

Minutes - Published

Almondsbury PPG Autumn Meeting
23 October 2023 18:00

Attendees

P.Miles, A. Mintram, J. Lockey (from 6.30pm), D. Davies, J. Davies, S. Hewson, M. McNally, F. Phipps, D and P Rayfield, H. Sanday, R. Spence, C.Thomas, N. Tilton (Chair), E.Vicary, P. Vicary, A.White

Apologies

J. Adams, H. Dimambro, M .Farmer, P. Hinton, L. Roberts, J. Thomas

Approval of minutes

Nina welcomed new member Christine Thomas to the PPG.

Notes from the PPG meeting held on 4.7.23 were signed off as an accurate record of the meeting.

Action Plan

Action Plan from the previous meeting was reviewed with actions closed as completed or updated.

Thanks were extended from the practice to all those who supported the distribution of information around the upcoming new Anima system.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Nina proposed the Terms of Reference document, updated in the light of the last meeting's discussions, should be accepted. This was seconded by Helen S.

The PPG at Hanham have been happy to adopt the re-worked document also.

Two matters arose from the Terms of Reference: Christine T. raised the need for future consideration of how the ambitions of diversity on the PPG might be achieved, and Pat Hinton had sent a point for discussion to Nina regarding geographical representation on the Group.

Practice Update

Dr Hannah Warren is leaving to relocate and her replacement will be subject to appointments being made at the Hanham practice. The main partners at Almondsbury, Drs Lockey and Atherton, also work at Hanham, so the new appointee at Hanham will hopefully free up more time for those doctors to spend in Almondsbury. An Advanced Nurse Practitioner is being sought.

The flu clinics are going well: the practice usually get around 80% take up and are currently achieving 60%+. The next flu clinic in Almondsbury will be on Nov 3rd.

Contractors contacted the Surgery with notice of a closure of Sundays Hill from Oct 23rd, affecting access for patients and staff. The work should be completed by Sat. Oct 28th.

ANIMA

Andy echoed Paula's thanks for the support and cooperation around the adoption of the new booking system introduced on Aug 16th 2023. While the system won't solve every problem around patient access, it is a government requirement that this, or one of the three other named systems, should be adopted by all GP practices. Anima is the system our surgery has gone with. 2700 requests have been made on the

system so far and of these, 84% were medical requests and the rest were administrative. The peak day for requests has been seen on Mondays. Over 80% of the requests have been made online. Andy offered to share the practice analysis of the system usage with the PPG members.

From the Practice's point of view the system is working well; those with higher clinical need are being seen sooner (a call-back from Reception after advice from the GP triaging the request has been within 2-3 hours) and those of lesser urgency wait a little longer (eg. a request for a letter, taking around 2 days).

Dr Lockey reported that, from a clinician's perspective, the new system is proving really successful. Patients are being seen more quickly and by the right person. She asserted it was still a work in progress and it suits different people in different ways. Teething troubles are being dealt with.

Teething troubles reported by Andy include:

- There are many questions asked when making a request, and for simple requests these appear too numerous. But clinicians need to know sufficient information to assess the level of need appropriately. Staff at the Almondsbury surgery are confident/experienced enough to reduce some of those less important questions when dealing with requests on the telephone.
- There is confusion with inconsistent instructions around log-in for patients. Paula reported that the Practice is preparing a series of step-by-step guides to log -in, for individuals, and for carers, proxy/dependent access and those who share the same email address. Anima itself is being modified to streamline log-in and linking one log-in page request to another correctly.
- Currently training for staff and volunteers to support patients with log-in difficulties needs to be put on hold until the modifications and improvements to the system are finished. This should be by Christmas.
- Paula reiterated that if a patient is struggling to get online, a call to Reception will help sort out the problem. 'How to.....' step-by-step guides will be available from next week and will be posted on the updated website, and in hard copy for distribution in the Community Shop and beyond. The usual channels will be used to have them placed in the parish magazines and on social media.
- Telephone: on some days the telephone queues remain an issue. The lengthy questions that need to be asked make calls long, but online access mitigates against some of the telephone demand. The new telephone system will allow for a more streamlined queuing system, but this is not available yet.

Patient feedback: the log-in process is somewhat confusing and long-winded, but when these hurdles are overcome, the system works well and the feedback, both in the meeting and to the Practice directly, is broadly positive. The difficulties around shared email addresses and dependents' access have been raised several times. The scramble for the 8am telephone request for appointments has been resolved.

A couple of members raised concern that a small number of patients had been told that reception could not deal with face-to-face requests and this had caused some distress. Paula emphasised that this is not the case and will remind reception staff of current guidance.

There will be a patient survey around Anima, which already asks for feedback when using the system. Andy reported that, as a government mandate, the system was making things better and clinically safer.

Christine T asked if there were plans to extend the availability of Anima beyond the Surgery's opening hours. Andy replied that the system could, indeed, be used 24/7 but the process must work first before

consideration is given to extending its use. The medical requests must be responded to in a timely manner which will be impacted by staff availability. Dr Lockey reported that the Practice's opening hours are under review, with the ambition of having a late evening or weekend opening.

Richard S asked if Anima is in widespread usage. He felt that once you are 'in' to the system it was brilliant. Andy replied that it is part of the national framework of suppliers of systems so other Practices will be using it.

Paula underscored that there was no obligation to go online with requests and that the reception staff, while strongly recommending the online system at first as they got to grips with it themselves, are now able to give more support for those struggling with the system. Also, some requests, eg Nurse appointments, can be phoned through without the need to go online. Similarly, GP texts or requests for follow-up appointments can be dealt with at Reception.

Paula felt that follow-ups, in particular, were working really well when the GPs made the appointment themselves at times to suit the patient and GP; there is more continuity and less stress all round.

AOB

Christine T asked for clarification around the list of vulnerable patients held by the Practice and Andy explained that the Anima system allows for a dynamic update as new patients are added or information is received, for example from a hospital report or discharge letter. A search is used to interrogate the system for each clinic to capture those eligible through vulnerability or by age.

While this is not 100% accurate, a safety-net text is sent out by the Practice also, to cover missing patients.

Recruitment to/diversity of the PPG will be scheduled for the next meeting.

The action plan point of a sub-committee for communications was decided to be unnecessary at this time.

Helen S offered to take to the Community Shop committee the idea of using the Shop as a centre of support for those having difficulty with the online Anima process. She thought use could be made of the Shop's wi-fi and office space upstairs to give help at specified times. Christine suggested that there be a group of volunteer 'super-users' to support those struggling with the online system.

Helen, as founder of the regular village walks that start and end at the Shop, suggested that the Practice may wish to recommend these walks to any patients who might benefit from joining them. Similarly, Maria M. , organiser of the ladies singing group, would welcome any referrals coming via the Surgery. These two welcomed offers initiated conversations around 'social prescribing'. While they do not fall into this category as such, Paula suggested that some future input from a guest speaker on the subject of social prescribing might be of interest to the PPG. The group agreed.

Future Meetings

The date for the Winter meeting was agreed as **Wed Jan 10th 2024**

Proposed meetings 18.4.24, 8.7.24 and 22.10.24 to be reviewed.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm