



PPG Meeting – 25th April 2022

Date of Meeting:	25.04.2022
Attendees:	Claire Clayton – Practice Manager Jack Gaddass – Assistant Practice Manager AK, YT , KM, JL, RA

Introductions:

New Management Team:

Jack and Claire provided a bit of their background.

- Claire has worked at Woodhouse Health Centre for 17 years and in that time has worked her way up. Claire started as a receptionist, then worked as a secretary followed by Operations Manager and now Practice Manager, this role started in June 2021. Claire spoke about all the knowledge she had gained over the years in these different roles.
- Jack worked in administration for 6 years before becoming a manager at a GP practice in the north of Sheffield and came to woodhouse in December 2021 as the Assistant Practice Manager.

Abusive Patients:

GP Practices have reported at a national level that abuse from patients has risen significantly following the early Covid-19 lockdowns. Zero tolerance policies have been publicised from NHS England. Even recently, with services close to or above historic levels, patients are showing increased levels of abuse.

- Phones not being answered and appointments not being available suggested as causing some of the frustrations. Jack agreed that this has been a significant problem, especially in early 2022 where high sickness rates resulted in the loss of over 100 appointments per week for approximately a 2-month period. Hopeful that the phones will be aided by the heavy recruitment that has taken place in the reception team, with 4 new starters in the past 2 months, and with more recruitment still occurring. Training the staff will still take several months.
- There is an option on the phones for prescriptions that states that prescriptions cannot be handled over the phone, before sending you back to the start, could this provide the option to speak with someone if it is still appropriate?

- It was suggested that people seem to have generally been more aggressive outside of GP practices since covid, and that this problem may not be unique to general practice but could be linked to an overall effect of the pandemic.

Appointments and Patient Access:

Patients are now given the choice of if they would like face to face or telephone appointments.

The front door is now open to queries, though appointment bookings are not taken at the front door to prevent backlogs for the patients who need access to the building.

People may have heard from the news that GP practices are going to be open for longer hours. The details on this are currently very unclear so we can't provide much more details other than that it is expected to start in October 2022, and the hours are 08:00 – 20:00 Monday to Friday, and 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday. The funding is at a network level, which means this service will most likely need to be provided alongside the 4 other GP practices in our network.

- Patient with no access to telephones can still book at the door, simply inform the reception that this is the case, and they should be let in.
- The phone system is being investigated to see if a queuing system can be added
- It was suggested that the phone lines alert patient when appointments have run out. This has been investigated in the past but is not easily done, will investigate again to see if changes in technology now allow for this.
- It was noted that the doctors within the practice seem to regularly change. This is because we are a training practice that regularly have trainee GPs with us on a rotation basis, often changing every 3-12 months depending on where they are in their training. We will check to see if this information can be added to our website, along with an up-to-date staff list.
- Some people were unaware of the AccuRx service which allows for appointments to be requested online, along with admin queries such as sick notes and results to be submitted without having to call the surgery. It was suggested that this be included in the phone message whilst patients wait
- The message that plays when you call the practice was identified as out of date. Much of this phone message was required by national guidance but had remained unchanged for 2+ years. We will review the latest guidance to see if this has changed and if we can update the message.

Building Changes:

Construction work is planned on the lower entrance of the building to create an automatic two door system. This should increase the disability access of the building, along with security and heat retention.

The pharmacy is moving into the old library near the practice, and we are currently in talks to improve access between the two buildings.

Future of the PPG:

Before covid the PPG was more patient lead than this meeting was and took place every 3 months. It was agreed that the more agenda driven meeting lead by Jack seemed to work well, and it was asked that this continue going forward. 3 months was agreed as a good timeframe and will continue to be at that those intervals.