

# PONTELAND MEDICAL GROUP

## PATIENT FORUM

Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2008  
Ponteland Primary Care Centre

### Notes of Meeting

**Present:** Mrs. Janet Boakes (Practice Manager), Dr. Mark McCaldin (Partner), Sister Helen Baty (Senior Practice Nurse), Mrs. Shirley Hill, Mr. Colin Scott, Mrs. Joan Hentze, Mr. Alfred Rutherford, Sarah Lamb (Receptionist), Joanna Wake (Patient Services Manager) Mr. David Lea (Head of Performance, North of Tyne), Rachel Dyer (Professional Executive Committee, Northumberland Care Trust).

**Apologies:** Received from Mr. Alfred Rutherford.

**Notes from last meeting:** Agreed as accurate.

Janet introduced Joanna Wake, Patient Services Manager, who had joined the organisation on the day of the meeting. She explained Joanna's role which involved working with the Reception and Dispensing Teams to provide excellent patient services across the three practice sites. It was anticipated that this appointment would improve upon some of the weaknesses identified in previous patient satisfaction surveys. Joanna would become a regular member of the Patient Forum.

Janet also welcomed Rachel Dyer (PEC Representative), who, together with David Lea, supported the practice in their commissioning role.

**Practice Based Commissioning – Plan for 2008/09:** Mark discussed the practice's main priority for the coming year, which was to re-design a community nursing service much more suited to the needs of the practice population. Northumberland Care Trust had issued a nursing specification which the practice felt was not quite flexible enough. It was important to the practice that consultation should take place with our patients to determine what they would like to see provided by a community service and a discussion took place about how best to carry this out. A decision was taken that an open meeting should take place, and this should be publicised widely to attract as many interested parties as possible. We thought that members of the nursing team could lead small groups to discuss the issues that were of importance. As a starting point 6 topics could be:

1. Palliative care
2. Elderly and care of the frail
3. Long term conditions
4. The role of the Community Matron and interface with social care
5. Admission avoidance
6. Housebound patients

David Lea offered support from his team to analyse the information received. Mark and Janet agreed to work on this idea which would be discussed further at a full Primary Healthcare Team meeting arranged for Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2008.

We agreed to make the Commissioning Plan available to the Forum at our next meeting, and that a glossary of terms should be added to make some of the content easier to understand.

**Quality of Care and Extended Opening Hours:** We discussed the latest government directive regarding Extended Opening Hours. The practice felt quite strongly that this was being imposed upon the organisation despite the fact that there had been no evidence whatsoever from recent patient surveys that this was needed. The introduction of the Rapid Access Clinic in May last year had been well received by patients and there was concern that this could not be sustained should the practice be forced in to extending the working day. More information was awaited from the Department of Health, but the group felt strongly that it would be a retrograde step to dismantle the current level of service. We discussed telephone appointments again and whether or not these could be bundled together in to clinics, as there was obviously a lot of activity occurring each day that was not easily measured. Janet and Mark suggested that a patient survey should be undertaken at the end of the month so that patient's needs continue to be met with a high level of service during the day.

**Magazine:** Janet and Mark were currently working on the Spring Edition of *Ponteland Medical Group News*. The autumn edition had been well received with no adverse comments, apart from one incorrect telephone number being published. Delivery of the magazine in to all households in the Ponteland and Dinnington area had been booked for soon after Easter. The group agreed that sponsorship should be kept to a minimum.

**DNAs (Do not Attends):** The practice continues to experience around 110-120 DNAs each month (equivalent to 10 surgeries). We discussed this again, and it was agreed to consider making it possible to cancel appointments via the website, and also for Sarah to re-run the 'DNA survey' similar to one which had been carried out two years previously. The results of this would be brought to the next meeting for further discussion.

**Date of next meeting:** Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2008.