

**Patient Participation Group
Notes taken from the 29th June 2017**

Present: Geoffrey Coulthard (Chair), Jeffrey Smith, Joan Smith, Brenda Cope
Practice representative: Sheila Whiteoak (Minutes)

Apologies

Apologies were received from Veronica Oura, Joan Pemberton and David Atwood.

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting on 30th March, having been previously circulated were read and approved

Matters arising

None

Agenda Items

1. Ultrasound Service

On the 12th June, Roe Lee Surgery has been commissioned to work alongside the hospital trust, ELHT. In future Roe Lee Surgery will be providing a service where patients can have non obstetric ultrasound scans. There are going to be 4 sites, Roe Lee Surgery, St Georges Surgery, The Montague Practice at Barbara Castle Way HC and Darwen Healthlink at Darwen Health Centre. These will be in addition to the current sites that ELHT have at the Royal Blackburn Hospital and the Ultrasound Department on the ground floor at Barbara Castle Way HC. We have employed Consultant Radiologists and sonographers in order to provide similar standards of care as are provided by the Trust. This will allow easier access for patients, better facilities and faster appointments closer to the patient's home. This is very exciting for us as this is the first time that secondary care and primary care have come together to provide a joint service. Many thanks are given to Dr Zafar for having the foresight and experience to see this into fruition.

2. Opening Times

From the 1st April 2017 our opening hours have changed and we will now be open from 8.00am to 6.30pm continuously. This has happened because there was so much variation between practices in BwD: some closed for half days, some closed for lunch etc, and the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) wanted patients to have equal access to their GP services.

3. Practice merger

We are delighted to announce that Roe Lee Surgery and The Montague Practice are proposing to merge to form a larger 'super-partnership'. Over the past few years there have been increased pressures placed upon General Practice. The increasing elderly population, the growth in long term conditions and the need to move more work from secondary care into the community means that General Practice needs to expand and innovate to absorb this increased workload. Whilst both practices are performing very well against all the national and local targets and have been rated

'Good' at recent CQC assessments, we have decided that the best way to continue to offer our patients an innovative, sustainable, quality service into the future is to seek to merge our practices.

Our two practices share the same commitment to quality and to patient care; by merging we would be able to share working arrangements and be more effective and efficient building on the skills and expertise of a broader pool of doctors, nurses and managers. We have begun to make arrangements for a merger which is planned for 1st October 2017.

All of our doctors, nurses and other staff would continue to be available to you under the new planned arrangements at Roe Lee Surgery and The Montague Practice. There would be no changes in premises or phone numbers; but there would be greater flexibility in accessing healthcare and, over time, we would seek to make additional services available in the practice. Your registration would not be affected and you would be able to be seen by one of our doctors or nurses at either practice. In time we would change the name to reflect the fact that we would be a single practice but a new name has not yet been chosen.

We are proud of both of our practices and the quality of care we have maintained over the years and have always been touched by the positive feedback and support from our patients. This proposed merger would see our teams uniting as one like-minded team and would continue to provide care for you at our practices following a seamless and safe sharing of healthcare information and prescribing data.

The first step in the process is for us to communicate our plans with you, our patients and seek your feedback on this proposal. We understand that you may have questions about the merger and we intend to address any concerns raised. We very much welcome your feedback on our plans. If you have any specific queries or concerns please contact Sheila Whiteoak, Practice Manager at Roe Lee Surgery or Ann Harwood, Practice Manager at The Montague Practice . Contact details are at the bottom of this communication.

Merger would be a time of change for us all and whilst we would all work extremely hard to minimise any disruption, we would be grateful for your understanding throughout the proposed merger process. We are excited to be planning on taking this important step to secure the long term future of General Practice and very much look forward to receiving your feedback on our proposal. Please feedback to us either in person or via letter or email to:

Sheila Whiteoak
Practice Manager
Roe Lee Surgery
367 Whalley New Road
Blackburn
BB1 9SR

Ann Harwood
Practice Manager
The Montague Practice
Barbara Castle Way Health Centre
Simmons Street
Blackburn
BB2 1AX

Email: sheila.whiteoak@nhs.net

Email: ann.harwood@nhs.net

Any Other Business

On line appointments for nurses – a member asked why there were no appointments on line for nurses. The reason for this is that our nurses all have different skill mixes which are not known to patients. Our nurse practitioners do not do smears whereas our practice nurse does. Our practice nurse does travel vaccinations whereas our nurse practitioner nor Healthcare assistant can. It would just cause confusion if patients booked themselves in with the wrong person. We do not have the manpower to check what each person is coming to clinic for, for us to be able to cancel them if it is inappropriate. The explanation was accepted by the group.

Date and time of next Meeting

Thursday 14th September 2017 at 1pm