was hoped would soon be able to work regular Tuesdays, with the intention of increasing this to two days per week. These additional GPs would bring the total number of doctors to 8, which had been necessary to try and deal with the ever increasing demand for appointments.

The surgery was now fully open, with a maximum of 10 people in the waiting room at one time. Telephone triage was in operation, with the intention of directing patients to the appropriate clinician, if a face-to-face appointment was necessary. It was estimated that 50% of patients were being seen in person by a clinician, with the other 50% being dealt with by telephone consultation.

Nurses continued to carry out blood tests, ECGs, dressings etc.

This year the Flu Vaccination Clinics would be increased to 3 mornings (18th Sept., 25th Sept. and 9th October). The plan was to operate them in the same way as last year, by appointment only, as this had been very successful.

At this point in time it was not known if surgeries would be required to administer booster Covid vaccinations at the same time and so preparations could not be finalised, but it would not be possible for patients attending to use the car park unless they were disabled or helping to run the clinic. It was hoped that the car park could be used for stalls, and that the PPG would be involved.

Any ideas on the type of stalls would be gratefully received and any questions on the summary above should be sent to the PPG to be discussed with SA.

3. Chair & Treasurer's Report:

HB commented that in a recent conversation with SA he had said that for some reason appointments being requested were twice the number as at the same time last year. JF commented that there had been mention on a radio programme recently that this was a general problem throughout the country. It was thought that perhaps people had held back from making appointments owing to the pandemic and only now were going to GPs. This of course meant that in many cases problems had worsened. HB added that SA had

mentioned that he was trying to find out the volume of calls to the Surgery at the present time for comparison purposes.

HB understood that a suggestion had been made for the Fire Brigade to take a stall in the car park at the Flu Clinics in order to talk to people about the necessity of smoke alarms. This was a very valid suggestion and she asked that members should give serious thought to other organisations that could be approached and might consider being present. Also, to think of what contribution the PPG could make.

BH highlighted a recent problem he had experienced when he arrived for an appointment for a blood test early one morning the week before. The website stated that patients should stay in their car and telephone the surgery to tell them they had arrived for an appointment. As it was early morning and lines were busy, he had tried for 15 minutes to get through and then had given up and gone into the surgery to tell them he had arrived. He drew the Receptionist/Care Navigator's attention to this problem and she had said this procedure was no longer necessary as the surgery was now fully open, but that she would communicate this in order that the website could be updated. As of today, 3rd June, the website had not been updated.

BH also pointed out that he understood that the surgery now had 8 phone lines, but at that time in the morning when call volume was high, there were two Receptionists/Care Navigators on the front desk, one dealing with patients, leaving only one to deal with phone calls. HB added that it was also very stressful for elderly people to constantly telephone from 8.00 a.m., for sometimes 15 to 30 minutes, before getting through and then be told they would have to repeat the exercise the next morning because there were no appointments available. Many people did not understand why this situation occurred and why, within such a short time, all appointments were taken. HB said that she, JF and JH would be meeting with SA in the near future and would try and ascertain how the appointments system worked and would report back. It was hoped to try to ascertain the facts and then explain the system in as simple a way as possible and put this information in the Newsletter and Raunds Roundup, which reached the majority of households in Raunds. HB reported that very little had happened in recent months, owing to the pandemic, although a request had been received from SA to promote a poster advertising the fact that anyone registered with any of the four Practices, Nene Valley, The Meadows, Marshalls Road and The Cottons, who was between 18 - 40 years of age would receive a text to go along to Nene Valley Surgery in Thrapston in order to receive a vaccination. These posters had been displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards in Stanwick and Ringstead, Raunds Library, Raunds Post Office and Co-op. It could not be promoted on the electronic board owing to the limitation on the number of letters.

4. Questions from Vice Chair re Raunds Roundup:

This could not be discussed, owing to the fact that SA was not present, but as mentioned above, JF would be meeting SA with other officials in order to attempt to understand and then put an explanation of the appointments system in Raunds Roundup as this reached so many Raunds households. He also asked if members could let him know if they had any thoughts on procedures at the Surgery which needed more clarification.

5. Any Other Business:

There was no other business to discuss.

6. Date of Next Meeting:

It was decided to wait until more information had been received by the Practice regarding what would be happening about the Flu Clinics and Covid booster vaccinations. The date would be advised to members at a later date.

N.B. This meeting has been recorded for accuracy purposes only.