**BRIDGES PPG MINUTES 29TH OCTOBER 2024**

PRESENT:

Meridy Phillips (Chair) Rupert Turberville-Smith (GP) Lennie Edwards (Practice Manager)

Sue Brunt, Alan Clark, Shirley Earley, Liz O’Connell, Gill Penwell, Anita Roberts, Steve Thomas, Jo White

APOLOGIES: Jim Gammans (NHS Dorset), Paul O’Rouke

ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING: (R T-S & LE)

The Autumn Vaccination Programme has been underway throughout October on Saturdays. 3400 flu and approximately 2800 covid vaccinations have been administered so far and the programme will be running until March 2025, so it is hoped last year’s total of 3900 flu vaccinations will be beaten. The staff feel the system this year of offering both vaccinations in one place has been better and queues have generally been short. SB requested that Volunteers helping at clinics be notified if sessions are due to finish earlier than expected.

LE thanked the PPG members who helped at the clinics.

R T-S updated the group on Collective Action:

* All practices in Weymouth and Portland have agreed to the 25 patient contact limit per day, which is the BMA recommendation. On rare occasions this limit has been reached and patients have been diverted elsewhere. So far, there have been few problems and there is still a certain amount of ‘wiggle room’ to accommodate patients in desperate need.
* The Primary Care Network (PCN) will shortly be publicising in the Dorset Echo the reasons surgeries are carrying out these actions.
* Hospitals have been notified that as from January 2025 practices will no longer provide follow up care for the following conditions: 2 year monitoring of bariatric surgery, certain blood conditions, ADHD prescribing and monitoring, gender reassignment and eating disorders. These have never been in the contract for local practices, but had been offered on a goodwill basis in the past. It is accepted that it is clinically preferable for hospitals to carry out these follow up procedures.

PRACTICE UPDATE: (R T-S & LE)

The Staff celebrated 25 years that Dr Rupert Turberville-Smith has served and all present congratulated him on this outstanding achievement.

The Bridges are the highest user in the group of the service Pharmacy First. This is a system where some patients can be referred straight to a pharmacist for prescription only medicines for a certain number of conditions. There have been no complaints so far, but there was discussion on how this could be further publicised, so that more people are aware of this facility.

STAFF: One doctor is returning on 30th October from maternity leave. One doctor is on extended compassionate leave and the hours are being covered by locums as far as possible.

SB raised the issue of patients who fail to attend appointments and the waste of time this causes to Staff and the problems created for others who cannot get an appointment. In many cases the patient is contacted by phone to be asked why they did not attend. There was discussion on what publicity there could be to raise awareness of this issue. LE stated that the problem is not confined to the Bridges.

PPG PROJECTS:

Cookery classes for pre diabetic patients start next week in the Salvation Army hall. The course lasts 6 weeks and each session lasts 2 hours where people are shown basic cookery skills by personnel from the Friendly Food Club, with volunteers assisting, in the hope of building enough confidence to cook healthy meals from scratch rather than depending on ready made offerings from the supermarket.

Volunteers are continuing to assist at the ‘Frailty Clinics’ which are run by the PCN to help people who have been referred to carry out exercises which may prevent them having falls.

MP stated that the last Newsletter which should have been geared towards the Autumn seemed to be biased towards Summer activities such as staying safe in the sun.

RSV VACCINATIONS:

LE stated that some vaccinations were carried out in September, but paused during October because of the flu/covid vaccination programme. It will be resumed shortly and eligible patients will be sent an invitation in due course.

AOB

Several local churches provide sessions for people who are lonely and/or are looking for a cheap nourishing meal. It was suggested a poster advertising these locations be displayed in the waiting area.

LE asked if anyone would be willing to volunteer at busy times (mornings) to encourage patients with a booked appointment to use the self check in system rather than waiting unnecessarily in a queue to speak to the Receptionist. MP will organize a rota.

AC who is also a governor at Dorset County Hospital (DCH) has offered to keep PPG meetings updated of latest developments at that establishment. MP stated that there would be an item included on the agenda for this to be a regular occurrence.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TBC