

## DATCHET HEALTH CENTRE – PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

### THE PATIENT VOICE - SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

#### **Telephone and Appointments**

The Group met in May and again in August with the telephone system and appointments seemingly always on the agenda. The Windsor Primary Care Network [PCN] is installing a new telephone system across all the area's GP practices. Sadly it's taken time but is now up and running and hopefully patients will have benefitted. The new appointments system went live on 4<sup>th</sup> July with each doctor having a daily list of 16 appointments. This will be a mix of booked telephone calls, on the day telephone calls, booked face to face appointments and on the day appointments. Currently booked face to face appointments are running two weeks in advance. Whilst some patients prefer a face to face appointment many do prefer a telephone appointment. There is good news on the recruitment front as some locum doctors are being replaced with regular salaried doctors with GP's starting during the summer. Money has been made available to recruit GP's to run additional surgeries at KE7 hospital but with limited uptake. There is a workforce crisis in primary care which is not going to go away.

#### **Living with Covid**

With Covid infections starting to decline again we have asked the practice to indicate how they are dealing with the government's "Living with Covid" strategy with many ignoring Covid and others still having to self-isolate. It's against this backdrop that the surgery operates and the practice says that some clinicians, patients and staff have health issues or family members who are shielding and therefore face masks and occasionally PPE are still required. Most patients understand this but sadly some do not. The surgery hopes to cope during a very busy summer but the situation may change come the autumn and winter.

#### **Reception Staff**

Sadly this important front line job is one of the poorest paid in the NHS and the PPG has been concerned about the amount of adverse social media comments made and the amount of abuse these important people receive. Something seems to have happened during the various lockdowns to our ability to have polite social interactions with the NHS. The problem is not just in Datchet but across A&E Departments and GP surgeries up and down the country. We wondered if the small "porthole" window in the foyer impeded polite conversation but the problem is just as bad over the telephone. Sadly receptionists at Datchet, as elsewhere, are going to have to be screened from patients but the current situation is untenable. The NHS requires practices to operate a national "Active Signposting" model for reception staff and this has caused a degree of confusion between signposting and triage. We have asked Dr. Ali to explain.

*“Datchet Health Centre has a range of health professionals working alongside the GP that have the appropriate skill set to deal with a range of clinical issues. This includes MSK practitioners, paramedics, nurses, clinical pharmacists and social prescribers. In addition there are various community services and self-care advice which can support you when you require it.*

***What is Active Signposting?*** *If you request an appointment with Datchet Health Centre the receptionist may ask you the reason you are asking for an appointment. When you provide the reason for your call, the receptionist may be able to give you information about a community service or self-care source that you could access for your symptoms without the need for you to see a GP. In addition, it allows you to access appropriately one of our multi-disciplinary team [MDT] who are fully trained in the clinical complaint or issue you are presenting with. This avoids delay and allows you to access care at an appropriate time to meet your needs. Our aim is to empower you to get the best clinical advice and support.*

### **The Process.**

- *The Patient explains their problem to specially trained receptionists who have knowledge of a range of care options.*
- *Receptionists then signpost the patient to appropriate source of help whether that's on the practice or elsewhere*
- *This can be one of the MDT staff in the practice, community services or self-care options*
- *To help make sure you receive the most appropriate medical care, from the most appropriate health professional at the most appropriate time. “*

Well that's what Dr. Ali says so if you don't like Active Signposting please don't take it out on the receptionist who is following an NHS requirement but take it up with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, currently Steve Barclay, or your local Member of Parliament. Receptionists are leaving because of the unpleasantness and this surely must change.

### **Website**

If you haven't done so already please check out the new Datchet Doctor website which has been provided to all GP practices by the NHS. We hope these newsletters may now appear there.

### **Introduction to Exercise**

With more of us becoming susceptible to Type 2 Diabetes exercise becomes increasingly important but can be off-putting for some who see it as a strenuous and sweaty business. However, a member of the PPG Sylvia Burchell, a qualified trainer, is happy to run a series of easy exercise classes for men and women if the demand is there. Please contact her on 07973 500357 as its an offer too good to miss.

## **Health Education Evening**

The practice and the PPG are joining to run an open evening on **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 7.15 pm in Datchet Village Hall, on “Menopause Matters”** There will be two specialist speakers detailing what every woman and man should know about the Menopause. This important subject has traditionally received little attention but recently highlighted in the media by Davina McCall with much concern in the media about the availability of HRT. We look forward to seeing you there and please pass the information on to your friends and neighbours.

## **PPG Members**

Patricia James  
Rowena Mignot  
Suresh Gogna  
Helen Jenkins  
Anita Kapur  
Julie Layton  
Sylvia Burchell  
Pam Curry  
David Simpson Chair/newsletter  
Dr. Asif Ali - ex officio  
Rim Kennou - Practice Manager ex-officio

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**NOTE:** View expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Practice