**BRIDGES PPG MINUTES 27TH JUNE 2023**

PRESENT:

Sue Brunt (Chair)

Rupert Turberville-Smith (GP)

Lennie Edwards (Practice Manager)

Jim Gammans (NHS Dorset)

Sue Bousfield, Claire Brown, Louise Browne, Shirley Earley, , Liz O’Connell, Anita Roberts, Jo White, Norman White, Dorothy Woods

APOLOGIES: Meridy Phillips, Merle Turner

Sue Brunt welcomed everyone and introduced Rupert and Lennie for the benefit of new members.

ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING:

* The WIFI problem at Littlemoor Surgery is yet to be resolved as the only way to get a reliable signal is to stand at the main entrance.
* Did Not Attend (DNA) was discussed. Numbers have not changed since the last meeting. There has been a delay in sending out the questionnaire to patients who miss appointments due to the main person being indisposed. It is expected that when they are sent out it would be over a 2 – 3 month period and then the results can be analysed. A question was raised whether the appointments that had been missed were people who had made them well in advance, but it seems there is no direct correlation, as some people make an appointment on the day and still do not attend or answer if a phone consultation appointment has been made.

PRACTICE UPDATE: (LENNIE)

* The Advanced Care Practitioner has left which has put pressure on other staff. The two trainee registrars are staying on after completion of their training on a part time basis which will benefit both sites. A new full time trainee registrar is expected to start in August for a year. Another is also expected but will be going on maternity leave in due course. A practice nurse is retiring after 40 years’ service, three of which have been with The Bridges. A replacement is coming but will need training before they are fully up to speed.
* A Mental Health Practitioner is available for face to face and telephone consultations, but is being shared with other practices.
* Across Weymouth & Portland Saturday morning clinics are continuing and building up.
* There has been a meeting between surgeries and pharmacies to talk about working together and improving communication for both sides.
* The newsletter will include guidance about the importance of taking prescribed medication. Pharmacies will get involved by talking with the patient, making sure they take the full course of medication and not stop because they feel better, but also not ordering medication unnecessarily.

PPG PROJECTS: (SUE)

* Digital Volunteers are taking a summer break and there will be a review on whether they will resume in the autumn with the possibility of evening sessions being offered. Their work has involved helping patients access the System Online app or the NHS app on their phones with the hope that people can order medicine, access some appointments and carry out other tasks for themselves and so relieve pressure on reception desks. Over 1000 people have been helped in Weymouth & Portland, with many of them coming into the Bridges surgeries.
* Health Workshops have been taking place and in the last 2 months there have been 3 pre diabetes and 2 hypertension sessions. A speaker was booked for each one and they have been well attended. The Littlemoor venue has proved to be less convenient than the Commercial Road surgery. The sessions do not follow a strict agenda, they are more for people to ask questions and raise concerns. Discussing issues with others in the same position has proved valuable. The aim is to point people in the direction of self-help before their symptoms require medical intervention and thus relieve pressure on the surgeries. Other practice managers have shown interest and it is hoped that they can help in organizing future sessions. PPG volunteers have been greatly valued for their work in setting up the room, preparing and offering refreshments and clearing up afterwards. There was discussion about a possible autumn programme which could also include workshops for menopause, asthma and inhaler techniques and carers of dementia patients in addition to pre diabetes and hypertension. Other suggestions were C-siders cancer support group and relaxation techniques for tackling stress. Thought would have to be given about who would be invited.
* Newsletter & Website – content for the summer newsletter is under review. The new website is in the development stage and it is hoped before it goes live that it can be viewed and ‘tweaked’ as necessary. There was discussion about the PPG page on the website. It was agreed that it should outline what has already been achieved by the group – health talks, digital volunteers, vaccination clinics etc. The page should also have a simple to complete application form for anyone interested in joining the group. The issue of a different name from PPG was raised. Various possibilities were suggested but there will be no change at present.

AOB:

* Access to appointments is still difficult. Incoming calls can be monitored and if there is a backlog staff can be deployed to ‘phone duty’ from other tasks, if necessary.
* Some patients are wary of discussing their reason for wanting an appointment but reception staff are bound by confidentiality in the same way as the medical staff and if they can ascertain the reason for calling, the patient can be directed to the most appropriate person. This information should be put in the newsletter so that people know that they might have to have these discussions before an appointment is arranged. Lennie will ensure this is done.
* It is expected that flu clinics will be run as in previous years for people of 65 and over and those with chronic conditions. People under 65 without medical conditions will not be eligible, but they can go to a pharmacy and pay for a jab, if they so wish. Clinics will probably start a little earlier this year in September.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday 19th September at 6:10pm. (The later time will allow drivers to park in the council car park without paying)