Minutes of Meeting of Portland PPG Wednesday 4th March 2020 5.00 pm

Present: Sue Cousins, Hilary Mulholland, Sabrina Ruffles, Dawn Smart, Liz Smith

Apologies for absence: Gail Jukes, Melinda Green

1. Minutes of last meeting – agreed as an accurate record.
2. Health Promotion event for Carers week: 9th June. Representatives from the Self Care Team, Walsall Carers Team, and Manor Farm Community Association have agreed to attend. SC agreed to contact dementia café service. SR agreed to contact the social prescribing team and will also seek involvement from the Carers “Champions” from the practice. SR said that the practice does have a register of Carers but there are not many young Carers identified. There are lots of people ranging from 40 – 60 caring for parents, and older people caring for partners. She suggested that the practice could use text messages to identify other Carers, this method could also be used to advertise the event and to publicise Carer’s health checks. Reception staff can start to mention the event to known Carers if they attend the practice.
3. eConsult access: SR said that there is a link to this on the practice website; it will go live from 17th March. On clicking the link the first page has questions to flag up urgent conditions e.g. key words such as chest pain, and will stop the patient from filling in the form further and will advise action such as calling 999. Most of the form is tick boxes. The request will be viewed by an administrator on receipt who will then forward to the appropriate person. If this is a GP a booking will be made for the GP to manage the request. This may result in a telephone call, prescription, message or a face to face appointment. Admin requests such as sick notes can also be dealt with, 50% of telephone calls are for requests that can be acted on by admin staff. Response time will be within 24 hours, if the request is received before 2 pm there will be an initial response by 6.30 on the same day. One member of the admin team will be dedicated to eConsult to ensure this response time. EConsult will take pressure off the phone lines which should mean phone calls can be answered more quickly. There may be a “dummy” site which PPG members could use to demonstrate usage to patients to encourage uptake.
4. Update on practice staffing changes. SR outlined changes:

Clinical pharmacist in post, will do medication reviews, deal with medication queries and conduct some telephone consultations. There are 2 new receptionists. Dr Finnikin is leaving the practice at the end of March. Dr Saleem will be staying with the practice. Dr Ruffles has returned as a locus for two days each week on a temporary basis. SR

1. Feedback from Patient Participation Local Group meetings (PPLG) – SC summarised points from the meeting on 3rd March:
* Consultation process is underway for merging of 5 CCGs including Walsall (Black Country and West Birmingham CCGs). Concerns were expressed about representation of local services and local views, would these be lost under the new arrangements?
* Andy Rust, Commissioning Lead for Walsall CCG presented an update on Walsall Together, working on integrating health and social care together and looking at different ways of working. He described a single point of access for care homes to contact the Rapid Response Team rather than calling 999, which should result in better care and more appropriate management of patients. He also described a new development, Castle Hill, a 75 bed home in Stonnall. GP services will be commissioned from Northgate and Portland Practices. There will be 22 psychiatric beds supported by a consultant, which it is anticipated will be able to take patients who are currently often placed outside the borough due to the severity of their needs. Funding should start September- October.
1. Next meeting June 4th 2020. NB may be a need for a mini meeting in relation to the Carers Event on 9th June.