### PPG Meeting

### January 15th 2025

**Alwoodley Medical Centre**

**Present (Patients):** Dr Stewart Manning (Dr SM), Richard Killington (RK), Shelley Ross (SR), Marilyn Ableson (MA), Barbara Robinson (BR), Bea Glass (BG), Kate Pritchard (KP), Sue Smith (SS).

**Present (AMC):** Dr Raj Sathiyaseelan (Dr RS), Dr Jorge Allegria Valencia (Dr JAV), Ayishah Khan (AK)

**Visitors:** Madeleine Wood (ML) Moor Allerton Library

**Minutes compiled by:** SR

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**Apologies**

Philip Turnpenny, Colin Sykes, Brenda Metcalfe, Alex Sharpe, Louise Scott.

**Minutes Of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the November 13th 2024 meeting were approved.

**Matters Arising**

**Befriending Service**

CS had emailed SR to advise that he had concluded his efforts with the Lingfield Centre regarding obtaining contact information for befriending services. He had been unable to gain any information from them and had advised them to look at the social proscribing page on the website if they needed information.

**Digital Support Sessions at Moor Allerton Library**

**Action:**

* A decision will be taken about whether to continue with the sessions.

MW said the last session had taken place in the early part of December 2024 but only 5-6 people had turned up. Due to the poor number, she said it appeared that the sessions were no longer needed but the library would still be offering IT training for those members of the local community who needed it.

Dr SM suggested that the poor turnout may have been due to the colder weather and suggested that another session be held in the Spring.

**Action:** To be discussed at the next meeting in April.

**PPG Noticeboard**

**Action:** BR to speak to LGP/AK about the PPG noticeboard.

BR explained that she had set up the PPG noticeboard and had pinned up the group’s Terms of Reference. SR said it would be good to put these in a plastic wallet and use the space to display other information such as the PPG’s contact details and the minutes from the previous meeting. BR said she had heard that the practice did not want to display the minutes even though they can be accessed on the AMC website. Dr RS said there was no reason not to display the minutes. BR said she was happy to continue maintaining the board.

**Reading Well Scheme**

**Action:** MW to restock the book shelves

MW had restocked the books before Christmas and planned to review them in due course. MA said she would liaise with MW about this.

MW suggested inviting a speaker to talk about diabetes or a health and well-being issue which could be held at the library. Dr SM said he would be happy to give a talk about cancer screening and knowing your own body which he regularly gives to different community groups. RK said a talk could be given about vaccinations.

MW asked if this would be an AMC initiative or organised by the library. She said she would have to check with her senior management team.

**Action:**

* MW and MA to review the books in the stand.
* MW to speak to the library about hosting health and well-being talks.

**PPG Facebook Page**

**Action:** AK to:

* speak to the web designer about moving the sign-up facility for practice emails to the homepage
* speak to Vicky Amos (VA) about a practice Facebook page
* contact PATCHs about uploading a clearer message

**Patient Sign Up for News about the Practice**

AK advised that the web designer had moved the facility for patients to sign-up for practice news next to the NHS app at the bottom of the AMC homepage.

She also said that she had spoken to VA, AMC’s Patient Service’s Manager, about setting up a Facebook page. She said that VA had expressed concerns about who would run the page and would prefer for patients to gain information and news about the Practice from the website. KP said she was aware that a number of other practices had Facebook pages and it was a good way to communicate with patients. BG said she would be happy to help set the page up and suggested that it could be run by several admins. She added that it could be updated weekly and only admins would be able to post information. There would be no facility for followers to post.

AK said she would speak to VA again to advise that the PPG were keen to set up a Facebook page as members believed it would be a useful asset for both the Practice and patients.

**Improving the message on PATCHs when it reaches capacity**

AK said she had emailed PATCHs twice and was still waiting for a response.

**Action:** AK

* + - to speak to VA about setting up a Facebook page
    - to advise the group on the response from PATCHs about changing the message

**Private Area for Patients at Reception**

**Action:** AK to look into this further.

AK advised that there was a room next to reception which was rarely used and a sign had been put up to advise patients.

**Latest News and Information from the AMC team**

At the pre-meeting, RK had suggested that at each meeting the medical team should give a regular update about any news or information they wished to relay. This was agreed by the whole group.

When advised about this at the main meeting, Dr RS said that since the beginning of December 2024, there had been an issue regarding blood test results following the implementation of a new system to process blood tests by the Leeds Hospitals Teaching NHS Trust. He explained that this had affected all practices in Leeds, Bradford and Harrogate and caused absolute havoc. The consequences of this were that blood tests were not being analysed and results were not coming back properly. It meant that results were and had been severely delayed with some patients being recalled and retested.

He said that he had written to the CQC and the ICB about the chaos that had ensued as a result of what was a software update. Despite trying to resolve the issue, there were still problems and AMC patients were being sent to Chapel Allerton because the surgery was unable to cope with the number of repeat blood tests.

SR asked if there had been anything wrong with the previous system. Dr RS said there had not.

**PATCHs**

SR said she had received some questions from two members of the PPG virtual group about PATCHs.

Carolyn Holroyde (CH) asked:

“Unless logging onto PATCHs at 8am, the following message appears: “Alwoodley Medical Centre is currently unavailable for health problems on PATCHs. They will next be available tomorrow at 0800. PATCHs is closed as the surgery has now reached its safe capacity to see patients. PATCHs will reopen at 8am the next working day.

“Why is it not possible to register your issue at any time of day and if unable to see a GP, why can’t requests be reviewed the next day?”

Dr RS said at 8am, many patients try to access PATCHs which results in an average of 200 PATCHs requests being dealt with each day. He explained that when a large number patients are accessing PATCHs at the same time, the software used by the PATCHs system reaches capacity. This creates the message stating that AMC is unavailable for health problems on PATCHs and that it will be available the next day at 8am. However, this ‘unavailability’ is only temporary while the various messages are being filtered to the appropriate place. Once this has been achieved, PATCHs re-opens. He advised that patients should continue to try. However, it was not possible to keep accepting requests once the daily threshold of appointments had been reached.

“What are patients supposed to do if they need an urgent appointment that is not an emergency? There is nothing in the PATCHs message providing advice.”

Dr JAV said that in this situation, patients should call the Practice and if the issue is urgent, an appointment will be made by reception using the PATCHs system. However, if it is for a routine appointment, then they will be asked to contact the Practice the next day. He added that those patients who struggled to use PATCHs and the NHS app when making an appointment, could also call the Practice and an appointment will be made for them.

“What percentage of patients are getting face to face appointments and is this increasing or decreasing?”

Dr RS said 78% of patients had face to face appointments while 22% had telephone appointments. He added that this had slightly increased since last year.

RK asked what impact PATCHs had had on the number of phone calls received by the Practice since its implementation. Dr RS said these had been reduced by half.

Julian Jacobs (JJ) wanted to know why it was necessary to speak to a doctor on the telephone and then be asked to come in for a face-to-face appointment. Dr JAV said it was sometimes necessary to triage patients to establish whether a face-to-face appointment was needed.

JJ also stated that he had heard from other patients, that they were unable to make appointments by telephone. Dr JAV reiterated that those patients struggling to use PATCHs could contact the Practice and an appointment would be made for them by reception using the PATCHs system.

Dr RS added that patients under the age of 16, those receiving palliative care or are housebound, will always be seen on the same day when requesting an appointment.

**Labour’s Plans for the NHS**

Dr SM asked what the medical team’s views were regarding the government’s plans for the NHS. Dr RS said it was unclear what was going to happen but would be challenging. Dr SM said this topic would continue as an agenda item at future meetings.

**Next Meeting**

Wednesday April 2nd 2025