



**WE ARE HELPING TO  
DEVELOP A STRONGER NETWORK  
OF PPGS IN DORSET**

**Royal Crescent & Preston Road Practice  
Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 1pm-2.30pm  
Held via Zoom Video Conference**

**Notes of Meeting**

		Action
	<p><b>Attendees:</b> Present: Tracey Scorer (PPG Co-ordinator), Leanne Birch (Operations Manager), John Hewitt (Practice PPG Chair) Peter Greensmith (W&amp;P PPG Locality Chair), Dr Tanya Stead (GP Partner at Royal Crescent Surgery) &amp; 18 PPG Members (11 PRS, 7 RCS) <b>Chair – John Hewitt</b></p>	
	<p><b>This Joint Surgery PPG meeting was held to update the PPG on changes in Accessing General Practice, including a presentation on Mental Health and Suicide Awareness by John Hewitt</b></p>	
1	<p>John welcomed Dr Stead and 18 PPG members to the 2<sup>nd</sup> joint practice PPG meeting held via zoom.</p>	
2	<p><b>Mental Health -Video discussion - Dealing with Depression</b> John shared with the group a clip from Module 3 of Zero Suicide Alliance Training which showed a parent who had become worried for his son’s mental health and was worried his son may be thinking of harming himself, this showed the signs and steps he took to ensure his son remained safe. The video was discussed along with signs, symptoms and steps to help or signpost people to access help. Sadly in 2016 there were 6000 deaths by suicide in the UK, and in 2018 there were 6507. Suicide is a preventable and avoidable death, and everyone is encouraged to be more aware of the signs and symptoms and how they can help. Some people can be helped by talking things over to another person, and then no longer feel at crisis point.</p> <p>Ways to get help that were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Samaritans</li> <li>• MIND - provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. 0300 123 3393</li> <li>• By Self-referral to Steps 2 Wellbeing – a counselling service</li> <li>• Talking to their GP</li> <li>• Connections - A round-the-clock helpline for people of all ages, anywhere in Dorset, who are experiencing mental health problems and need support. Helpline 0300 123 5440</li> </ul> <p>The link to the training and video modules <a href="http://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training">www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training</a> One PPG member was worried that as we are hearing more on the news about mental health and depression – could this have a negative effect on someone who may be at crisis point and prompt them to act on their thoughts? Dr Stead said that talking about mental health and depression reduces the stigma surrounding this and it is helpful for people who may be suffering to know that they can talk and that they are not alone.</p>	
3	<p><b>New ways of working within the Practice.</b> Leanne said that a letter had been distributed to patients in September detailing new ways of working within the Practice. The main point being that, we are busy, but we are still open, and we are still seeing patients.</p>	

To help keep patients and staff safe, all patients requesting an appointment will have a telephone appointment in the first instance with their GP. GPs can help many patients with a phone call, those who need to be seen or examined will be advised by their GP to come in for a Face to Face appointment. They should then come to surgery at their appointment time and wear a face covering.

Leanne apologised to any patient who might be struggling to get through to the surgery via telephone. We have more staff answering the phones to try and keep up with the increased demand, which is now more so as patients cannot pop into the surgery with their query.

Leanne advised that E-consult should be used for any medical query and that patients using this will get a reply from the surgery by the end of the next working day, if not sooner.

Leanne also advised that patients should not email with any medical query as this is not a safe way to communicate. The surgery will also cease to accept any prescription requests via email from January 2021.

A remote doorbell has been installed at both sites allowing the receptionists to open the door for patients who have an appointment. But to stop patients coming in who do not have an appointment, thereby lessening the footfall through the surgery.

The staff work in a socially distanced way, in separate rooms where possible, and remote access has been set up to allow other staff and GPs to work from home.

A cleaning regime has been put in place wiping down all door handles, banisters, and patient chairs are wiped down after each patient along with any surfaces that patients may have touched.

The wiping down procedures after each patient has limited the number of patient's nurses can see in a session.

Patients who have a long-term condition which is stable, may receive a telephone call or questionnaire rather than be seen in surgery.

Other patients with more complex problems will still be seen, as will all recall's for yearly blood tests etc.

A separate isolation room has been set up at both surgeries, which can be directly accessed from outside the surgery, if needed, for any patient who may have COVID symptoms but needs to be seen.

Leanne shared a poster (attached) which thanks Primary Care in Dorset during COVID-19 and how Primary care has transformed the way it's working to keep people safe and well.

### **Flu Season**

The Practice have currently held 13 flu clinics and vaccinated over 5000 patients. There were many challenges to this year's flu vaccination season.

Family members who live with a patient that has been shielding will also be offered a flu vaccination this year.

Communications regarding vaccinating the 50-65 group has not yet been finalised.

A PPG member congratulated the surgery, saying he arrived for his flu vaccination and was in and out without having to wait or queue and encouraged other patients to book their flu vaccine appointment.

Another PPG member said she had her flu vaccination in the carpark, which again was very quick and a was a lovely sunny day.

### **Practice Staff**

The receptionists have been having an increasingly hard time over the last few months, and have been at the receiving end of abuse, aggression and patient complaints. Some patients are demanding to speak to a manager about why they have to wait outside the surgery, and why can they not just walk in?

We ask all patients to bear with us under these difficult times, and to be respectful to our staff. These measures have been put in place to keep our staff and patients safe. We will not tolerate abusive behaviour from any patient.

	Dr Stead said the practice were concerned that patients who need to be seen, ie patients with cancer, or long-term conditions were staying away from the surgery. We need to prioritise care for patients who need it., rather than those whose condition may be stable. A letter is being drafted to the Echo encouraging these patients to continue to be seen and book appointments when needed.	
	<p><b>Pharmacies</b> Concerns were raised regarding the long queues outside pharmacies and elderly, frail patients having to wait for long periods, particularly as the weather deteriorates. Sometimes, when seen their medication is not ready for them to collect and must come back and wait yet again. It was asked whether any provision could be made such as a temporary shelter with seats for these patients? Dr Stead said, we have no alliance with the pharmacies, however she would contact the LMC Community Pharmacist and raise the PPG concerns, she will ask whether the pharmacy could provide a number of top tips to help patients and reduce the need for patients to queue., and to give some thought to a temporary shelter for the winter months.</p>	<b>Dr Stead</b>
4	<p><b>Updates from previous meeting</b> <b>The practice website</b> has been updated to include a <b>Mental Health &amp; Wellbeing page</b> and the <b>PPG page</b> has been updated which includes a letter from our PPG Chairman encouraging other patients to join the PPG. There is also a <b>COVID-19</b> information page accessible via a link on the homepage. This includes up to date information and where people can get help if needed.</p> <p><b>E-consult</b> has been updated to allow patients to upload a photo along with their E-consult. The PPG asked if the website could include more information on E-consult, i.e. what it does, how it works and when it should be used.</p> <p><b>The System Online App</b> used on mobile phones or smart devices has been updated, it previously did not offer the full services which are available from the web version. On updating the App – the name has changed to <b>Airmid</b>. Users of the previous System Online app were sent an SMS advising them to download the new <b>Airmid App</b> for increased functionality, and to enter their existing username and password. There is no change for people using the web version.</p>	<b>Tracey</b>
5	<p><b>Patient Experience Questionnaire – Peter Greensmith</b> Peter said there are 7 PPG groups in Weymouth &amp; Portland who meet regularly to pass on communications from their PPGs. This information can then be fed if necessary, to the Weymouth &amp; Portland Locality board meetings, so communications from patients can be passed via the PPG to GPs and commissioners. The PPG Chairs group have developed a Patient Experience Questionnaire which has been agreed by the commissioners, Health Watch Dorset and GPs. The CCG will help to distribute this questionnaire via email and post, and it is hoped to be finalised and sent out later this month. The results will be analysed by an independent service and hope to be available in the new year. Tracey will email the link to the questionnaire once it has been finalised.</p>	<b>Tracey</b>
6	<p><b>AOB – Topics for future meetings</b> <b>Secondary care</b> – what is happening in secondary care due to the major disruption of routine services and referrals during COVID. <b>Southampton University</b> - research is being conducted upon Ageing and Frailty. To discuss any experiences and patient pathways that the GP's have dealt with at the surgery. <b>Results of PPG Questionnaire</b></p>	
7	<b>Date for next meeting – Jan / Feb 2021 when results from PPG questionnaire are available.</b>	