

Minutes of P3 Group Meeting – Wednesday 24th November 2016

Present were: Anne Wilson, Paul Ellis, Elizabeth Mount, Margaret Althorp, Roz Spain, Gay & John Middleton

Apologies were received from Jane Kent & Tony Lowe.

1. NHS Application & Premises Update

Maria updated us all and explained the process to merge SMHC & ESS has now been started – we have been given go-ahead to begin. It will be a long process ‘enabling the future’ and helping us to improve the quality of care we offer in South Molton and to remain sustainable within the CCG. Public Health England are supportive of our application and we have had our bid for funds to allow the renovation of the two buildings accepted. This will allow us to rejuvenate & increase our workspace to become fit for purpose and provide appropriate Healthcare Services to South Molton & the local area.

The timescale for the merger of the 2 practices is 1st April; for the renovation work – a 3yr plan. The first stage of the merger will be to bring together the 2 practices telephone system and computer records system.

There will be a press release in South Molton News next week.

There is an on-going survey taking place in both practices asking for patient’s views on the merger and we should have some results by the next meeting. These views will be taken into account when shaping the new merged practice.

We are currently working with an architect - David Wilson. An event will take place shortly with information including pictures & plans of the proposed changes to the Health Centre and East Street Surgery buildings. Members were invited to attend and assist in dealing with questions from patients.

2. Electronic self-check-in

We shall shortly be installing a Self-Check in screen. It will hopefully be sited in the inner hallway before you enter Reception. When it is put in place a receptionist will be on-hand to assist anyone having difficulties. We hope the new screen will help free up the receptionist at the Front Desk to deal with other enquiries.

3. On-line Access

Patients are to be encouraged to apply for On-line Access to enable them to order prescriptions and make appointments on-line. This service has been available for some time and will help people who cannot attend the Health Centre to make better use of these services.

4. Family & Friends

Tina briefly explained the process we are using to get feedback from patients about their experience of using this Practice. We target varying clinicians’ patients or demographic groups of patients to try and get as many responses as we can – all are anonymous. These results are fed back to Public Health England and are published nationally.

Mr & Mrs Middleton mentioned they had to wait for a long time to see their GP recently and no explanation for the delay had been given by the reception at front desk. This will be fed back to the reception team.

It was suggested we had a comments box in reception & members were encouraged to use the Family & Friends response box.

5. Flu Clinics

Mrs Althorp commented on how well the Flu Clinics had been run again this year. Figures for the uptake of the vaccination were discussed. It was mentioned that we had been affected by the availability of the vaccination at the local pharmacies. It was stressed that the important thing is that patients are vaccinated to help protect those at risk. Children aged 5, 6 & 7 are being done at school this year.

Any Other Business

Paul Ellis voiced his concern over the 'chase for efficiency' resulting in a loss of personal service for the patient. He felt that though this is a good surgery we may be in danger of losing touch with patient feelings and needs. Mr Ellis's comments were noted and will be considered in the future.

Dr Geary explained that we may not have all the resources to do as well as we'd like. Receptionists & Doctors are expected to provide a quicker & more efficient service all the time. For this to happen receptionists sometimes have to ask for more information from patients to help gauge how much time to allocate for certain problems – she acknowledged that sometimes patients' felt this was invasive and objected to giving details. She stressed how helpful it is for the doctors to have as clear a picture as possible before the patient arrives to make the best use of the consultation for the patient.

Over the Counter medication

Elizabeth Mount voiced her concern about the emphasis being put on patient's being encouraged to Self Care. She is concerned that older people might not contact their GP when they should and that there could be a danger that people might self-medicate and do more harm than good.

It was stressed that the pharmacies are always willing to help and answer questions but would still refer patients to the Doctors where appropriate.

Mrs Mount also felt that patients should be encouraged to purchase medication whenever they could to help save costs to the NHS

There is now an increasing list of items which patients are encouraged to purchase for themselves rather than ask for a prescription. This advice comes to us from the Prescribing advisors Team and is done in an effort to save the NHS resources. The list includes items like paracetamol & ibuprofen; Cough medicine; Head Lice treatment & haemorrhoid treatments. Dr Geary stressed that patients who had to pay for their prescriptions are normally advised if the item is cheaper to buy over-the-counter. It was noted that in general only about 40% of patients have to pay for the prescriptions.

Future Meetings & Dates

It was felt that the next meeting be just for this P3 group before arrangements are made for members of SMHC and ESS participation groups to meet and join together.

Next Meeting to be Friday 27th January between 1 & 2pm