**Apple Meeting 18th Sept 2023 at 3pm**Attending:

Dr Saluja, Practice Managers: Elaine Robinson and Matt O’Toole, David G, Jackie S, Beryl D, Ann M, Fiona B, Joanne H, Cllr J Maney & Cllr M Pearce

1. Welcome Dr Saluja welcomed & David chaired the meeting at the surgery.
2. Apologies for absence; Dr Ray, Jules T, Cllr Panjala
3. Minutes of last meeting 12th June 2023 were approved.
4. Matters Arising.  
   DNA numbers listed in the surgery for patients to see monthly figures of appointments and ‘no-shows’. Wording is to be made clear that DNA in this instance stands for Do Not Attend. Figures seem to be consistent, with more appointments lost to nurses, clinical pharmacist and smear clinic. Currently most patients receive a reminder text before appointments and automatic DNA text notice if they did not show up: consider using follow up letters reflecting the cost to the NHS for missed appointments.  
   AMC website has been updated and shows Apple minutes.

Blood tests in borough currently have wait times anywhere of approx. 4-5 weeks, this is a lengthy time and complicates medical reviews at the surgery where the wait for blood test appointment and then results can and does take longer than the month allotted. Some patients have received letters reinforcing the importance of their review and questionable wording about not renewing medication. The surgery is now more aware of increasing wait times and any letters regarding appointments dependent on blood test results will have an additional line about recognising, for both patient and surgery, the possible longer wait times. Requesting patients to inform the surgery if they are experiencing a delay, this will help with communication and outcome.   
Also, trying to help alleviate the backlog of blood tests AMC is starting to do their own blood tests for more urgent bloods, these will be on Fridays with a view to extending based on need.  
Update on prescriptions being given in supplies of 2months + is continuing with medications for blood pressure and controlled diabetes, steroid inhalers are still slow to be renewed as previous (2 inhalers, less often) and requests are reviewed individually. Ongoing: review of medications and how better to refill for patients.  
Reception desk is doing well and handling patient’s requests, from recent experiences phone calls have less wait times throughout the day and answered quicker.

1. National GP Survey  
   The National survey of the practice again had disappointing response numbers; of the 12,303 registered patients, 486 surveys were sent of which only 115 completed and all feedback is based on this (<1%) of the patients. Results are usually less positive than the in-house surveys, sent after appointments that have a higher response rate. The National survey showed an improvement in 10 areas including choice of appointments, making appointments… a slight decrease in 7 and the same in 1 area…figures are based on year to year, to the local area (ICS) and Nationally. The breakdown of areas and analysis can be seen on the AMC website. Actions include continuing support and developing new receptionists, training courses for patient navigators and red flag courses, all clinicians to undertake Mental Health Awareness in Primary Care training and advertise local services in waiting room. The aim is to continuously improve services at AMC including triage, available appointments each day, seeing preferred doctors (working part-time) and answering patients’ calls successfully. Each Tuesday the surgery holds a clinical meeting where upcoming issues are discussed and resolved. Moving forward, the surgery will employ an assessor to sit in and observe a range of surgery appointments with a view to performance and reviewing any room for improvement. For reference, at present locally, AMC is performing as a surgery similarly to Purfleet and better than Pear Tree.
2. Flu/Covid programme  
   The Flu jab can be taken any day, without appointment at the surgery, fitting in with ongoing nurses’ appointments. The first walk in clinic will be held Saturday 23rd September.  
   Covid vaccinations; a programme specifying care homes is underway, followed by those who are housebound and then next month from the surgery.
3. Text Messaging  
   Text messages received by patients booking an appointment currently say to wait until after 6:30pm to call 111 or the out of hours GP at the weekend. This message is to be amended, as appointments may be a week away, to first say to call the surgery during hours if your symptoms worsen before your appointment date.  
   Some patients might have received a text message about making appointments that they have already had, the surgery is checking the updating of computer systems linked with appointment messages, to avoid confusing messages.
4. ‘New’ Roles in GP Surgeries  
   GP surgeries including AMC now have access to a wide range of medical assistance for patients, some services are broader known as ‘ARRS’ staff ~additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme; serving several practices but the list available at AMC includes the following:  
     
   *Paramedics  - Yes, Physiotherapists  - Yes, Physicians associates  - Yes , Care co-ordinators  - Yes*

*Social prescribing link workers - Yes, Clinical pharmacists - Yes, General practice nurses - Yes*

*Nursing associates - No, Health & wellbeing coaches - No, Mental health practitioners - Yes*

*Dieticians - Yes, Podiatrists -Yes, Occupational therapists - Yes*

1. Update on Bluebell Surgery Repairs  
   The building condition of Bluebell surgery was discussed and the shocking state of the water damaged walls in the waiting area and lack of open windows. The building is not owned by the practice and the landlord is aware of the damage, despite requests the issue has not been resolved. Next step: the surgery are approaching Cllr Jackie Doyle Price to use her connections with NHS England to progress this matter, to continue.
2. Triage Protocol   
   Discussed how the triage system works in practice; the Patient Navigators answer the phone and based on need assign relevant appointments for the patient. The staff are trained, especially at spotting red flags with greatest need, their training is updated and ongoing and the system they use gives guidelines base on criteria. The system is overseen, as a list, by GPs and areas of improvement are discussed, the use of photographs of injuries is useful if available. Appropriateness of appointments and timeframe are reviewed, this is an ongoing system and is continuously being monitored.
3. Phone Appointment Time Slots  
   Accuracy of timeslots provided to patients when booking appointments for phone consultations was discussed, time slots are to be narrowing to ideally one hour periods where possible to better serve patients. Understanding that patients waiting for longer period of time; a whole morning or afternoon may not be able to instantly answer their phone (not necessarily available) also phone calls received other than times given may not be answerable by the patient. Although increasingly improving, further improving the accuracy of timeslots will benefit both patient and practice.
4. A.O.B.  
   The availability of the hubs in the area for appointments especially on Saturdays.  
   A large TV was given to the surgery (from PCN) and now informs patients when their appointment with clinician is ready, where they are and with which member of staff, it also features useful medical information and healthy recipes.  
   Raised the possibility of locating a Defibrillator (Defib is an electric shocker for someone in cardiac arrest) near the practice, available for the residents if need ever arose - following recent drives to give better access to this life-saving treatment.  
   Read a letter praising AMC staff; their speed and caring in dealing with a medical situation. With appreciation.

***Next meeting Monday 13th November 2023 at 3pm***