**Sunbury Health Centre Group Practice (SHCGP)**

**Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

**Minutes of the Core Group Meeting held on**

**Tuesday 29 September 2020, 3.30 pm at SHC**

**Agenda**

**Present:**

**SHC:** Richard Fryer (RF), Dave Gill (DG) and Sasha Thurgood (ST).

**PPG Core Group:** David Butler (DB), Jenny Downes (JD), Tom Fidler (TF), Polly Healey (PH), Neil Huntingford (NH Chair), Diana Huntingford (DH), Alison Richardson(AR) and Paul Thompson (PT).

1. **Welcome** and **apologies** for absence

NH welcomed everyone to the first online meeting of the Core Group. He explained that this was going to be a shorter meeting than normal and that there was no agenda, the purpose of the meeting was for RF & DG to update the group on how the Practice was coping and working in the pandemic.

**2. Update from the Practice RF & DG**

RF started by explaining that since we had last met as a group (date) the Practice had been operating in a very different and difficult time. The Practice has not closed its doors at all during this time however there has been a drive to try and keep people out of the Health Centre for everyone’s safety. This has been greatly supported by the increased use of IT and especially video conferencing.

RF reported that initially a lot of the staff working at SHC either contracted the virus or were at home self-isolating. At one point this did involve 20 members of staff, however it was possible for a lot of work to be achieved by staff working from home.

There is a concern that since the car park was almost empty at times that the local community may have assumed that the very little was happening at the Practice. The following statistics help to dispel this assumption:

Between 1 April and 31 August 2020

* There were 16,858 video or phone consultations
* 12,000 prescriptions were prescribed
* 12,000 requests were answered via the web-site
* 6,000 face to face appointments took place
* 2,000 blood tests were completed.
* In excess of 37,100 telephone calls were answered.

Procedures were put in place at SHC to ensure the safety of staff and patients, this included:

* Creating separate *Hot* and *Cold* entrances for patients.
* Patients were asked to wait in their car until they were called on their mobile phone to enter the building for their appointment.
* Consultation areas were cleaned after every patient and had a deep clean each evening.

RF explained that this week saw the start of the annual Flu Campaign, this year the Practice has been given additional targets, this includes a rise from 55% to 75% for the number of 18 – 64 year olds to receive a vaccination. The government has also suggested that patients aged 50 – 64 with no underlying health symptoms should also receive a flu vaccination; however the additional vaccines for this group of patients are not yet available. It is hoped that vaccines may be available in November.

The Flu Campaign is being delivered in a different style this year and there will be no Saturday clinics, therefore unfortunately no cake sales. The style of providing vaccinations for 6 people per minute, which was the norm at the Saturday clinics, is no longer possible due to social distancing requirements. Therefore this year vaccinations (circa 150 per day) are available in five minute intervals every week day. Central Surrey Health has now vacated the building and therefore this has enabled the Practice to create a one way flow of patients in and out of the building. This new style of delivering the Flu Campaign has necessitated the training of three additional staff to support staff administering the vaccinations. There have been a few concerns regarding the delivery of pre-ordered vaccines, but these have not impacted on patients. Over 1,000 patients have already booked a flu vaccination for between now and the end of November, most of the bookings are made via the web-site and this has helped reduce the number of telephone enquiries.

**3. Responses to questions submitted in advance**

**Q** Other than appointments for blood tests, will there be any face to face appointments with clinical staff while the more extensive Covid 19 additional restrictions are in place. Or will it all be done by telephone?

**A** RF confirmed that this has been the case throughout the pandemic. Anyone who is deemed to need a face to face consultation with a Doctor will be given an appointment and asked to wait in their car or outside until called by the clinician and then enter the building via the *Cold* entrance. Patients with possible Covid symptoms who need to be seen face to face are asked to attend, wait in their car or outside and when called by the clinician enter via the separate Hot Entrance.

**Q** Concerns have been raised by a number of patients on the PPG website, about the difficulty they are experiencing when trying to use the Practice's website.

**A** RF explained that the web-site is the same as that used in Practices across Surrey Heartlands and therefore the SHCGP has little control over its design. The practice can tailor the site to some extent and will continue to work with the PPG to make alterations to enable easier navigation.

PH added that she had received over 20 such concerns, some of which she had managed to redirect, others she had forwarded to RF. AR suggested that maybe patients were experiencing difficulties using Patient Access?

Action: RF agreed to consider the points raised and discuss with Cassie Boylesif patients need redirecting when using the SHCGP web-site.

**Q** Can we have an update on the flu campaign, how it will be rolled out and if there are any concerns over supply?

This was answered during RF’s update*;* however there was a short discussion about the flu campaign.

In response to a question by NH with regard to the use of Mjog to remind patients about booking for a flu vaccination, RF explained that this had not yet been undertaken but will take place once vaccination deliveries are received. In addition Public Health England (PHE) will be sending out letters to vulnerable groups encouraging them to have a vaccination. On 5 October a letter will be sent to parents with young children and a similar letter to those aged over 65 on 19 October. PHE are very keen to increase the number of people who receive a flu vaccination this year. Unlike previous years the Practice is not in competition with local pharmacies due to a more favourable allocation of funding this year.

RF confirmed that it is still possible for those not entitled to free vaccination at SHC to pay for one at local pharmacies.

RF agreed that when vaccinations are available for the 50- 64 age group with no underlying health issues, this will be advertised probably November at the earliest.

**Q** How is the Practice interacting with the local Hub?

**A** RF confirmed thatthe Practice has continued to work with the Hub although this is mainly virtually. The Extended Access Clinics are currently closed with resources due to be reallocated to provide Hot Clinics that SHC clinicians will use to book patients into as an additional resource.

**4 Additional questions**

TF asked if the Practice has been able to work at full capacity?

DG replied that this had undoubtedly been the case because the Practice had not been restricted to face to face appointments, as discussed in RF’s update.

In addition the Practice had continued to support the Care Home and Dr Jopling (the allocated Doctor) did his utmost to continue his work with the home although, as a precaution not to risk taking infection into the home he did a lot of support via IT or the telephone.

Paramedics were also providing up to eight visits a day to Nursing Homes.

NH asked if a positive outcome of the pandemic could be that working practices could change for the better? RF & DG both agreed and added that issues that had previously been barriers before the pandemic had greatly improved; IT resources, screens for Reception and the new web-site have been well supported by the CCG. DG did stress that although a lot of patients are using the service differently additional pressure has been placed on the Practice due to the closure of hospitals for out-patient appointments and blood tests and the loss of Health Visitors, podiatrists etc who were not able to operate during the height of the pandemic.

DG concluded by saying that a lot of lessons had been learnt, however the response to the pandemic by the staff at SHC had reinforced the excellent quality of the team and he was very impressed with how well people had worked together.

PT asked if the Practice was now experiencing a back log of patients who had previously not come to the Practice due to a fear of presenting themselves. DG confirmed that during July and August there was a substantial increase in the number of such issues.

NH thanked the Practice for using FaceBook to communicate with the local residents. He stated that he felt this to be a very helpful method of sharing information.

**5. Other Matters**

 It was agreed to cancel the Open Meeting scheduled for 12 October, however patients would be advised that they could submit questions to DH and that these would be answered and posted on the PPG website. (*Post meeting – no questions were submitted to DH).*

NH proposed that the next meeting of the Core Group should take place as planned on 24 November, but that it is a virtual meeting. NH will discuss the agenda for this meeting closer to the time.

**The date of the next PPG Core Meeting is Tuesday 24 November 2020.**

**The date of the next PPG Open Meeting is Monday 29 March 2021 – *to be confirmed.***