**PPG meeting 21st March 2023**

**Park Pavilion 2.15pm**

**Present MMC** : Fiona Gardner, Dr Nadeeja Koralage, Chloe Barclay

**PPG**: Kath Calver (Chair) Rita Rossini (Secretary) Mick Verrier. Tony Whitmarsh, Jenni Whitmarsh, Val Harpur, Louise Yaxley, Mike Wyatt, Maureen Townsend, Marilyn Jones, Graham Green, Patricia Paxin, Gill Hughes, Emma Connell-Smith, Julie Kinnon, Geoff Smith.

1. **Apologies**: Ben Notley, Sheena Parsons, Ann Coogan, Sandra Howlett, Terry Howlett, Libby Davies, Kerry Mitchell
2. **The minutes from the previous** **meeting** were accepted as correct.
3. **Matters Arising:**

* Patient test results: Kath stated that a poster has been put up in the MMC to remind patients to ask for a time-frame for test results. This helps patients and also reduces the phone load. Patients are encouraged to phone for results at quieter times.
* Kath stated that the pharmacist is going to do a talk for the local Age Concern group.
* Kath stressed the importance of a patient newsletter with MMC providingcurrent information and they have agreed in principal to produce one. The PPG and Emma Connell Smith have offered to help.
* Kath gave fedback on the NE Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) open meeting, in which a ‘Joint 5 year Forward Plan was discussed. Julie Kinnon and Graham Green also attended. Marilyn asked how people could apply for services, and Kath stated that this could be addressed at a follow up meeting when Emma Connell Smith will be talking to the members. Emma C-S outlined the structure of the plan, and stated that people can access it on-line, and sign up for involvement in various participation groups and projects. Mike and Jenny also had queries regarding the funding and services, which can will be taken forward to the next meeting.
* Meeting with Sir Bernard Jenkin: the press release has been forwarded to members and will go out soon (following the information regarding he local levelling up fund). Sir Bernard made a commitment to do the best he can with regards to the MMC shortfall in doctors and the better use of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) as a walk in centre for both injuries and illnesses. Sir Bernard is writing to the ICB to arrange a meeting, and is arranging a visit to the Mayflower Medical Centre. Re the MIU, Sir Bernard is to check which departments are involved, together with current and potential funding, and work with the agencies to upgrade the Unit. Urgent help is also need with staffing for the MMC. Dr Koralage hopes that there is now more focus on Harwich, as the area has been overlooked in the past. Graham stated the the new building developments in the area are not helping, as further strain is being put on the MMC, and Fiona stated that the MMC is obliged to take on new patients moving into the area.
* Dr Andrew Kelso, Medical Director of NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB Board recently visited Dovercourt Hub, and Emma is going to ask for feedback regarding his visit.

1. **The Accelerate Programme:** Chloe Barclaydiscussed the Accelerate scheme: the MMC has been involved in a Quality Support programme for 20 weeks with Quality Improvement Associates (consultants). Chloe provided information regarding their feedback from the Appointments module, which showed that 30% of appointments were booked in inappropriately, or didn’t need appointments. Fiona is to organise more receptionist training. There is also a need for more education for patients regarding the wide range of support available, for example appointments with the Physio for back problems etc. Chloe stated that some patients do exaggerate symptoms to get appointments, but agreed that the proposed newsletter or leaflet would help to educate patients. Mick commented that some patients may be unhappy with receptionists ‘interrogating’ their symptoms, but all the receptionists are undergoing further training.

Graham asked about blood tests, as appointments can sometimes take 2 weeks, though blood tests can be administered at the Fryatt hospital on Tuesdays. It is also possible to book on-line at Clacton or Colchester, but many patients may not know this. Fiona stated that the practice tries to be flexible.

**5.Complaints Data:** Fiona regularly monitors complaints; she mentioned the ‘Not a Crime Harwich’ facebook page where some very negative comments are being made. However Fiona stated that it be not be professional to reply to these comments. Fiona welcomes feedback in writing to the MMC and said that patients who complain will always receive an acknowledgement of the complaint, it is then investigated and then sent a reply; she stated that most complaints are about access.

**6, Appointments:** Dr Koralage stated that the average number of patients per full time GP is 2,300 wheras at the MMC each F/T equivalent is 4,200 patients. Dr K wants to improve accessibility. Dr K suggested that the newsletter could include information on the range of services available, and said that Saturday appointments can be made from Wednesday onwards; these appointments are for routine appointments and follow up appointments, other than appointments requiring medication, as Dr K stated that no chemists are available at weekends.Geoff asked how many patients a doctor might see in a day, and Dr Koralage said she would see probably see 40 -50 patients, with a minimum of 24. There have been difficulties trying to recruit new doctors. Fiona mentioned wasted appointments which were not cancelled (209 in a sample month) and stated that you can just reply to the appointment comfirmation text with the one word ‘cancel’, rather than spend a long time on the phone. Geoff asked if the cancelled appointments could be offered to others and Fiona stated that this would happen where possible.A member stated that this does not always work and a ‘no show’ letter can still be sent. Graham suggested that some callers did not really need appointments, but Dr Koralage disagreed. Jenny stated that she had waited in all day for a telephone appointment which had been incorrectly classified as a face to face appointment. A member queried the fact that some part-time doctors may have private work, but Kath stated that this is up to individual doctors. Dr Koralage assured the member that she herself does not work privately.

Michael stated that some patients try day after day for an appointment but cannot get through. Mike asked if the MMC had any idea of the number of patients who can’t see a doctor and have to go elsewhere. He suggested it would be useful to monitor this. Kath stated that when preparing information for the meeting with Bernard Jenkins this was collected on one sample day 73 people couldn’t get an appointment and were told to call 111 or go to the Urgent treatment centres at Clacton or Colchester, but there could be a risk if they don’t go, or are unable to go. Many may have chosen to wait and try another day.

Dr Koralage stated that she visited Stowe Health practice to see the partners regarding the ‘Ask My GP’ scheme, where 80% of patients book appointments on line, and 20% through calls. She stated that there is no prefect solution but that it is worth exploring other ways of doing things.

**8.** **Renewal of Long Term prescriptions:** Kath stated that batch prescriptions for 3 months are available for one or two medications, which can be collected monthly from a named pharmacist. Requests to go to a doctor or the pharmacist.

**9.** **On Line short CPR course with accreditation:** Kath stated that Tony Whitmarsh had completed this course which is important in saving lives in emergency situations.

The link for those interested is : revivr.bhf.org.uk

**10: Talk by Yvonne Alexander – Social Prescribing:** Yvonne and Yasmin work for Community Voluntary Services, Tendring District Council as Social Prescribers. They at available at the MMC Tuesdays from 8.30am – 4.30pm, and support patients with non-clinical matters. They sometimes work with discharge teams in hospitals, and help with mental health and weight loss issues etc.

Marilyn asked how people get to know about this support, and Yvonne stated that anyone can self-refer. This highlighted the need for a newsletter. Bookings can be made through the MMC or the Hub.Yvonne is also a GP Care Advisor, and GPs can refer patients to her, for example for weight loss prior to an operation. Fiona stated that leaflets for the Social Prescribing service are available at the MMC.

**11.Any Other Business**: Tony Whitmarsh asked if the PPG has a Vice-Chair as yet. Kath stated that nominations for the committee are very welcome prior to the next meeting ,which is the AGM. So nominations are required for Chair, Vice, Chair, Secretary and 2 other committee members. Marilyn asked if bookings for the MIU could be made over the phone, as this is not the case at present and people have to call in to book or be referred by 111

1. **Next Meeting: AGM June 6th 2023.**