

PATIENT VOICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Patient Voice Annual Report 2017

I must first thank all members of Patient Voice for their contribution to our work. Last year I wrote about our decision to stay together and to continue with the committee which had taken six years to build. That decision proved to be the right one and has proved successful. The members who took on the lead roles in the various sections have stayed in situ.

One of the most important issues was to be able to retrieve contact with the Patient Reference Group (PRG). It took a great effort on the part of Liz Davies, Jackie Griffiths and Ray Harris who finally managed to succeed and the situation is now resolved; still very secure and accessible. These patients are still a valuable addition to the work we do. Could I please make a plea to anyone who would like to know more about PRG to give their contact details (email address and phone number) in to reception at The Oaks Surgery, or you can put the information in an envelope and address it to Patient Voice Chair. We are not asking you to attend meetings. The group consists of more than 200 patients and gives you the opportunity to contribute to our decision making. This will not include addressing any personal medical issues. Confidentiality is secure.

Newsletter

We continue to encourage patients to take and read our Newsletter. It always contains useful information which varies according to which topics we use and the space we have; we try to keep them up to date to help them keep fit, we tell of staff changes and things of interest to them. For instance, our most recent newsletter has given patients guidance on how to get the most from their appointment without running out of time: they should tell the doctor of the real problem first, and not any minor issues first, so that there is time to discuss the most important reason for their appointment when the time is limited. The most recent change has been the departure of Dr Jenny Rush who has been with The Oaks Surgery for 10 years. She has left to start a new career in The Ministry. We all thank her for her service with us and wish her well in her new career .

Our newsletter reported on the generous gift of a defibrillator to the surgery which was received from the Swanley & North Downs Lions Club. We all were extremely grateful for such a generous gift which will save lives. The presentation was made at the surgery and there is a plaque on the waiting room wall to commemorate this.

Patient Information and Service

The TV screen in the waiting room is updated regularly. It is a most effective way of keeping patients informed. PV information is included in the programme loops. The Oaks website is well established and PV has a page on the site. The key role we have is to monitor the service and delivery. We work with the surgery and are mindful of the limitation of time, space and finance under which the surgery has to work.

One of the continuous complaints we received was about the length of waiting time at the reception desk. We were aware of the problem but were not in a position to resolve it. Then on 18th April 2017 the whole process of ordering repeat prescriptions was changed to POD, (Prescription Ordering Direct.) This system is funded by The National Health Service and amounts to 'one phone call and collect from your chosen pharmacist' .

It appears to have been a resounding success. Yes, there have been a few complaints and they are being monitored.

I am pleased to be able to report that our new staff have settled in, supported by those already in situ. PV members have had a meeting with the staff as a means of getting to know them and for them to know us and how PV works. We are seeking another meeting in the near future.

Health Education Events

These are intended to help patients and carers to understand and manage long term health conditions: how to stay healthy and perhaps reduce demand on the surgery. It is also useful for carers to give them information and indicate where support is available. This is an important part of our work, good for both carers and the surgery.

Our annual Event last year was "Help in Senior Years". It was more general in content and covered a range of issues which were put by those speaking to the subject. It was a successful truly informative event and well received. The introduction was given by Dr S Gregson.

This year our Event was specific. MENTAL HEALTH was the subject ~ including Anxiety, Depression and stress. The many aspects affect all generations. It was a great success. Dr H Clayton who gave the introduction was followed by excellent guest speakers, two of whom were Professor Hana Soliman from Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Mental Health team and Justin Bateman, CEO of Dartford Gravesham and Swanley MIND. The attendance was good and we were pleased that many visitors took advantage of the question times and raised issues which concerned them. As usual there were stands manned by other organisations offering their help and we thank them for their continued support on other varied issues. Thank you also to the students from the Orchards Academy for attending. Patient Voice is grateful to everyone involved for their contributions, and we look forward to enjoying their company in the future. All the speakers and other contributors have had a personal thank you. We have also sent our thanks to Anton Gustave-Tavernier, Sevenoaks District Council for his support and to Kerina Keir, Manager of the Alexandra Suite. A big thank you to The Oaks Surgery for the continuous support they give to Patient Voice and last, but by no means the least, is a big thank you to the PV team. We all play a role in the preparation and presentation of these events starting several months before they happen. The 'Event' is always open to all residents. It is widely advertised for that reason.

Following on from the above, a petition is underway to call for improved mental health services locally. Petition summary and background. ~~~~ To provide a dedicated Mental Health Services facility in Swanley. This was called for at the Patient Voice Health Event held in the Alexandra Suite on 11th July 2017. A lack of local dedicated health and community services was identified as an issue to those struggling to provide care at home for those with mental health issues, forcing patients with mental health problems to require a visit to Dartford or Gravesend. ~~~Action petitioned for~~~ "We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our health and community leaders to act now to provide such a facility to take the pressure off the GPs surgeries, Accident and Emergency and Police Services" ~~~

When you see it, please sign it.

Urgent Treatment Centres ~~~~For the past few months Harry Chapman, a member of Patient Voice Committee, has been the Patient Representative on the NHS Dartford,Gravesham and Swanley Urgent Care Review Steering Group.

This group have been looking into improving the urgent care treatment patients require in the area and some proposals are about to be implemented. These are as follows~~~~~

1-The Walk in Centre at Northfleet to be upgraded to the standard required for a UTC.

2-The present Minor Injuries Unit at Gravesham Hospital to be replaced by a UTC, using some of the empty accommodation in the hospital.

3-Darent Valley Hospital Emergency Department to be arranged so that on entry patients will be assessed and those requiring emergency treatment will go to A&E and those who appear to only need to be seen by a GP will go to another area. Additional facilities will be provided for the latter, but the GP will still be able to refer the patient to the emergency section if necessary. This system will operate from 10.00am to 10.00pm seven days a week and is expected to be in place by the end of October.

It is hoped that all these new arrangements will speed up the time taken to see patients at Darent Valley Hospital Emergency Department.

If you need to see a GP during 8am and 6.30pm please contact The Oaks Surgery. If you need a GP after 6.30pm or on a weekend please call 111 to get access to an out of hours GP. Please only use casualty for emergencies.

PPG (Patient Participation Group)

In April 2016 we were advised that all surgeries are to set up a PPG. Ours has existed for several years as have others in the Gravesham area. With The Oaks surgery support we had taken the name 'Patient Voice' and the committee has ten patient members, one of our doctors from The Oaks surgery together with the practice manager and her deputy. We became proactive from the outset, and are now well established. Committee meetings are held bi-monthly with input from the clinical staff and members of the committee. In our newsletters and on our waiting room screen we offer information and advice; this will include new initiatives within the health service, ways to keep healthy, how to use your own appointments effectively and any changes in staff.

The PPG has regular meetings for the chairs of surgery committees when we discuss and put forward our views on the necessary changes that must be made in the present circumstances.

The PPG is also working to help other surgeries set up a committee. Ideally we would like all surgeries to have the opportunity to have input on major and local issues on behalf of all patients.

CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group)

This is the group that has overall control of the National Health Service, Gravesham . Our deliberations are reported to them in order to help seek solutions which will improve the service offered to the public.

The CCG set up two one day conferences to which PPG chairs and other interested parties were invited.

The first was at the Hilton Hotel Maidstone , 23rd November 2016. This was entitled "Whole System Stakeholder event" The event was to bring together a range of stakeholders including commissioners, providers, KCC and district councils, Healthwatch , civil society, emergency services, patients and the public to stress test the model. This was seen as an opportunity to improve the whole Urgent Care model and consider the implications for all agencies.

At this meeting we were given the relevant information in stages then worked in groups for discussion and to draw conclusions which were recorded. It was a successful day and well attended with everyone taking part.

The second meeting was held at Shorne Woods Country Park ,Gravesend,10th February 2017. Entitled "Urgent & Local Care" Listening Event. This was presented by the DGS and Swale Clinical Commissioning Groups. This was a discussion on urgent and local care review, and proposals to improve patient experience and health outcome. We had papers to show what had already been done, why we needed change, our vision and preferred clinical model and workshop discussions. This was another very full and successful day carried out with great enthusiasm.

All the issues were discussed by all the interested parties and resulted in a fulsome publication being presented at our February PPG. It is entitled "Strategic Objectives and 2017/18 Corporate Objectives". It is a very detailed document. I quote the CCG's vision. " To be a clinically led and innovative commissioning organisation that puts patients first, improves their healthcare outcomes, and operates with minimal bureaucracy."

At our meeting we were asked if anyone was willing to proof read the document and to, if they so wished, comment on the content. The vice chair and I volunteered and now await the outcome.

You can rest assured that the Patient Voice Committee will stay strong in mind and spirit as we look forward to another year.

Joyce Watts~~~Chair of Patient Voice~~~The Oaks Surgery.