**HEATON ROAD SURGERY**

**PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING**

**14TH JUNE 2022**

1. **Welcome Back After Covid & Introductions** – Dr Gall welcomed members back to our first meeting following the pandemic and introduced Grace as the new PM for Patient Services following Pam's retirement.

Dr Gall advised the PPG that the practice door is now open and that things are slowly returning to the "new normal" with the telephone message being changed this week to reflect the relaxation of restrictions and the practice offering both face to face and telephone appointments.

1. **Changes to Practice Staff** – The effects that the pandemic has had on practice staff was discussed. The PPG were updated on the clinical and administrative staff changes which have occurred since the last meeting. A discussion followed on how the practice is moving forward and the measures being taken to recruit new clinical staff into the practice. PPG members commented on how effective the in house pharmacists were proving to be and welcomed the idea of more of this type of service being offered going forward.
2. **Appointment System Going Forward** – Dr Gall explained to the PPG that with the onset of Covid-19, the practice installed new phone lines to cope with the amount of telephone calls coming into the practice and to enable staff to contact patients for telephone appointments. The telephone system will now be reviewed to ensure that we have appropriate staffing levels to manage the phone calls to the surgery.

The pandemic saw the introduction of econsult and Accurx texting to the practice to enable patients to access GP practices via electronic access and for staff to contact patients by text. These have proven to be highly successful and will remain in operation as they allow the practice to offer a variety of pathways into the service.

The PPG agreed that the new services were indeed working well, however the comment was raised that the econsult form was long winded and was there a way in which it could be reduced. Dr Gall explained that it is via an online platform, provided by an external company and we cannot make changes as a practice.

It was mentioned that some practices turn the econsult facility off in the evening and at weekends. The practice feels that this is an excellent way for patients to access the service when we are closed and at present we will not be turning the econsult off, but the situation will have to be monitored going forward.

1. **National Data Opt Out** – Grace brought the PPG up to speed on the NDOO which is going ahead. Practices will have very little to do with this once it is introduced and all information on how to opt out is displayed on notice boards and available on the practice website.
2. **Patient online Access** – Grace gave an update on patient online access. The proposed go live date is now 1st November 2022. This is an automatic switch on, so no action is required by the patients and the practice is ready for this to be implemented. Information regarding this will be on the practice website once the go live date is confirmed. The concerns and benefits of patient online access were discussed.
3. **Year of Care** – Dr Gall explained to the PPG the recall system being used in the practice for year of care reviews, with the aim to review patients on repeat medications with chronic medical problems in their birthday month.
4. **Social Prescribing Link Worker** – Tracy Bell is our Social Prescribing Link Worker and does a great job engaging with patients who, for many reasons, have social problems which in turn affect their physical and mental wellbeing. Tracy offers a variety of services including supporting patients, going for walks, helping with benefits and even runs a healthy eating group. This type of interaction goes a long way in helping the patients to cope with everyday life without having to come and see their GP and is proving to be very successful. A similar service is available for younger patients via Streetwise which was also discussed.
5. **Any other business** – Grace has asked the PPG members if they can think of anything that they would like to discuss or have any ideas in how to carry the practice forward into the "new normal" as all suggestions are welcome. Suggestions can be emailed to the practice email address NGCCG.heatonroadsurgery@nhs.net and will be discussed at the next meeting
6. Next meeting to be advised