

Dr Salako and Partners
Langdon Hills Medical Centre

PPG Minutes

Date of meeting: 26th March 2025

In attendance: Dr Arora
Tim Young
Karen Freeman (via teams)
Denise Birkett
Christine Fletcher
Dr Fraser FY2
Ajin PA

Marguerite Cutting - Practice Manager
Alison English - Deputy Manager
Gill Stitson (via teams)

Apologies: Barbara Allen
Paul Findlay
Lesley Street
George & Betty Lee
Christine Dawson

Welcome

MC welcomed members to the meeting. We aim to hold them bi-monthly.

1. Hybrid practice appointment booking system

GA and MC explained that eConsult is working well with many patients welcoming this new system and the quick response time to their queries/requests. However there does seem to be a software flaw where it will reject a patient's request if certain words are inserted which is frustrating for patients as they then must contact the surgery separately.

Any patients who are unsure or unable to complete an eConsult are currently assisted by reception across both sites and this will continue. Patients can still telephone for an appointment or come to the reception desk.

Accrux is also being used widely across GP surgeries and feedback has been very good from other Practice Managers. This is something that the practice is currently considering. It offers a variety of ways for patient contact. This includes SMS contact with the ability for patients to reply, video consultations, mass texts, sending out patients' referrals, results etc.

2. Proposed application for extension of the surgery at Great Berry

Room availability is a constant issue at the surgery. Apart from the GPs, trainees, nurses and HCAs we also have physiotherapists, midwives, young person mental health practitioner and Essex Ultrasound who have rooms on a weekly basis across both sites.

GA explained that the surgery is looking to apply to the Council for a proposed 2 room extension.

The area under consideration is directly opposite the off licence and to the back of the surgery. This will not impact on the car park. It is the start of a process which will be open for discussion/objection and updates will follow in the future.

GA asked the PPG for their support which they resolved to provide.

Any Other Business

TY raised concerns about the recent announcement by the Government of the NHS England abolishment and asked GA her view on this point. GA explained that she feels secondary care will mainly be affected by this decision e.g. reducing top managers/red tape/duplication of roles which will hopefully allow more time and funding for additional clinical staff for patient care. Detailed information of the Government's plans is still to be announced, and the group will be kept up to date accordingly.

TY also asked MC about the rising levels of abuse staff are having to deal with. MC confirmed this is progressively getting worse with the addition of eConsult to the practice – reception was receiving the brunt from some very unhappy patients.

KF spoke about eConsult and the notice from the surgery saying, 'we have listened to you and your requests to move to eConsult only'. KF was not aware that this question had ever been asked. She suggested that training sessions could be offered by the surgery to patients as she works in Havering and GPs there have provided this with great success. Maybe a booking system put into place whereby patients come into the surgery for a visual training session. This would show patients that you cared.

MC mentioned that we have 15,000 patients to consider and in practice would not be feasible and reiterated that reception is always willing and able to assist patients with eConsult submissions.

GA commended KF on her suggestions and discussion ensued. The possibility of uploading a video on the website or offering a Microsoft teams meeting for patients to log onto was discussed.

GA advised that eConsult is a government backed initiative and this was not something that the surgery had just chosen to implement independently.

KF shared with the group that she runs a Cancer support group called 'Survivorship Group' via a local hospice once a month. She was enquiring if it was possible to have a space at the surgery so that she could offer a group locally. GA explained to KF that currently space is at a premium across both sites which is the reason for applying for an extension, but this is certainly something to consider in the future.

KF explained that the group is invaluable and helps patients with a variety of things including administrative assistance such as LPOAs, wills etc and the patients that attend these groups have all been in similar situations and so they know how each other are feeling. Valuable friendships are formed through these support groups which can sometimes take certain pressures away from GP surgeries.

MC explained that we refer our patients to St Lukes Hospice with whom we have a good working relationship and that they support our patients going forward.

GA asked KF she had any posters which she confirmed she did. These will be attached to the minutes and a link put onto the website for patients' perusal.

Proposed date of next meeting

Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 1pm.