

West Area Health Forum

Wednesday 28 September 2022, from 10-11:30am at St Richard's Church and Community Centre.

1. Welcome and introductions

There were 36 people in attendance.

Please contact Forum facilitator Jo (JM) on joanna.martindale@hkproject.org.uk or 01273 706469 at any time with agenda ideas, comments, suggestions or questions, including feedback about experiences of attending the Health Forum.

2. Notes of the last meeting

The notes were agreed as accurate.

3. Updates Hove Medical Centre, Mile Oak, Wish, Links, Benfield and Portslade

Links Road Surgery & Wish Park Medical Centre

Steve Cribbs (SCFT Primary Care Manager of Links and Wish) gave apols, but had briefed Emma the new Practice Manager at Wish to update today

- GP capacity is stable but there is pressure from staff sickness Flu clinic starting on 10th GP's are at capacity (5 GPs) and only 1 nurse, trying to recruit a new nurse. Trained 1 HCA to give one flu vaccine.

Q Dawn asked about flu clinics, flu jabs are starting on 8th and then on 22nd Oct

Q Mike how do you cope with 1 nurse? It is really tough and we are struggling, the doctors are having to take on a lot of the nursing responsibilities. Trying our best to recruit but no luck so far. There is a proposal to get some help with the nursing but we will have to wait and see if it's approved.

Q Dawn: Will we ever get back to appointments via the phone?

Benfield Valley Healthcare Hub (BVHH) (including Burwash Surgery)

Lindsay Coleman (Business Manager) reported:

- Now part of Goldstone PCN with Brighton Wellbeing Centre and they are working through the merger, recruiting for GP's, nurses, pharmacist and receptionists (now 15), have also recruited paramedics. Ongoing issues w waiting times should be starting to improve but it will be over time as staff are trained. Phone wait times are still longer than desired but improving. Flu clinics have started and have 500-600

people booked in over the next few weeks. There are blips but working hard, new PPG group set up as a PCN model – all Benfield/Burwash patients welcome –

Q Mary when is Burwash going to open? – ans: there are still things to do before we can open, we are trying hard to get everything done as the space is needed urgently. When can we book an appointment by phone? – currently difficult for older people in particular – ans: we are going to fix that.

Frank reported on the difficulty of all appointment booking including someone that needed life saving surgery. Frank to feed back to the individual practice managers on details but he raised three cases anonymously:

1) The answer machine message said that there were no more appointments available that day.

The message said that callers should hold to speak to reception for other matters but not to ask for an appointment.

After a fortnight of this and on the verge of giving up, the patient's partner said hold anyway.

The patient waited and spoke to a receptionist who said that there were appointments available that day.

The patient was seen later that day and immediately referred to a consultant.

Weeks later the same patient had an urgent operation for a condition which, had it been left, could have been life-threatening, would certainly have been more difficult to treat and would probably have been more expensive for the NHS to treat.

...

2) A patient was asked to book a blood test at the polyclinic by their GP.

The patient's partner was then asked to have an urgent blood test the next day.

The consultant advised patient's partner to have their blood test at the walk-in blood test clinic at the Royal Sussex County Hospital outpatients department.

The patient had to transport their partner to the Royal Sussex and took their letter to enable both tests to be carried out at the same time.

The clinic was not busy but said that the blood test requested by the GP had to be carried out at the polyclinic.

...

- 3) A patient was told by their GP to book an appointment at reception to review test results in just over a week's time.

The receptionist said that it was not possible to book advance appointments.

The patient told the receptionist that the GP had just asked for the appointment to be booked and agreed to do so.

Frank asked whether there was a way for the PCN to facilitate action learning/practice sessions to improve patient satisfaction

Hove Medical Centre

Richard Gravestock (Business Manager), reported:

- The Practice had 6 GP registrars start in Aug for training, room space is a big problem the most clinical staff in admin reception staff has been stable but we are understaffed even with 19 staff given demand. Flu vacs arrived and vacs program starts on Monday

Mile Oak Surgery

The Practice: Lisa Winney sent apologies (Jo Martindale passed on information)

- Terrible problems with their phones which is at the point of being resolved. They are understaffed on reception. They are really trying through the problems and have put a mobile phone number for over 65s. They have recruited new partner GPs and new salaried GPs and now have a full complement of Doctors.

Portslade Health Centre

Rowan (Partner GP Portslade, Clinical Lead PCN)

We have the same problems as all the other surgeries, staffing is a constant battle and how we utilise the services that we have. We have a lot of new staff and training has been difficult. Looking to recruit another part time GP. We have also run out of space, and clinical space to see patients is at a premium. Our website needs developing and updating, it hasn't been looked at for a long time. It is helpful for the GPs to have telephone appointments before a face to face as often allows for tests to happen ahead of an appointment eg bloods.

- **Q** Mike: are Portslade accessing the social prescribing team? We need to use social prescribers more. **Ans:** In an ideal world with more space, we would have room for everyone to work, we are striving for that which adds to us not utilising services as much as we would like.
- Rachel Friggins – Togetherco Social Prescribing lead org: **ans:** The social prescribing numbers are going up, supporting more patients over last year than before.

Tory Lawrence PCN Manager: PCN main project is the targeted lung health checks project. Targets 55 to 74 and if a smoker or ex smoker, you will be invited for a lung check, the scanner is at Sainsburys in the car park.

4. Targeted Lung cancer Health Checks

This is a clear explanation of the process and booklets were handed out at the meeting

[Sussex NHS Lung Health Checks \(sussexlunghealthcheck.nhs.uk\)](https://sussexlunghealthcheck.nhs.uk)

David Parker NHS England have set the parameters for this project as 55-74. If there are people under or over the age range that have symptoms of lung cancer they must access their GPs. There is nothing we can do about the targeted age range at a local level because its set by NHSE

We are in phase 3 of a national program, it has started at other places around the country. NHS England chose Brighton and Hove and locally we convinced them to add on Hastings and Crawley which also have high deprivation and levels of lung cancer. We are currently sharing the scanner between Brighton and Crawley. People are invited by letter if they have been smokers or ex-smokers.

Sylvia has a letter, that seemed to imply only smokers but what about those people that have lived with smokers? Those that are affected indirectly. Ans: Unfortunately, passive smoking doesn't make you eligible for the scheme

Maureen: It seems us over 74 are written off again.

Qu: What about people with COPD? The CT scans will pick up all sorts of things eg emphysema and letters are sent out to inform patients. This has resulted in lots of calls from stressed patients all of which are followed up by the PCN team saving local surgeries from a deluge of calls which would be disruptive to day to day business.

JM: We, as a group, could work with PCN to help get the letter less frightening for patients if helpful. Rowan to ask JM for support as and when letter is redesigned

5. Amy Galea, Primary Care NHS Sussex – replaced by Hugo Luck

Hugo Luck Associate Director of Primary Care, coming back to Brighton on Monday. Reflecting on how we have moved on since COVID

New system started in July

Around new ways of working, integrated care system, working together of Health and Social care. We want people to live longer and address health inequalities

across Sussex. Want to enhance the patient experience, up to 30K patient contacts every day throughout Sussex. There are more appointments available than 3 years ago however requirements have gone through the roof – demand is huge. We need to support the work force after all that has happened in last few years as they are ‘on their knees’. Finally, value for money are we spending our money wisely as a system?

Challenges: Access, guiding patients through the systems and the work force issues.

Last winter we had 7.5m of additional central money available slightly less this year. Last year we put on 100,000 additional appointments this resulted in less calls to 111 and less visits to hospitals.

For some people digital isn't the way forward and we recognise the need for face-to-face appointments, we will work with health watch and patient groups to simplify things and make them clearer. Need to increase the use of community pharmacists. Looking at ways that people can access services directly (i.e. physios) without going through the GPs

We will continue to work with our GPs and patient groups to make the system better.

Q Pat when you are evaluating these services, look at eyes people currently must go to Sayers Common. There are problems with the service at Sayers Commons and there have been a lot of problems since the service moved. Will you be looking at this as part of your evaluation?

Hugo: Ophthalmology used to be run by NHSE and will now return to localities (NHS Sussex) we will collect monitoring information and look at feedback and will evaluate the services provided locally.

Michelle Health Watch – difficulties with appointments, access, and delays have been highlighted here

Are there any other surgeries being merged?

Healthwatch are involved in looking at GPs websites now, there is a huge delay in information sharing and websites need improving.

Reliance on digital systems: there are a group of people that do not work on digital systems and the reliance on digital and video systems is not OK for them

Jane Lodge: My job to take back the insights (stories) that come from the communities and make sure this information is logged and action is taken. There is lots of work going on behind the scenes. What is the best way to pass the information on about the work going on behind the scenes? Communicating what we do is always a challenge

Sharon, welcome the observations, we as patients want to be involved in the solutions.

Ann, I rang for advice and was seen quickly and action was taken and I was well supported by my GP.

Rowan we really want to spend time with our older patients so that we understand their needs.

Rowan -plea for Estates issues to be prioritised in new system – how can we make best use of staff and joint working when there is no actual clinical space?

Qu: Ian making better use of pharmacists – are you increasing the capacity for pharmacists to prescribe?

Hugo: there are fewer practices than there once were, practices must deliver far more services now. We will be looking at digital/face to face/phone. We will be looking at hospital bed usage and care within the community

Estates: yes to Rowan - we will be finding creative ways around and working with local councils to try to find solutions to the lack of space in the system.

We will be looking at pharmacists being able to prescribe in future.

Jo Noted need to have a meeting around dental services when they transferred to NHS Sx.

6. Extended hours for local surgeries Mark Cannon Director Organisational Development Brighton and Hove Federation

Supporting with enhanced access between 6-8.30 largely GP remote appointments on weeknights and Saturdays. 42 hours of appointments. 58% increased capacity.

Comments through Jo where people believe services can be improved?

Q extended hours how have the GP surgeries reacted for the need for extended surgeries? It will be a struggle for the local surgeries already under pressure to stick to these additional appointments.

Jane Lodge: virtual wards, its going to be a difficult winter – trying to deliver hospital services in the home to take pressure off the hospitals. If anyone wants to ask more then contact via Jo as we could arrange a talk.

7. Autumn Boosters/Flu and other resident Rep updates

Ann: we are doing Covid boosters at St Richard's 27th October 10-12 over 65s and clinically vulnerable

Ann: Bookable appointments are only available at the racecourse and access is difficult for many people

Mary: there were some bookable appointments at Portslade Health Centre but these appointments went within an hour.

The need for covid vacs to be available in the West was agreed as members highlighted transport difficulties

Jo advised there should be more Portslade sessions coming and HKP will circulate whatever info they get.

PCN or rep updates Sharon – we are all aware of how critical it is to get our communications to patients correct, so that we are sending out clear communications – not been that clear on vaccine access.

Ashley from HMC advised that patient transport still available – heres the link
<https://www.sussex.ics.nhs.uk/your-care/covid-19-vaccination/free-transport-to-your-covid-19-vaccine-appointment/>

8. Community news, updates on diabetes peer support, Health Digital champion sessions, community menopause group and potential chronic pain group – November Health event for whole community

- Diabetes peer group met in Sept w a session on healthy eating on a budget
- Digital sessions for health are run every Friday at St Richards 11-1 as a drop in – supporting people to access whatever would support their health online eg Physio exercises, online prescriptions, e consult etc
- New date for menopause support w Dr Zoe Schaedel on 9th November at St Richards 6.30-8 looking at HRT and natural alternatives
- Health event Saturday November 5th 1.30-12.30 at St Richards for free smoothie making, bliss bowls, yoga tasters and a chance to talk to health experts around lung and bowel cancer screening. Also nurse taking blood pressures and giving advice. HKP have received funding to deliver yoga and shape up sessions free and this is a chance to find out more and sign up

Claire Hines (HKP) will be the project lead on the cancer awareness and lead on the health event 5th October claire.hines@hkproject.org.uk

9. Any Other Business

Frank Le Duc informed the Health Forum of the following Brighton and Hove News new community reporter Felice has put together a survey to get some feedback on accessible City proposals

This was highlighted as important for the city – so do fill in if you are living with a disability or caring for someone with additional needs

<https://www.brightonandhovenews.org/2022/09/27/fill-in-our-survey-and-help-make-life-better-for-disabled-people/>

The next West Area Health Forum meetings is:

- 7 December 2022

All meetings are planned to be held from 10am-12noon on at St Richard's Church and Community Centre, with coffee available from 9:30am.