

LANGDON HILLS MEDICAL CENTRE

MINUTES OF PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

22ND MARCH 2013

Present:	Dr. B. Salako	Stephen Metcalfe MP
	Geoffrey Parker	Elizabeth Parker
	David Coleman	Lesley Street
	Tim Young	Julie Coker
	Joy Beecham	Christine Dawson
	Jan Hilyard)	Denise Birkett
	Ray Hilyard) Wickford H/C	Diane Osborn
	Marguerite Cutting	David Thomson

J.C. welcomed the members and introduced Stephen Metcalfe MP to the meeting.

We invited S.M. to the meeting to discuss various issues the first being the proposal to send all blood samples to Bedford. A copy of the Evening Echo was shown to the group indicating that the new procedure had been dropped. However, S.M. stated that the paper was not 100% correct and negotiations are still ongoing.

B.S. asked why these changes would be made as there would be no financial gain and problems could occur with weather conditions and traffic. S.M. replied that it was thought that initially savings could be made. However, after discussions with groups of GPs and clinicians, concerns were raised and apparent problems with the system highlighted. Discussions are ongoing for a local system based around Basildon and Southend but under the umbrella of the Bedford Trust.

S.M. informed the group that changes had to be made as health inflation runs far higher than normal country inflation because of new drugs and services. He said that adjustments and savings had to be made elsewhere and that one layer of health management had already been seriously reduced.

S.M. continued to discuss with the group future changes to the Health Act. As he only had a limited time to give us today, he apologised that he could not answer the other questions we wished to discuss but asked the group to keep in touch with him and would be more than happy to come back another time.

J.C. thanked S.M. for coming and for his time and said we would definitely contact him for a return visit.

D.T. thanked the group for allowing the 2 members from Wickford Health Centre to attend the meeting as he wanted them to see the workings of a PPG for them to gain information to start their own group. He stated that his plan was to set up a local PPG comprising of one member from each Practice group by the end of May 2013 in order to be representative at local CCG meetings. This group would hopefully be 6 members in total.

D.O. asked for feedback regarding the patient survey and whether the members agreed with the objectives derived from the questionnaire. The main focus pertained to Surgery opening hours and that patients would like access to the Surgery late Evenings and Weekends. B.S. stated that the Surgery is open Saturday mornings and meets existing PCT criteria. However, the Practice would look at the possibility of staggering evening appointments to facilitate the requirements of patients returning from work.

J.C. asked D.O. why, when making an appointment, the Receptionists asked for an explanation of symptoms. D.O. stated that this was in the best interest of the patients to ascertain whether they would be seen in an appropriate clinic e.g. complex problems should be seen by a Partner rather than a locum Doctor. Additionally, sometimes patients who ask to see a Nurse should be seen by a GP. The group thanked D.O. for the information and agreed that this course of action was appropriate. D.O. also stated that it is the patient's prerogative not to give a reason and that Receptionists would be retrained on how to deal with this issue sensitively.

L.S. brought to the group's attention another comment on the survey of the issue of confidentiality while speaking to Receptionists in the waiting room. D.O. stated that posters are in place in the waiting room informing patients of their right to be seen in a private room to discuss any issues of a sensitive nature. The Practice Manager will also display this information on the polycomp board.

D.B. referred to feedback regarding the length of time patients wait for their consultations to begin. D.O. stated that sometimes delays in appointment times were unavoidable but to alleviate the frustration for patients, a whiteboard will be installed in the waiting room with regular updates on any delays to GP clinics made by the receptionists.

The last item on the agenda was A.O.B. and J.C. informed the group that she had placed an article in the local paper and magazine with information regarding the Langdon Hills PPG. She also attended a ladies' coffee morning and discussed the workings of the group.

J.C. also informed the PPG that the Depression Group in Billericay do not answer their telephones and deduced that in light of this fact there is no informal group for depression in the area.

L.S. mentioned that she had seen the posters in the waiting room regarding patients missing their appointments and asked if anything could be done to deter this regularly happening. It was the thought of the whole group that a charge should be made as carried out by Dental Surgeries. However, it is not possible to enforce this within Primary Care. L.S. asked if we telephoned patients who miss their appointments but D.O. said it would not be practical.

J.C. closed the meeting and thanked all members for attending. The next meeting is 24th May 2013.