Minutes of the PPG meeting on 5/7/13

Present:

Dr A Pugh                       Mr I Wadlow              Mrs P Molyneux

Caroline Lee                   Mrs E Smith               Mr T Braithwaite

Ruth Smith                     Mr & Mrs Forshaw    Mrs M Arts

Lorraine Skillicorn          Mr P Mayes

Introductions – Our new member of staff Ruth Smith, Administration Manager, was introduced to the PPG.

The meeting was opened by Caroline.

 General Update

Caroline gave an update report to the group:

Dr Burroughs is on maternity leave and will be returning in January 2014.

Dr Boardman left the practice in December 2013 and has taken up a position with the Cumbria Commissioning Group.

Mr Wardlow asked if Dr Boardman would be returning at some point. Caroline said that she had left permanently.

Caroline gave an overview about the difficulties of trying to attract GPs to the area. It was noted that it is not just our practice facing difficulties, all practices in Barrow are struggling to recruit.

Mr Braithwaite asked Caroline if the difficulties were mainly down to financial constraints. Caroline said the problem was not financial, just a lack of GPs available.

Dr Pugh also added that the GPs were very aware of the problems patients sometimes experience making an appointment with a GP of their choice. In addition GPs’ workload had increased and they do prioritise their work to enable good quality patient care. Caroline pointed out that the GP’s are working longer hours.

Sadly Julie Atkinson one of the Practice Nurses is leaving and will be replaced by a very experienced Nurse Practitioner called Fiona Martin.

Donna Baynes who worked as a health care assistant at the practice will be returning next year after completing her three year nurse training.

Mrs Smith asked if we had any information on our new premises. Caroline explained that Alfred Barrow School had been identified by the Commissioning Group as the preferred site. Not only would it have other GP surgeries it would also house the ambulance service, Children’s services and District Nurses etc.

However the practice has looked at the costs involved to move to this site and the location itself and feel it is not a viable option. The practice might have to stay put and consider modifications to the building.

Mr Braithwaite feels Alfred Barrow School offered some positives with parking and bus routes etc.

Mrs Arts also mentioned the old Police station as an option for our new premises.

Mr Braithwaite asked if it was significant that the premises had to be north of the railway line, Caroline while the practice has patients across the area there were significant numbers who lived north of the practice whose needs had to be considered.

Mrs Arts asked about the old Kwik Save site however that option is no longer open to us and Caroline said it was unlikely.

Dr Pugh added that looking for the ideal location is difficult and we always try to consider the best interests of our patients when making any decisions.

Mr Mayes asked if reducing patient numbers was a positive thing and could we not close our list due to the lack of GP appointments.

Caroline explained that we cannot close our list we now have 11,100 patients as opposed to 11,500 last year. The main factor to cause this reduction in patients could be due to the fact we have lost to very popular GP’s Dr Rogerson and Dr Boardman.

Mr Mayes filed a complaint last year and said he was offended by the reply he received from Caroline. Caroline apologised and added it was not supposed to cause offence.

Mr Braithwaite explained that you build up a rapport with a GP and it is better for continuity that you should be able to see the same GP each time. This is not always possible. Dr Pugh agreed and said that it would be better if a patient chose a specific GP and then had a second and third choice for when a GP is off on holiday or sick.

Dr Pugh added that as a practice the GPs had weekly updates. They communicated with each other very well especially if they were seeing a patient who was not known to them.

RCGP – Royal College of General Practice.

Caroline explained to the group that we have now been accredited and that we are the fourth practice in the country and the first practice in the Northwest to receive this.

The group were told that we were given the accreditation after eighteen months of hard work and the high standards we achieved as set down by the RCGP.

Mr Braithwaite asked about the benefits of the accreditation and Dr Pugh explained that many systems and procedures in the practice have changed to meet the high standards required.

As an example Caroline told the group that we have now Quality Improvement Meetings every three months to discuss any complaints, critical events and things we could do better. She also explained that we have looked at the care of specific groups of vulnerable patients and identified ways that we could improve their care.

Care Quality Commission

The CQC will be inspecting the practice. We won’t know when this will be happening until 48hours before. Caroline asked the group if anyone would like to be the Chair person to represent the patient group. Nobody wanted to do this however everyone said they wouldn’t mind the CQC contacting them.

Mr Braithwaite asked what powers the CQC had and Caroline explained that they could close us down with immediate effect if necessary.

Suggestions

Feedback was given to the group on patient suggestions that had been implemented. The prescription box had been moved to avoid congestion at the front door.

Mr Mayes suggested that another radio station might be better played than radio 1.

Review of Action Plan 2012/2013

We have increased routine appointments with GP partners after employing David Kenrick, Emergency Care Practitioner. We have increased our nurse and Health Care Assistant appointments

Reception staff have on-going training.

Survey 2013

Caroline asked if the PPG could suggest anything they would like us to focus on for the survey questions.

Mrs Arts suggested hospital transport.

Mr Braithwaite and Mrs Arts elaborated on their experiences of travelling to the Royal Preston and Royal Lancaster Hospitals.

Mr Mayes also commented about travel costs and car parking charges at hospital sites.

The group decided a shorter punchier survey which will include questions on transport and the new premises. The sample will include 300 patients. Caraline said that they would draft a survey and send it to the group for comments.

Questions

Mr Braithwaite asked if there was a two tier system to the results system as at a nurse appointment he was told she could not gain access to his results. Caroline and Dr Pugh told him this was not the case and nurses do not have restricted access. Dr Pugh commented that sometimes if a consultant has requested the tests the GP does not get the result it automatically goes back to the requester.

Mrs Arts complimented us on the online prescribing service. However some people disagreed and stated that the online service and EPS prescribing had caused them problems. Dr Pugh assured the patients that there have been teething problems with the EPS prescribing because it was a new system however we would look in to individual cases.

Mr Mayes asked if the EPS was a fail- safe system and commented that what would happen if a patient incorrectly chose heroin. Dr Pugh assured the group there were checks in the system to prevent inappropriate or incorrect requests.

Dr Pugh explained the whole EPS system and pointed out the advantages to the patients for using the system. Mr Braithwaite commented about the medication review dates on the electronic prescriptions Dr Pugh also explained the reasoning for this.

Mr Mayes commented that on the website he has seen the letters F M and D against staff members names he wanted to know what this means. That is something we will look in to.

Mr Mayes commented on how well the reception staff deal with difficult situations and said he thought things had improved.

The group all agreed that the removal of notices about abuse to staff members was a step in the right direction.

The members of the group said they appreciated the hard work undertaken by the practice.

Caroline thanked the members of the group for attending and closed the meeting.

The group will meet again in November 2013 to consider the survey results..