

## **Launceston Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

### **Minutes from Microsoft Teams Meeting Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6pm**

**Present:** Joan Heaton (Chair), Les Whaley (Vice Chair), Janet Ford (Secretary & Treasurer), Paul Ford, Dawn Rogers, Andrew Yardley, (LMC Practice Manager), Steven Fettner, Bonnie Soanes (later in the meeting)

**Apologies:** Jo Keogh, Liz L'Estrange West, Sue & Nigel Hollingsworth, Leighton Penhale, Helen Bailey, Steve Dymond

Joan opened the meeting welcoming the PPG members and new member Steve Fettner and reminded everyone of the confidentiality of the minutes until approved.

Joan talked about her report and the fact that the Clinical Commissioning Group had officially accepted the problems surrounding the closure of Launceston's MIU. She reported that Kate Shields (NHS Kernow's new chief executive and accountable officer, and the chief executive of the emerging Integrated Care System (ICS)) will be doing all she possibly can for all Cornwall's MIUs going forward.

The pressures on the health system are dire. GPs come to work to help patients not to block them. Staffing is a problem with parents having to stay at home to look after their families who are getting ill.

Joan thanked Les for organising the voucher and card for Dr. Haddon who had written a lovely thank you letter.

Joan continued by talking about Rachel Wigglesworth (Cornwall Council Director of Public Health) who is doing a lot of work to see what is needed in Launceston re Population Health.

Andy said the response from patients has been fantastic re the MIU closure to ensure it remains open. With regard to possible further closure discussions, it would be helpful if a member of the PPG could get involved with Silver Command or someone from the Practice before such a decision was implemented.

Joan reported that a statement had been made by the Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to Cornwall Council:

*We sincerely apologise for the lack of communication ahead of the unit's closure. We have taken steps to ensure that operational changes are notified to the community and wider stakeholders.*

*The decision to close an MIU is never taken lightly; and this decision was in line with the Trust's COVID-19 and business continuity plans. The focus of both is to maintain core services at our priority units.*

Launceston MIU is one of the quieter units seeing less than 8000 people a year.

Dawn commented that Parish Councils have been active in supporting getting the MIU opened. She also mentioned that there used to be a dialysis unit on the Pennygillam estate which was ideal for LMC patients. Joan advised that they are lobbying for this to return. Les commented that we need to push harder as transport costs and time were high due to having to take patients for dialysis to Derriford or Holsworthy.

Andy advised that there are approximately 37 patients needing dialysis and he is distributing a PPG questionnaire to relevant patients to collate their views on current treatment.

Paul said he noticed that Launceston Hospital is recruiting for Band 6 nurses but sadly there is no accommodation available in the area if recruits are found. Joan advised again that Prouts Corner is going to be developed with affordable housing.

Joan attended a fundraising event at Launceston Town Hall celebrating 50 years of the League of Friends and thanked them for their support.

Les ran through his report and the ongoing problems with patients having to wait outside the LMC before their appointments and also ongoing concerns with getting through on the telephone to make appointments. There was a lengthy discussion about the LMC and their triage system and Steve Fettner advised that the online system could be improved to help patients.

Andy advised that the Covid rates are still high and cases are being hospitalised. He has 2 members of staff away due to Covid or because family members have Covid. He said that if a patient could not wait outside because they came by taxi or were dropped off by someone else, then they could wait inside. Andy will bring this to the attention of the Reception Team.

Les mentioned the problem of call backs by the Centre and asked if patients could request an a.m. or p.m. call back. Andy said patients can request it and the message would be passed to the doctor.

With regard to the LMC triage policy he mentioned that some doctors are for it and others against. We are developing a set protocol for all clinicians to use when contacting patients that will involve ringing multiple times and send texts to patients. Steve advised what other places do with regard to triage and Andy and Steve will get together to see what can be put in place to help.

As time was running on, Andy agreed to get back regarding Les's other questions and will send his answers to Janet.

Paul ran through his report and advised that a new Chief Operations Officer for the CPFT had been appointed – Tamsin Anderson who has a wealth of experience. The CPFT still need a new Chairman. Paul reported a new x-ray machine will be going into Launceston Hospital at the end of October.

Les said that Age UK had £812 left in the kitty to use for Covid assisted transport. He spoke about planters for the outside of the Centre and that Launceston in Bloom is happy to maintain these. Les asked if we could reach an agreement during the Meeting on the finances so he could get these ordered. They cost £49.99 for a 400x400 planter and £69.99 for a 800x800 planter. Andy agreed it's a fantastic idea and Les and Andy to meet shortly to discuss them.

A vote was taken on the cost and **it was agreed by all members** (except Steve Fettner who abstained) **to a top spend of £1,000**. This would then leave approximately £2,000 which could be spent on benches – again Les & Andy to discuss this option.

Andy advised Dr Sarah Michaels started last Friday.

The Covid booster vaccinations started last Saturday at Launceston College and 300 patients were co-vaccinated i.e. with the flu vaccine too – this was cohorts 1-5. Paul asked which vaccine was used and Andy advised it is the Pzifer which is collected from Treliske where it is stored at -60 degrees and then collected in a defrosted state and then brought to Launceston where it needs to be used within 30 days. There is a 15 minute wait after each vaccination. The question of transport for patients arose and the links will be put on the LMC website so patients know who to contact to arrange transport. Dawn suggested that information goes into Parish magazines too and Joan agreed.

Andy advised that the Clinical Psychologist, Dr Rebecca Magill, is doing a great job especially at a time when there are far more cases. Andy carried out a survey for feedback from patients seen by Becks and out of 121 people who did the survey, **64 +20** were impressed with the service. There will hopefully be 2 trainees being taken on to help.

Andy showed screenshots of figures relating to how many face to face appointments there had been pre and during Covid. Pre-Covid there were 3,887 per month, during lockdown 1,491 per month but after 2 doses of vaccinations the figure was up to 4,745 per month.

The next meeting is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at the Launceston Medical Centre at 6pm and on Microsoft Teams for those who are not comfortable attending the Centre. This will be the Annual General Meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.59 pm.

Agenda for the Meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October is attached below.

**Launceston Medical Centre  
Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

**Microsoft Teams Meeting  
Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6pm**

**AGENDA**

1. Confidentiality reminder: all reports with this agenda are confidential until the minutes/notes of this e-meeting are distributed.
2. Chair's report: **attached**
3. Vice-chair's report: **attached**
4. Paul's update from the weekly Governors briefing from CPFT: **attached**
5. Treasurer's report: **attached**
6. Practice Manager's report: **at the meeting**
7. Any questions or comments

This is an opportunity for PPG members to ask questions of the practice manager or our officers on the reports contained with this agenda (just as you would at a normal PPG meeting in the surgery).

Responses to item 7 are also the opportunity for PPG members to add relevant

comments/updates of their own.

**Please send all questions by email to Joan and Janet only**

I will do my best to collate the questions, answers and comments, along with the reports, into notes of the meeting and, once they have been signed off by Joan and Andy, circulate them to all members. Once the notes of the meeting have been circulated, members will be able to discuss the contents of our discussions with outside bodies. The notes will act as the basis for a press release.

**2. PPG Chair's Report:**

By the date of our PPG meeting, Launceston Hospital MIU should be open once more to serve our community.

The MIU Campaign Group Petition, with 1,843 signatories, was presented to NHS Kernow, Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT), Cornwall Council, Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust (CFT) and others.

On 2 September 2021, two colleagues and I met with Trudy Corsellis, NHS Kernow board secretary, and David Wilson, CFT's area director for north and east Cornwall, to express our concerns and receive a response.

On 16 September 2021, Kate Shields, NHS Kernow's accountable officer, and Karen Kay, system director for urgent and emergency care, joined David Wilson of CFT at the Launceston Community Network Panel meeting.

All apologised for the breakdown in communication surrounding the sudden closure of our MIU and acknowledged the impact this closure has had on our community. They explained that the system pressures had been complex and there had been a need to maintain safe staffing levels due to Covid. We accepted the apology but requested better and more robust communication in future emergencies. Working with people and communities is essential as we move towards the inception of the Integrated Care System in Cornwall in April 2022.

The petition will be formally received at the NHS Kernow Governing Body meeting next week. Assurances will be sought that protocols are in place to improve communication regarding urgent decision making.

I would like to thank our Deputy Chair, Les Whaley, for organising a gift voucher for £50 plus card for Dr Haddon who retired recently. Dr Haddon served the Launceston community as a much respected doctor for many years and she will be missed. Thank you to Practice Manager, Andrew Yardley, for forwarding the PPG gift to Dr Haddon.

I would like to thank Cllr John Conway for his generous donation from his Cornwall Council Community Chest Fund of £160.00 to purchase a Dementia Friendly Clock for one of the newly refurbished waiting rooms at the Medical Centre. I shall ask Cym Downing, PPG member and Launceston Memory Cafe, to advise on the best product.

Deputy Chair Les Whaley received an award recently from Tavistock Area Support Services for Hospital Car Transport, in recognition of his voluntary work throughout the Covid Pandemic in taking Launceston patients to appointments in Devon and Cornwall. This crucial service highlights the cross border collaboration between our health service providers. Les acknowledged that he could not do this work without the full support of Mrs Whaley.

The PPG continues to lobby for local renal services. Our Practice Manager, Andrew Yardley, is helping by handing out a questionnaire to all renal patients. We shall collate the information and present it as evidence to the service provider which is Derriford Hospital.

Our next meeting will be our PPG AGM. Nominations for Chair and Deputy Chair are welcomed. I attach the PPG Constitution for your information and to recap on our role.

Joan Heaton  
Chair, LMC PPG



PPG Constitution  
2021.docx

### **3. Vice-Chair's Report:**

I am seeing Derriford carrying out more face to face appointments and I hope our Medical Centre will be able to follow very soon.

Patients are asking when and where are the Covid booster injections starting, and we may need to assist with transport once we have the dates as we did last time, to arrange hospital cars we need 7 days notice.

There is still concern with patients phoning in having to wait hours to get through and then being told that they are too late for appointments that day and they must try again the next day, a change is needed could the patient be put on a list for the following day, also when asking for a phone back we no a time is not able to list but to help patients plan their day please can they be told a phone call will be AM or PM. Patients are concerned having to wait outside to pick up their Prescriptions now the weather is changing.

I would like to know when the new chairs will be delivered and would like to discuss Pictures for the waiting areas which was brought up some months ago, I understand Doctors will pick for the own rooms but it would be nice if patients could pick a picture or photo in the waiting areas.

I have seen workmen in the centre how is the remediable work going and costings with the high rise in materials.

Regards

Les

### **4. Paul's update from the weekly Governors briefing from CPFT**

The Trust and its staff are still under huge pressure, the major issue is still freeing up bed space for new patients. The problem is getting space in care homes and arranging care in the patients own home, which we all know, home is the best place to be. The problem we know is staff, both in the care homes and community nursing team, the current staff are exhausted and trying to recruit new staff is extremely

difficult because of the shortage of affordable homes in Cornwall. This I'm afraid is not a quick fix.

All that being said, the COVID infection rate in Cornwall is beginning to go down finally, we are all now waiting for our Flu jab and our Covid Booster.

CFT's new CEO Debbie Richards starts work in October, however, the search for a new Chair of the Board and Board of Governors still goes on, so there is still a chance for you to put your name forward, if you so wish.

Keep safe and well.

Paul Ford – Elected Governor for the East Cornwall Constituency

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

## **5. Treasurer's Report as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

### **Income**

There has been no further income this month.

### **Expenditure**

A cheque for £2,600 was issued to Launceston Medical Centre for the upgraded chairs as agreed.

Also a £50 voucher and £2.95 card was given to Dr Haddon as a thank you for all her support and hard work. £13 was used to pay to frame a picture for the LMC.

The balance after the above items are cleared is £2,977.58.

If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to ask me.  
Janet Ford, Temporary Treasurer

## **6. Practice Manager's Report – at the meeting**