

## **Minutes of the VSG PPG Zoom Meeting held on**

**9 November 2021 at 6.30pm**

**Present:** Denise Chilton (Chair), Mags Roseblade (Vice Chair), Terri (Secretary), Trevor Ferrigno, Clare Marsh, Ian Cameron, Anne Dawson, Nikki Roseblade, Jan Fereday-Smith, John Proudlove, Suzy Leaman

**Apologies:** Sheila Caddy, Ian Waddington (hoped to attend at some point)

### **1. Welcome:**

Denise welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologised for the confusion regarding the two ZOOM links and thanked Esther for standing in at the very last minute at the October AGM/Meeting because of a family bereavement.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of 12 October 2021 and Matters Arising + PPG Secretary Update:**

Minutes approved (matters arising raised elsewhere on Agenda)

Terri has offered to remain in permanent post as Secretary – unanimous.

### **3. Update: Happy to Chat Benches and December Walk:**

Denise reported that 'The Happy to Chat' benches have been signed off and we await delivery.

In memory of David Hughes and in celebration of the siting of the Farndon bench, it had previously been agreed that the PPG participate in one of 'David's Walks'.

- Scheduled for Saturday 18 December
- Departure from Surgery at 1.30pm
- David's daughter to be informed/invited
- We intend to raise a glass of festive cheer – Terri to arrange Mulled Wine and Stollen; Esther to arrange paper cups; John Proudlove offered to supply mince pies – Trevor kindly agreed to cover costs – please keep receipts.

### **4. Wildflower garden at Tattenhall:**

Since Ian was not present, Terri reported on her conversation with Transition Tattenhall.

It was noted that at the last 'Engagement Day' held by Transition Tattenhall, the possibility of creating 'mini-meadows' throughout the village had been discussed. It might be a 'best fit', therefore, to refer to a future VSG wildflower area at the Tattenhall Surgery as a 'mini-meadow'. Terri has the name of 5 individuals who have expressed an interest to get involved. The creation of such a meadow would require a management plan for both the establishment/maintenance of the area and, of course, the site would need to be cleared/prepared. Sowing times for wildflower seeds are best between mid-March – late October. This might be something which Ian could consider

as a project for 2022. Trevor kindly agreed that the Surgery would fund the project.

## **5. Transition Tattenhall – Green Credentials**

Terri also suggested that with COP26 in mind and since Trevor had raised his desire for a greener Practice at the last meeting, then we might create a sub-group to determine, say, '10 Eco Tips from our Village Surgeries Group' as our contribution to 'Healthy Planet, Healthy People' – the NHS is working to reduce its carbon footprint to net zero by 2040.

This would be work in progress but the disposal of unwanted and expired Inhalers was discussed as an example (rather than ending up in domestic refuse). Terri stressed keeping the eco message simple; making it easier to encourage patients to change their behaviour. 65m respiratory inhalers are prescribed annually. Metered dose inhalers contain hydrofluorocarbons + plastic + metal. The pharmacist in Tattenhall supports the safe disposal of unwanted/expired Inhalers but our other pharmacists would need to be approached.

Greener funerals were also mentioned – most recently in Farndon, the Barnston Estate is the first estate in Cheshire to open its own natural burial ground. Cremations have a negative impact on the environment, releasing CO2 emissions and in some cases vaporised mercury. It might be that this greener approach is something the VSG would wish to support too.

Sub-group volunteers – Terri, Esther, Nikki and Suzy

## **6. Newsletter – Next Edition Status:**

Clare reported that everything was in place and that final proof reading needing to be undertaken in the next few days. There was discussion that comment should be made on the long-term sick leave of Dr Siddorn.

## **7. Updates/News from the Practice:**

**Flu Vaccination Programme:** Nikki reported on the success of the roll out with high vaccine uptake levels (+1000 over the 2 weekends and likely to be closer to 1200). Lessons were learned from Tattenhall, and there was good feedback from Farndon patients. It was confirmed that we were well on the way to our targets. It was also confirmed that flu vaccines were continuing but were now by appointment, requiring a booking.

**Covid 19 Booster Vaccines:** Nikki advised on the updates regarding the Booster with involvement from the Barbour Institute (Tattenhall), Vicars Cross Pharmacy (Garden Lane) etc. Clare would share information regarding walk-in centres on the Facebook page. Nikki also confirmed that for patients residing in Wales, then they should use the postcode of either Surgery if booking an appointment online. In response to a query from Jan, Nikki also confirmed that when patients have received their booster, the VSG receives a 'code' for the patient record.

### **Review of Recent Complaints:**

Trevor reported that there had only been two – delayed referral to the Countess of Chester Hospital and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vaccines. The Surgery is dealing with both. He confirmed that the Surgeries are not providing Covid Vaccines/Boosters and that letters circulated by the NHS which advise patients to contact their Surgeries have been misleading. Whilst the Surgeries are not in control of this, it was agreed that we must signpost patients correctly; communications being one of our strong points (Clare/Trevor/Nikki to arrange).

Trevor updated the PPG regarding Blood Tests and the delays – 42,000 blood test results have been released by the Countess of Chester Hospital, with our share being approximately 5,000. He also stated that the new system is releasing discharge summaries from weeks ago. This is a result of a computer systems change by the Countess. Denise confirmed that at the Rural Alliance Mtg it had also been stated that any normal organisation would have initially tested that the new system was fit for purpose. The result for the VSG is managing patient expectations. Trevor stated that he was reasonably confident that if there was a serious concern, then an alert would be phoned through. Accepting that there were frustrations and to manage the problem, Trevor has decided to temporarily disable this functionality on Patient Access; i.e. patients will not be able to see blood test results. The functionality will be reinstated asap. Esther again raised the need to communicate this to our patient footprint.

On other practice updates – one of our Nurses has left albeit that she is continuing with a couple of sessions in November and that a new Nurse will be in post in December. An update was given on Dr Siddorn.

It was reported that in 2022, NHS England will activate the entire available facility of Patient Access to every patient who has the NHS App – all historical data will be available to view.

Trevor continued to update everyone on the ‘annihilation’ of Primary Care by the government who continue to insist that the NHS is not under undue pressure, and of the BMA and Royal College of GPs response to this. The general feeling is that if the government continues with this strategy, then it will be the demise of primary care with even fewer GPs/early retirement.

It should also be noted that the VSG received no payment for our Welsh patients in October which comprises 20% of our income. Similarly, in November. The VSG has advised the CCG requesting what should be done from 1 December. Contractual obligations have been breached. Jan queried whether this was a digital computerised issue.

We have observed that the Countess is sitting on blood test results; patients are waiting months for referrals and now the payments process is inaccurate. A blame culture is developing.

Suzy stated that she would send information regarding 'Hubs' to Trevor. Suzy also felt there might be mileage in getting our MP, Edward Timpson, involved and that she would approach his Secretary since constituents are adversely affected.

## 8. Topics for Discussion (to continue).

- **10 minute appointments** – it was questioned whether this was still relevant. It was considered that this was always relevant but in the current climate it is a particular clinical challenge – Trevor reported that some patient appointments were running at 35 mins. Suzy suggested a pointer to patients '*... you are here to talk about 'x' ...*'. This would require some education on the part of the patient and the GP; perhaps neither will be receptive.
- John questioned whether our telephone message might need adjustment to include this but it was felt that in the short term the message remain unchanged.
- Agreed that better use be made of all our platforms – Newsletter/Websites etc to educate everyone.
- **Younger Rep on Committee** – deferred.
- **Patient Access** – to include uptake in our Newsletter (89%).
- **At 19.57 Terri lost her internet connection for about 5 minutes ... after consultation, we believe this to be a 'best fit' on what was said ....**
  - Website – there had been a query that our Website was insufficiently clear in how to make a complaint. Any feedback on this to be forwarded to Nikki and Clare and Nikki to review and Clare and Mags to consider 'The Patient Journey'. *Nikki and Clare made a comment that at some point they would be interested on the PPG viewpoint re: the location of the 'Complaints Section' on the Website. The CCG had commented that our site wasn't easy to navigate in this respect. Having looked at the Kelsall Website under Patient Information on their Home Page there is a dropdown menu, in which 'Complaints' is listed. On the Malpas site, it is on the Home Page, under 'Key Information'. Denise requests that we might make our section more visible and mirror other practices. Looking at the VSG Website there is a 'Practice Policies' section on the PPG area. Could we put a tag there that took us through to the Complaints information? Alternatively, should we have a box on the Home Page which is entitled 'Practice Policies' and which is clearly visible and easier to navigate for all concerned?*

### Actions:

- **18 December Walk/Happy to Chat Bench** – email to all PPG members regarding Walk and celebration of the life of David Hughes.

- **Next Meeting** – since apologies had already been received for December and since the group intended to meet on 18 December, it was agreed that the **next meeting of the PPG be on Tuesday 11 January 2022 at 6.30pm by ZOOM**