**Wealden Ridge Medical Partnership**

***Incorporating Heathfield Surgery, Newick Health Centre, The Firs Surgery & Chailey Surgery***

Dr R. Rajan, Dr S. Narasimhan, Dr E. Sheppard, Dr S. Crowley,

Dr L. Gillespie, Dr J. Andrews, Dr J. Wills, Dr K. Naineni

Patient Participation Group meeting – 24th February 2025

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| Item | Notes |
| **Welcome, Apologies and Introductions** | Jackie welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies were noted from Jan and Gab.  A round of introductions was held. Present at the meeting were, Jackie Wood (vice chair), Cllr Mike Gadd, Colin Webb, Barry Simons, Lawrence Mudford, Heather Ward, Becky Dilley (notes)  Apologies were noted from Jan Groom, Jane Leney, and Gab Szekely |
| **2 – Election of new chair** | David Cumberland has recently resigned as Chair. The PPG and practice thanked him for his contribution to the PPG, and the hard work he put in as Chair.  Lawrence nominated Jackie Wood as Chair, seconded by Julie. Everyone in attendance agreed, and so Jackie was duly elected Chair of the Wealden Ridge Medical Partnership PPG. |
| **3 – Election of new vice chair** | Jackie nominated Becky Dilley as Vice Chair, seconded by Lawrence. A discussion took place as to whether the Chair and VC should both be from what was the Heathfield/The Firs surgeries but agreed amongst the group that we are now one practice, and so this shouldn’t be an issue. The other members in attendance agreed, and so Becky was duly elected as Vice Chair of the Wealden Ridge Medical Partnership PPG.  **Becky confirmed that she is happy to continue taking notes.** Colin and Cllr Gadd suggested recording future meetings and trialling AI generated summaries for the minutes. **The group agreed that this was a good idea and should be piloted at the next meeting.** |
| **4 -** **Practice Update** | Julie gave an update on recent news from the practice.  **Staffing**   * Dr Naineni has joined the Partnership, working mostly at the Heathfield site but covering annual leave at Newick where needed * Dr Marc retires on the 18th of March. There will be a temporary rota covering The Firs until April. The PPG wanted to thank Dr Marc, and wish him well for the future. * Dr Marr returns from parental leave soon, and will resume clinics at the Newick surgery. Dr Marr’s new surname is “Sherlock”. * Dr Glasspool will move to Heathfield/The Firs site to replace sessions lost by Dr Marc’s retirement. Dr Glasspool will also take some of Dr Marc’s patients with the remainder being split between other list holding doctors * Charlotte (former lead nurse at Heathfield) is leaving, and Nicola has been recruited to start in March/April time. Nicola will work across both sites   **Other**  A review of the appointment system will be held shortly. The practice has on-going review, but a more indepth review is generally carried out annually. The practice will be looking at the following:   * split of appointments on offer. Julie asked for feedback to be sent to her. This also looks at what * reception team “wording” when all appointments are booked for the day * reception training in processing on the day requests for appointments * continued use of Visiba AI triage   Colin asked re the AI triage system and Julie confirmed this is still being used and is very effective. The long term plan is to be able to open up more ‘book ahead’ appointments.  Colin also suggested that the number of missed appointments in the previous week is displayed at each site. Becky added that this information could also be displayed in a way that demonstrated the cost to the practice of DNAs. Barry suggested posting this information on Facebook too. Later in the meeting, Colin asked about persistent non-attenders, and Julie explained that after 3 missed appointments they can be removed from the list, but it does depend on the patients’ individual circumstances. Cllr Gadd asked about having more reminders of appts – Julie confirmed the system is bound by the automatic text settings, but will investigate whether additional reminders are possible.  Heather raised that some of the elderly patients are being asked to call back for triage, rather than being taken there and then. Julie agreed that this should not be happening and will investigate why and treated as a training issue NOTE: since the meeting I (JAc) have spoken to reception who confirm those patients presenting at the desk or if the phone has been answered in an area that is not private then the patient will be called back from a more private area to discuss their request  Heather also raised that she is getting reports of elderly patients from Newick being asked to come to Heathfield/The Firs for blood tests. Julie confirmed that there are blood test appointments each day at Newick, Chailey and The Firs, and that perhaps it is due to patient availability.  Lawrence suggested that communication with patients could be part of the problem and emphasised the importance of outreach. This led to a discussion regarding plans for putting information into the various parish and church magazines that are produced in our communities. Later in the meeting, Becky suggested that the PPG draft a newsletter, perhaps every 2 months, with a different focus each time. Julie agreed this would be good, and **Becky agreed to draft these. Jackie, Lawrence and Barry offered to support Becky.**  Ideas for items include how to make an appt (including other people you could see), flu clinics (August issue), Covid Boosters (spring), prevention advice, how to live more healthily, the general practice ‘iceberg’, Friends and Family test results.  Cllr Gadd asked about some of the definitions in the NHS app appointment booking system:   * Extended Hours – the practice offers 1 additional hour of appts per 1000 patients on the list – these are earlier, later than normal clinic hours, and on Saturday morning. Julie and Scott said they would see if they could amend the terminology. Use of these is audited, and the appointments are very well used. * Teaching Block – this is so that Dr has time to supervise trainees and should be viewable by patients. Scott will investigate why these are appearing in the the NHS App.   **BMA guidance on GP workload**. The recommendation is for a GP to have 25 patient contacts a day. Our Drs have 27 but have agreed to keep this. Other guidance included a greater use of signposting to others services/clinical colleague, pushing back on some of the work their secondary care colleagues ask of them, and ceasing some of the non-contracted work (such as signing passport IDs etc)  **CQC registration** – the application for a single registration has been delayed, and now further documentation has been requested. Julie hopes it will be sorted soon. The next inspection is likely to be 1 year after the new registration. |
| **5 -A Day in the Life of… Deputy Practice Manager** | Scott gave a brief overview of his previous background in local government and his previous role as Practice Manager at Heathfield.  Scott ran through the things that he is responsible for, which include:  Day-to-day Troubleshooting and problem solving IT issues, staffing, and anything else that arises  GP rota and day-today clinician queries and problems  Line manager for 2 team leaders – Patient Services Manager (Reception, Complaints and Private Paperwork) and Care Administration Manager (Secretaries, Care Coordinators & Workflow)  Monthly and quarterly claims for locally commissioned services  Friends and Family Test review – monthly  Contracts – and ways to look for savings  Covering sickness (eg pharmacy dispensary)  Recruitment  Website  Notional rent claims and appeals  Updating policies and procedures – including contingency plans  Completing annual e-declaration  Emails!  The PPG really got an appreciation of the diversity of general practice, and lack of support departments. We also were able to see the teamwork that goes into keeping things running. Scott also reminded us of the ‘Iceberg’ of general practice and suggested this features in the first patient newsletter to give patients and the public and understanding of the volume and variety of work that goes on in primary care.  Scott mentioned Heathfield Health – which is the private part of the practice, renting room space from the partners to a Physiotherapist, Podiatrist and Osteopath). We still have 2 rooms available for renting out.  Scott said he is still learning, 3 years into the job and thanked Julie for her support, induction and patience.  Jackie thanked Scott for everything he does – and the group agreed. |
| **AOB** | Barry asked about the vacancies on the PPG. After discussion it was agreed that we need 3 more members, younger members, perhaps one registered at Heathfield/The Firs and 2 from Newick. Becky suggested that the **GPs or nurses could perhaps identify people** that might be interested and suitable and approach them. **Barry will approach Heathfield College again.**  Cllr Gadd invited the practice to the Heathfield Chamber of Commerce  Barry forwarded a summary from HealthWatch – **this will be circulated** with the minutes.  **Becky will distribute a doodle poll for the next meeting date** – will be Thursday, in Newick. Date TBA |