**HIGHPARKS MEDICAL PRACTICE**

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## OF THE PATIENT GROUP

**Date: 23rd January 2025**

**Time: 1.30pm**

**Place: Emmanuel Centre, Cliffe Woods**

**Present:**

Dave Bowen Chair

Claire Butler Practice co-ordinator

Marilyn Campbell Lead Nurse

Christine Cavender

Jess Cross Practice Manager

Barbara Cummins

Jerry Doyle

Jill Fanner Deputy Chair

Nikki Fox

Dr Asser Ghozlan GP Partner

Susan McDermid

Shivani Patel Deputy Manager

Debbie Wright

The meeting was quorate.

In the absence of the Secretary, the minutes were taken by Claire Butler.

Dave welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 1.45pm.

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|  | **Item** | **Action** |
| **1.** | **Apologies for Absence**  Received and accepted from Jenny Dunster. |  |
| **2.** | **Notification of Any Other Business**   * Practice Newsletter * Higham patient who has difficulty obtaining care from the district nurses |  |
| **3.** | **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**   * None declared |  |
| **4.** | **Membership of the Patient Group (PG)**   * Dave welcomed Nikki Fox and Debbie Wright to the group |  |
| **5.** | Minutes of Meeting of 17th October 2024 Minutes had previously been agreed as accurate records by the Chair and the Practice Manager and published on the website. |  |
| **6.** | **Matters Arising and Action Points**  All actions had been completed or were on the agenda. |  |
| **7.** | **Chair’s Report**  Dave reported that the pre-meeting with Jess had not thrown up any major issues. |  |
| **8.** | **Report from the Practice**  Members had received the report prior to the meeting.  Jess drew attention to the following points:  **Staffing - Recruitment and Vacancies**  No major changes;   * No changes to GP team * Caroline (Business Manager) left the practice early Januaury. No plans currently to replace the role. * Nurse Associate, Anna, started with the practice and is getting on well * 1 new nurse starting in due course   **Appointments**  It was noted that Highparks had averages of:   * 135 appointments per 1000 patients per week in October * 137 appointments per 1000 patients per week in November * 100 appointments per 1000 patients per week in December   This exceeds the government recommendation of 72 patient appointments per 10000 patients per week.  Extended access continues on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.  **eConsult**  Postivie feedback regarding the Econsult service.  Patients can acces this via the website between 8am and 10am every weekday. It is providing continuity for patients  There was discussion on whether eConsult could be made easier to find on the website. It was confirmed that the website has been audited and must follow NHS guidelines to ensure it is user-friendly, even for a 10-year-old. Previously, the website had been flagged with a "red alert," prompting updates to align with these guidelines and improve accessibility. However, it is acknowledged that despite these updates, some patients may still encounter difficulties navigating the website or locating specific features.  Number of eConsult slots on a weekly basis:  339 (including on-the-day and routine appointments)  GP- 242  Physio- 52  Pharmacist- 7  Physician’s Associate- 7  Paramedic- 6  Admin for GP- 25  ***Did Not Attends (DNAs)*** – data includes all GP, nurse, blood and vaccine appointments:   * October 133 * November 140 * December 130   (July – 212, August – 139, September – 140)  DNAs are generally reducing and the practice continues to follow-up with messages and phone calls.  Q: How does the phone system operate?  A: As outlined in the practice update, calls are answered through a centralised system across all 4 sites. Patients can request a callback which ensures they retain their place in the queue.  Phone system received positive feedback from all PPG members who attended the meeting, especially the call back function.  Q: How many appointments available to book online, face-to-face or phone?  A: It is difficul to provide these figures as patients have a choice of whether they would like a phone call or face to face appointment.  The practice does not offer online bookable appointment for various reasons. Online booking systems have previously led to patients scheduling appointments that were not suitable for their symptoms.  The clinical team has grown significantly and now includes professionals from the Primary Care Network (PCN), such as physiotherapists, mental health nurses, and other specialists. Patients can now see a physio for related symptoms instead of a GP.  Q: Empty waiting rooms?  A: Jess explained that GP practices see fewer patients between 12:30 and 2:30pm as this period is designated for clinicians to complete administrative tasks, which often overlaps with their lunch breaks. Additionally, the number of patients physically present in the waiting room during this time is further reduced because many patients opt for telephone consultations rather than face-to-face appointments. This option allows patients to maintain their daily routines or work commitments without needing to visit the practice in person.  Q: Call back- is there a cut off time after which the call won’t be made?  A: There is no cut off time.  PPG member highlighted that they had not recevied a call back- the practice will look into this.  Q: Has the high number of missed blood test appointments been investigated?  A: The practice follows the intermal process for missed appointments, a text message is sent to patients to notify them. If a patient consistently misses apointments it will be flagged as a cause for concern.  The practice has a policy in place for children who are not brought to their appointments. Parents/guardians will receive a call to query why the appointment was missed. This can help identify any safeguarding concerns.  Jess explained that, over a period of time, a significant number of appointments were canceled due to personal reasons involving one of our phlebotomists.  A member raised concerns that some patients were arriving for their appointments only to find out they had been cancelled. Jess clarified that the practice’s messaging system had experienced a technical issue. However, the practice confirmed that cancellation texts had been sent to the affected patients and were recorded in their medical records.  **Vaccinations programme**  The practice has an upcoming Flu Clinic for patients over 65 and an RSV clinic for patients aged 75-79. These clinics will be held on25/01/25 and 08/02/25.  There seems to have been significant miscommunication between the receptionists and patients. Several patients who inquired about their vaccine appointments were turned away and told they had missed the timeframe. However, this was not the case. The lead nurse, confirmed that appointments were available and clinics were also held in December. The practice will ensure that there is clear communication going forward.  Members discussed the availability of appointments at other sites. The practice confirmed that, moving forward, vaccinations will be distributed across all sites for future vaccination clinics.  During the next vaccination campaign, posters will be advertised to target patients.  **Complaints** – October 2024-December 2024   * Total number = 12 * Upheld = 2 * Not Upheld = 6 * Partially Upheld = 4   Five complaints were regarding access to appointments.  **Confidential minute** | **Practice**  **Practice**  **Practice**  **Practice** |
| **9.** | **Future of the 4 sites**  Jess informed the PPG that an application has been put in place for the closure of Higham Surgery.  All staff were made aware of the situation on the same day. Patients were contacted via text and letter to inform them about the application for closure. Additionally, a survey was sent to patients to gather their feedback. To further assist patients, drop-in sessions have been made available, providing an opportunity for patients to ask any questions they have regarding the application for closure.  A 10-week engagement period will begin on 27th January 2025. At the end of this period, the results will be presented to the ICB, and a decision will be made regarding the future of Higham  Jess provided a detailed explanation of why the application was necessary. She highlighted that data from all 4 sites had been thoroughly assessed over 18 months, and she explained why the information ultimately led to choosing Higham.  The PPG requested that their thanks is passed onto Caroline Wells. | **Practice**  **Practice** |
| **10.** | **Memory Café**   * Positive feedback from attendees. * Look into contacting people with equiptment for next meeting * Anna (mental health nuirse) to attend next meeting if it falls within her working day * Next Memory Café date will be discussed amongst the PPG members separately. | **Jess** |
| **12.** | **Any Other Business**  Q: Newsletter - Jerry has requested that the upcoming newsletter features a reference to the Memory Café, including details about the speakers and organisations involved. The practice is happy to include this information in the next newsletter.    Q: Why is a Higham patient having difficulty obtaining care from the district nurses?  A: There have been ongoing difficulties reported between the district nurses from Medway and Gravesham due to boundary restrictions. The GPs at the practice are aware of this and have expressed their concerns about these issues, emphasising the impact it is having on patient care and overall coordination | **Practice**  **Practice** |
| **13.** | **Confidentiality**   * One confidential discussion was identified. |  |
| **14.** | **Date of next Meeting,**  All meetings will be on Thursdays at1.30pm at the Emmanuel Centre  April, date to be decided |  |

Dave thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 3.35pm.

Signed ……………………………………………………………………………….

Date……………………………………………………………………………………