**Norwood Medical Centre**

**Minutes of the Patient Participation Group Meeting on 6/12/13**

Present

Dr A Pugh Mr I Wardlow

Caroline Lee Mrs P Molyneux

Ruth Smith Mr & Mrs Bull

Lorraine Skillicorn

**Apologies**

Mrs M Arts

Mr T Braithwaite

Mrs E Smith

Mr A Mayes

Mr & Mrs Forshaw

**Introductions**

Caroline welcomed our new members of the group Mr & Mrs Bull and thanked them for coming. All members of the group introduced themselves. All members confirmed they were happy to be named in the minutes.

Mr and Mrs Bull said that they had been patients for many years but had not known that the group existed. Caroline explained that there was information on the website but acknowledged that we needed to publicise the group more widely. It was agreed that an area of notice board in the waiting room would be used for information on the group, meeting minutes etc.

**General Updates**

* Caroline reported that Dr Burroughs will be back in January after a year on maternity leave. We also have a new doctor in training, Dr Helen Sacre, who started on the 4th December 2013.
* Caroline went on to explain about the new appointment system that will be in place in January. The number of same-day and next day appointments has been increased significantly which it is hoped will help with demand and lead to greater patient satisfaction. Caroline did point out however that this meant there were fewer appointments available to book ahead but it was felt to be the right thing to do as most patients want to be seen quickly.

In addition there will be one GP designated each day to work through the home visits. The GP will start visiting much earlier so that urgent visits are seen more quickly. This was trialled in November and proved to be very successful.

Mrs Bull explained that she had struggled in the past to get a home visit. Caroline apologised. Mrs Bull added that she was not aware the practice has a patient liaison advisor in post.

Mr Wardlow also added that he too had experienced difficulties when requesting a GP appointment or a telephone call; he said the system seemed very rigid and inflexible.

Caroline agreed that our systems are sometimes insufficiently flexible and that we are trying to address those problems.

Caroline also explained that as part of the new system commencing in January we are revising our triage process. The GP’s are going to devise a list of criteria for the Receptionists to ask at the initial telephone call. This will ensure the patient gets triaged in the appropriate way and it will lead to more flexibility in our appointment system. Also an extra person is going to be answering the phone between 8-9am when there is a high volume of calls coming in.

The Primary Care Foundation, who are experts in dealing with access issues in General Practice will be analysing our systems in January. Once they have reviewed the data they will provide a report and visit the practice to discuss ways we can improve.

* Fiona Martin is our new Nurse Practitioner. Donna Baynes who was our Health Care Assistant will be coming back in March after completing her nurse training.
* Caroline discussed with the group about the options open to us regarding a move or modification of the existing building. Dr Jolliffe is meeting with the partners in the New Year as the offer of the old Alfred Barrow school site is still on the table but the practice did not feel it was a viable option. Mrs Bull stated she agreed that the site was not suitable for Norwood patients.

**RCGP**

Mr & Mrs Bull asked what the RCGP abbreviation meant and what the accreditation entailed. Caroline explained that it stands for Royal College of General Practitioners and that the practice had participated in an accreditation programme which entailed meeting the standards set down by this organisation. As a result of this we now have internal quarterly meetings within the practice and discuss ways to improve how we deal with critical incidents and prescribing to name but a few. Any new ideas and suggestions are also discussed.

Dr Pugh explained that she is the prescribing lead for the practice and takes up any issues around prescriptions.

**Care Quality Commission**

Caroline discussed the possibility of a forthcoming visit to the practice by the CQC (Care Quality Commission). Mr & Mrs Bull are happy to be added to the list of patients from the PPG who may be contacted by the CQC regarding the patient experience at Norwood.

**New NHS Structure**

Caroline explained that since April NHS England are our overall bosses who police us and make sure we adhere to the rules , they are based in the North East. Locally we are members of the CCG (Cumbria Commissioning Group) of which all GP’s are members. The locality lead is Dr G Jolliffe. The group offers support and development as well as managing the budgets for all hospital care. Caroline went on to explain that the transition from the PCT (Primary Care Trust) to the CCG and all the changes by the Government regarding the NHS has been quite challenging. In the period of April to August this year things have been chaotic.

Mr Wardlow asked if Caroline has a voice within the new setup and asked who would she complain to. Caroline explained that Hazel Smith works for the commissioning group and is very supportive in her role to address complaints and issues in practice and has the power to escalate concerns raised.

Dr Pugh discussed the fact that Cumbria CCG does arrange monthly meetings for GP’s however these meetings are usually held in Penrith. It seems only one meeting has been arranged so far at Newby Bridge for GP’s to attend but this was impossible because GP’s were informed at very short notice and the meetings started at 7.30pm most GP’s are still in Surgery at this time.

**Patient Survey**

Mr Wardlow asked why the sample of patients was low and Caroline explained that it had been difficult to get patients to fill in the survey. It was decided that for the next survey we would consider uploading the questionnaire on to the website to enable a larger group to participate.

The survey results were discussed. No new issues were highlighted. It was noted that the feedback regarding hospital transport was good.

**Specific Patient Issues**

Mr Bull discussed his positive visits to the A&E Department at Furness General Hospital. However he said the same could not be said for the out of hours GP services. Mr Bull stated they did not offer a good service over the weekend and that you had to wait a long time for a GP to contact you after the initial call. Mrs Molyneux also agreed with this. Mr Wardlow asked about how CHOC the out of hours GP service worked. Dr Pugh explained and added that the out of hours service in this area was very good compared to other areas in the Country.

Mr Bull added that the GP surgeries all close on a Friday for the weekend and questioned the reason why GP’s only seemed to work part-time. Dr Pugh replied that a GP’s working hours even if part-time normally amounted to a 36hr week. Caroline also mentioned that in Barrow as a whole we have a shortage of 8 GP’s; this is a result of GP’s retiring and the inability to recruit new GP’s to this area.

Caroline added that more practices are recruiting Nurse practitioners to help fill the gap, although, not a GP they are trained to prescribe certain medications and help with busy on call days.

Mr Bull shared with us his experience using a nurse practitioner and said he was very happy with the care and expertise he received, this was with an out of town provider.

Dr Pugh also added that patients seem more likely to want to see a GP for minor ailments now where as in the past patients used to self- care. The group discussed how helpful it is to visit the local Pharmacy and get advice from them although not everyone agreed a pharmacy was the place to get a flu vaccine.

**Action Plan And Discussion**

Caroline explained how the appointment system is going to be overhauled in January.

The group discussed the rigid and inflexible appointment system within the practice and Mr Wardlow commented that you can wait days for a telephone call from a GP. There is going to be more training for reception staff. We are also aiming for all annual chronic disease management reviews from April to be carried out in the patient’s birthday month. It is easier for us to manage the review programme and easier for the patient to remember.

Mr Wardlow stated the recorded message on the phone line did not sound very professional, Caroline agreed to listen to the message and explained that IT and the hospitals trust looks after the telephone system and PC’s.

The group agreed that the plans discussed for the future of the practice would be an improvement.

Caroline thanked the members of the group for attending and closed the meeting.

The group will met again in May 2014