

# PONTELAND MEDICALGROUP

## PATIENT FORUM

Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2009  
Darras Hall Surgery

### Notes of Meeting

**Present:** Dr. Mark McCaldin (Partner), Mrs. Janet Boakes (Practice Manager), Gillian McMullen (Reception Supervisor) Mrs. Shirley Hill, Mr. Colin Scott, Mrs. Joan Hentze.

**Apologies:** Mr. Alfred Rutherford

**Notes from last Meeting:** Agreed as accurate

### **Matters Arising:**

Extended Hours Janet reported that the uptake of evening appointments was now good. A small survey of 100 patients attending these surgeries over a 10 week period from January to March had shown that 66 of these patients had specifically requested evening appointments and 34 patients had taken the first available appointment. It was reassuring to find that only 1 patient commented that they had not known about the evening surgeries. The plan would be to repeat this exercise during August and September, and re-run the news item on the website during July.

Practice Action Plan for 2009/10 The practice was working towards the priorities within the plan and on target to meet the agreed timescales.

On-line Surveys A facility now existed to run surveys via the practice website and the first of these had just been started. This related to gathering some information regarding the next edition of the practice magazine which would go out in September.

Rapid Access Clinic Numbers of patients attending the RAC were remaining fairly static and the new times had been introduced. A small group from the practice was due to meet soon to discuss operational issues. The telephone recording system was being used as a training resource for receptionists and doctors.

### **New Business:**

New working arrangements within the nursing team Janet reported that Sister Helen Baty had just left the organisation to take up a new post at Freeman Hospital. This had presented the practice with an opportunity to explore new ways of delivering nursing support to the team and a six month pilot project was to start in July. Mark gave some information as to the background of this pilot:

Since the practice had moved in to the new accommodation in Ponteland in 2006, a number of out-reach consultant-led clinics had been introduced, working in partnership with Northumbria NHS Trust. These included upper and lower limb orthopaedics, general surgery, pain, gastroenterology, urogynaecology and Parkinson's disease clinics. These services are highly valued, not only by our

patients, but also by the practice and consultants who run educational meetings for the GPs. For some time the possibility of extending these services to include specialist nurse support to our health management clinics had been under consideration. With the departure of the senior practice nurse, it was felt that the time was right to run a pilot scheme for six months, which involved bringing in specialist nurses in diabetes and hypertension. This was planned to start at the beginning of July and would be evaluated at the end of the year. Concern was raised by the group members that patients may feel that the continuity of care had been compromised and a suggestion was made that a qualitative questionnaire should be run, once the clinics were established. It was agreed to carry this out after three months, possibly in October.

**Patient Involvement:** Janet had circulated a DoH document 'Understanding what Matters' prior to the meeting. Consensus of opinion was that this was too detailed for our needs and we should explore other ways of engaging with the practice population. Janet agreed that an article should appear in the next edition of the practice magazine, and suggested that her and Mark meet over the summer to write a 'Patient Involvement' strategy (to be shared with the group before the next meeting). It was felt strongly that younger patients should be recruited to the Patient Forum and that a possible way of identifying these patients may be through Nigel Twelves speaking to sixth formers at Ponteland High, and also by asking the Health visitors to help to identify young families. Janet made the group aware of the fact that towards the end of the year patients would be able to give feedback to the practice about the services provided via the NHS Choices website.

Shirley (as Secretary) made the group aware of the work that was being carried out by the Ponteland Community Partnership. Janet asked if it would be possible for her and Mark to attend a meeting after the summer to discuss patient and public involvement. Shirley offered to suggest this at their July meeting and also to forward the notes of the meetings in 2009 to Janet. Shirley reported that discussions had taken place regarding the introduction of a community bus, which would be beneficial for those patients who find it difficult to access the premises in Meadowfield.

**Any Other Business:** Joan asked if it was known whether any progress was being made regarding the building works at Dinnington and Janet agreed to make enquiries regarding the current situation.

**Date of Next Meeting:** Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2009, Ponteland Primary Care Centre.