

PPG Meeting Minutes

17th August 2023



Attendees: JW, SH, KS, LJ, GB, AB, MH, KW

Apologies: PS, PC

1. Ratify previous meeting's minutes/matters arising (all)

Previous minutes

The minutes from May were ratified by the group and can now be uploaded to the website

Matters arising

- Can electronic prescriptions (EPS) be flagged as urgent to the pharmacy? No current functionality to do this – the patient or clinician would need to tell the pharmacy that there was an urgent script and the pharmacy would locate it. AB to log as a service request with EMIS.
- Website update – the group agreed that the website is much improved. There is still work in progress. MH to review and add PPG statement from JW.

2. Questions to GP (KW)

KW attended the meeting to answer some questions from the group. KW has been a GP at Fireclay for 14 years and is a GP partner.

What changes have you seen since the merger?

- It seems like a long time ago (April 2018)!
- There were 4 GP partners at St George so communication was easier. When we first merged communication was more challenging due to more partners and staff, but we worked on this and it is now better than before. The workload can be shared between more partners.
- There was reluctance for staff to work across sites initially but in a way covid forced this to happen and positively brought teams together. Once staff worked across sites, this also encouraged patients to attend both sites.
- We implemented the best processes from each practice when we merged.
- It would have been more difficult as a stand-alone practice to fulfil government changes so this was a definite advantage. It was also easier for us to form a PCN as Fireclay.

Could you explain your role as a GP trainer and advantages to the practice?

- I completed a training qualification for teaching/education of health professionals
- We currently have 4 trainee GPs at Fireclay
- Being a training practice helps to keep us up to date with new developments and also brings new energy and enthusiasm to the practice!
- It is good for recruitment as our trainees often end up working with us as GPs

What are your expectations of the PPG and how can the PPG raise awareness of what we are trying to achieve?

- Patients only really see what is in the media but it is much more complex
- The PPG should be the voice of the patient but also try and communicate to patients e.g. make them aware of allied health professionals, accessing appropriate appointments etc
- Fireclay are open to suggestions from the PPG and are extremely open to trying new things!

How do you personally handle stress and do you think the practice supports staff with the growing pressure on them?

- I try and keep my home life and work life separate and it helps that I have a non-medical husband! We live in the countryside which also helps.
- Staff feel supported in the workplace by their colleagues and management and this was evidenced in our recent staff survey. We also have a social committee who organise social events both inside and outside of work. There are various WhatsApp groups for staff which helps with team building.

3. Practice items (AB/MH)

Staffing Update

- A new Nurse started at the beginning of August and we are advertising for another Nurse.
- We are looking for another PCN Physio to replace one leaving in September.
- A new PCN Practice Pharmacist is starting in October.
- A Physicians Associate is starting in November (new role).

Telephone System

Our new telephone system with Surgery Connect goes live on 25th August. This will have the following advantages:

- It will integrate with our clinical system so the patient record will automatically open when the call is answered (staff will double check patient details).
- Staff will be able to call direct from the patient record.
- There will be no limit to the number of calls in the queue and therefore no engaged tone for the patient.
- Callback function for patients.
- Messages can be easily and quickly updated.
- Good reporting tools for management.

Patches (replacing eConsults)

- Patches went live on 1st August.
- Enquiries can be clinical or non-clinical and will take traffic away from the phones.
- Clinical enquiries will be dealt with exactly the same as if the patient phones in but replies are usually online.
- We are looking at introducing new teams to Patches so that requests can be passed directly to them e.g. medicines management queries, referral queries to secretaries.
- The plan to bring a GP on board to deal with any queries that patient navigators aren't sure where to signpost.

Where does Patches come from (JW)? *It was designed and built by GPs & clinicians in Manchester.*

Staff Survey

We have recently completed a staff survey which showed some positive results, for example:

- 98% of staff felt they had a good relationship with their colleagues.
- 97% of staff felt listened to by their line manager.

What improvements can be made:

- We will formalise the role of 'wellbeing champion'. OneCare/ICB have set up a forum for wellbeing champions which we can access.

Do we have a mental health first aider (GB)? *No, we do not but there are other avenues we can use and we are also introducing role of wellbeing champion.*

How can we encourage more staff to respond to the staff survey (GB)? *Staff could have responded anonymously, although most were happy to put their name on their response. We will communicate actions so that staff can see they are being listened to which may encourage a response next time. We will repeat a shorter survey in March.*

4. PPG items (JW/SH)

PPG week – members to think about what we can do in PPG week June 2024. Noticeboard at vaccination clinic?

Health Awareness dates – SH has researched health awareness dates for the rest of the year. These have been passed to Operations Manager to use for website and facebook posts.

5. AOB (all)

- LJ suggested 'A day in the life of.....' for the next newsletter. Also suggested previously by JW. To be discussed at management meeting.
- LJ asked if there is succession planning for GPs currently doing Learning Disability reviews. There are 4 GPs regularly doing LD reviews (although all GPs can do these). We also have a specialist nurse completing these and a dedicated care coordinator to organise the appointments and liaise with the patient and their carer. This also generated a discussion on distinguishing between Learning Difficulties & Learning Disabilities. We are currently doing some work on this in the practice as there is some crossover.

6. Next meeting date

- Thursday 30th November 3.15pm