**Corbridge Medical Group**

**Patient Representation Group**

**Wednesday 13th September 2023, Corbridge Health Centre, 7pm**

**Minutes**

**In Attendance:**

PO, VB, DP, AE, EC, AB(PCN Patient Forum Rep), Shauna Hardy (Clinical Administrator), Joyce Dickinson (Practice Administrator), Dr Rob Barker (GP Partner), Julie Johnston (Practice Manager)

**Apologies for absence:**

MD, MM, BC, PB, Nicola Lamb (Reception Manager)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

We welcomed VB to the group and also AB who was attending the meeting for the first time.

We acknowledged the apologies from MM and BC who have both tendered their resignations from the group. Julie expressed her appreciation for their involvement in the Patient Forum since its formation in 2011. They were both founder members whose contributions have been constructive and supportive throughout that time and we wish them well.

1. **Matters Arising and updates from the last meeting:**

Shingles Vaccinations

Julie described changes to the Shingles vaccination eligibility criteria which have been introduced since the last meeting and confirmed that, once the flu vaccinations are complete, she would look to implement a recall system for Shingles vaccinations for the new cohort of patients aged 65. Patients who are aged 70-79 remain eligible for a Shingles vaccine and would not be routinely called in unless they reach aged 79 and remain unvaccinated. Television advertising and information on our website and TV screen promote the Shingles vaccination to eligible patients.

Pneumoccocal Vaccinations

Following the discussion at the last meeting a catch-up clinic for patients aged 65 and over who had not yet had a pneumococcal vaccination was arranged. A total of 136 vaccines were given in a morning clinic which was an excellent uptake and Julie confirmed that we would aim to run something similar on a regular basis to promote this vaccination.

Digital Sessions

Appointments with Shauna or Julie had been made available for patients to book on Wednesday afternoons since the last meeting and the uptake had been good. We will continue to offer this for any patients who are struggling to register with online access or who simply need some guidance as to how to use it.

1. **Update on Staffing Changes**

Julie confirmed that a 3rd salaried GP has now joined the practice team, Dr Kate Foster will be working from Tuesday to Friday each week. There are now 8 GPs working in the practice – most of them part-time but, in total, providing much needed additional capacity to meet the increasing demand for appointments and the increase in list size. The new GPs will have appointments available 7 days ahead and 'on the day' appointments which will unblock at 8am and will be available online for anyone who needs to be seen that day. Appointments with the GP Partners will be available ahead of time with no restrictions for those patients who prefer continuity, but we will encourage anyone with an urgent problem to see one of the new GPs rather than waiting for an appointment with a Partner so that the problem can be dealt with more quickly.

A new practice nurse has also been recruited into the team over the Summer. Amy Lamb will join the practice at the beginning of October and will see patients with respiratory conditions as well as those with cardiovascular disease or hypertension for annual reviews. She will also provide appointments for cervical cytology screening, vaccinations and all other practice nursing tasks.

1. **Practice Website Development**

As agreed at the last meeting, members of the Patient Forum had been asked to look at the practice website so that we could consider some changes and/or re-organisation of the content. This was an initiative which all practices were being asked to do so the timing of our meeting was ideal. Julie and Shauna had worked through a toolkit which had been provided to practices for this purpose and summarised some thoughts which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

A summary of the discussion is as follows:

* Advertising the website - once this exercise is complete – will be important to encourage and re-educate patients on how to use it so they get the best from it. Sending a text out asking patient to 'take a look' would be useful. Writing a new piece for Corbridge Matters and Riding Mill Parish News would be useful as would promotion on the TV screen with perhaps some screenshots of the website pages to show how best to use it. Mentioning the website on the telephone message might also encourage patients to look there first when ringing for information.
* Consideration to be given to the names of the tabs along the top of the website home page so that these give a better indication as to what information sits beneath each one eg 'Services' could be replaced with 'Practice Information', Patient Group could be renamed 'Patient Feedback'
* A tab with information for new patients would be useful – giving details of how to register, a boundary map (with post-code checker), a description of our appointments system etc. for those who are less familiar with the practice.
* A self-care tab would be useful to help patients to decide whether they need an appointment – the eConsult banner could be included here (in addition to the front page) as it helps patients through a series of questions designed to navigate them to an appropriate service. In addition we could list those services to which a patient can self-refer with contact details and links to their websites via QR codes where available. Useful telephone numbers could also be provided here eg for local pharmacies, hospitals, community teams etc. There is a useful NHS Health Info A-Z embedded in one of our current pages which could be made more prominent either within the Self-Care tab or perhaps as a link from the front page.
* An automated 'update contact details' service is available from our website provider and this would be a useful addition
* The Patient Feedback tab could include results from Friends and Family tests as well as a 'You said – We did' section so patients can see how their feedback has been used. This would continue to be the place where PRG minutes are published
* The Forms library needs updating and could provide additional links to external providers (also available on the self-care tab).
* A description of how to access sick notes should be more prominent possibly linking to the eConsult banner through which these can be requested. A suggestion was made that we devise a leaflet to be given to patients when receiving their first sick note telling them how to renew (via eConsult)
* Information about where to get travel health advice, with a list of contact numbers should also be updated as this may have changed recently.
* It was agreed that the Covid19 tab should be removed but could reinstated if required in future
* Information about research studies could also be made more prominent – partly to reassure patients when we are actively contacting patients but also to let them know which projects we are currently involved in.
* An error on the current Team pictures when clicking on 'next' needs fixing so it takes you to the next photo (not the next group of staff) – 'previous' and 'next' seem to be the wrong way round.
* Updating the qualifications for all clinical staff would be useful – this is currently missing for the new salaried GPs.
* The publication dates on each page are misleading as it gives the impression that some information might be old – can these be removed or re-worded?
* Use of the word 'Problem' to mean diagnosis appears in different parts of the site – this terminology is not recognised by patients and could be re-worded.
* The font for the Titles and Tab headings seems small and the white background is a harsh colour to look at – we will see if these can be changed.
* The name of the practice was queried because we refer to the practice as Corbridge Medical Group and then in other contexts as Corbridge Health Centre. Julie explained that the business trading name is Corbridge Medical Group which includes all the staff employed by the practice and the services provided by the GP practice but when talking about the wider team including community staff (who are not employed by the practice) we tend to call ourselves Corbridge Health Centre (eg when answering the telephone). The generic term is really a reference to the building and everyone who is based here. For the purposes of the website we will try to be more consistent and use the practice name which is Corbridge Medical Group.
* The Doctor and Nurse availability grid was thought to be very helpful but needs updating to include the new staff. Julie agreed to look at this and create a new one as the original was proving difficult to edit.

**4. Friends and Family Feedback**

The Friends and Family feedback for June, July and August had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The comments were generally very positive and the majority of patients gave good feedback for the services provided. General themes were discussed as follows:-

Appointments running late – this is a regular issue for patients and can best be managed by having the receptionist let patients know about likely delays – this is more difficult for those using self check-in so we will see whether a message could appear on the TV screen to update patients about likely delays with particular GPs.

Telephone First – a comment had been made about not being able to get a face to face appointment without speaking to a GP first. This is a misunderstanding as we have not had that approach since the Covid restrictions were lifted around 18months ago. Patients can now book directly into a face to face appointment with GPs. However, if expecting to see a GP on the same day with an urgent problem, if there are no face to face appointments left we will arrange a phone call first so the GP can decide on an appropriate timeframe for being seen (or indeed whether the urgent problem can be dealt with over the telephone).

Door Numbers and directions from Reception – a comment had suggested that better signage for room numbers should be provided in the waiting area. Julie had placed a map on the TV screen to help with this but agreed to put a poster under the screen so this is visible all the time for those who are less familiar with the layout of the building.

Self Check-in issues were reported from a number of patients whose check-in had failed to register within our clinical system. Julie had investigated these and found that people were pressing 'Enter' multiple times after entering their date of birth and that this causes problems for the system. She agreed to place a sign next to the screen reassuring patients that 'enter' should only be pressed once and that it takes a few seconds for the system to respond. It is hoped this will stop these problems.

Noisy Door – a comment had been made about the closer on the Utility Room door which bangs shut and creates a very unpleasant environment for patients sitting in the waiting room. Julie agreed to have a look at the closure to see if it could be adjusted and also to put a sign on the door for staff to be aware so they don't just allow the door to slam behind them when coming in or out.

**Any Other Business**

AB reported that the Primary Care Network patient group were doing some work with the National Patient Survey results and he noted that Northumberland practices were scored much higher than the National average and that Corbridge was one of the best amongst that Northumberland group which is an impressive achievement and patients should be made aware of this. The results can be accessed using this link which can be placed on our website for patients to see.

 <https://gp-patient.co.uk/patientexperiences?practicecode=A84018>

A question was asked about the Covid Autumn booster campaign and whether information would be posted in the Courant. Julie confirmed that the information is usually only made available at short notice but would be posted on our website home page as soon as we receive it. The National Booking System would be live from Monday 18th September and a link to the online bookings would be provided on the website from Monday onwards.

**Date of the next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on **Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7pm**