

# Patient Forum Group Meeting

27 September 2011

**Patient Names have been removed to protect confidentiality**

**Representing the practice:** Dr Mark Merrick, Sandy Tomlinson (Practice Manager), Julia Mitchell (Receptionist), Jane Elliott (Senior Practice Nurse), Louise Owen (Assistant Practice Manager)

Sandy welcomed everyone to the meeting

## Matters Arising from Last Meeting

The last meeting had been held in June 2011.

- A member of Hannage Brook Patient Group will be attending the Consortium Locality Patient Participation Group. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have feedback from the Consortium meeting at the next Hannage Brook patient meeting.

## Website – Comments and Suggestions

Those attending the meeting had been asked, if possible, to have a look at the practice website before attending the meeting. It is currently under review by the practice as there is a general feeling that it needs to be a little more 'dynamic'.

General opinion amongst those who had visited the website was that it was fairly user friendly, with a lot of information, but quite 'wordy'.

It was queried whether we knew what proportion of our patients have access to a computer? It is not something that we do know, but we are trying to improve our records of patients email addresses. (Emails can only be used for non-clinical information as there are problems with confidentiality). At the flu clinic to be held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October all patients attending will be given information on how they can obtain a website log-in, which we will hope will increase the number of patients booking appointments or requesting repeat prescriptions online.

It was also suggested that it may be possible to offer a website training session for patients by linking in with the local library. ***To be investigated further.***

## Priorities for Patient Survey

As mentioned at the previous Patient Participation Group meeting the practice must engage in a survey of our patients as soon as possible in order to involve patients in decisions that affect the services we offer and we must publish this information together with our action plan on the website by March 2012. The practice will receive payment for doing this.

This survey is carried out by the practice and is in addition to that conducted by the Department of Health (who send a survey to a random selection of patients and over which the practice has no control).

A sample sign-up and survey sheet was circulated at the meeting, which included some suggested focus areas, and the group was asked what their priorities would be. It was agreed that clinical care was the most important,

but it was queried why patients were given the option to tick more than one choice – how would we then know which was the most important? Should they be given a ranking e.g. 1-5, or should the choice be limited to just one? Once finalised sign up sheets will be circulated at the flu clinics and an electronic form will also be available on the website.

In a separate piece of work the practice is also in the process of carrying out a survey of diabetic patients to find out what they think of the care provided by the practice.

### **Flu Clinics**

Letters or texts have been sent to all eligible patients right at the start of the flu campaign in order to try to improve take-up at the drop-in clinics. Jane noted that the clinics were a very efficient, effective way of reaching many patients.

Sandy explained that we would like to have a Patient Participation Group stall at the flu clinics and if anyone from the group was able to attend as a volunteer that would be greatly appreciated. A sign up sheet was circulated.

### **General News**

- **Productive General Practice** – at the last meeting we had explained that the practice was taking part in a test programme designed to help us become more efficient. The programme involved asking patients and staff for their thoughts about the surgery, monitoring phone calls and analysing demand and capacity of appointments during one particular week in July. There was a great deal of data collected and those patients from the PPG who had helped with giving out patient surveys were thanked for their time. Louise outlined a few of the results, including some patient demographics – age and incidence of chronic disease amongst patients, the difference in demand and availability of appointments during the week in question and the overall results from the patient survey, which indicated that by and large the vast majority of patients were pleased with the service they received. It was requested that the survey results be circulated with the notes from the meeting.
- Sandy then outlined the staff's thoughts about areas that staff felt it would be useful to get patients views on – including, amongst other things, why some patients don't follow through on Choose and Book, the layout of reception and the perception of the length of appointments.
- **Telephone Appointments** – it was suggested that the number of telephone appointments we offer should perhaps be increased as Wirksworth is a rural area - if a patient did not need to be seen 'face to face' it was more convenient to have a telephone appointment than having to travel into the surgery. As a practice we need to be more proactive in making patients aware of this service.
- **It was questioned what the impact of current NHS changes is on the practice.** Sandy explained that income is currently running at around the same level as previous years, but outgoings are increasing and we are being expected to do more for the same money. It is not yet known what impact the changes post 2013 will have on future practice income. Dr Merrick explained that hospitals are being required to cut the number of out-patients follow-ups by 30%. This means that

they will need to be picked up by GPs thereby having an impact on staffing. Additionally some services have been withdrawn from the NHS e.g. some minor surgery so patients will have to seek private treatment. However, we cannot charge any of our patients for private appointments, they have to go elsewhere.

- **Drop in clinics at Waltham House** – this is something the partners have been actively considering and is still under discussion.
- **Time of meetings** – the next meeting will be held in the winter and some patients expressed concern about having to walk to the surgery on dark evenings. It was agreed therefore that we should alternate between daytime and evening meetings and it is likely that this will also enable other people to attend.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**Tuesday 24 January 2012 at 2.00pm**