

Summary of Patients' Voice Meeting via Zoom on 11th August 2020

There had not been the usual pattern of Patients' Voice meetings as a result of the Covid-19 crisis and the last meeting had taken place in January.

During this online meeting which took place using Zoom the Practice Manager reported on how different it had been operating the two surgeries during the Covid-19 crisis! It had initially been very quiet but systems were quickly put in place for more telephone triage, text messaging, use of video, etc and the practice carried on processing essential blood tests. In more recent times the practice began calling more patients back in and nurses are now almost back to their normal range of services. There have been some long term condition reviews and more routine work is being carried out. Anything that was stopped as a result of Covid has had to be reassessed with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) before re-starting. There has been good liaison with CCG through remote meetings and this is now reduced to just weekly meetings. Most appointments with GPs are undertaken on the telephone. One room is in use with visiting patients and appropriate measures are in place for cleansing between patients, etc. Health Care Assistants are seeing patients and are wearing PPE as appropriate. Access to the surgery is via intercom and this may raise issues as weather worsens, with restricted numbers and queuing outside.

We welcome a new nurse Becky for three days per week and she has settled in really well. We have lost an Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Cheryl, who was with the practice for nine months. There are two new registrars, Dr Thomas since April and Dr Toller from early August.

The Chairman asked how the current level of consultations compares with normal figures. The Practice Manager said that there has been much less contact than previously because many patients are managing things for themselves more but it is starting to get busier now. There are currently no bookable appointments being put online for patients to access. One member of the group thought that the e-consult process on offer was rather too detailed and time consuming for many patient enquiries so perhaps needs some amendment into the future.

The Practice Manager drew advance attention to the fact that the flu vaccination programme would have to operate very differently this year. Hence the practice is trialling a drive-through pneumococcal vaccination clinic for patients who will attend a gazebo at William Brookes School and stay within their cars while clinicians, administrators and car park managers operate the programme. This process will be assessed to see how a similar procedure could be used for the flu vaccinations in the Autumn. The practice is very grateful to the school for kindly making their facilities available and it is understood that they will also be available during the October half term and on Saturdays.