

Committee Meeting of the Friends of Parkwood Surgery,

Monday 20 November 2023 1800hrs to 1900hrs

Attendees:-

Yvonne Metcalf (YM), Chair	Apologies	Richard Cartwright (RC)	Apologies
Lloanne Lees (LL), Secretary, Deputy Chair	Present	Valerie Day (VD)	Present
Sue Durham (SD), Treasurer	Present	Ian Morris (IM)	Apologies
Jo Bullen (JB), Communications	Present	Hilary Lawrence (HL)	Present
Augustina Badu (AB), Practice Manager	Apologies	John Howard (JoH)	Present
Mahdiya Islam (MI), Operations Manager	Present	Peter Allen (PA)	Apologies
		Simon Jackman (SJ)	Present

<u>CC</u>	Kirsty Day, Michael Ross, Jacquie Humphrey
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Minutes

- Minutes of last meeting:** agreed, approved by LL 23/10/23 and published on FPS website
- Chair Comments**

YM: Unfortunately I am unable to attend this month's meeting but here are a few words about what's been happening this month:-

Communication is still the watch word and at the heart of how we are able to support fellow patients through FPS. I attended a Zoom meeting run by the Herts and West Essex Patient Group entitled 'Communicating with the wider patient population' in late October with participants from many different surgeries across the region. I found it really helpful in terms of thinking about how we all communicate with each other. There were lots of tips, useful to both us as a group but also to the practice in thinking about how messages are received by patients remembering that patients' understanding is very diverse. I'm sure many people will have been slightly baffled by the recent text re how the appointment system is managed. On the other side, there was recognition that we as patients have to take responsibility for ensuring that our interaction with practice staff is reasonable and doesn't cause offence. It was also interesting to hear how different surgeries are at different levels of implementing new ways of working. On a personal level, I have had my own family issues around lack of communication which for me is a living example of the things that probably many patients face.

I have been able to speak to the practice manager about surgery attendance at our meetings and I hope there is now resolution of this.



3. Summary Updates

a. Open Actions

Please see the Open Actions report

Key Updates:-

- Stair Ramps & Higher seated chairs – surgery to purchase and FPS to reimburse
Action is with the surgery, still awaiting details
Jun – AB or MI to advise
Jul – with MI
Aug – MI seeking confirmation of supplier for chairs, will then obtain quote for both
Sep – Awaiting purchase by the surgery
Oct – Ramps selected, surgery to purchase £174 Inc. VAT and FPS to reimburse
Chairs £200 each with minimum order of 20 so seeking alternative supplier
Nov – stair ramps have not yet been purchased, they are checking again as the item selected previously was not suitable, MI to review and confirm the correct item and price to FPS so we can confirm we will cover the cost, Parkwood can then arrange the purchase, MI to email confirmation of details

ACTION: MI to confirm revised product and cost for stair ramps to FPS

Also still reviewing the higher seated chairs, finding alternative supplier and identifying how many need to be purchased

b. Treasurer's Report – November 2023

- Current balance is £2844.23
Grants – all require specific purpose and costs
AB requested details of available grants to see if we might meet the criteria with a joint initiative, SD to share details

New ideas needed for ensuring we have funds

Collections at regular health talks, attendance at local events to raise funds etc.
The toys we gave out at flu clinics seemed to generate donations, so perhaps we should consider selling small craft items rather than simply asking for donations

Dacorum Small Grants – closing date end November, max £500

Agreed we should submit a request for funds: purpose – ramps/chairs/printing

ACTION: SD to compile and submit an FPS request

Locality budget Fiona Guest may also be an option



Concern that criteria usually specify that the grant benefits the local community: we should be OK as long as we can demonstrate benefit to a large cohort, and as Parkwood covers approx. 11% of local population we should have a reasonable chance

c. Comms

- October newsletter – issued early November
- Next one to be published before Christmas: update re flu clinics & funds raised, mental health hub opening for 10-19 year olds

Suggestions for other subjects to JB

d. Website

- Review of website – to be scheduled for September meeting
Sep – the meeting conducted a review of the live website

Actions for RC:-

- Where hyperlinks are used, denote these with Bold and Underlined text so that we're not relying solely on colour to make them obvious

Nov – TBC

Actions for JB:-

- Review the Cost of Living 2022 page and update or retire the content

Oct – carried forwards

Nov – updated: closed

The meeting also noted that the Surgery website also contained a number of pages that were out of date.

ACTION: LL to identify actions items and share with MI

Oct – carried forwards

Nov – Parkwood Website content:-

- News, Plans for GP Surgery Extension
- News, Visiting the Surgery 24 Feb 2022 (page says posted Jan 2022 but is titled 2023)
- Visiting the surgeries / advice re face masks
- Covid 19 section – most articles are 2021
- Surgery Newsletters – none for 2023

MI confirmed that she is reviewing the Parkwood Surgery website to remove old content and update where needed, but this is taking some time



Feedback received about the Surgery's recorded phone message – the Parkwood surgery website address given is incorrect.

Nov - MI has checked and it's correct. Closed

4. Practice Manager's Comments

Confirm if GP can attend these meetings going forwards

Jun - AB raised at Partners meeting

Jul – YM, LL raised with AB on 06/07, AB has discussed with partners and agrees this should happen, it will be addressed once GPs have bandwidth to attend

They will also review who is best placed to attend our committee meetings, may be better to have GP as constant representative so ToR updated to allow this.

YM advised that the surgery rep does not need to be available for the whole meeting, and that other staff can also attend to share their views and suggestions for FPS

Aug – carried forwards

Sep – no representation from the practice

Oct – no representation from the practice

Nov – flu jabs can be booked on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for next couple of weeks until stocks used. Texts issued to patients who are eligible – call to make appointment

Could surgery provide flu jabs at care homes in future? Yes would normally do this but this year they've not had enough nurses so it's been difficult to organise

There are arrangements underway to start a Proactive Care project in South West Hertfordshire led by the ICB and Parkwood has been asked to find out if patient leaders would be key to help co-develop it due to "lived experience".

YM has confirmed that she is keen to be involved

- Boots @ Stoneycroft asked if GPs can prescribe meds in the box quantity to avoid having to split packets
ACTION: raise with AB, MI
Jul – YM, LL raised with AB, MI on 06/07 – with AB
Aug – no update
Sep – no update
Oct – no update
Nov – MI to seek an update
- Concern re lack of response to online consultation requests
JH mentioned that he had submitted a number of request but had no contact from the surgery in response.



LL suggested that he phone the surgery to confirm the requests had been received, since they are supposed to respond within 48 hours – this was tried but unable to get through after waiting for more than 45 minutes

Unable to raise as no surgery representative present

Oct – no update

Nov – still seems to be an issue that patients are not receiving responses within the 48 hour window indicated.

MI advised that this partly to do with the increase in volume of requests being submitted via Online Consultation form now (which is a positive), and still being understaffed so don't always have the number of staff to review and process them: expect things to improve when new GP starts in next week or so

Patients are concerned when they don't get a response, there's no auto-acknowledgement that the request has been received and nothing to say there has been a delay, which means patients often submit again or call/turn up at the surgery to check which also then increases the volume of transactions staff need to deal with

Worth promoting the message that there are different clinical roles so don't necessarily need to see a GP, might be pharmacist, etc. and everyone who has had an appointment with other clinicians have been very impressed, plus they're often more knowledgeable or specialised

- **Gov introducing change in March 2024** whereby all surgeries will have digital phone lines, designed to make booking appointments easier. Patients will no longer hear the engaged tone, and find out how their request will be handled on the day they call rather than being told to call back later: urgent requirements to result in same day appointment, non-urgent appointments to be offered within 2 weeks, or be referred to a pharmacy or 11.

Question to AB, MI: Please can we have an update on what this means for Parkwood surgery?

Oct – no update

Nov – MI to discuss with AB

Change should mean that surgeries move to a new digital phone service when their current contract expires, the new service has to be chosen from named suppliers, it should include a service that tells you what number you are in the call queue



5. Patient Queries

- Telephone recording needs updating as there's no mention of what to do to get test results - if the surgery wants patients to use PA, that needs saying somewhere, or an option adding to the switchboard

Nov – Reception would not give out test results “on spec” as they need to be reviewed by a clinician who would decide if further action is needed. Usually, the surgery only contacts the patient if further action is necessary.

FPS has advised patients via our booklet that they should use Patient Access to obtain test results wherever possible.

MI to review whether a change can be made to the telephone message

- Can a timetable of when appointments will be released be published on the website for 2024? The explanation page we were all sent (<https://parkwoodsurgery.nhs.uk/routine-appointments/>) makes reference to the first 'cycle', but by January, it's a bit much to expect patients to count forward from 25th October. This page <https://parkwoodsurgery.nhs.uk/appointments/> (which is under the tab for appointments... the other is under 'News') says appointments are released each fortnight which isn't the case (as it's 2 weeks - no weeks - 1 week on a 3-weekly basis) and to ask at reception when the next batch is released - a simple page on the website might alleviate that pressure on reception.

Nov – this is being planned

6. FPS Event Planners – Flu Clinics 2023

a. 2023 Flu Clinics

Sep – confirm dates and availability

No representation from the practice but assumption made that the first two dates are going ahead, as committee members have appointments confirmed

Availability for 07 Oct – LL, VD, HL, JB, JH, and YM

Other dates are 14 Oct, (21 Oct), (28 Oct), 04 Nov – to be confirmed

FPS Booklet completed and published online, folded leaflet also completed and printed in preparation for the flu clinics. LL to print a small number of the booklets but only for patients who are unable to view the booklet online

Surgery to direct new patients to the FPS website for the booklet.

Oct – 07 Oct clinic was very slick, FPS raised £35.50 and the toys were a great hit

14 Oct – FPS raised £67, toys very well received, more on order

Assumption that next/last flu clinic is 04 November

ACTION: YM to confirm date(s) for other flu clinics

ACTION: committee to advise their availability once date(s) confirmed

Feedback re flu clinics so far:-

- 07 Oct – 1190 flu jabs given, 14 Oct – 1139 flu jabs given
- Patients received mixed messages about turning up - some had booked 1-minute appointments, other told to arrive between 10-11am



- Those who booked 1 minute appointments were not happy that they still had to queue
- The length of queue and waiting time was much longer than in previous years, the queue didn't move as fast, and not everyone waited
- Car park was less busy this time after asking people to walk, but many unprepared for having to wait in the cold
- Slower queue may have been partly caused by fewer staff being available due to illness. FPS observed that patients were removing coats etc as they progressed through the surgery so little delay once in the consulting rooms
- Slow queue may also have been partly a result of patients who delayed turning up from the previous Saturday

Nov –

- Fewer attendees at last clinic, even though this was opened to be a walk-in
- May have seen better attendance overall if clinics had started in September so they're less likely to go the pharmacy etc.
Note that the Government wanted to delay the rollout of flu jabs, this wasn't a surgery decision
- The toys we gave out to youngsters were a great hit, key is to restrict to a small range as too much choice slows down the queue

7. FPS Survey feedback

- **Survey feedback review – Key Findings**
 - More work to be done around publicising the website and the items on it
 - Desire for face-to-face events, including one in conjunction with the surgery
 - Strong sense that FPS needs to (continue to) act as an intermediary between surgery and patients
 - Clear concerns over many changes, which need conveying and 'selling' more effectively
- **What would you like to see FPS doing more of (Summarised)**

Support with surgery changes

Help with filling in forms for the NHS app

Provide clear procedures for use of necessary websites, how to see a doctor, prescription renewal etc.

Target more demographics

Engaging with younger people

Hold an AGM to enable other patients to either join the committee or offer their skills to enhance the patient experience.

Act as a bridge between surgery and patients

Maybe intermediary between surgery & patient

Putting pressure on the surgery to do better. And holding them to account when the service is sub



par.

Supporting us in communicating with the surgery

Liaising with the surgery so that any changes can be explained prior to implementation.

Communication and influencing. Bring the voice of the patient

Making sure patients views are passed on to Parkwood drive

Support patients more

Not sure of where the Boundary would be for talking about Health Care Issues and FPS as in what

happened or didn't happen with the Assistance with filling out the Request for our individual Patient

Access to being able to Register for Repeat Prescription and Access to our Patient's Records.

Keeping me informed of changes at the surgery and putting our concerns to them

Organise health talks

Face to face talks/meetings. Have attended these in the past and found them useful

Any chance of a Stoma support group

Put on talks so that patients with long term health difficulties can self-manage their health concerns.

Also involvement with doctors educating patients to be proactive in improving their health

Advice on healthy lifestyles and the benefits thereof. But not for me of course!

Seek information from the surgery

Provision of a list of the practitioners at Parkwood Surgery-

Nothing, you are doing great Just keep on keeping us in touch. Some info on recent staff changes in the practice and info on what they are expecting in the coming months would be helpful. Lots of staff changes and not much info from the practice has been disconcerting

Want to know why it is so difficult to see a doctor

When sending new messages don't send old ones too

Improvement results published, show the patients that PDS is a learning organisation striving to improve. You said, we did

Answering the phones instead of waiting 57 minutes one day 45 minutes the next day and 53 minutes the 3rd day before I got answered

Finding a way to make it easier to get appointments.

All to review feedback and propose actions – to be progressed/discussed via email prior to next meeting, so final decisions can be made in the meeting

Sep – the feeling is that our proposal for a series of talks on changes at the surgery, and how to use new systems etc. would address many of the concerns raised in the feedback, see AOB.

We should also consider how we can engage with different cohorts, for example younger patients. Can we work with the surgery to identify key phases where we might see younger patients and use this as a means to get them interested in the patient group, e.g. targeting comms at 18 year olds going to university who are advised to get the meningitis vaccine?

SJ asked if we can find out from the surgery the numbers of patients who should be using Patient Access etc for repeat prescriptions but are not signed up, so we know the size of audience to be targeted?

JB advised that we're still receiving a lot of complaints about the changes to how patients contact the practice for appointments. Frustrating that option to request an urgent appointment

a) disappears at 4pm and b) isn't available out of hours – not everyone has access to a PC during the working day so they have to take time off work just to make the request, as well as then taking time off for an appointment.

Can we ask the surgery to modify the wording to say these requests will only be viewed during surgery hours, but then allow people to submit at any time?

ACTION: LL to raise as no surgery representative at the meeting.

Oct – Raised with AB/MI in the patient queries email – the change has not been made by Parkwood Surgery and AB is investigating



Nov – it appears that admin requests can now be submitted out of hours
Close this item as covered under Joint Event

8. Pharmacists Health Talk

explain what they can deal with so patients more comfortable approaching them, which may alleviate some demand for appointments

May – carried forward

Jun – carried forward

Jul – carried forward

Aug – carried forwards

Sep – carried forwards

Oct – carried forwards: perhaps cover this as part of Joint Event

Nov – close this item and include in Joint Event

9. FPS Achievements

June – Patient Access video & literature

Note that Health Matters webinars on hold due to strikes

Jul – supported PA mornings

K&N group continues

Aug – completed survey, discussed future actions

Online Consultation box on surgery website repositioned as recommended

Sep – newsletter, webinars, User guide for Online Consultation, New version of Guide to Surgery

Booklet, leaflet for issue at flu clinics, news cascade from external sources, appointment preparation form published

Oct – flu clinics

Nov – flu clinics

10. AOB

- AB asked whether we had considered organising an event for all Parkwood patients
FPS had discussed having an AGM on a number of occasions but the logistics, whether the event is physical or virtual has stopped us going any further
AB thinks we should consider a joint surgery+patient group event at a local venue, so patients can learn more about how the surgery operates etc.
For further discussion
May – carried forwards
June – AB raised with Partners. Feedback awaited
Jul – with AB
Aug – the logistics and effort involved in organising one large event means that is unlikely to be feasible.



Based on our survey feedback LL suggests a series of smaller events using our health talk format but focussing on how the surgery operates, what's changing etc. – Dr Fernandes talk earlier this year was very well received. Talks can be in person, and we can record a version based on the same slides with voiceover to make available online

ACTION: LL to outline structure for discussion

Sep – proposal shared with committee members after August meeting

Agreed in principal

ACTION: LL to expand on proposal so it can be presented to the surgery for comment

Oct – proposal being converted to PowerPoint slides, LL to share for review and discuss with AB at next meeting

Nov – LL to share presentation re Joint Events Proposal with MI and AB for review and discussion

- IM noted that he had received the text message promoting the last Diabetes talk – but the talk was aimed at pre-diabetes so had expected the text to go to a different cohort, not those who already had diabetes.
LL to check with MI, MM if the text was sent to all patients or specific cohort
Also to remind them about issuing the text message for next week's talk
Nov – are texts being issued to specific cohort
MI confirmed that they do send texts to specific cohort, this occasion was an error
- Christmas Meal
Those present decided that we would not arrange a Christmas meal this year
Instead, we will have mince pies & drinks at our December committee meeting
Nov – each to bring a contribution
- Surgery Gardening – JB advised eco-group being set up at school and would be willing to help manage FPS gardens if the surgery is interested. Group is just being set up and would have tools etc. so probably looking at actively engaging in the new year
Discuss with AB
Nov – group still being set up
- IM forwarded link for ICB workshop with Patients Association re developing PPGs – 04 December
- FPS Infographic on which service to use has been refined, just waiting for confirmation that the wording is acceptable before we publish
ACTION: LL to send copy to MI and AB for review



The Friends of Parkwood Surgery

REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL PATIENTS * ENABLE IMPROVEMENT * SUPPORT THE PRACTICE

11. **Date of next committee meeting:** [Monday 18 December 2023, 1800hrs, Parkwood Surgery](#)
12. **Meeting closed at** - [1905hrs](#)