SANDWICH MEDICAL PRACTICE

Patient Participation Group

**Notes of Meeting held on Tuesday, 12 August 2025**

**at Sandwich Medical Practice**

In attendance: Suzanne Myers (Practice Manager) SM

Carol Bore (Business Manager) CB

Francis de Souza (Chair) FdS

Michael Edinberry ME

John Bateson JB

Alanda Tofte AT

Robert Marshall RM

Brenda O’Neill BN

Rose Wanders RW

**Apologies**

Sharon Dunn, Natalie Baker.

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

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

**Practice update from SM**

Jasmine Quittenden has moved on from SMP.

An additional Advanced Paramedic Practitioner, Viv Smith, joins SMP on 1 September. She will be working Tuesday to Thursday.

Dr Rakha has completed his training and is staying at SMP.

GP Registrar Dr Williamson, in the final year of training, is joining SMP. There are 9 GPs at SMP now, though not all work full time.

There is a new appointment of HR and Operations Manager at SMP, Ellena Healey.

There is a new practice nurse, Victoria Burchette. Gaye Spickett has retired and is now on the bank staff list.

Covid jabs will be offered by SMP from October.

Update on Anima. There was an extended discussion on the introduction of Anima to SMP and many comments and observations on how it is being introduced, recognising the difficulties being experienced by patients, SMP staff and PPG members alike. Anima and its introduction is a topic on which every PPG member had something to say at the meeting, either for themselves or on behalf of patients, which is indicative of its impact on booking appointments. Key points of the discussion were:

The Anima process is GP led, with a GP, a nurse and an administrator working from 7.30 to 10.30 am at present (to 12.30 from September).

Introducing Anima has been challenging but SM believes things are improving as time passes.

There is a limit of 2 request per day for each patient.

BN thought advance communication about Anima could have been better, using text and email to communicate with patients in advance of Anima’s introduction, because the only other introduction to Anima occurs when a patient phones or visits SMP unless they look at the SMP website. It is not too late to communicate with patients – there may well still be some who do not know about Anima.

BN also queried the lack of a link between Anima and the NHS app. SM said that Anima is working on it.

RW thought the Anima rollout had suffered from poor communication and proposed that a workshop, better PR, use of testimonials and drop-in sessions could help.

FdS was concerned that the PPG and its members were in the dark about how Anima really works, so when asked questions about it by patients he is having to say, “Sorry, I don’t know”, which he finds unsatisfactory.

**Parking and Dover District Council**

CB sent the text below, a collation of comments from PPG members, and BN in particular (who had done an excellent job of surveying the car park and summarising her findings) to the DDC cabinet reviewing the car park. Additionally, CB raised with them the issue of SMP no longer being able to purchase parking authorisations from DDC to give to visitors for use in the car park.

One reply received from DDC so far is a proposal to add 4 more disabled parking spaces.

**Statement from Sandwich Medical Practice Patient Participation Group**

In summary, patient group comments are:

* An acknowledgement of the recommendation to increase the number of disabled parking bays by 4 – with the hope that possibly 2 more could be considered (practice has more than doubled in size with 2 extensions in 2016 and 2023).
* Importance of ensuring access is taken into account for existing and proposed disabled parking bays (i.e. dropped kerbs to allow easy access to medical practice).
* Clear signage directly outside the surgery to indicate the hammerhead is a no parking area and blue badge holders are not exempt from these rules.

From the practice perspective:

* Cost of permits and no concessions offered to practice or staff working from Sandwich Medical Practice
* Removal of facility to purchase visitor books increases our costs considerably.
* Proposal to increase parking fees in Guildhall Car Park.  This would increase daily parking charges for students on placement here to approximately £20/day (as a consequence of no visitor books).
* Proposal to limit stay in Guildhall Car Park to 3 hours – again, this would impact our students on placement as they are here for full days.

**Newsletter**

There was a brief discussion of the latest SMP newsletter which had been circulated to members by FdS.

**Stoma supplies**

AT gave a short presentation about the East Kent Stoma Group’s roadshow being held during September. The flier detailing the roadshow sessions is attached to these minutes. The East Kent Stoma Group works with industry partners.

**AOB**

At his request, Sir Roger Gale, the MP for Herne Bay and Sandwich, is coming to meet SMP staff on Wednesday 15 September at 1pm.

Topics for discussion include patient appointments and parking at the practice.

**Next meeting.**

Tuesday 4 November at 5pm.

