

PPG Meeting 9th April 2025

Present: Chris Smith, Tony Fleming, Joe Stokvis, Richard Moon, Margaret Toms, Sindy Foster, Lynne Earthy, Dr Khalid Al-Khayat, Claire Farragher

Apologies: Simon Barton, Colin Mutton, Mary Shepherd, Natalie Moore, Mairead Anderson, Anna Lockhart, Peter Jay, Nicky Johnson & Dr Emma McMyn

The minutes of last meeting were approved.

Practice Update

The practice is currently well staffed. Our Lead Nurse, Lynn Adlington, retires in April but is going to continue working a few clinics throughout May and June to support our acting lead nurses, who are current employees.

Dr Rohit Sethi retired at the end of March and his patient list is now being treated by Dr Hannah Leach.

We are short staffed currently in our Dispensary team and have an advert out at the moment. The current team are closing at lunchtimes to catch up and be able to have a break so please bear with us whilst we look to increase capacity within this team.

The practice continues to host 3rd, 4th and 5th year Bristol medical students and we have two relatively new GP trainees; one at Tetbury and one at Cirencester.

Improvement Grant

The practice has been approved for an Improvement Grant to refurbish the waiting room and provide a more confidential space at Cirencester. Work will commence as soon as possible.

Portakabin

The practice has instructed an additional ecological appraisal to improve the ecological baseline of our Cirencester site, which is now a pre-requisite for planning applications. We are hoping to place an additional Portakabin to the back of the one already in situ to create much-needed additional clinical space and await the council's response once a new application has been submitted.

Clinical System

The practice will be changing its clinical computer system in June to a system called System1. Staff training events have started with access to a learning platform and new access to a dummy system. There is also in-person training planned for our protected learning events in April and May. Local pharmacies have received a letter regarding changes to prescribing, including going paper based from 22nd April until go live. A prescription for patient regular medication will be issued on a paper prescription and a further post-dated prescription will be issued at the same time to provide the patient with 2 months' worth of regular medication to reduce the number of requests we receive during this time.

Future appointment numbers will be limited post May, as all appointments will have to be manually transferred across in June so availability may be limited for a few weeks.

It is anticipated that the processing of routine or normal results, letters, appointment requests etc. will be delayed during this week although access and processing of non-urgent or acute medical requests will be actioned in a timely manner.

The practice is communicating with patients on its website and Facebook and has printed posters at all of its sites.

Application to close our branch at the RAU

An application from the practice has been submitted to the ICB to close our branch at the RAU. This is due to low student usage, which despite efforts last summer to improve, has not resulted in material change. Only 20% of offered capacity was used in January from an audit completed. The practice expects to hear the ICB's decision just before the end of May.

Premises

It is hoped that work will shortly commence for the new Tetbury site. The current scheduled completion date is April 2026.

Dr Sethi retirement

Chris Smith indicated that a letter had been sent to Dr Sethi from the PPG thanking him for all he has done for the practice and PPG over the years. Claire Farragher clarified that an Executive group is in place to organise and plan for the day-to-day running of the practice following Dr Sethi's retirement.

Spring Covid Vaccination Campaign

Appointment reminders have been sent via the NHS England Vaccination team to patients eligible for a spring Covid vaccination. These are patients over 75, care home residents and patients 6 months and older with a weakened immune system. The vaccination window will be between April – June. The practice is offering appointments and eligible patients should already have received an invite.

British social attitudes survey

This survey, which was published in April has showed the highest level of dissatisfaction with the NHS since its inception in 1983 with 59% of those surveyed reporting dissatisfaction with the NHS. A comparatively small amount of people were surveyed and it was done in Sept-Oct 24, just after the Darzi report was published.

It will be interesting to see the results, later this year, from the national patient survey, which covers a wider patient group.

NHS England

It was announced several weeks ago that NHS England is to be disbanded. Its functions will now be merged with the Dept of Health and Social Care. The government are aiming to reduce staff by 50%, especially those in roles considered to be duplicated. All NHS England vacancies are currently paused. It is likely that ICBs will remain key for strategic commissioning, but assurance and quality functions may go.

PPG Digital & IT Systems Working Group

The group are currently examining how well patients find and interact with IT access, such as the NHS App and practice website. A survey would be a good way of finding this out. The survey would

be designed to tackle specific points with no more than 4 questions, which would be sent out in stages and with the intention that the PPG would do most of the data processing. There are some matters relating to GDPR and the basis for consent to be worked through, although it is felt that this can be achieved. The first survey is likely to be sent out in September 2025, after the clinical system change.

Areas that the survey may explore are:

Utilisation of the 'ask doctor a question' page on the website. How many patients are requesting prescriptions online via paper?

How many carers are registered with the practice as carers? Of those, who has NHS App access for the person they care for?

The practice can see that 65% of patients have downloaded the App. Patients are able to access their records now via the App.

CF to send Chris the number of carers registered with the practice. It is assumed the numbers won't be reflective of the actual number of carers, as it tends to be underreported.

AOB

Sindy Foster suggested adding QR codes, directing patients to information on the NHS App into existing comms with patients. CF explained that costs for text messages come out of the overall ICB IT budget and there is now a push to keep these costs under control as they have spiralled in recent years with the increase in the use of text messaging.

Sindy Foster also suggested putting the Facebook post about the system change onto other local facebook pages, on a semi-regular basis and tagging followers in the post. CF to speak to Liam.

Sindy agreed to get involved with the IT working group. Chris will pass on her details to Richard.

The next IT working group meeting is the 23rd April.

The next PPG Meeting was scheduled for 16th July.