**Minutes of Lower Gornal Patient Panel Group**

**Wednesday, 30th October 2024**

**Welcome from the Chair:** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Joanne Stanley, a guest presenter.

**Present:** Russell Gardner (Practice Manager), David Gill (Chair), Chris Bate (Vice Chair), Sue Smith, Michael Bowen, Amanda Bayliss, Rowena Thomas, Helen Newton

*Hayley Wright informed the Chair that she would be late due to work commitments but when Hayley arrived, she was unable to get into the building and was therefore unable to attend the meeting.*

**Apologies**: Vikki Webb, Donella Bullas, Barrie Bromley, Elizabeth Carrier, Jean Edwards, Farzana Follows

**Presentation by Joanne Stanley:** Joanne explained that it was her job to inform people across the Black Country of the Abdominal Aortic Screening Programme. The programme targets males aged 65+. Patients coming up to their 65th birthday are generally informed by text. There is an 80% take up and deaths caused by this type of aneurism have fallen by 50% as a direct result of the screening programme. Males only need to be seen once to detect a possible aneurism. It affects about 2% of the male population. Joanne asked us all to make people aware of the necessity of taking up the appointment when requested and if there is a genetic family history to speak to their doctor regarding an earlier screening. The meeting agreed to publicise the screening programme in the next newsletter and through our facebook page.

**Review and Approve Minutes of Last Meeting**

The draft minutes for July’s meeting had been sent to members several weeks before and following some amendments in the run up to the meeting they were duly accepted as an accurate record.

**Matters Arising from Minutes**

Sue asked whether the newsletter could be placed on the noticeboard in the waiting room and this was agreed.

**Practice Update**

Russell presented figures for the ongoing vaccination programme which began on 3rd October

Flu Covid - 1030

1057 over 65s Covid for housebound - 130

280 under 65

Approximately 300 patients have had their vaccinations at the local pharmacy. Russell is concerned that some people who had booked appointments at the Practice are being encouraged to have their jab at the pharmacy when they happened to visit. He had spoken to the pharmacy about this and had asked the pharmacy to desist from offering vaccinations to patients who had already booked appointments elsewhere. Patients need to be aware that if they have their vaccination at venues other than their medical practice then it may not be worth the Practice providing this service.

**Friends and Family Survey:** This survey is completed by patients following an appointment.

173 very good

 25 good

 2 poor

 3 very poor

 4 DNK (did not know)

A new receptionist has been appointed in place of Georgina. She is local and will begin working on 18th November.

The winter hub sessions have started in Brierley Hill. When the Practice runs out of appointments patients are diverted there to relieve pressure.

**Reports from Other Meetings**

**Digital Engagement Workshop**: Chris Bate had attended this on our behalf. She reported that there is a continued drive to place and therefore access more and more information on phones and computers. Whilst we all agreed there are many benefits to this, there remains a real concern for those, particularly the elderly and the poor, who may not have a device or any wi-fi. Russell said that it is hoped digital engagement will reduce the need for some appointments. This is already happening as the Practice identifies those patients with long term conditions who need a blood test **before** seeing a health profession rather than discover the need for a blood test at the appointment which prolongs any treatment and doubles every appointment.

**Primary Care Network** (1/10/24) The minutes of this meeting had been circulated to all PPG members. Dr Giresh, Director of the PCN, talked about how different practices within the PCN are at different stages in meeting targets related to key health issues such as: blood pressure, cholesterol, COPD, smoking, hypertension, diabetes. The reasons for differences between practices are varied, the main one related to patient demographics. Russell said that according to the Dudley Quality Outcome Framework Bull St Medical Practice was in the bottom quartile in Dudley but that there has been a significant improvement last year with an outcome of 94.5%…………………………………………………………….

**Informal Meeting of Patient Panel Members on 11th September at 332 Himley Rd**

The Chair reported that this had been a worthwhile meeting and was well attended. A number of issues were discussed and in particular the topics for the health-related talks being planned for 2025.

**Questions and Matters of Concern from PPG members**

Russell was asked if patients in the waiting room could be informed if appointments were running late. He said that this does sometimes happen when patients first arrive but he agreed that if any clinicians were running particularly late then reception staff should inform those waiting.

We also discussed the possibility of having a display board showing photos of practice staff with their names so that patients could get an overview. Russell said he would not permit this because of problems with some patients targeting staff on social media leading to upset and in one case to time away from work.

Russell was also asked about the possibility of having blood tests at the Practice. Though he thought this would be a good thing it could not be done under current arrangements as the collection of blood is an issue as it is collected no later than 10am and there is no facility in the Practice to store blood safely after this time.

Now that Dr Malik has retired Russell was asked about the leadership team at the Practice. He said it now consisted of three doctors and himself as Practice Manager.

It was decided that the first health-related talk in the new year should be on the related to dementia as it now affects virtually every family. Amanda and Chris will liaise with the library which will be the venue for our first talk in March/April 2025. Rowena is to liaise with the speaker and the Chair.

**Our next PPG meeting will be on Wednesday, 5th February at 6pm**