

Rowans Surgery
Patient Participation Group Meeting
27th January 2018

In attendance:

Dawn Defontaine – Practice Manager

Elaine Richmond – Practice Business Manager

9 Patient Group Members

Minutes of the last meeting:

A number of patients said they did not see the minutes. Dawn explained that these were posted to the patients who attended the last meeting and were also available to on our practice website www.rowanssurgery.co.uk in the patient participation group section.

A number of patients also said they had not been aware a meeting was taking place but had been not told by other patients. Dawn explained we had written to members of the group who had attended our meeting back in November 2017 and we also had posters in the practice and on our website.

(We later identified that these particular patients had not been coded as members so would not have been picked up on the email or text message reminders. This has since been rectified)

We agreed that communication for future meetings would be sent via email and text so it is really important to check we have the correct contact details for you on record.

One patient asked for confirmation that we are no longer open on Saturday mornings and whether we offered alternative extended hours appointments.

Elaine informed patients **we are no longer offering extended hours** as we were having difficulty covering the sessions while we are recruiting GPs. It has been agreed with NHSE that we will be offering core hours (Monday-Friday 8am-6.30pm) until our clinical team has been established. We will consult with patients by way of online (sent via email) and paper survey (in the practice). Due to limited resources it has not been possible to inform patients by post so we have updated our telephone system, website and practice posters to reflect the change in opening hours.

Patient services and feedback

The Practice ran a sample survey over 2 days w/c 22/01/2018 to get an idea of patients views on the current service.

We asked the following questions and the average response is recorded in red.

How do you rate your most recent experience of trying to get an appointment? 6/10

How satisfied were you with your recent consultation with the Doctor or Nurse? 6/10

How helpful do you find the Reception Team? 9/10

The group then opened up to discuss issues that patients face and how the practice can address these issues.

Concerns were raised about the issues we are having with recruitment. The group would like to know what the practice is doing to address these issues.

We are working with NHSE and the CCG support team to recruit 2 new salary GPs. We have sought advice from recruitment experts who assisted with the latest recruitment advert which has been placed in the BMJ, on NHS jobs and the GP Training notice boards. It was acknowledged that the issues we are experiencing are not isolated to our practice. Nationally there is a shortage of GPs and practices are struggling to recruit across the clinical team.

Patients queried why other local practices did not seem to have the same issues to which another patient member of the group responded. Those local practices were in the same position in few years ago as we are now. They have been through difficult recruitment processes and have now settled down with an established clinical team.

The Rowans Surgery is doing everything we can to ensure the stability of the clinical team at the surgery and while we share the same concerns patients have around availability of appointments and consistency of care we are also mindful that we need to ensure that whoever joins our team must be suitably qualified and understands the needs of our patients. The Partners are very hands on in supporting new additions to our team and our working closely with our Salaried GP, Practice Nurse and locum GPs.

Concerns were also raised about the lack of development with the new surgery site. A patient member informed us that a council meeting to discuss the new site was cancelled at the last minute the day before our PPG meeting. The last update the practice received was that the surgery would be ready at the end of 2019. We have requested written confirmation of the completion date from the CCG and the developers, (which we have since received). We are very conscious that the current site needs some updating but it would not be cost effective to carry out this work if we are moving in a year's time.

A number of patients felt that communication about repeat prescriptions needs to improve. On occasion their medication requests have been declined or altered without explanation. **We will feed this back to the GPs.** Patients should be given an explanation for any changes to their medication whether this is over the telephone or in writing.

Some patients were unaware that we have a **Practice Pharmacist, Umair Mukhtar** who is assisting with our medication review. Patients can book telephone consultations with Umair on Mondays and Wednesdays. We are aware that there is a back log of medication reviews to be carried out. The bulk of Umair's workload is to work through these reviews in order of urgency to maintain patient safety.

The group would like to share their positive feedback with our reception team. A member of the group personally witnessed a reception handle an irate patient with dignity and respect and they were able to de-escalate the situation. We appreciate that the majority of patients recognise how hard our team works and their efforts are appreciated.

Dawn went on to say that the surgery team have had a difficult time over the past few years with the changes in management of the practice. They have had to manage with changing leaderships and patient's frustrations. Often the reception team face the brunt of patient's frustrations as they are the first point of contact. They are only able to work with the appointments they have been given and they do have to work towards strict guidelines which are in place to keep patients and staff safe. Overall the team are conscious that it has been an unsettling time for our patients and have been there to support them through the various changes to the practice systems. We are very grateful that we have a strong team and a stable partnership to lead our practice. We hope that patients will begin to see more positive developments over the next few months.

Carers

Unfortunately the representative from Carers Support Merton was unable to attend the meeting today.

As a practice we are doing more to identify carers and to offer support where needed. We have a notice board in our waiting room with details of the various support organisations. We also have a carers form at the reception desk which patients can complete. Once completed we then add a code to identify you as a carer so we can offer you the relevant support and services as required.

Virtual Group

We discussed the importance of including patients that may not be able to attend the bi-monthly PPG meetings and agreed that we will work on developing a virtual group.

Main objectives of Virtual Group:

- Practice updates by email
- Agendas and minutes of PPG meetings by email
- Patient surveys by email.

To facilitate the set up of the virtual group:

- Existing patients who wish to join are asked to confirm their email and contact number with reception who then add a code to their medical record, this allows the team to keep an up to date database of PPG members.
- Newly registered patients will be automatically added to the virtual group, there will be an "opt out" option on our registration form for patients who do not wish to be included. (This will start from late February 2018)

AOB

The Group discussed the issues around transportation to the various community based groups. We are concerned that patients who have mobility issues or social issues may become isolated as they are unable to travel.

Dawn suggested the PPG could host a coffee morning at the surgery on 8th February 2018.

- All patients would be invited.
- 10am-11.30am
- FREE TO ATTEND (practice will cover the cost of supplies)
- Monthly to begin with.

If successful we could have directed meetings with guest speakers from community groups (carers, AGE uk, community pharmacists).

2 members volunteered to help facilitate on the day.

The practice will advertise the coffee morning via posters, email, text reminders and word of mouth at reception.

The next PPG meeting will be held in March 2018. Date to follow.