

Thaxted Surgery Patient Participation Group Minutes – 12 September 2019

Present: Sue Bush, Dianne Claxton, Jo Curtis, Harry Ellis, Pam Gale, Joan Gray, Margaret Legg, Jane Lucas, Chris Rengert, Sheilah Rengert, Shiela Roberts, Carol Skelton, Jon Spencer, Rita Williams; Sara Carruthers, Jessica Peck

Apologies: Bob Bass, Michael Delahooke, Diane Drury, Keith Isgar

Building work – Timeline for completion

Building work is progressing well. We lost a bit of time around steel work, but this is now done and the team are onto plastering, flooring, fixings and services.

The date for the surgery to repossess the existing building is Friday 1st November.

The surgery plans to move reception, dispensary and waiting room over the weekend of 2 November and open for patients on Monday 4 November as usual. The refurbished consulting rooms may be opened up one at a time over the following week. The PPG agreed that this was a reasonable plan.

Prior to this, the surgery is losing the “orange” nurse consulting room so the builders can convert it to a clean utility room. We will, however, have the new upstairs meeting room and will be using that as a consulting room for a period of 4 weeks prior to 1 November.

Status on Refurbishment

Now that the major risks of the building project are behind us, the surgery are assessing what additional refurbishment works they have the capacity to carry out. The surgery has committed to redecorating 4 existing GP consulting rooms, and are on the point of committing to refurbish dispensary.

The PPG agreed with the surgery that it is also highly desirable to refurbish the two nurse consulting/treatment rooms if not before 1 November, then very soon after and before momentum is lost. The PPG agreed to use existing surplus funds from fund raising efforts to help fund this, and to continue raising funds to cover the work (see fund raising update below). Sara agreed to report this back to the partners to help decision making.

Feedback and ideas re how we are managing in current reduced space

The surgery has fewer consulting rooms than usual and waiting room, reception and dispensary are temporarily upstairs.

The surgery recognise that this is inconvenient for patients, and that confidentiality can be an issue in the waiting room. They have put up signage and put out patient communications explaining the situation. They have also employed students as “runners” to help guide patients. Sara and Jess sought feedback and any additional ideas to help ease the situation for patients.

PPG members felt that the runners had worked well. They suggested:

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- additional signs at the Margaret Street end of the ramp.
- a “countdown” poster in the waiting room helping patients to understand that this is only temporary and the end is in sight.
- “Please close when not in use” signs on the toilet doors opening into the lobby

PPG members particularly wanted it noted that they felt the staff had coped extremely well and continued to present themselves to patients as open, helpful and good natured. The PPG asked Sara and Jess formally to express their thanks and appreciation to staff.

Fund Raising – Current financials and why we are still fund raising

PPG funds stand at £30k, and Yardley’s have also offered the surgery a grant. Of this, the surgery has requested around £12k for equipment already purchased, and will need some more to fund additional new equipment as we open up the old consulting rooms again.

Best estimate is that there may be up to £10k of PPG funds that the PPG would be happy to use to contribute to refurbishment of the nurses rooms (see above).

PPG members suggested more posters/communications to explain why fund raising is still in progress. Sara to action.

Fund raising help

The fund raising group noted that they need more help – a small number of people are doing all the work. They would welcome extra pairs of hands from the rest of the PPG, and the wider patient population. The PPG agreed that the rota for the Christmas raffle should go to all PPG members to sign up, not just the fund raising group. A few members are not receiving e-mails, and Sara agreed to make sure their e-mail addresses were on the right lists.

Fund Raising Plans

The fund raising group are planning:

- To serve tea and coffee at the Fluathon – the main objective of which will be to explain why we are still fund raising and to recruit new helpers. (There will also be a donation box, and some second hand items for sale)
- Christmas raffle
- Coffee & craft morning at Parishes (with thanks to Bill Brazier) on December 6th, at which Christmas raffle tickets will be sold
- Plant stall and coffee morning at Parishes on 15 May

Update on my Care Record

Sara confirmed the fair processing period has now completed and the surgery has signed a data sharing agreement for My Care Record.

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Update on Primary Care Network (PCN)

Sara confirmed that Thaxted Surgery has signed up to partner with Crocus, Gold Street and Newport surgeries in a primary care network.

These surgeries seem to be of a similar mindset to Thaxted surgery in valuing patient continuity and preferring to keep services within the surgeries rather than centralise services into one location. For example, the network has chosen to keep spirometry, ECG, doppler and wound dressing within each surgery even though west Essex CCG has offered contracts that encourage pooling those services.

The PPG were reassured by this.

The PPG also discussed the potential advantages of the PCN approach, and agreed that there are some potential services and resources that are much more feasible if they are shared, including “social prescribers”, visiting paramedic, and physiotherapy assessments. However, they were very keen that in sharing these services, it is the service that moves around to spend 1 day in a week in each surgery, rather than patients having to travel to access the service.

2018/19 Patient Survey

Sara shared the results of the 2018/19 Patient Survey <https://www.gp-patient.co.uk/report?practicecode=F81131>

The PPG were pleased to see Thaxted at the top of the local area again, in spite of a difficult year with building disruption.

Sara noted that:

- Thaxted scored particularly highly (100%) in trust and confidence in clinicians
- The surgery is hoping to improve scores relating to reception and making appointments as a result of the new building (though scores are already high in relation to NHS and CCG averages).

Any other business

Some PPG members noted that they had heard grumbles about making appointments. Jess and Sara repeated that the surgery’s aspiration is always to see patients on the day if there is a medical need to do so, and that reception staff are now being directed to ask patients reasons for their appointments so that we can do this. If this is not happening correctly, it could be a staff training and/or behaviour issue.

Sara asked PPG members to please encourage patients to talk to either Sara or Jessica so that we can get to the root of the individual issues and see what needs to change. Please reassure patients that we genuinely want to hear so we can improve things.