

Patient Participation Group Minutes Monday 22nd January 2024

Present from Auckland Surgery: Dr Anna Clarke, Dr Sumana Pausumarthy, Sue Balinski (Reception Supervisor and Diane Beresford (Assistant Practice Manager), Renier van Zyl – Group Business Manager, Greenwood Group.

Diane Beresford welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the GP's, Sue and Renier

Renier explained he was Group Business Manager at Greenwood Group which includes Upper Norwood Group Practice and he has been helping and advising local Practices with the setting up of Practice systems to enable surgeries to go live with the Ask First App.

The agenda was an overview and introduction to the Ask First App and how it will help in supporting patients to plan their planned care making it easier for patients to access urgent care when needed.

Staff Changes – an introduction to the Practice Team

Renier explained NHS England through the GP Contract has set out requirements for Practices to promote and offer online consultation tools. This will help Practices allocate healthcare services according to individual needs ensuring all patients the care most suited to them.

The Ask First App has been developed and tested by GP's and leading IT Company Sensely. It has had vigorous checks and it is now being used by many surgeries including those within our Primary Care Network – Upper Norwood Group Practice, Parchmore Medical Practice, South Norwood Hill Surgery, Merstham Medical Practice and Thornton Heath Medical Practice.

Dr Clarke explained the App does not and will not replace our excellent receptionists but will be an additional way of interacting with the Practice.

The App is free to download and features an interactive symptom checker which triages patients to the most appropriate onward care services whether it be NHS111, GP Appointment, Pharmacy or A & E within appropriate time scales. Effectively helping patients to choose the right service.

Dr Clarke explained that this App would not mean that Patient Access and the NHS App which a majority of our patients use would become redundant but patients may notice less availability as we go over to the Ask First App as this offers the triage ability that Patient Access does not. Dr Clarke acknowledged they were all different in what they can offer patients.

One of the plus points with the triage system is that once a patient has answered the questions and got an appointment through the app the GP would have the answers to the questions in the patient's consultation record through the clinical system before the patient arrives for the appointment.

Renier informed the patients that had attended the meeting that he would send a link via Diane for the App and they could have a look and test it out before we go live. If anyone has any questions or would like to give feedback they can do this via Diane

Dr Clarke informed the group that in conjunction with going live with the App at the end of January they will notice a change in our appointment system. Patients will now only be able to receive an urgent care appointment on the day and then aimed at supporting our patients to plan

their planned care there will be more appointments to book within a 2 week time period and patients will be offered this whether they use the app or phone our reception team.

Alongside these changes we are going to be working closely with local pharmacy teams in both Croydon and Bromley Boroughs

Croydon pharmacy teams – Day Lewis South Norwood High Street and South Norwood Hill

Bromley pharmacy – Hamlet Pharmacy, Anerley Road

The Pharmacy First service means that pharmacists will be able to offer advice and guidance to patients for conditions such as sinusitis, sore throats, ear ache, infected insect bites, impetigo and shingles.

Dr Clarke then went on to talk about our extended Practice Team and when they work.

We now have in Practice the following (see attached sheet):

3 Clinical Pharmacists – they can review patient medicines, agreeing and making changes to prescription's, advising about medicines and possible side effects

A Health and Wellbeing coach – provides coaching support to help you manage your condition, working with you to identify your health and wellbeing goals, signposting you to helpful resources and peer support groups

Social Prescribing Link Workers – Supporting patients to manage health and wellbeing, helping to access support services and activities.

Physiotherapists – Diagnosing and treating certain health conditions, advising how to manage your condition, referring to specialist services.

We also have a special highly qualified hands on Physio who is in Practice on a Friday but patients would need to be referred by a GP or a Physio for one of these appointments.

Physician Associate – diagnosing and treating certain health conditions, arranging tests and analysing results, performing physical examinations.

Mental Health Practitioner – carries out assessments, provides advice and support, supports access to various appropriate mental health services

Primary Care Network Paramedic – Completes Home Visits on behalf of the GP's to patient's homes if they are housebound.

There was praise from the group for our reception team on how helpful they are on the phone and at reception – this will be forward to the team by Sue our Reception Supervisor.

Dr Clarke thanked everyone for coming