**QUANTOCK MEDICAL CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

# MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT NETHER STOWEY LIBRARY

# Wednesday 7th December 2022

## PRESENT

Diane Faris (Chair), Helen Stacey (Practice Manager), Maggie Harlow, Sue Sidery, Elizabeth Woolcock, Kate Hope, Bruce Roper, Sally Friend, John Friend, Sarah Bennett (Village Agent), Ian Faris (Minutes)

**APOLOGIES**

Terry Binding

## MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (June 2022)

Circulated, read and agreed.

## CENTRE UPDATE

Demand has increased, patient numbers are up by 200. Patients have been holding back on problems which are now coming to the fore and people’s ability to cope has decreased. Increase in average age is a factor plus loss of communal knowledge and experience with more fragmented families. Prioritisation is employed. There is some mobility into and out from the village but some patients are kept on.

The cost of drugs has gone up by nearly 100%. Locum costs come in excess of £1000 per day. Both doctors Stone and Klein took much-overdue holidays in October which was expensive to cover. Nursing hours have increased including mental health help.

Structural problems have arisen from subsidence as a result of the hot, dry summer. It will take some months to get it sorted and paid for.

The practice had an “outstanding” inspection the other day – WELL DONE Helen Every and the Practice!

Nurse Helen Every has had a very bad year. Her experience has highlighted the need for patients who experience unusual chest pains or (e.g.) break bones in a fall to contact 111 or call an ambulance rather than contact the surgery. The Centre has applied for medical retirement for Helen (Every) with effect from the end of the year, though she will keep in contact.

Anna,the respiratory nurse, is on holiday in New Zealand for December but will be working 3 days per week from the new year.

Bruce has noted that new procedures seem to involve doctors working through prescribed check lists whereas, in the past, experienced doctors would have gone straight to the apparent problem. Helen felt that this may have arisen as a result of the number of doctors working remotely during and after the Covid pandemic.

Missed appointments tend to involve the same patients, mostly those with respiratory problems, which is both frustrating and wasteful but difficult to resolve cost-effectively.

## PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

Lou was introduced to the meeting as a Health Coach. He works for Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (SASP). His and his team’s role is to help people lead a lifestyle in such a way as to reduce risks and associated need for medical/clinical attention. Helen asked Lou about sleep, in particular trying to ween people off sleeping tablets. Apparently, considerable resources are being directed at this area. The internet is the means of access to SASP and the aim is now to communicate to the population a) the existence of this facility, b) what services are available and c) how to access them.

Government support is currently being directed at the Primary Care Network (PCN) rather than individual practices. The Centre’s peripheral activities e.g. the walking group, are part of this process. A hub is being created to serve the Bridgwater area which won’t provide GP services but will include specialist “self-help” staff e.g. lifestyle coaches, health coaches, children’s healthcare specialists, physiotherapists etc. This is expected to be operational from Victoria Park from January 2023. Our Centre is linked to Victoria Park and Musgrove Hospital. Targets need to be agreed to meet the requirements for Government funding. Lou agreed to write an article for the Quantock Messenger explaining the existence of the hub, its purpose, the services available and how to access them. He also agreed to lead a “1 boot” short walk around the village, if required, and Elisabeth agreed to do the same. Initially all services at the hub can be accessed by contacting the surgery first to obtain relevant contact details.

Sarah Bennet explained some of her role as Village Agent. Food is an issue at present, as is transport. The shortage of volunteer drivers e.g. for the shuttle was highlighted but Ian pointed out that providing such a service could impact upon drivers’ car insurance.

Diane suggested that the availability of allotment strips could be introduced to the Mothers & Toddlers Group that meets in the Church Centre. Helen offered to mention this to nurse Sophia who runs that group. John and Bruce highlighted the responsibilities entailed with running an allotment plot that aren’t immediately obvious to potential gardeners. It was agreed that further discussion was required between John, Sally, Helen, Sophia and Elisabeth as to how this might be organised.

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bruce raised the question of the multitude of contra-indications for certain drugs. Helen advised people to contact the doctor for specific clarification.

## NEXT MEETING

Helen will message all with a date for the next meeting plus the “tea party” next March for Helen Every.

Meeting closed at 1140.