

In attendance

Sid Williamson, Dr Simon Desert, Karen Varty- Castlegate & Derwent Surgery.
T Alston, R Bratton, P Clarkson, M Coley, P Colquitt, F Harkness, J Hully, D Keeler, D Johnson,
R Lee, J McGrath, A Metcalfe, S Moyle, S Noble, R Petecki, W Sanders.

Opening- SW thanked the members of the PPG members for attending and opened the meeting for questions.

Update- SW began the meeting with an update on the merger process informing the group that due to technicalities the merge date has been pushed back, but we are working towards a merger date of Tuesday 1st December.

The group asked why the delay? SW advised that there were a number of contributing factors including systems, delayed recruitment but felt considering what we have achieved so far, we have done a good job.

JMcG asked could the group not have been kept up to date with the proceedings via email updates? SW replied that the progress changes daily and it would have been difficult to keep everyone up to date although this may have been useful. JMcG replied that the members could have helped to spread the word about the progress and stage that the merger was up to.

Communication of the completed merger will be via the websites, Coda screen in surgery waiting areas and Cockermouth Post. The group asked if the Times and Star would write a news feature on the completed merger? Dr Desert said that this could be something we can look at.

GP update- Dr Alison Hetherington, Dr Nicola Hughes and Dr Julie Carter have all joined us. The group members felt a noticeboard in the waiting area that included information about the GP's with photographs and any specialist areas would be very beneficial. This information could also be included on the website.

SW advised the group that over the next month they may start to see different nurses, Health Care Assistants and admin staff as we begin to cross work.

Dr Desert explained to the group that every patient is allocated a usual GP who will have the overall responsibility for the patient and safely manage their care.

Systems- Dr Desert explained to the group the barriers we have been facing with the integration of the two systems and that initially we will have to run on two separate systems and contracts. The new merged practice will continue to operate using separate EMIS systems and continue with separate contracts, many discussions have been made with NHS England who advised us to continue using the two separate systems. This will be pursued further with the aim to run on one merged system.

SM asked how Patient Access will work? And will for example a Derwent patient only be allowed to book an appointment with a Derwent GP? SW replied that unfortunately at this time until we run on one system this will be the case. However, if booking an appointment over the telephone may be able to see a GP quicker.

The merged practice- Recruitment for the role of Office Manager is now complete and Julie Pearson take on the role overseeing the smooth running of the systems.

We are still looking at enhancing the services that we offer at the surgery. We have signed up to six medical research studies including Diabetes, COPD and heart. We have recruited a medical research nurse with the possibility for a further two nurses in the future.

We have secured the funding for a humanitarian GP and we would be looking at this in the New Year.

SW explained that by offering these enhanced services, being a top QOF performing practice and providing a good service will all help in the recruiting and attracting new GP's and patients.

Reception- The group brought up the issue of confidentiality in the pods and would we continue to use these going forward? Dr Desert explained that we would be using the pods and we are looking at adding a roof to help with the confidentiality, although he did add that they should provide more privacy than an open reception desk.

The group suggested maybe a designated queueing/ waiting area away from the pod could be the answer stopping patients from waiting right outside the door to the pod.

The third pod will be used for prescription enquiries and Choose and Book to allow appointments to be made for patients whilst visiting the surgery.

The existing surgery telephone numbers will divert through to the combined surgery reception.

SM raised an issue on PLT day when the surgery was closed and asked if a message could be added to the telephone system so patients clearly know that the surgery would be closed that afternoon. SW replied that this is not as straight forward as it seems and we will look at making the dates clearer on the website.

There will be one combined website for Castlegate and Derwent Surgery that will go live after the merger has taken place.

RL asked about the signage around the building and if it is NHS standard, he felt that there were various different styles around the building. Dr Desert replied that it was NHS standard and is designed to help the visually impaired.

The question was raised as why Receptionists asked questions/ symptoms when on the telephone? The group felt the staff are not medically trained to make the judgement. SW replied that the questions are asked to allow us to offer you the quickest solution. This could be to see a nurse rather than GP, the pharmacy rather than a nurse.

Other questions-

MC asked how Dr Desert got on with the visit to the Secretary of State? Dr Desert replied that so far there was no benefit, he listened to the situation of the healthcare in Cocker mouth and would go back to NHS England but as yet no response received.

A question we received by a member of the PPG, not present at the meeting. Why is there signage for Xray, Ultrasound, Surgical unit, Community Clinics and what/where is this? These are all areas that are still under discussion with the hope of resolution but as yet there are no developments.

Also why the PPG members were not informed of the NHS consultation site? SW replied that we are not sure what the NHS consultation date is and has nothing to do with the surgeries.

Also CQC questions about the Cocker mouth Hospital? The surgeries are not Cocker mouth Hospital, both surgeries passed CQC with flying colours and the hospital has their CQC this week.

SW thanked the members for joining the meeting today and their comments.

The date for the next PPG meeting will be advised at a later date and via the website.