

Whitstable Medical Practice Patient Participation Group

Topics discussed at the PPG committee meeting held on Wednesday 4th September 2013

1. **Practice Update**– Carolyn Nelson, Practice Manager

a. Computer Upgrade

The new computer software was installed on 3rd September. Staff had worked extra hard to ensure a smooth change over and to transfer information from the old system Vision onto the new software Emis

b. Endoscopy

Although this is such a worthwhile service to be able to offer patients, it is not financially viable at present. The Practice have looked into ways to keep the service running but even once the equipment is purchased there is still a further £63,000 running cost p.a. to take into account.

Previously the estimated figures that were projected at the start of the contract (3 years ago) were viable, but then the contract for the Lower Endoscopy service took too long to come through and this has contributed to the difficulties of continuing to run this service.

Whitstable Medical Practice would like to continue to offer the service at Estuary View and as Endoscopy is such a specialised service the only other option would be to sub contract if the right opportunity was to arise.

EKHUFT previously had a 9 month waiting list for an Endoscopy service however since 2 more suites have been built the waiting time is now much shorter.

2. **PPG Open Meeting**

17th October - 7pm to 8.30pm at Whitstable Health Centre. –Topics and discussions / presentations include:

- Diabetes
- COPD and the support available
- Child vaccinations
- Dementia Café
- Practice update and Q & A session

Posters and flyers have been advertising the event along with the practice website and TV screens.

3. **PPG Newsletter**

The following topics would be included in the September newsletter–

- Open meeting arrangements, prescriptions information, flu clinics, & shingles vaccine.

For a future newsletter an article about non GP clinical services was suggested with the possibility of including feedback from patients who have benefited from the services.

4. **C4G Update**– Dr John Ribchester

An open meeting chaired by Dr Mark Jones, C4G Chairman, was being held on the 18th September at St Lawrence Cricket Ground at 1.30pm.

5. Prescriptions - Jan Haydon, prescription supervisor for the Practice

A number of patients had reported receiving a letter from a company offering a delivery service for medicines. Whilst the letter appears professional in design and could be mistaken as having been sent from the NHS or the patient's own surgery, Jan clarified that this is not the case. The letter has nothing to do with Whitstable Medical Practice or NHS England.

The letter asks patients to fill out all of their details and medical needs and offers to send medication out to patients. PPG members felt that this could be unsatisfactory for a number of reasons as delivery services might not always be reliable and medication could go missing, and also that the GPs are not authorising and therefore not able to monitor the medication going out to patients. Jan is contacting concerned patients who have signed up to this service to fully explain to them the pros and cons involved.

The meeting felt that patients perhaps need to be made more aware of the ways they can order their prescriptions. This could include information that probably the fastest and easiest way is for patients to place their order on line through the practice website and then, within 2 working days, the prescription will either be sent to the pharmacy of preference or ready for collection from the GP reception desk. Alternatively the request can be made in person by completing a form at reception or via the patient's local pharmacy. It was noted that when using the pharmacy service the time frame is extended an extra day or two depending on when that request is sent to the practice.

A brief article about the ways of ordering prescriptions would be included in the next newsletter.