

Norbury Medical Practice - Patient Participation Group

Notes of Meeting held at 2.00pm on Monday 21st January 2019

Present

Dr Noureen Chaudery
Dr Kalpesh Shah
Mr Ian Acaster
Mr Mike Phillips
Mr Rasiklal Shah (Practice Manager)
Mr Rasiklal Shah (Pharm)
Mr Mohammed Sheikh
Mr John Taylor
Mrs Seema Thapliyal (Practice Pharmacist)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Sue Biggs, Mrs Kay Coles, Mr Syed & Mrs Chris Farouk, Mr Howard Hill, Mrs Eunice Shepherd and Mr Andrew Smith.

1. Introduction.

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Mrs Seema Thapliyal who has joined the Practice recently as the Practice Pharmacist.

MP outlined the role of the PPG and indicated that we had been formed in September 2006 and the committee is composed of patients of the Practice who meet with doctors and practice staff at regular intervals to:-

- Foster and maintain a good relationship between the practice and the patients
- Increase patients' awareness of the practice facilities and topical health issues
- Bring the wishes and concerns of the patient to the doctors and the practice staff

Since the PPG was formed, we have had 71 meetings and issued 19 Newsletters to patients. Copies of the minutes for the last 6 years and most of the Newsletters are available the Practice website. The PPG committee normally meets at 2.00pm on the third Monday, every 2 months, and the meetings are intended to last for about an hour.

MP indicated that apart from the Patient Participation Group (PPG) there is also a Patient Reference Group (PRG) which is a virtual community of about 1000-1200 patients for whom the Practice holds their email addresses. This enables the Practice to circulate Newsletters to patients and to gain their views and ensure they are involved in decisions about the range and quality of the services provided by our practice.

MP indicated that the main agenda items at this meeting would be to have:-

- a. An update on how the 'flu jab programme is going
- b. Discussion re NHS England announcement that patients can now access GP appointments in the evening and at weekends
- c. Discussion re NHS England announcement re free Health Checks
- d. An update on NHS proposals re items which should no longer be routinely prescribed in Primary Care

2. Update on how the 'flu jab programme is going.

NHS England have set a 'flu vaccine uptake ambition in 2018/19 as follows:-

Groups

Aged 65 years and over	75%
Aged under 65 'at risk', incl pregnant women	At least 55% in all clinical risk groups
School aged children (in reception & years 1 to 5)	An average of at least 65%
Preschool children aged 2 and 3 years old	At least 48%

RS(PM) tabled a report at the last meeting (dated week ending 4th November 2018) on the situation at Norbury Medical Practice showing the ***Eligible Patients, Remaining Patients to Vaccinate and Vaccinations to meet National Ambition.***

RS(PM) tabled another report at this meeting (dated week ending 20th January 2019) on the current situation at Norbury Medical Practice showing similar information to the earlier report.

Although every encouragement has been given to patients to have the 'flu jab, there are still concerns re the take up in several groups. Unfortunately there had been earlier delays in supplies of the relevant vaccines which may have impacted on the uptake rates. Some patients may also have concerns about the limited effectiveness of last year's vaccines.

It is understood from newspaper reports that the number of patients seeing GPs about 'flu has more than doubled in the last few weeks, whilst the number of cases treated in intensive care is as bad as it was last year, when the NHS had the worst winter crisis on record.

3. Discussion re NHS England announcement that patients can now access GP appointments in the evening and at weekends

The NHS has recently issued a note (17th December 2018)(copy attached) that all patients across England can now access GP appointments in the evening and weekends.

The note also indicates that extended appointments will either be available through designated local NHS services and in some cases a patient's own GP practice.

Norbury Medical Practice already offers extended evening appointments on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, for people who are unable to access the GP surgeries during the usual opening hours due to their work commitments. However funding limitations do not permit any further enhancements.

The other alternatives for patients are to attend one of the GP Hubs as recommended in the PPG Newsletter of July 2018, or to attend the new service set up by the Croydon GP Collaborative (CGPC) which is run from Brigstock Family Practice.

It was agreed that the next PPG Newsletter would set out all of these options for patients.

4. Discussion re NHS England announcement re free Health Checks

The NHS has recently issued a note (31st December 2018)(copy attached) that all patients aged between 40 and 74 with no pre-existing health conditions will be invited automatically for a free NHS Health Check, which takes place every five years.

It was understood that all the necessary actions are in hand and the relevant patients are being contacted and invited to arrange their Health Check appointment at any one of the many sites listed in their contact letter.

5. Update on NHS proposals re items which should no longer be routinely prescribed in Primary Care.

In the year prior to June 2017, the NHS spent approximately £569 million on prescriptions for medicines which can be purchased over the counter from a pharmacy and other outlets such as supermarkets. Annually, the NHS spends £4.5M on dandruff shampoos, £7.5M on indigestion and heartburn, and £5.5M on mouth ulcers.

NHS England therefore called on Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to curb prescriptions for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines for a condition:-

- that is considered to be self-limiting and so does not need treatment as it will heal of its own accord
- which lends itself to self-care ie that the person suffering does not normally need to seek medical care but may decide to seek help with symptom relief from a local pharmacy and use an over-the-counter medicine.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) subsequently asked for a nationally co-ordinated approach to producing commissioning guidance.

As a result, NHS England carried out a public consultation for a period of 12 weeks, from 20th December 2017 – 14th March 2018 and issued guidance on 29th March 2018.

The recommendations covered 35 minor, short term conditions, including dandruff, indigestion, mouth ulcers, travel sickness and coughs and colds. Vitamins/minerals and also probiotics have also been included as items of low clinical effectiveness which are high cost to the NHS. The total list of 37 conditions for which prescribing should be restricted are listed in the guidance that was issued on 29th March 2018 – click on the following link:-

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-guidance-for-ccgs/>

However, the NS has now given further consideration to the matter and has proposed to update and review the commissioning guidance on 8 more products that cost the NHS more than £68 million. A national public consultation which runs from 28th November 2018 until 28th February 2019 has been launched – click on the following link:-

https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/consultation/items-routinely-prescribed-update/user_uploads/low-priority-prescribing-consultation-guidance.pdf

Whilst we await the updated guidance, it is understood that GPs will continue to use discretion about issuing prescriptions for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.

6. Any Other Business

There was no further AOB.

7. Date of Next Meeting

We normally meet every two months, on the third Monday of the month, to avoid the Practice meetings and it was agreed that we should convene the next PPG meeting on the third Monday in March 2019 – **Monday 18th March 2019 starting at the usual time of 2.00 pm.**

Michael J Phillips
Chairman

NHS England News

Evening and weekend general practice appointments available across England

17 December 2018

All patients across England can now access general practice appointments in the evening and weekends, NHS England has announced today.

The extended access means that patients will be able to see a doctor, nurse or other member of the practice team at a time convenient to them – providing an estimated nine million extra appointments per year.

The weekend and evening service is available across the country more than three months ahead of schedule and will help ease pressures on the NHS as temperatures drop.

NHS England has started a communications campaign for the run up to Christmas to ensure patients are aware of the evening and weekend appointments.

Dominic Hardy, NHS England’s Director of Primary Care Delivery, said: “Strengthening general practice is an important part of the NHS Long Term Plan and local health services have worked hard to ensure patients have access to our excellent general practice services right across the country. Because of this hard work, we have been able to make these extra appointments available months ahead of schedule and before winter really starts.

“As well as offering convenience and choice to patients, it will help to reduce some of the pressure on general practice and A&Es and ease some of the wider system pressures we saw last winter.”

On top of the extended access services, strengthening general practice and primary care is a key part of the forthcoming NHS Long Term Plan and at least £3.5 billion more in real terms will be invested in primary medical and community services, which will also improve access to weekday ‘in hours’ services.

Recent figures show there are now 5,321 more primary health professionals working in primary care than three years ago.

That exceeds NHS England’s target of an additional 5,000 by 2020 set out in the General Practice Forward View.

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, said: “GPs across the country are going above and beyond to ensure we can deliver good, safe care for our patients under intense resource and workforce pressures.

“All practices in England now offer some form of extended access to routine GP services, and they will have tailored these to the needs of their local population.

“We are preparing for a very busy winter in general practice. Our patients should always be able to access GP services if they become ill, either through our routine service, or the GP out of hours service – but we would also encourage patients to think about whether they really need to see a GP, or whether self-care or visiting a pharmacist are options in the first instance.”

Extended appointments will either be available through designated local NHS services and in some cases a patient’s own GP practice.

The service is being publicised through national press and broadcast to ensure patients are aware of the extra appointments.

It has proved popular in areas where the evening and weekend appointments were first trialled. In Herefordshire, for example, more than nine in ten appointments were used by patients in August.

In London, where these services have been in place for 18 months, almost three quarters of appointments are taken up.

Evening and weekend appointments will be offered in addition to other services such as out of hours GPs and NHS 111 that offer access to clinicians at any time day or night.

Spotting heart problems early could prevent dementia in tens of thousands

31 December 2018

Making a New Year's resolution to take up a free NHS health check could stop people developing dementia as well as catching physical conditions, a top doctor said today.

The national health check – a 20-minute, pain-free assessment carried out by a GP or nurse and involving tests on blood pressure, weight and height – is free to everyone aged 40 years old and above.

Symptoms like high blood pressure or an irregular heartbeat increase the risk of having a stroke or suffering a heart attack and can be spotted as part of the routine health check.

The national health check programme also picks up conditions such as kidney disease and type 2 diabetes and, since June, has included advice about preventing dementia.

However, recent figures show that of the 15 million people eligible for a free NHS health check over the last five years, fewer than 50% took one.

For every 2% reduction in the number of people experiencing stroke or other heart problems there are around 10,000 fewer dementia cases later in life.

As part of the long term plan for the health service, NHS England has committed to improving care for heart conditions and stroke.

On average, four strokes can be prevented for 100 people who are identified with atrial fibrillation and receiving anticoagulation medication which helps to thin, prevent and break up dangerous blood clots.

Alistair Burns, National Clinical Director for Dementia and Older People's Mental Health for NHS England said: "Heart disease and dementia are two of the biggest health risks facing people in our country and the national health check will help stop both.

"Attending a free NHS health check is a great opportunity to discuss existing health conditions, and to work out how to reduce the risk of developing dementia and other illness in the future.

"The start of a new year is exactly the right time to resolve commit to taking a simple, free and potentially life-saving step towards a healthier life."

Everyone aged between 40 and 74 with no pre-existing health conditions is invited automatically for their free NHS health check, which takes place every five years.

The NHS in England has committed to improving early diagnosis of dementia and has already made significant improvements in care for older people, including introducing certificates for GP surgeries which have adopted additional training to spot mental ill health among people aged 65 and older.

The national target to ensure at least two thirds of people living with dementia are diagnosed and treated has been met for the last two years, and the upcoming long term plan for the health service will build on this progress.