

Minutes of the meeting of Bruton Patient Participation Group held at Bruton Community Hall at 11am on 30 June 2023

1. Introductions and apologies
Apologies – Fran.

2. Actions and matters arising from previous meeting:
 - Sarah was not available so Paul gave an update on health coaches. Currently their main focus is on prediabetes. Diabetes is a major issue for the NHS and is using up a huge amount of its budget. Anything that can prevent patients getting the disease is good for them and the NHS. The condition is picked up following a blood test and if the condition is detected the patient is given advice on diet and exercise. However patients are not routinely given blood tests unless there is a perceived need for one. Might there be a case for offering anyone overweight a blood test? It was noted that fibromyalgia does not get the attention it deserves. There is an article in the July Dove on Ten steps to pain if anyone is interested.
 - Surgery signage. Paul is waiting for an update from Tom Power . Paul understands that Somerset Highways have visited the site. Elizabeth volunteered to contact the owners of Patwell House to ask if their foliage could be cut down to make the sign more visible.
 - Website and Surgery publicity. There will be an update at the next meeting. It was noted that the PPG minutes on the Website are over 12 months old.
 - New GPs. Still struggling to find replacements. Paul remarked that despite their self employed status locums are still eligible for a full NHS pension. Together with the flexibility and lack of responsibility it is no wonder that so many GPs opt to be locums. There is talk of this being changed next year when the GP contracts are reviewed. Paul told the meeting that wherever possible the practice does try to get the same locums.
 - Health Booth. Still trying to find a supplier to install the equipment.
 - Ginny reported that the NHS did get a lot of coverage at the Glastonbury Festival.

3. Primary Care Strategy issued by NHS Somerset. Unfortunately, no one had been able to read it. David reported that he had and had found it somewhat repetitive and littered with acronyms. It also appeared to be very optimistic in believing it can bring together GP practices, pharmacies, dentists, opticians and dentists. David also reported that in a recent conversation with Dr Andrews she told him that not only had she not read the report she did not know of its existence which does seem extraordinary .

4. Practice Update.

Two new receptionists have started.

Paul reported that the relationship with Bruton Pharmacy is not working as well as it used to. There are occasions when the pharmacy is suggesting patients attend the practice when an over the counter medicine would have been appropriate. Paul confirmed that he is normally the person from the practice who speaks to the pharmacy. The situation is not helped by the fact that there are a multiplicity of different locum pharmacists so there is no consistency of approach. It is hoped that the relationship will improve.

Paul reported that the search for new premises for the practice continues. He is having a meeting with a member of Bruton Town Council to discuss the possibility of a surgery on the Sunny Hill site. This not ideal given its distance from the town centre. There also continues

to be discussions regarding the Enterprise Zone on the Frome Road. Whilst redevelopment of the existing surgery would be the best option this is not possible as the building has a number different species of bats in the roof which are protected so no building works are possible.

Non attendees for appointments continues to be a problem. The practice now calls or texts those patients who have a history of non attendance a day or two before their next appointment.

5.AOB. Patience wanted to know why the results of an Xray can take up to 8 weeks to get to the practice. Paul said the practice has no control over the time it could take but agreed that if is urgent the time period is likely to be less. It does seem strange that in the era of electronic communication when most things can be sent with the click of a mouse that there should be any delay at all.

Ginny reminded the meeting that it is the NHS's 75 birthday and any amusing or interesting stories about the NHS should be sent into NHS Somerset.

Paul was asked about complaints. He reported that there had been some but all of a trivial nature.

8. Next Meeting. 11am on 22 September 2023 in the Bruton Community Hall.