

## Summary of Patients' Voice Meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022

The new Community Care Co-ordinator (CCC) introduced herself and gave some background to her position, how she had been tackling the job in these early weeks and her plans for future work in the role. She has worked as Receptionist at the practice for three years and this experience was proving very valuable. She had met with the previous CCC to discuss various aspects of the position and how he had worked in the role. She is currently linking with various local voluntary groups e.g. the "Good Neighbours" scheme and the "Friendly Bus" project.

If members of the Practice are in need of a range of supportive services from a non-profit-making group of volunteers they (or their families or carers) are recommended to take a look at the Friendly Bus website to find out more at:

<http://www.friendlybus.co.uk/home>

The "Friendly Bus" group can pick up medications and shopping, do a range of supportive jobs e.g. gardening or changing light bulbs, be a friendly voice on the phone or in person, as well as offering low-cost transport within their minibus or through volunteers using their cars.

Our CCC is working 15hrs per week and has work passed to her from the GPs and nurses but she also has time to do research into what services/facilities would be useful to patients.

The Practice Manager described the new "Prescriptions Ordering Direct" facility which now operates for 37 practices in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. It is managed locally as part of our Clinical Commissioning Group and has 51 part-time clerks who are employed by the NHS who manage their governance, training, etc to ensure it is of an appropriate standard and that patient data is secure. They are administrators but the service is supervised by a clinical manager. The system is intended to streamline prescription services and to reduce levels of waste by going through checklists with patients when they telephone. As a result, patients now benefit from a much wider set of opening times than was possible when this was managed from within the practice. There are similar systems elsewhere in the country. Patients are advised to avoid Mondays and Fridays when demand is particularly high but should not be put off if they are told they are e.g. "35th in the queue" as there may be as many as 35 advisers available so they could still be responded to relatively quickly.

It was acknowledged that reviews of patients with long term conditions had not been addressed as well as normal during the last two years as a result of Covid but some of these services are being taken forward more effectively now e.g. for asthma and diabetes.

With regard to staffing matters the practice is still in need of an additional Health Care Assistant. Recruitment has not been easy but this is being pursued. A potential phlebotomist is being interviewed next week with the hope of appointing and giving further training in-house.

The appointment of our new Community Care Co-ordinator is working well – see above. Two new receptionists began work this week. A new registrar with a year's GP work elsewhere will be starting next week for four months. Recruitment is also taking place for an additional salaried GP. The practice is also recruiting a diabetic nurse.

The situation in the dispensary is now improving following the earlier appointments and funding is being sought to swap over the positions of the pharmacy and the reception at Cressage in order to make additional working space available adjacent to the pharmacy to make the retrieval of packaged medication faster and more efficient for the dispensers.

A Physician Associate is now working at the practice on Monday and Thursday and a Clinical Pharmacist on Tuesday and these roles are bedding in well.

Reports were submitted on discussions and developments within Shropshire Patients' Group and our local Clinical Commissioning Group. A new menopause initiative was particularly welcomed which offers consultation and clinics. Patients can contact the practice for further details.

Work is currently taking place at the hospital Outpatients Department with the aim of reducing waiting times and trying to make sure that patients are being seen by the right person.

The group discussed the potential introduction of the new Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) within the practice and it was acknowledged that, whilst this would be seen as being of potential benefit for some patients it had the potential to have a major impact on the viability of the Cressage dispensary and, potentially, to the economics of operating two sites within the practice. It was

agreed that any implementation of EPS would need to be very carefully managed and that all patients within the practice would need to be well informed of its potential negative impact overall as well as any possible advantages it may bring to some.

The Practice Manager was asked if there was any aspiration to reinstate the online booking of appointments and she said that this should be happening at some point in the future.