

Eve Hill Medical Practice

Patient Participation Group Meeting Minutes

Meeting held on 24/01/2023

Present: Dr V Smart (VMS), Kelly Houseman (KH) Practice Manager, Kim Skidmore (KS) Minute taker, Grace Williams (GW). See attendance list

Welcome and Introduction

KH welcomed the group back to the first Face to face meeting since COVID as meetings prior had been virtual.

Staff Update & Practice Update

KH explained to the group that Eve Hill Medical Practice is a training practice. We have GP Registrars who are qualified doctors and take further training to experience General Practice and qualify as a GP. We have new members to our reception team who some patients may have met.

KH informed the group that patients Lloyd George records have now been digitalised which has provided more space in the reception area. This has now been turned into a telephone hub to help with phone call demand.

PCN Staff and Services Physicians Associate

KH explained to the group that we are a part of a PCN (Primary Care Network) therefore within the PCN they have staff that we can use to provide additional services to our patients. PA's have healthcare degrees, take a 2 year masters degree. They can see patients for Minor Ailments, ENT, MSK, stomach and viral illnesses. Currently the surgery has 2 PA's funded by the PCN. The practice is responsible for their clinical practice.

PCN Staff and Services Health Coach

KH explained that we have a health coach available at the practice who can offer support with healthy eating, lifestyle, smoking, weight and exercise. Health coach can help patients achieve their goals. Reception can book no GP appt needed.

PCN Staff and Services First Contact Physio

KH informed the group that we have a first contact physio patients can book with for MSK problems. They are a qualified physiotherapist, can request bloods, scans and refer to other services. This is intended so patients can book directly into an FCP clinic and get the investigations required freeing up GP appointment for more complex cases that cant be seen by any other clinician.

PCN Staff and Services First Contact Mental Health

The practice can book patients in with dietician if needs help with weight and promote nutrition. She can tailor needs to each individual. Community dietician service referrals have a lengthy wait and can often be rejected.

Trainee Nursing Associate

KH explained that a Nurse Associate is a registered professional in between a Health Care Assistant and a Practice Nurse. Kira used to be a part of our reception team therefore some patients may recognise her. Kira is a qualified Health Care Assistant and is currently completing a university course to become a nurse associate. Currently Kira can give vaccines (flu) complete health checks and LTC reviews. This frees up nurse appointment for more complex needs ie. Asthma and COPD reviews.

Appointments

We have changed our appointment system to a mix of telephone and face to face appointments. When COVID first hit we were advised by NHS England to completely stop Face to Face appointment and go to a triage system. Now that we are trying to get back to a 'normal' way of working we have split our appointment system to around 60% face to face and 40% telephone. Patients can request either form of an appointment and we will try and accommodate this depending on the need i.e all face to face has been filled but query cannot be done via phone call.

KH gave an example from the previous way of working. The patient would be booked a telephone call with the GP, the GP would call the patient review the problem and ask the patient to come up to the surgery if an examination was required. This would take up 2 appointments that could be done in 1 appointment if it was a face to face in the first instance. This was not an effective way to manage the appointment system. IT was noted that not all problems can be dealt with over the phone. This has been working very well but is constantly being reviewed by management.

Access Hub

KH explained that there is an Access hub funded by the PCN which is set up to offer GP, HCA and nurse appointments. The service offers evening and Saturday appointments. Patients can have a blood test, smear, dressing and immunisations.

Footfall

KH informed the group that NHS England advised that surgeries must offer an online platform to their patients therefore our new website was created called Footfall. This allows patients to ask a GP/nurse a question, book nurse appointments, request travel vaccines, request a sick note, order repeat medication and also register at the practice. We have a dedicated member of staff who monitors this on a daily basis,. We have found this to be a good way for patients to be able to communicate with us at a more convenient time for them as this can be done at any time of the day.

Frequent attenders

We have around 8350 patients and recently we have been looking into our frequent attenders. We found that 225 patients take up 8 clinics per week of GP and PA appointments. Now that we have a range of specialised clinicians available to us not everything needs to be booked into a GP appointment. Some of the appointments may have been appropriate for a GP but some of the appointments could have been booked in with another clinicians. We are looking at each patient on an individual basis so we can evaluate and see how we can best manage the patients needs. For example if a patient has a social issue this is best suited towards social care/social services, we will look at training our reception staff on resources available depending on the issue to fully advise patients on how they can get help for their issue.

VMS advised that the hospital have a similar system called 'High Intensity user'.

KH explained that this is a new project the next step is now looking into how we can best manage the patients needs. Updates will be presented at future meetings.

Questions: One of the PPG members asked regarding Ear syringing. The patient called up to book an appointment and was told to 'look on the internet'. The patient asked if HCA will see patients for this now.

Answer: Ear Syringing is not a core service but we do offer it here at the practice but we can have a long wait. KH advised that there is a clinic at Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre available for patients to book into.

Training is going to be given to reception staff to build up their knowledge of community services out there to empower and allow them to give patients as much information as possible if we cannot offer what the patient is asking for.

Another PPG member asked if the GP they are asking for is not available would another GP be offered.

KH responded Yes where the condition they are calling with is appropriate for a GP and where there is availability.

Another PPG member asked what the average waiting time is to speak to reception.

KH advised that its difficult to give an average waiting time as this depends on the time and day, also on the length of the call at the time. However, we can monitor how many patients we have in the call queue. We have 3 members of staff on reception every day. KH highlighted that the main demand for appointments are the first hour of opening (8-9) therefore the surgery now has additional admin support for the 1st hour of the day. This helps to manage the appointment demand and reduce waiting times to get through to the surgery to book an appointment. We have found this to work very well but we are always monitoring our appointments and call queue and further changes will be made if required.

A member of the PPG stated that they have not seen a senior GP at the practice since he registered and said that they know someone who has said they have 'easy access to VMS'. KH responded to say that it could just be that that person knows the day VMS works and if appropriate for a GP it will be booked with that clinician.

VMS informed the group that the surgery has GP registrars who have very good supervision throughout their GP training and in fact many of the GPs who patients see now used to be our registrars. KH added that the registrars have direct access with the GP partners as do all the clinicians at the surgery.

Patient Feedback

KH informed the group that when you have an appointment at the surgery you normally receive a text after the appointment to give feedback. This is not used anymore therefore at the moment the surgery is doing this manually by handing out feedback forms to patients who attend for an appointment. KH went through the stats for the last few months. KH noted that some of the feedback was in regards to our car park and one of the feedback was in regards to waiting time to see clinicians. We appreciate GPs can run behind but we do not like to have a 1 problem 1 appointment rule.

A PPG member asked if reception advise patients if the clinician they are seeing is running behind. KH advised that we do encourage reception to advise patients if a clinician is running behind. One of the PPG member suggested a whiteboard to advise pts if a clinician is running behind so that if reception are busy patients can still be advised.

KH to discuss with partners regarding whiteboard in waiting room to advise pts if a clinician is running behind.

AOB

No further questions were asked. KH advised the group that we welcome suggestions for future agendas.

Date of next meeting: **April 23 (date to be confirmed)**