

Glenpark Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting
30th March 2022



Present on behalf of the Practice:

Dr J Harness (Partner, Chair)

Mrs J Lowes (Assistant Manager, PPG Secretary) [Minutes]

Patient Representatives:

R Diston, B Thompson, M Bates, V Burn, K Hillier, L Johnson, J Dennis

Apologies received from: P Wallace

The meeting opened at 6:00pm with a welcome from Dr Harness.

Review after Pandemic and plans for moving forward

Our whole focus during the pandemic was safety for all. Our response was predominantly led by the guidance passed down from NHS England, daily at first which meant a lot of organisation, but we also needed to find our own way forward in the best way for our patients and staff. We had to change our whole way of working overnight to adapt. We as a practice did a lot of the leading in technology and Dr Harness lead on digital response to ensure that all practices could make the changes needed to continue to "see" patients. We moved to a fully triaged model whereby Drs could ring patients then help either fully over the phone, via a video consultation or, wherever necessary, still bring patients in to be seen safely. **At no time during the whole of the pandemic did we close our doors to patients.** We did have a strict protocol for who could enter the building but our thoughts were that we needed to still be physically available for our patients as much as possible. Mrs Bates stated that she had been asked by members of the community to check how many Drs had been working in the building and how many stayed at home as the general thought was that there were no Drs. Dr Harness informed that every single one of our Drs came into work each day unless they were self-isolating and even then, due to the upgrades in technology, they still worked from home.

Our Drs also worked at the "hot hubs" where potentially positive covid patients were seen so as not to have to bring them into surgeries. The Inner West PCN of which Glenpark is a member worked alongside Outer West and

Glenpark Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting
30th March 2022



played a very active role in manning these clinics. We also sent Drs, Nurses and HCAs to assist in the covid vaccination centres. There were over 60,000 vaccinations given at the Blaydon vaccination centre where we were based. This did impact on the number of staff in the building at times but we are very proud of the work helping to immunise the population.

We also made the decision to continue to see our patients with Long Term Conditions. A lot of practices shelved these reviews in the early stages but Dr Haines thought it more beneficial that these high-risk patients continue to be monitored and has been commended for her innovative work.

We contacted our shielding patients to check that they were ok and signposted them to additional services if needed.

We also still had the flu campaign to organise and run safely and effectively. We have always had a robust and efficient service for this but with social distancing in place we had the extra challenge of seeing our usual high numbers of patients as quickly as possible. Again, we adapted where necessary for safety and received positive feedback on how this went.

Although we tried our hardest, it was inevitable that not all patient groups would be monitored as they had been pre-pandemic. Medium and low risk patients are now a priority for reviews so we can quickly get back on track.

Patient and Practice Priorities and Issues

Appointment System Changes

This year saw an increase of appointments offered at 10% higher than pre-pandemic. We are now looking at a new appointment system which we hope will alleviate the pressure that our GPs are facing with higher demand and which we hope our patients will find works well for them.

The RCGP recommend that 25 is a safe number of contacts in a day for any GP to deal with. In one day, on the on-call screen, Dr Harness had 66 contacts. Before covid, each Dr in a normal surgery had 16 appointment slots AM and 16 slots PM. During covid, this was increased to 19 each. As more was done by

Glenpark Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting
30th March 2022



phone and there were less visits this was acknowledged as fine at the time but is no longer sustainable or safe. The new system will see each GP have 12 slots plus a visit slot each morning and then the same on an afternoon. Appts will also increase in time from 10 minutes to 15 minutes. With the added staffing this will balance out over the day. We will also be having 2 GPs on call for the full day as opposed to 1 at a time at the moment.

Patients will also be offered their choice of how they wish their appointment to take place – over the telephone, via video or face to face. We must remember that Covid is still present and we have vulnerable patients so many may still wish to not have to attend surgery.

This will be phased in once our new salaried GP starts in June.

Glenpark are in the top 5 practices in Newcastle and Gateshead for the number of patient consultations.

Mrs Dennis gave praise to an experience she had recently had with triage phone call then patient being seen. Mrs Diston expressed that she finds e-consult is a good way to contact GP too.

Planned Practice Changes

New Staff

As all practices are finding, it is becoming harder and harder to recruit GPs. We are delighted that we have managed to recruit 2 new Salaried GPs starting later this year.

Dr Febrina Robinson starts in June. She did part of her GP training as a Registrar at Glenpark. She will be joining us permanently 2 days per week when she is finished her training.

Dr James Kane is currently a registrar here. He finishes his training in September and will join us as a permanent member of staff working 3 days per week.

Glenpark Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting
30th March 2022



We had recruited a new phlebotomist to give more blood appointment but that role is now vacant again. We are looking to recruit a Health Care Assistant instead. Alex Collins our current HCA is out on placement as we are supporting her in her aim to become a Registered Nurse.

As part of the PCN we have employed professionals in other roles to give a more streamlined service, our receptionists can in some cases book straight into appointments without the need for a Dr to have to refer.

We have:

2 Pharmacists

1 Paramedic

1 Mental Health Nurse

1 Physio

Social Prescribing Team.

There are plans for a further physio, a 3rd pharmacist, a dietician and a pharmacy technician.

Phone System

We have a planned new phone system in April. We think this will be much better for our patients. We will have unlimited phone lines both in and out of the practice. Anyone ringing in will be told where they are in the queue and be given the chance to hang up so they are not sitting on the line. When you are next, the system will call you back. The new system runs off our clinical system so providing you are ringing from the number we hold on file for you, when your call is answered the system recognises who you are and the receptionist will already have your details on the screen. It also gives us a breakdown of how many calls in and out and when is the busiest periods so we can look to make any changes in-house to alleviate stressors and waiting if necessary. It also records all calls which will be helpful for training and monitoring.

Glenpark Patient Participation Group
Minutes of Meeting
30th March 2022



Review of Complaints

There were no complaints to discuss.

AOB

We were asked if we would be opening the front doors at any point. This is planned as we slowly get back to "normal."

We are also looking at a new automated arrival system so that patients will not need to queue at reception to be booked in. The newest technology available will allow patients to check themselves in from their seat via their mobile. At the moment we are still looking at options.

CQC – We had our planned visit and it went extremely well. We thank all of our PPG members who responded to the email request from CQC as to how we are doing.

We have initiated an "ideas board" in reception for all staff to add any thoughts or ideas on how we can improve our service for both staff and patients. We are always open to any suggestions.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed upon as Wednesday 22nd June 2022 at 6:00pm in Glenpark Patient Reception area. The Agenda will be sent out prior to this.

Dr Harness and the Practice staff sincerely thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting closed at 7:30pm.