SANDWICH MEDICAL PRACTICE

Patient Participation Group

**Notes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 30th October 2024**

**at Sandwich Medical Practice**

In attendance: Suzanne Myers (Practice Manager) SM

Francis de Souza (Chair) FdS

 Michael Edinberry ME

 John Bateson JB

 Natalie Baker NB

 Robert Marshall RM

 Jasmine Quittenden JQ

FdS welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

**Apologies**

Apologies were received from Sharon Dunn, Brenda O’Neill and Alanda Tofte.

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

**Practice updates**

Several slides (attached to these minutes) were presented to the meeting and key points explained by SM & JQ.

Dr Ahmed is now working at SMP 4 days a week. This news was enthusiastically welcomed by the meeting.

Dr Pryce has retired. Dr Roberts will start maternity leave on 25 November.

The telephone system upgrade has received positive feedback from patients. It allows patients held in the queue to request a callback when they reach the top of the queue, without losing their place in the queue.

Patients using Blue Badges to park near the door of SMP have received parking fines. Dover District Council have confirmed that Blue Badges can be used on single yellow lines on public roads but they cannot be used in council car parks such as the area surrounding SMP. ME pointed out that parking is therefore possible on the road leading into the car park, though not as safely as in the car park.

Dover DC is planning to hold a public consultation during the coming winter, when patients and others can express opinions.

Waiting time for a GP appointment can be up to 6 weeks at present, especially if a patient wants to see a specific GP. This is not helped by an increasing number of “did not attend” patients, of which there were 220 in September/October. RM suggested contacting no-shows to ask them why, and NB suggested telling them that their failure to attend means that other patients have to wait longer. On the other hand, people with a 6 week wait might then come as an emergency and forget to cancel their appointment.

On a very positive note, 1832 same day appointments were provided in September, which was more than 90 a day. And patients were sometimes able to phone as late as 2pm, and always at least 10.30am, to book a same day appointment.

It was also noted that SMP receptionists are more than simply call answerers. NB noted that they all have training to understand medical terminology and are trained to understand patients requests and help to guide them to enable them to see the most appropriate member of SMP staff, who often will not need to be a GP.

A similar system works for e-consult. A decision tree helps the anonymous e-consult person to respond to the patient’s answers to focus the interaction, At the end of the e-consult the conversation goes onto the patient’s records and can be seen by the GP as necessary.

JQ is working on a website review sponsored by the Kent Care Board for Kent and Medway. The SMP website is already rated as overall good but JQ’s work should make it more user friendly for patients accessing it. PPG will be told when it reaches a stage where members can review it.

**AOB None**

**Date of next meeting**

The clear loser was trying to book meetings for a full year ahead. After a discussion of the pros & cons of different days of the week and different times of day the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 4 February 2025 at 5 pm

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