

Launceston Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Minutes of Email Meeting Wednesday, 12 August, 2020

Practice Manager's report

Members thanked Andy for his update on the building works and congratulated all involved in the projected handover of the new build on 24 August with a final completion in February 2021.

Maureen and Steve commented on the new phone system and said it was much improved.

On behalf of the PPG, Joan offered support from PPG members for the flu clinics this year.

Questions:

Joan - We hear that regular clinics for diabetes and suchlike are being reintroduced by the Practice, mostly by telephone consultation. Will patients needing regular injections or physical examinations for such conditions be officially notified to attend by the Practice? Can patients request a physical consultation if concerned about their ongoing treatment?

Joan - With the rise in cases of diabetes nationwide, and the associated complications of epilepsy and peripheral neuropathy, how are the associated complications dealt with at Launceston Medical Centre?

PPG Chair's report

The Chair's statement that we would continue to hold email meetings until we can meet physically in safety, prompted a prolonged discussion about the pros and cons of virtual PPG meetings. The discussion centred around our AGM which had been postponed since March.

Members pointed out that statutory bodies were holding virtual meetings successfully and that Team would be the safest option. However, some members felt that it was important to be able to physically see and meet delegates at the AGM – especially those standing for office. One member suggested the possibility of an outdoor meeting but it was considered there would be difficulties regarding safe-distancing and being able to hear speakers.

The secretary formally proposed that the PPG should hold its AGM via Microsoft Team; this was seconded by Paul. The secretary also asked if there were any other proposals. There were not. A voting form was distributed by email and one hard copy was delivered by hand.

Action: Chair and secretary to set up an AGM via Team

4. Vice-chair's report

Les's response to the concerns that many public toilets are still not open in that it was possible for people with medical conditions (not necessarily disabled) to purchase a Radar key for disabled toilets prompted some discussion.

Questions:

Joan - The Radar Key to open most disabled toilets - are these available to everybody or only to Registered Disabled people? (If proof of need is required, how does that work on eBay?)

Les:

You can purchase a Radar Key from Mobility outlets even if you are not disabled but have some medical conditions that are on the shop's lists for a range of medical conditions. If on the list your purchase would be Vat Free, You can also purchase on Ebay without having any conditions.

Paul's update from CPFT

Paul, who had just started his second three-year term as a governor with the Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT), explained the duties that were expected of a governor. A governor's role was to provide a different perspective on new initiatives and the performance of the CPFT. Governors were also responsible for holding the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the Board, and for ensuring that staff, patients and the general public's views are represented. To that end, it was important to listen to the views and comments from the community and he outlined some of the many organisations and groups with which he was involved.

Treasurer's report

The treasurer's report showed the PPG had a balance of £7,509.41 with £ 2,715.00 of that specifically donated for PPE.

At some point early it was reported that the PPG would receive an anonymous donation of £100 which would be paid into our bank account. This was reported in the treasurer's May and June reports and was still showing as an offered donation. Did the group want it left showing in the accounts or to have it deleted? In either case we should formally record we have agreed to do so.

Les, Paul, Liz, Joan, and Maureen voted to delete the item; no other members responded.

Any other business

Dawn

Question - relating to any item that requires a decision who votes for a decision? Committee members or everyone? and how are decisions recorded ? Again no criticism but my question.

Patty

If there were to be an issue/question that required a decision, all members would be asked to vote.

Dawn

Question - I believed that Steve Dymond was deputy vice chair?

Patty

Steve stepped down earlier this year to allow Les to become sole vice-chair feeling that it made more sense as he chairs of the PPG Building Sub Group.

Dawn

Question - Have there been any Committee meetings please, or is everyone on the committee? If yes, then there no need for a committee.

Patty

Yes, we have a committee, but we have had no committee meetings during Covid 19. There were some committee meetings in 2019 when the constitution was reviewed and a report made to the full PPG. Committee members are: Steve Dymond, Jo Keogh, Maureen Amy, Dawn Rogers, Cym Downing, Pam Davey, Paul Ford, and Rosemary Bromwich

Cym

Question - At the beginning of the year I was contacted by the builders about dementia friendly signs. I know Covid has got in the way but it must be moving forward to putting up all the signage?

Les

We have not been able to hold a building group meeting but I will speak to Andy about dementia signs, etc., next week and report back.

Joan:

Question - We had an in-depth discussion about CONFIDENTIALITY some time ago. This came about because the PPG was asked to keep some information about sensitive commercial facts within the group. This was essential at the time. Local government organisations have public meetings and can ask the public and press to leave if a sensitive confidential issue is on the agenda. The public and press are then readmitted after the agenda item has been discussed. It has been noted that we are not a local government organisation but an independent organisation of patients at Launceston Medical Centre with our own Constitution. Many of our members are also members of other organisations, some in local government. Our health provision is of interest to everybody as the NHS is a national institution. Therefore most, if not all, members of our community are interested in our health provision. Do our PPG members then have the right to report back to their other organisations all content of our PPG meetings? If so, our CONFIDENTIALITY clause is redundant. (I can hear the groans already!). This is a very important issue for our members and we have to get it right. Could it be an agenda topic for our next meeting?

Maureen

Confidentiality: please, we have been over this before and the PPG voted on this subject and we agreed that there are matters that are confidential to the PPG and therefore not to be released to the whole community. We agreed that in general matters discussed at a meeting would be distributed to the general population after being signed off by the Practice Manager and officers of the PPG. I see no need to have another discussion or vote.

Patty

Has something happened to cause you to raise the question of confidentiality again? As Maureen said in her email, we reviewed the constitution and the issue of confidentiality last year. Hence the announcement at the start of every meeting – actual or email – about our confidentiality policy. It is quite clear: nobody can report anything about our meetings that does not appear in the minutes. I can see no conflict of interest for any councillor, or any other member who sits on an outside body, in respecting the very rare occasions when we deal with confidential information. A summary, with the result, of any discussion on confidential items will be given in the minutes and can then be shared with other parties.

Les

Question for Paul - Regarding your note about a Renal Unit coming back to Launceston, I have been taking a patient from Warbstow and Egloskerry to the Renal unit at Holsworthy at the Tamar Business Park and I understand from the patients that the Launceston unit was closed due lack of staff to run both Launceston and Holsworthy, the two gents go by hospital car 3 times a week at a transport cost to the NHS and a longer time to travel ,they would like to see Launceston reopen but as the Holsworthy and Launceston were run by a private Dialysis company to the NHS there seems little chance of Launceston reopening at this time. Paul if you could please bring the matter up at NHS meetings you attend there may be a change one day.

Paul

With regard to the possibility of a Renal Unit coming back to Launceston, I am afraid that there are no plans for this to happen in the foreseeable future. I will continue to keep the PPG informed of the status of the CPFT, equally if the PPG has any questions or concerns regarding the CPFT then please let me know and I will do my best to help. Thanks for updating me on the current situation, I admit it does seem crazy to be paying out for a hospital car, but unfortunately it seems that the private business could not make it pay, hence the slimming down of the service. I will report your comments to the Board and let's watch this space.