**The Farley Road Medical Practice**

**Open Meeting Tuesday 30th May 2023**

**Meeting notes**

* **Online Services**

Did you know that you can book appointments, order prescriptions and access your medical records online?

[More Information](http://www.farleymedical.co.uk/pages/Appointments-Online)



**Welcome**

The PPG Chairman, Mr Biman Ghosh, welcomed all the attendees to the meeting and explained a little about the work of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and mentioned vacancies on the PPG committee. He then introduced the speakers:

1. **Dr Jasper**

Dr Jasper described the PPG as an invaluable part of the practice, keeping track of the various markers that the practice is judged against. He talked about the difficult time that General Practice is going through, mentioning the difficulty in getting appointments and the 8 am rush of telephone calls. He explained that the Government is imposing a new contract whereby, instead of speaking to a receptionist, you will need to fill out a form and that will be triaged to the most relevant service be it a GP appointment, a Pharmacist or a Mental Health worker. Dr Jasper commented that this will be a massive change but he knows of practices where you cannot get a GP appointment for three weeks.

Dr Jasper then went on to talk about the pandemic and said that Covid is still happening but they have removed screens from reception and no longer wear masks in the surgery.

Concerning new staff, Dr Jasper said that there are new staff available in Primary Care such as Care Co-ordinators, Pharmacists, Social Prescribers and First Contact Physios. Our practice uses Surrey Physio in Upper Selsdon Road. The problem is that there is a massive demand now. When Dr Jasper started working in the NHS, people would die from diseases that are now survivable. The NHS is cherished but the Department of Health is trying to find new ways of doing things. There basically are not enough doctors or Pharmacists. Dr Jasper expressed his thanks to all those working at the surgery and said that they tried to provide the best service they were able to.

**Questions for Dr Jasper:**

**Q1** Thanks to Dr Jasper and his team. Everyone is very polite. If you cannot complete the new form, how will you get an appointment?

**A1** The receptionist will complete the form for you. They will need to offer an appointment within two weeks and let the patient know when the appointment is on the same day as the request is received. This is happening all over the country!

**Q2** Echoing the thanks to the practice. Is it possible to get the stats about how many appointments are face to face?

**A2** We now have 30% more requests for appointments. We have 12,000 patients on our books. We have some doctors working from home where they can deal with things appropriately. We need to work a hybrid model as we only have three consultation rooms as the nurses etc are also using rooms. NHSE do have the figures.

**Q3** When is the new system coming in?

**A3** It came in last April that we have to have electronic triage.

**Q4** Will the forms be available in the surgery so we can have some at home for when we need one?

**A4** You can just ring or send an email in.

1. **Ms Ruth Simmons the Practice’s Social Prescriber**

Ms Simmons started in the April just as Covid hit. She described how she supports the practice with non-medical health needs such as social problems which trigger health problems. These could include social housing issues, claiming benefits, helping with digital inclusion. You can refer yourself. Ms Simmons works in close partnership with the Council although she has no authority over them. When asked to give examples of her work, Ms Simmons described a situation where she had a patient who was concerned about her weight and having Type 2 diabetes. So Ms Simmons arranged for tests to be done, obtained a GP appointment and organised a weight management plan.

Dr Jasper explained that Ms Simmons is brilliant and signposts patients to voluntary services that GPs are not aware of. He said that her role makes a lot of difference.

**Questions for Ms Simmons**

**Q1** How are you contacted?

**A1** Call the surgery and they will refer you to her. She is at Farley Road on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

1. **Ms Sonal Patel Clinical Pharmacist**

Ms Patel said that she had been at the surgery for six years and is employed directly by the practice. She started doing prescription reviews but is now an independent prescriber and so looks after, for example, cholesterol management. She checks medical records abut medication and monitors blood test results. Ms Patel is available to help with patient enquiries over, for example, side effects of drugs. There are two other Pharmacists apart from Ms Patel, one does asthma management and the other leads on audits and policies.

**Questions for Ms Patel**

**Q1** Do Pharmacists have the knowledge?

**A1** It is most efficient to use the professional who specialises in drugs. For example, looking at discharge summaries from hospitals is very time consuming and they can help the GPs.

**Q2** How do you dispose of unused drugs?

**A2** There are regulations about the disposal of drugs. Pharmacies should take them back but patients can try to only order what they need.

**Q3** Why are drugs provided in packs of different number so you cannot co-ordinate when you need to re-order your medication?

**A3** Medication is prescribed generically i.e. by the name of the drug and each pharmacy provides what they are supplied with by the manufacturer. The size of the packs differ by manufacturer. It costs 10 -15 times more to prescribe by the trade name.

**Q4** The change in appearance of drugs may lead to patients taking the wrong drugs.

**A4** Pharmacies should be able to provide dossette boxes to patients that need help sorting out their medication. It became apparent from the audience that some pharmacies are charging for proving dossette boxes.

**Q5** Can you log into the NHS App for someone else e.g. your wife?

**A5** Yes, providing they have joined the App and have their ID and password available.

1. **Ms Jasmine Singh Manager of Selsdon Contact**

Ms Singh described Selsdon Contact as the hidden gem of Selsdon. It was started in St John’s church on the Upper Selsdon Road where it was recognised that older members of the congregation required help with socialisation, shopping and getting to the doctor. They obtained some funding from Croydon Council and organised a range of services for any age – currently 16 to 100 years old. They don’t discriminate and currently have about 305 clients on their books. Next week they have a drive to attract new volunteers to support clients. Their volunteers are dedicated but are quite elderly. They have no funding now and in Selsdon, rely on donations from the clients. They have five mini bus drivers and do door to door services for a one hour trip to Sainsbury’s and are able to take wheelchairs. The round trip costs £7.

Contact’s office is downstairs next door to the coffee shop and is open Monday to Friday. As well as the shopping trips, they do coffee mornings at the Baptist Church for £2.50 and have speakers coming as well. The Fire Brigade has talked about fire safety. Once a month there are trips to garden centres, cathedrals, lunch or cream teas. Croydon High School girls do a befriending service and adopt grandparents! Trinity School boys go to clients’ homes to help with jobs around the house or garden. Volunteers do different practical jobs such as changing light bulbs, walking the dog or finding false teeth! They have to fill in the gap with Social Services when, for example, meals on wheels fail to arrive. Contact can refer people to Social Services and they keep in contact with neighbourhood care schemes.

Contact also has wheelchairs and Zimmer frames that are available for loan.

**Questions for Ms Singh**

**Q1** What are the links with Ms Simmons and with Selsdon and New Addington Local Partnerships?

**A1** Contact is paired with New Addington. The local organisations are asked to work together but Selsdon has different challenges from New Addington. They can apply for council money but it has to be shared. New Addington runs the Pop In and Selsdon runs the mini bus.

**Q2** If we wanted to donate to Contact, how would we do that?

**A2** There is a concert on 8th July where you can donate. They are about to launch a 100 Club. This area has the highest number of over 65 year olds in Croydon. Contact is happy to collect donations outside of Sainsbury’s. They are short of money and the future of the centre is under threat.

1. **Mr Biman Ghosh**

The Chairman of the PPG gave attendees a last opportunity to raise any questions to any member of the panel.

**Q1** What can we do to reduce DNAs (Did Not Attend)?

**A1** The appointment isn’t costing the patient anything and so they don’t think to let the practice know. People need to realise how lucky they are to get the service they do.

**Q2** Mental Health has a high profile at the moment. On line resources are overwhelming. Is there an alternative to medication or on line?

**A2** Mental Health is difficult in Croydon. South London and Maudsley are the provider and it’s difficult to get appointments for patients. We do signpost to on line and group sessions. Some charities such as MIND offer counselling services but there are long waiting lists. There is also a Health and Wellbeing space n Centrale which offers mental health support as well as benefit and welfare advice.

**Q3** If we have a doctor’s certificate and need another, when can we contact the surgery – on the day or in advance?

**A3** Certificates are controversial but we are not policemen. If a patient rings up and asks for a certificate, we will do one. Just ring up or email when you need it.

**Mr Biman Ghosh** ended by thanking all the speakers and attendees and the meeting closed.