

School Lane Surgery

PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP (PRG) MINUTES (Condensed)

Meeting: Thursday 19th February 2015

1. Health Awareness Day

This evening we were joined by Sue and Tony from Grove Lane Surgery, who as co-presenters of the Health Awareness Day agreed it was a good idea to have this get-together to discuss final arrangements.

There are currently 16 individual support groups confirmed, with another couple of probables. Also in attendance will be the Engagement Lead for the South Norfolk Care Commissioning Group, as well as his West Suffolk equivalent; the West Suffolk Hospital is our preferred service provider.

The surgery will itself have a stall, which will promote medical services as well as encourage feedback on the general experience of patients. Grove Lane Surgery will also provide a practice representative.

Sylvia has kindly agreed to appear on the day, in her official capacity as Lady Mayor of Thetford, and will open the evening event with a short speech; she will also be speaking to the Thetford & Brandon about some press coverage.

An important point raised this evening was the health and safety aspect of the event. It was felt that the attending support groups should be given a brief outline of emergency procedures, so that they can act as marshals in the event of an incident.

Thursday 2nd April saw the final rehearsal for the evening session, which was also attended by Dr Martin and Mrs Hadley-Brown. A lot of work has gone into it, and we are confident that it will be a successful performance.

It was agreed that the two Patient Groups should get together again in the middle of the year to discuss this weekends event, and perhaps ways in which we could co-operate in the future.

2. Significant contract changes for this year, which may affect patients

This headline is a bit of a misnomer, as in reality there are no really significant changes to the contract which the surgery has signed up to; that would affect the patient experience at least.

A named GP has to be allocated to each and every patient, and they are already informed verbally when first registering at the surgery. Patients will need to be told that while they will be placed on a particular GPs list, it may not always be the case that they get to see that particular named GP.

Members of the armed forces are now able to register at the surgery for between 3 months and 2 years.

It is a part of the contract that the surgery hosts a Patient Group. It is also stipulated that carers should be able to give feedback for registered patients in their care; it will be useful to get the carers view, and even if they themselves are not registered they could be asked to help our understanding by joining the PRG.

3. Other Business

a) Access to summary care records will be made available to patients from March 2016, and will allow an individual to see a detailed picture of their own state of health; this will be via the **system**online website, which already provides the online services to book a GP appointment and order a repeat prescription.

b) The admissions avoidance strategy which is directed at vulnerable patients is to be continued.

c) An Admiral Nurse, specialising in dementia care, has now started at the surgery. GPs will be able to refer to the service once the administration is finalised.

d) Total surgery expenditure and earnings are to be published for the first time. The figures will relate to the services provided by the surgery, and will not divulge any personal details.

GP seniority payments are to be abolished by 2020.

The surgery has been asked to look into **personal health budgets**, whereby patients are given a sum of money to manage their own treatment. The initiative is designed to save money in the long-term, but there is some doubt about the efficacy of this move. In some cases, such as diabetes, the sum allocated would be exactly the same as the surgery already spends and there would be no saving at all. Some clinical experts are of the opinion this could be a recipe for disaster!

e) The **text service**, where a patient is sent a reminder about their appointment, is to be extended until October. The surgery is still collecting email addresses as this is seen as the way forward.

f) There is currently a one week waiting period for an appointment at the surgery.

g) The latest South Norfolk Care Commissioning Group newsletter included an invitation for PRG representatives to attend the planning workshops for the **Community Mental Health** mapping project.

The **Wellbeing Service** meetings at the Healthy Living Centre are proving to be a less than satisfactory experience, having been likened to a school lesson. There is nothing to attract patients back, and they are constantly dropping out.

Healthwatch has also been a source of disappointment, and is seen by some as more of a talking shop than an action group.

The Care Commissioning Group is currently looking at these things, and before any new services are commissioned, it will consult and consider all the relevant aspects.

h) It was pointed out that the new style appointment cards do not always make it clear which surgery has been booked.

i) It has been noticed in the town that children as young as 13 are being given a voucher which they can exchange at a local pharmacy for a pack of contraceptives, or party balloons as some see them. This has caused much amusement among the group, but it raises a serious question about funding. On the other hand we have to ask ourselves: if just one stops an unwanted pregnancy, was it worth it? It was agreed, there is no easy answer.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday June 11th, 7 pm at School Lane Surgery.