



Minutes of a Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 27th March 2024 at Haddenham Medical Centre

Present Barry Lynch (Chair) Brian Rogers (Vice Chair) Dr Mark Howcutt, Ciar Munn, Janet Mills (Chair of Haddenham u3a) and 30 PPG members

1. The Chairman welcomed members and introduced Janet Mills Chair of Haddenham u3a who talked to us about the many activities available and the benefit to health to its members.
2. Janet said she had moved to Haddenham in March 2020 and in 2021 after Covid she went along to a meeting of the u3a and joined as a committee member eventually becoming Chair. The Haddenham u3a is well established and gives learning opportunities for retired people with a wide range of new interests and places to visit and theatre trips. They now call it the third age trust and u3a where you can make new friends and have fun, learn, laugh, live. The National Association publishes 3 magazines per year and as part of your subscription of £16 you receive a posted copy. Haddenham u3a meet every month on the second Tuesday at 2.30pm in the village hall with an attendance of around 140 members. The total membership is 400. You can visit the website for more information www.u3a.org.uk. Though based in Haddenham the invitation goes out to all surrounding villages. The Social Prescriber at the Practice does encourage people who are lonely to join the u3a.
3. Practice Report – Dr Mark Howcutt and Ciar Munn
Ciar informed the meeting that the practice now has 1 full-time and 1 part-time health care assistants which will ease the long waiting time. Dr. Djemal a locum will be working 2 days per week to give extra help. A lot of reception and admin staff have been on holiday recently, but next month's waiting times should be shorter. We will be reviewing the appointment system next month within the practice to see how can make improvements and we have a trainee GP who will be looking at updating our website.

Dr. Howcutt informed that recently there has been an upsurge in old health issues such as scarlet fever and whooping cough where the vaccination has worn off in teenagers. They have had 1 case of measles and that was the first case he had ever seen. He would like everyone to be encouraged to have the vaccination. Funding of the 5-year arrangement by the Government with GPs has come to an end and in April there will be a new contract with an uplift of funding of 1.9%. In reality we need more. GPs are considering industrial action but the GP contract demands that it will not affect patients.

4. Barry asked if anyone had seen the theatre production which the PPG organized in conjunction with Human Story Theatre in 2019 called "Connies Colander" and only one or two members put their hands up. The play was well attended with over 100 members. The PPG is proposing to stage a new production "Lizzie on the Fence" together with the Human Story Theatre Company and we are hoping to hold this in October. Lizzie on the Fence is a humorous black comedy about an elderly couple set during the Covid crisis in a situation with one partner of the couple has a terminal illness and is in a care home and the partner not being able to visit. This will be a light and humorous portrayal and we are hoping everyone will come along. We do not have a venue as yet but are working on that. Unfortunately, we will not be going be able to offer free admission and will have to make a small charge. The Chair asked who would be prepared to come to this event and pay a small charge, perhaps £8 to attend. On a show of hands, the response was pretty good so we will push ahead and give more information in due course.

The 3 PPGs in the Phoenix PCN (Primary Care Network) have been pushing for more involvement in the additional services the PCN supplies to the 3 practices in our PCN area. We have now got agreement that the 3 Chairs of the PPGs in the practices can join their board meetings which will help to us understand exactly what the PCN is providing to patients and how to inform patients better of these services.

We were disappointed last month that our proposals to the PCN for support and funding for a patient education programme were refused. We are not going to give up on patient education and are going to work towards a lighter programme of short talks on various health subjects which would be held at HMC and possibly the other 2 practice members of the PPG.

5. Discussion on the need for patient self-help and education

Barry said that the PPG felt patients need to take more care of their own health. The increased number of people who are out of work due to sickness suggests an increase in people not paying attention to their health. A patient cannot expect an endless supply of treatment from the NHS as this is just not working. From our original idea of comprehensive education courses we are now working on a slimmer program where we will offer short talks on relevant health topics with volunteer speakers to assist them in maintaining their health.

One subject we are considering is people not being aware their test results are online or understanding them. Patients test results were made available online at the end of October 2023 and you can see them using the NHS app or Patient Access.

A session would consist of instruction on how to access test results online and hopefully some clinical input on interpretation of them.

The Chair asked for a show of hands as to how many members were not aware that they could see their medical record online and the response was around 75%.

If you need help getting online to see your test result you can message our PPG Helpdesk and our tech savvy volunteers will get back to you. Go to <https://www.dinton.info/ppgithelprequest.php>

Question from floor – “How long after a test can you expect to see the website test results”.

Dr Howcutt – results will not be released until the doctor has viewed them. Every test HMC requests comes back to a doctor though Blood tests requested by the hospital sometimes will not be seen.

Many results are back in 24 hours although some take a couple of days, and the doctor has to review them, release them and put comments to make it easy for patients to understand. Interpreting test results is very difficult from one patient to another. If there is a problem the doctor will let you know and you will be contacted by reception. Tests very important like cancer patients are advised to please check in 2 weeks that we have got the result back, if the doctor was very worried he would make a note to check.

Barry said online test results can be very useful for patients with long term conditions such as Diabetes. You can get online a list of historic results and sometimes a graph of the readings over time which can indicate your direction of sugar level control. The practice will report on your latest result which may be OK but online information may enable you to see that your trend could be upward and you could correct it yourself. Looking at your full results online can give you the bigger picture and takes pressure off reception.

Dr Howcutt suggested to Barry that the PCN would be well placed to supply speakers for this project Barry totally agreed and said that now that PPG chairs were able to sit on the PCN board meetings it would be easier to work with them on this project.

The PPG is concerned that we cannot see that PCN has delivered much to date, although we are not aware of all their activity. Patients understand little about the PCN and how their services benefit them. We hope that our PCN meeting attendances will help understand more about their services and how we can help patients understand how they can access them. A lot of taxpayers money has been spent on PCNs but we cannot see that this has relieved the pressure on the doctors very much

Lesley Coles said she had good service from Pharmacy Tech (Anna) and Dr Howcutt said she belonged to the practice not the PCN! Pharmacists from the PCN could not give enough support to the practice so they have employed their own.

Angela Rainbow had received a letter from PCN (Rachael) and possibly people who have certain problems will get them. In defence of the PCN Dr Howcutt explained that individual patients had benefited greatly from support from them but that the stated objective of PCNs taking pressure off the doctors has not materialised.

Question from the floor – Concerning the sessions the PPG is proposing on test results would patients have sufficient knowledge to understand the implications of test results and could that represent a danger?

Barry responded that we are not looking to giving people a degree course. We want to get patients involved in looking at the results and getting into the habit of using the online system. It would be a simple introduction as to how to access their results and read the comments from the doctors. Perhaps an hour long session. In the past we had Weight Loss sessions that were successful and regularly attended.

Comment from Lorraine Gooch that we have not mentioned mental health in our proposed list for education topics and support in this area is desperately needed.

Barry responded in that he felt that it had been covered in the topics with Social Prescription and Wellbeing Dr Howcutt confirmed the rise in mental health issues but felt that not all these could be attributed to Wellbeing issues. He warned that it could be difficult to find speakers with sufficient knowledge to talk on the subject of mental health. It would be challenging to provide sessions for people with mental health problems which were safe unless the speaker had a high level of training. The real issues of mental health we will have to leave to the experts.

Ciar said that more specialist help with triage was being given to the practice from Oxford Health in the form of a mental health practitioner and a psychiatrist.

Barry said that he felt that the PPG could address, in its programme, some of the causes of mental health but that dealing directly with the subject of mental health needed expertise that was beyond their knowledge. David Gregory commented that he felt that Social Media was responsible for many problems today and has created a lot pressures leading to mental health problems.

6. Any other business -

Brian Rogers said somebody asked a question about the pharmacist, who we did invite along to this evening but was unable to attend. Hopefully he will come to the next meeting to talk about the new process where people can in certain circumstances use the pharmacy instead of coming to the medical centre. There are some issues when some drugs cannot be administered due to age and they are not allowed to issue certain drugs to people above a certain age. We are hoping he will come regularly to our meetings.

Dr Howcutt gave a preview of the up and running Pharmacy First Schem and list of conditions they can manage at the Pharmacy.

These are:

Earache children aged 1-17

Impetigo Adults and Children aged 1 and over

Infected Insect Bites Adults and Children aged 1 over

Shingles age Adults aged 18 and over

Sinusitis Adults and Children aged 12 and over

Sour throats Adults and Children aged 5 and over

Uncomplicated urine infections Women aged 16-64

The Practice would encourage people to use Pharmacy First which is a walk in and they can help if adequate training has been done by the pharmacist.

Comment from Floor – Had eye infection and went to Tesco pharmacy got drops and within a couple of days drops successful.

Barry asked for a show of hands from members who think the pharmacy has improved in the last few months. 100% so a terrific job. Brian Rogers suggested we give the positive feedback to the Pharmacy on the straw poll. We have some details we feel could be improved on the SMS messages which need discussion with the pharmacy.

Question from Floor – Are the days of meetings set in stone i.e. always a Wednesday? Dr Howcutt said for him he was also at choir on Thursday and not at the surgery on Tuesday and that Thursday and Friday difficult. We have had different times of meetings but will explore if a different day and time can be agreed.

7. Date of next PPG meeting set as – Wed 29th May 2024 .
8. The Chair thanked the members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.