

Launceston Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, 23 March, 2017, at Launceston Medical Centre

1. Chairman's welcome

Chairman Maureen Amy welcomed members: Les Whaley, Steve Dymond, Rosemary Bromwich, Peter Harper (practice business manager), Patty Taylor (secretary), Jo Keogh, Andrew Yardley (IT Manager), and new members Gill Brown, Joan Heaton and student nurse Lisa Halls.

2. Apologies

There were apologies from: Dawn Rogers, Elizabeth L'Estrange West, Pam Davey, Nik Burgess, Cindy Hart and Julie Chegwiddden

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the 2016 AGM were unanimously agreed.

4. Practice Business Manager's report

Expansion plans

Peter reported that there was to be a meeting on 1 April when the level of funding towards the capital costs of the Medical Centre expansion would be decided by the NHS. With regard to the land required for the extension, negotiations between consultants representing the Medical Centre and NHS Property Services were still on-going over the actual conditions attached to the sale of the land. (The price had been agreed.) Members asked why there should be conditions when the land had been left to the town to be used for medical purposes. Peter said the land was now owned by the NHS but research was being undertaken to find out the details of the bequest and transfer of the land to the NHS.

More funding had been allocated by the NHS for the 'due diligence' checks to be carried out. Once the negotiations had been concluded and the level of funding agreed, it was planned to start work as early as possible and to keep disruption to the existing building and services to an absolute minimum.

Staffing Peter said the medical centre was short-staffed in the dispensary but would be interviewing possible staff the following day.

5. Web and IT update

Systmonline Andy reported that transfers by patients to the national Systmonline for booking appointments and ordering repeat prescriptions had settled down. Although it is currently running in tandem with the medical centre's own IT system for appointments and prescriptions, it was planned to migrate all patients to Systmonline over the coming months. The new national system is more efficient than the current local system. Andy stressed that there would be support for any patients who experienced difficulty/were concerned about using the new system. The details of how the migration will be effected were currently being worked out.

Check-in screen Concerns had been raised that the current check-in system at the front desk was rather slow. Andy said alternative systems were currently being investigated.

6. Chairman's review of the year

Maureen reported that the group had had a busy and positive year, with a focus on publicising the expansion project through the media, at meetings and individually. The group had heard directly from the Nurse Practitioners and the Paramedic about their specialist roles. The chairman and members had also represented the group at, and reported back on, meetings and events related to health provision in Cornwall.

7. Election of officers and committee

Secretary Patty Taylor took the chair for the election of chairman. Maureen Amy was prepared to stand for one more year and was re-elected unopposed. On behalf of the group, Patty thanked Maureen for her hard work and leadership during the past year. Pam Davey and Steve Dymond were elected joint vice-chairmen and Patty Taylor was re-elected secretary and press officer

Committee members re-elected for 2017-18 were: Cym Downing, Jo Keogh, Anne Langley, Dawn Rogers and Les Whaley.

The list of group members was reviewed and it was agreed that Patty should contact those from whom nothing had been heard for some time to see whether they still wished to be part of the group.

8. Key priorities for the coming year

It was decided that supporting the medical centre's expansion plans would be the key priority and one way to achieve this would be to hold more road shows as soon as there was information to communicate.

9. Promoting the services provided by Launceston Hospital

Members considered the letter from Maggi Woods, of North Hill, in which she offered the support of Carnewater Practice Patients Group if we decided to help promote the services provided by Launceston Hospital. The group discussed whether, as Launceston Medical Centre Patients Group, it would be appropriate to promote the hospital. It was unanimously agreed that the services provided by the hospital were of vital concern to our patients and that without the hospital there would be even more pressure on the Medical Centre and therefore we should proceed. It was agreed that the secretary should make contact with the hospital and League of Friends to discuss how best to proceed.

Action: Patty

Gill expressed her concern that we could lose Launceston Hospital if people did not take action now to prevent its closure. She proposed that the group write a letter to NHS Kernow seeking an assurance that there were no plans to close Launceston Hospital. There was no seconder for this proposal because it was felt that while the Shaping Our Future proposals (for re-shaping the health services in Cornwall) were being considered, no one was in a position to give such an assurance. Rosemary Bromwich said that the chief executive of Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust, Mr Phillip Confue, had said at an earlier meeting that currently there were no plans to close Launceston Hospital.

Joan told the group that there was to be a public meeting in the Town Hall on Monday evening to discuss the issues related to the hospital.

10. Sustainable Transformation Plan – Shaping Our Future

Maureen drew members' attention to the latest information about Shaping Our Future which was contained in a report of the Transformation Board meeting on 17 February and could be found on the Healthwatch Cornwall website.

11. Umbrella Group

The chairman provided an update on the East Cornwall Umbrella Group of PPGs where the main speaker was Dr Symonds who described a project called 'Community Nursing Hubs' for the care of leg ulcers. These would be centres to which patients could be transported by volunteers, nurses could change dressing, and patients would be able to have some social time with other people.

Dr Symonds proposed that the 10 medical surgeries in East Cornwall be split into three hubs each containing approximately 30,000 patients. Launceston would be paired with Tamar Valley Health Centre and cover the widest area geographically.

The suggestion was greeted with some concern by Launceston PPG because members felt the logistics of the proposal had not been properly considered, i.e. the length and time of journeys for each patient from such a huge area, the facilities needed at the hub, and the number of volunteers required.

Les pointed out that volunteer support is often regarded as free support, but in order to be successful, the whole system of volunteers would require proper management.

Maureen said the hubs might well be viable in urban areas, but would not be practical in sparsely populated rural areas.

12. Recruitment

As the group has lost some of its members, it was agreed that we should try to recruit some more. Various possibilities were discussed and it was decided to use a lively colour poster to stimulate interest and that the poster be circulated to parish meetings and various group meetings, as well as being available at the Medical Centre and at any road shows we undertake.

Action: Andy copy posters

13. Launceston Community Network

Joan gave a brief update on the LCN meeting at which Peter had outlined the current state of play with regard to Medical Centre expansion plans. This was much the same as Peter had earlier outlined to the AGM and Joan said Peter had publicly received the strong support of the town council for the efforts being made by the centre.

14. AOB

Les reported that funding for the *Living Well* project had been withdrawn from Age UK. The funding had been used to develop and encourage many community projects for older people. As a result, volunteers would be running a monthly get-together session in Launceston for elderly people. The first session of the new Friday Seniors Coffee Morning would take place at the British Legion Rooms from 10am until noon on 31 March. Members of the group were invited to go along and to help, if possible.

Steve said there were drop-in sessions on Thursday mornings at Elmsleigh House.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place at the **Medical Centre on 25 May, at 6pm**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.25pm.