**PPG Meeting 27th February 2024 at 6.30pm**

**Held at Heaton Road Surgery**

1. **Welcome and Introductions.**

Dr Gall thanked both patients for coming and introduced herself and Kay Bainbridge.

1. **Staffing Updates**

* Bethany Cave- Practice Manager
* Kay Bainbridge- Assistant Practice Manager
* Anne- Safeguarding Care Coordinator
* Lily- Admin Team Leader
* Rachel- Deputy Team Leader
* Steph- Admin Care Navigator
* Layla- Admin Care Navigator
* Jade- Admin Care Navigator
* Casey-Leigh- Apprentice Care Navigator
* Megan- Apprentice Care Navigator
* Dr Schofield and Dr Craig have both returned from Maternity Leave.
* Dr Chan and Dr Ng have both joined our team of salaried GP's.
* Practice Nurse Vicky retired just over a year ago and Hannah has since taken over as Practice Nurse.
* Operations Manager Rebecca Graham has now left and now works for NGPS.

Dr Gall went through the above staffing updates with the group. Positive feedback given from both patients about our current reception team and about the service provided by them and the clinical staff.

1. **Tracy's Groups/ Events.**

Dr Gall advised the group that Tracy Bell, our Social Prescribing Link Worker, has been doing some fantastic work with our patients and some of the wider community.

**Health Awareness Event**

* Two last year, most recent being Sept.
* Lots of other services join together to offer advice and information about lots of different areas such as Diabetes, Kidney Health, Pain Management, Smoking Cessation, Alcohol Reduction, Vita (Physical and Mental Health Services), and Retinopathy.
* Hoping to set up another event once funding has been agreed.
* Usually hosted at St Silas's church.

**Weight Loss Group**

* 12-week programme, the programme itself lasts 6 weeks (Freshwell) but TB organises guest speakers to come every other week to offer advice such as Dieticians, Smart Recovery and the Sleep Clinic which is why it lasts 12 weeks.
* Weekly weigh ins with advice and support.
* Will be starting up again after Easter.
* Located in St Silas Church.

**Ongoing Weight Support Group**

* TB is looking at organising this as a more informal support option, for those who would benefit from an extra 'boost' of support with their weight loss journey. Likely to be mid-week for approximately 30-40 minutes located at the Surgery.

**Free First Aid Class**

* Adult one last done in April and Paediatric class ran in Sept.
* Sessions are provided by St John's ambulance.
* Looking to arrange another one which is located at the Surgery.

**Heaton Baptiste Free Lunch**

* Manned by TB and is more of an informal opportunity to get advice form TB regarding anything she would usually be able to help with. This is also what we call a 'warm hub event' which means it's also an opportunity for patients who are usually isolated to do a little socialising where it is warm, and they can have a hot meal, tea's coffees and biscuits.

**Art Group**

* This happens at the Surgery on a Thursday afternoon from 1.30pm- 3.30pm ran by Josie who is from Newcastle City Learning.
* Initially started for those patients who we're suffering with anxiety, it is open more widely now for our patients to join with no skills needed at all. They do different tasks each week such as, clay models, acrylic painting and next week they are doing Mandala's.
* Again, this is one of the 'Warm hub events' that we offer, and patients can come and enjoy the art class along with other patients and a hot drink and some biscuits.
* Note this group does not operate during the school holidays.

**Healthworks- Cancer Awareness classes.**

* TB is in the middle of arranging some events with Healthworks around Cancer awareness and support. Some of the events would be a more general awareness but there would be some organised that focus more on female cancers or male cancers.
* This would be located at St Silas church and would be aimed at all patients.
* It would offer advice on being cancer aware, the signs to watch out for and so on, but also information for those suffering with cancer or have a loved one who had been diagnosed, so that they know what help and support is out there.

**Nutrition & Exercise within Residential Care Homes.**

* TB has arranged for University Students to go into five different residential care homes within Newcastle East area to offer advice and support around nutrition and to aid them in some appropriate chair-based exercises to help improve their health.

1. **New Telephone System**

Dr Gall updated the group on our new telephony system and explained that the main drive for changing telephone systems was due to the volume of feedback we had about dropped calls. Patients had complained that their calls would drop off after a long time waiting to be connected to a receptionist. Now that we have a new telephone system which enables us to put patients into a queue system informing them how far in the queue they are, we have had positive feedback from our patients. One patient advised that they have found the new system much more user friendly but that sometimes she found a 'delay' in the lines being connected on some afternoons. Kay informed the group that we are now able to see a lot more in-depth data regarding the amount of calls we receive by the hour, how many were dropped or abandoned, how many are answered and so on and therefore we would look into the 'delay' during afternoon times. Overall, this has proven to be one of the very positive changes since the last PPG meeting.

1. **Prospective Access**

Although discussed in the last PPG meeting, Dr Gall briefly explained what prospective access is and the pros and cons of this. Dr Gall advised that prospective access has now been 'switched on' as of the end of October 2023 and this means those who have the NHS app or online access through Patient Services, will be able to see their medical records. Kay also mentioned that this is only prospective access and any information prior to the 'switch on' would need to be requested via a Subject Access Request.

1. **NHS App Drop-in Session**

Dr Gall informed the group that Heaton Road Surgery are hosting a Drop-in Session on Thursday 7th March at the surgery between 12pm-1.30pm for any patients who would like assistance setting up the NHS App.

1. **Shared Care Agreements**

Dr Gall informed the group that a decision has been made as a PCN not to accept any shared care agreements from other services. Whilst this work is not part of our contractual work, we have in the past agreed to shared care requests; however, due to the unprecedented pressures that primary care is facing, we are unable to take on additional work from other services. This was a difficult decision to make and the ICB are aware of our position on this. The shared care agreements already in place prior to this decision will remain so. Both patients commented about the pressures on GP surgeries and that it seemed unfair based on the lack of funding being provided to Primary Care and how this is mirrored in other public sector roles too. Dr Gall advised that there will be some push back on the work that we do carry out for Secondary Care but that we will continue to provide the best care we can to our patients.

1. **Any other business**

Dr Gall feedback that Tracy has asked that we mention in the PPG meetings that we would welcome any suggestions to the types of groups or events that our patients may want to have. Both Patients advised that they would be happy to get in touch if they have any suggestions for this.

One patient asked us if we have many issues with abusive or threatening patients as they had witnessed this type of behaviour in the waiting room and Dr Gall advised that unfortunately we do. Kay explained that this behaviour does seem to have increased recently but that we have a 'Zero Tolerance Policy' for this type of situation which we will continue to enforce in order to keep both the staff and members of the public safe. Both patients sympathised with this and agreed with the need for the 'Zero Tolerance Policy'. Both commented on their personal experiences with our staff advised that they appreciate all the hard work that is done here.

Both parties thanked each other for their attendance and input and advised that invites for the next meeting will be in three to four months' time.

***Addendum: T***he telephony data was reviewed after the meeting, and it was concluded that there was a slightly increased wait time for calls to be answered but the seems to coincide with the lunchtime hours so there would have been less staff answering phones at any one time over this period. We have two new starters who weren't answering calls at the time of the meeting however, they are now doing so. This should hopefully help alleviate this issue.