

Bennfield Surgery PRG

Notes of Meeting held on 16 June 2022 held at 11am.

Present

Christine Batchelor

George Baxter

Eva Bridges

Martin Saxby

Apologies

Fiona Phillips – Chair

In Attendance for Update

Kayley Delaney – Practice Manager

Jane Gardner – Office Manager

In the absence of Fiona, Martin was asked to Chair the meeting.

Update

Kayley and Jane gave an update:

- The doors of the practice are now open to the public
- Problems of people using the car park for the town centre were mentioned
- The arrangements for appointments have not changed
- A question was raised about prescription reviews and it was explained these were now conducted by a pharmacist within the practice who holds 50 appointments per week over three days. This saves a lot of doctors' time.

Questions were asked about how valuable this was for patients as experience of PRG members was that it was fairly cursory.

There are now 3 pharmacists working across 12 practices in the area

- An advanced physio is now available on Fridays to deal with new cases – appointments can be made with them without referral by one of the doctors.
- The registrars have now completed their training and moved on but have been replaced by new registrars
- Some admin staff have left and 3 new receptionists have been appointed.
- A question was raised about an issue when only one receptionist was on duty and had a long conversation with a patient which led to the patient in the queue behind being “late” for their appointment. Jane offered to look into this.

Kayley and Jane left the meeting at this point, having offered to see Martin at the end of the meeting.

Agenda

Martin then invited the other members to share any issues they wanted to raise to form the agenda for the rest of the meeting. The agenda items identified were:

1. PRG Terms of Reference
2. Improving access to appointments
3. Operation of Prescription Reviews

1. PRG Terms of Reference

Martin referred to the lack of Terms of Reference for this group and the importance of having some. He had discussed this with Fiona and then looked on the internet for examples. Among others he found one from Latham House Medical Practice in Melton Mowbray.

Martin then shared a draft ToR for Bennfield (attached) that he had drafted (based on the Latham House ToR), for discussion by this group and the practice.

He explained the document and there was some discussion. The PRG members were very interested and agreed on the importance of such a document. They then agreed the draft unanimously and that it should be shared with the practice managers and partners and should be discussed again at our next meeting when we would hope to come to an agreed version to publish.

2. Improving Access to Appointments

The current arrangements were discussed and members shared the challenges they had faced in trying to get appointments. Some mentioned they were reluctant to ring because they found the process stressful. The long wait on the phone, sometime being cut off, and the limited availability of appointments were commented on. Members were particularly concerned for working people and parents who don't have up to an hour to wait for the phone to be answered.

Reference was made to a letter in the Guardian from a health professional who wrote "Many GP surgeries need to adapt their communications systems to deal with the increase in clinical practice carried out by phone and patients having to communicate more by that route" and the PRG members wondered what Bennfield had been able to do along these lines.

The members recognised the challenges the practice is facing and that it is an issue for many surgeries. But they were also aware of different processes elsewhere that could help. The members hope the practice can seek to be continually looking at options and discuss this with the PRG.

3. Operation of Prescription Reviews

There was further discussion about the new arrangements and some concern, based on members' experience, about the new process, about the value and effectiveness of it. It seems the onus is now on the patient to share their concerns rather than the professional looking to pick up medical issues.

Martin thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions. He said that after meeting with Kayley and Jane he would send notes of the meeting and the Draft ToR document to everyone.

The meeting ended at 11.50am.

Martin's Feedback Meeting with Kayley and Jane

Martin briefly shared the content of the PRG meeting and highlighted a few issues.

The draft ToR:

1. he emphasised that the PRG want to be a "critical friend". This meant there would be criticisms, but it was intended to help the practice become even better than it is already and they hoped the managers and partners would give serious consideration to issues raised or suggestions made by the PRG.
2. the PRG members felt it was very important that a partner was present at all meetings to hear directly from the PRG, but they recognised that this meant meetings needed to be conducted in an efficient and business-like manner.

The current situation with making appointments. Martin expressed the view of the PRG that improvements needed to be made and wondered what lessons could be learned from other practices. He accepted Jane's offer to come into the practice on a Monday morning for a couple of hours or so to experience what it was like. Date to be arranged after Jane's holiday.

In discussing the new prescription review process Martin suggested that as the onus is now on the patients expressing their concerns, a review appointment may not be necessary for many people and it could be done by an online form for those with internet access. This would save time and money.

Martin confirmed he would send the meeting notes and draft ToR to Jane so that these could be shared with the partners.