

PPG Meeting  
Tuesday 2nd September 2025

Attendees: Yvonne Gibson (PPG Chair), Graham Tongue (PPG Vice Chair), Christine Hibbert (PPG Member), Ginny Jones (PPG Member), Eliza Austin-Lea (PPG Member), Rebecca Dalby (Operations Manager, Upton Village Surgery)

Apologies: Heather Redhead (PPG Member), Matt Davies (Practice Manager, Upton Village Surgery)

Minutes by: Rebecca Dalby

Meeting chaired by: Yvonne Gibson

*Due to a last minute change of meeting location, agenda items: 1. Practice Manager Report, 2. Missed Appointments - how to educate patients, will be rolled over and discussed at the next scheduled meeting.*

### **1. PACO Implementation**

Rebecca updated attendees that the practice will be launching PACO (Patient Care Optimiser) on Monday 29th September. PACO is a digital platform that will replace the existing PATCHS system. Communications will be sent out to patients who currently use PATCHS for online consulting to inform them of the change, and notices will be posted to the practice Facebook page, website and included in the newsletter. The practice already offers an online consulting platform for patients to submit routine, acute health issues via PATCHS, the PACO system will offer the same plus more features including administrative requests and appointment bookings. The practice is not changing its processes for how patients book appointments, just changing provider for an already existing service.

### **2. PCN Chairs Meeting**

Graham recently attended the PCN PPG Chairs Meeting. He updated members today that from August, Social Link Worker Louise will no longer be employed by Healthbox and will now be employed through our Chester East PCN. Louise offers walking groups to patients but it transpired PPG members present were unaware of the walking groups that Louise offers. Rebecca advised it is published on the practice website, facebook, in the newsletter and shared on Community Pages via Facebook. A conversation was had as to how communication to patients can be improved if despite the above methods, the message is not being received. It was discussed whether sending an SMS text message to patients to inform them of new services would be a good idea. Rebecca advised it might cause "message fatigue" if messages are sent to patients each time there is a new update, as the service in the text may not be something of interest to all patients. However, it was acknowledged that SMS text message would be the best way to get updates directly to people. It was agreed that it would be included as a PPG

survey question whether patients would like to receive updates to services via text message so we can assess the appetite for this.

Graham advised that PPG members at other practices consider their role within their PPG as a “critical friend”. PACO was also discussed as another practice currently uses the system and they give good feedback. It was discussed regarding a “PCN Youth PPG” to try to get members of a younger demographic involved with the PPG. It was previously tried within our PCN to create a “Youth PPG” but there was no uptake.

Rebecca will speak to our PCN Admin about PCN Youth PPG and what methods they used for recruitment and feedback to PPG members at the next meeting.

We agreed that the PCN chairs meeting gives PPG members an opportunity to engage with PPG members from the other three practices. Therefore, it will not be necessary to host a separate meeting in Upton.

- *Action - Rebecca to research previous Youth PCN PPG recruitment and methods of promotion used, what uptake was etc and feedback to PPG*

### **3. Patient Survey Questions**

Final version of patient survey questions was discussed and Rebecca will share the final draft with members. It was agreed the survey will be sent to patients at the start of October with results being collected until the end of October. The results of the survey will be discussed during the next PPG meeting in December.

### **4. Patient Newsletter**

Helpful feedback was given to the draft of the upcoming practice newsletter that Rebecca shared including simplifying the page talking about our PACO launch. Members commented that it would be helpful to use the wording “digital front door” rather than PACO, as this is much easier to interpret from a patient perspective. Rebecca will update this before posting. Rebecca will also include the national GP survey results into the newsletter, as Upton did particularly well.

### **5. Upton Fun Day**

The PPG had previously expressed interest in having a stall at the Upton Fun Day, held in September, to try recruitment more members. Unfortunately, time is not on our side this year to prepare for this but members were keen to have the opportunity to do this next year. This will be added as a rolling agenda item to be discussed early next year (February meeting), so can plan ahead and arrange for next September.

### **6. NHS APP**

Our last scheduled NHS App drop-in for April was cancelled however Graham commented that our uptake for patients with the app at our practice is good. Members discussed how future drop-in sessions could focus on using the PACO system (Digital Front Door).

### **7. Annual Website Review**

To be moved to a 2 yearly review, next scheduled for the end of 2026.

### **8. Waiting times at the Countess of Chester Hospital**

A recent patient experience was shared in which they were referred to the Countess of Chester Hospital but faced severe delays for the speciality they were referred for. It was commented that it would be helpful for patients to be informed of the current waiting times ahead of being referred. Rebecca advised that when we launch with the PACO system, the Practice Secretary will begin sending a text message to patients which has a link to see the current departmental waiting times at all hospitals so they can make an informed decision on where they would like to be referred. By default, patients get referred to the Countess as it is the closest hospital. However, given current waiting times, the practice acknowledges that patients may like the choice of choosing another hospital if they might get seen sooner, despite the travel.

#### **9. Next Meeting Date**

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 2nd December 2:45 - 4:45.