

## Apple Meeting

23<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 3pm

### Attending:

Dr Saluja, Dr Ray,

David Gregory, Jackie Sparrowham, Beryl Davies

Ann McNamara, Fiona Bunton

Apologies: Brenda Marrow, Josephine Harman, Elaine Robinson

1. Welcome David chaired and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting 26th January 2021

Update on Oxford & Pfizer vaccines, not everyone was given their second appointment, which is normal, and they will be contacted nearer the time, 12 weeks after first jab.

The new telephone system has improved calls to the surgery but some experience of call wait times taking too long, with commercial breaks, as experienced by David, and Fiona experiencing calls getting cut off after the initial message in peak time 8 o'clock will be further reviewed to continue to maximise good contact with the surgery. Dr Ray will look into, there were 575 calls yesterday, 421 got through so will look at those that might not be getting through and if there are technical glitches. Monday and Tuesday the surgery receives a higher volume of calls.

3. Appointment times for nurse prescription/reviews.

Why not say what time appointment slot is rather than being given a 4 hour window? David expressed concern that a time slot between 9-1, or even more open, leaves patient's on alert by the phone for long periods of time. Dr Ray explained that the morning or afternoon consultation windows have been because some appointments run later. It was agreed that parameters could be a little tighter and patients can be more specific when they are not available. Dr Saluja will look at making the time slots more specific/narrower window.

4. Prescription requests to surgery

Picking up of prescriptions with missing items and a prescription repeat form that says 'OTC' as experienced by David recently. 'OTC' means 'Over the Counter' and agreed patients should be told that there is a CCG (Clinical Commissioning Groups) break on what the patient can buy over the counter, cream, eye drops etc. This initiative is saving and reinvesting money back into the NHS (£70k so far here) by charging patients for prescription items that are cheaper to buy over the counter than the cost of a prescription for the NHS. Communication to patients needs to be clearer, pharmacists should point out when the prescriptions are collected if there are missing items and if any items are 'OTC' under new rules, this should also be clear on the repeat prescription form. Ann highlighted that in the chemist the person collecting might not look at the prescription repeat form because it's in the bag, so might not realise items missing until later. Dr. Saluja will explore if a text/letter can be sent to inform patients of the change in the system and better communication from Pharmacist.



#### 5. Oximeters.

Patients with Covid are asked a criteria of symptoms and oximeters provided accordingly. Dr Saluja said hospitals inform the surgery of patients with existing Covid cases. Some surgeries provide oximeters to patients as standard, under the 'vulnerable' category. NHS England has limited supply (1 additional supplied to surgery) and not given to those vulnerable as standard. The surgery will continue to work under the instruction of the hospitals. Some Apple members have purchased their own and can be purchased from £10. Those provided, the NHS asks for them to be returned after used.

#### 6. How is the practice coping/managing with maintaining routine G.P. appointments & DNAs in current condition

DNA (no shows) and routine appointments, looks like number has gone down, because the surgery are calling the patients for their consultations. It was asked what happens if patients aren't there when they are called, the surgery said they are given more than one opportunity to follow up and call again later. The running of the system and conditions at the surgery for making appointments seems to be coping. Concern for patient's welfare and missing illnesses as people might not be calling, as Covid had stressed surgeries but now people calling more often and please do call with health concerns, do not hold back. Doctors still see some patients at the surgery, especially if needed after a telephone consultation. Phone consultation protecting patients and surgery as much as possible from Covid, but surgery prepared for patients coming in where Doctor advises it's necessary. Beryl highlighted the success of phone consultation appointment and follow-up. Dr Saluja noted can do video consultation as case needs, exploring options for best patient care.

#### 7. Update on C.Q.C. report.

Update on Care Quality Commission, the surgery has put in its challenges and going through the process. The main issue is an overall 'Inadequate' rating skewed heavily on patient satisfaction surveys. The rating will stay inadequate and the surgery is striving to improve patient's satisfaction. One approach is identifying areas of dissatisfaction, the surgery is sending out surveys. The main response is still about telephone access, ease of getting through is about 60%, there is a need to work on perceptions and show improvements that have and will continue to be made. Surgery is meeting with NHS England, patients believe it is hard to get through, need to address. The text survey the surgery sends had been completed by some members of the group, the 25 questions are those set by NHS England. The surgery is dealing with any and all concerns raised in the surveys so it is worth completing. Compliments are noted too. Looking at the future of surveys and accessing the opinions of those who prefer the medium of letters. Social media, Dr Ray has taken control for the surgery, seeing what's going on, appointments, responses, had 117 likes in month!

For other information regarding complaints and concerns:

<https://www.thurrockccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/complaints-and-concerns>

Complaints and Concerns Team. NHS Thurrock CCG. Civic Offices. New Road. Grays. Essex, RM17 6SL. 01375 365810. Email: [thurrockccg.complaints@nhs.net](mailto:thurrockccg.complaints@nhs.net).





#### 8. Update on Vaccination status.

Update on vaccination status at 60yr and above, 18-60year, no places as yet, when places are available surgery has extra staff on weekends so possible to receive calls then. Beryl raised point about those having the first jab at the Excel centre could they have a 2<sup>nd</sup> locally, cost of travel etc, this identified a need at the surgery for upto date information to be communicated to patients. Yes, you can have your second jab locally when due. Within the surgery there is a 'Whatsup' group for the colleagues to keep up to date and consistent. Is the surgery phoning people for 2<sup>nd</sup> jab? The surgery will book appointments as supplies arrive, they usually get a few days' notice when they are coming and how many. So far from the surgery approximately 2,000 patients 1191 Pfizer and 810 Oxford Astra Zeneca have received first dose. Bookings have been made from the surgery and NHS website following invitation, and both received at vaccine centres. In time Astra Zeneca hopefully will be available in surgery. Current appointments are also dependent on the flow from the supply chain, as observed by Beryl.

#### 9. Asthma: Peak flow and respiratory clinic.

Asthma appointments and identifying Peak flow at home was discussed and whether asthma sufferers need to monitor more regularly than their annual review. Dr Saluja said not everyone needs to have a peak flow tool at home and if the need is identified one can be prescribed. Noted also was the Respiratory Clinic at Basildon hospital for asthma control. Also discussed the Respiratory hub running currently for patients presenting with a cough and breathlessness. Identifying different avenues of help for patients.

#### 10. Any Other Business.

Requirements to put minutes on the website from NHS England. Copy sent to the surgery via Elaine as usual, upto date doctor emails too.

Moving forward Dr Ray suggested circulating invites through AMC website, noting the form to join the patient participation group and identifying people who might like to join.

Hearing aid batteries, David, Ann and Beryl raised concerns about patients not being able to get their replacement batteries from usual places in Covid situation, there should be a working link on AMC (Aveley Medical Centre) website referring you to Basildon Hospital where they are promptly sending them out, usually the library hub is a good source.

Google comments about AMC and their accuracy were discussed and confirmed the appropriate channels and complaint forms are always available at the surgery and please forward comments to the surgery as the team, including the Doctors are happy to explain any confusion and provide clarity.

Concluded meeting at 4:03pm

Next date 13<sup>th</sup> April at 3pm

