**HIGHLANDS SURGERY PPG**

**Minutes of meeting held on 29th October 2024**

**PRESENT**

Dr A Shaw, Katie Baker (Pr. Manager) Pat Holden (Chair),KB JB SC YC FG PG PHa AJ VJ ML-B RL-B EM SM MP JP AR ARo LSa LS PS MW SW

**APOLOGIES**

BB VC JdT AL JS MS

**PH** Warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, including a new member. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**UPDATE ON FLU CLINICS**

Total flu vaccinations given to date were 1,055 for over 65s, and 383 for under 65s. KB informed us that uptake had been slow and the group were very disappointed to hear how many patients had booked vaccinations but failed to turn up, having gone to pharmacies instead, without cancelling their appointment. **KB** said that pharmacies are not meant to give vaccinations before the same date as doctors’ surgeries can, but many now do. As Highlands have to purchase the vaccines, wasted vaccines mean wasted money. Highlands Surgery will continue vaccinations next year but will order far fewer and many surgeries will not be doing flu vaccinations in future.

**KB** Said there was plenty of vaccine left and it is possible to make an appointment over the phone for a flu vaccination.

**RSV (**Respiratory syncytial virus) **VACCINATIONS**

This vaccine can at present be given to age group 75 – 79. **KB** said there had been a higher take-up than had been expected. The surgery will be putting on a specific RSV clinic; it is also possible to book an appointment by phone. A member questioned why the age group was 75 to 79**. Dr Shaw** replied that probably the one off vaccine might well be less effective over eighty years of age.

**STAFFING UPDATE**

We were told that Amelia, who came on an apprenticeship, will be leaving soon, as her apprenticeship has come to an end. Molly who currently works at the practice will pick up Amelia's job.

A new nurse prescriber will be starting shortly at the practice. **KB** said that, having looked at the practices needs, they had identified that nursing was what was most needed.

Kath the Clinical Pharmacist will be starting shortly taking clinics. She will do one acute clinic, and one chronic medical clinic. It is now possible to be booked into these clinics. She is a prescriber, and will be doing the same job as an ANP (Advanced Nurse Practitioner)

Two of the existing registrars will be leaving shortly. New registrars will be starting in December and February. The practice will then have 5 registrars under the General Practice Vocational Training Scheme *(*GPVTS*)*. It is hoped that locums will be used now more to cover winter absence and holidays. The surgery had taken on more salaried staff and so were depending less on locums.

Members said that they had received reports of how friendly and helpful the receptionists are, both in reception and on the phone, and they had also had the same experience themselves.

**PATIENTS KNOW BEST (PKB)**

PKB is a new patient portal, which MSE NHS is gradually introducing to give digital access to some of the information currently held within the hospital systems. Outpatient appointment information and inpatient discharge letters have started to appear in the PKB system. A member said they had found it very useful. Information and registration via [www.mse.nhs.uk/patients-know-best-pkb](http://www.mse.nhs.uk/patients-know-best-pkb) or from the NHS App.

**EXTENDED ACCESS**

**Dr Shaw** said that the extended hours appointments, Saturday and late Friday, are working well at the main surgery now that Highlands is organising it. One of Highlands Partners is usually 1 of the 3 GPs there. If a patient is from Highlands they will see a Highlands GP. Appointments must be made during the week; it is not a drop in facility. The Patient Services Manager Izabela is very efficient at ensuring that these appointments are fully utilised. It is not possible to have an emergency appointment on a Saturday.

**LOCAL PCN**

**Dr Shaw** explained that there are 5 practices in our Primary Care Network (PCN) with approximately 60,000 patients in total. Pall Mall is the lead practice. He explained a PCN was a group of practices working together, not by choice but by location. It was not a legal structure, but a lead practice model.

The PCN support manager will hopefully be attending our November PPG meeting, and would be able to explain more.

A member asked about mental health support. Dr. Shaw replied that for this area it is run by the North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) but the service is not effective and delays very long if waiting for an appointment.

Next proposed meeting to be held at St Margaret’s Meeting Room   
(entrance opposite the Church) Lime Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 3PA  
on **Tuesday 26th November** at 12.30.