

Minutes of the West Byfleet Health Centre (WBHC) Patient Participation Group (PPG) meeting held at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Pyrford at 5pm on Tuesday March 11th 2025 which was attended by 253 people both in person and online.

1. Introduction

The Chair, Andy Grimshaw, introduced members of the PPG Steering Committee, the Practice Managers (PM) and GP representatives of Madeira, Parishes Bridge and Wey Practices. He also introduced members of the WitKnits who raise money for the Health Centre. Attendees were urged to support the WitKnits raffle and purchase knitted items. Andy then explained the format of the meeting with brief presentations by the PM's and GP's followed by a Question-and-Answer session.

2. Practice Manager (PM) presentations

Liz Reynolds, Wey Family Practice.

Liz said the current medical staff comprised 4 GP Partners, 5 salaried GP's and five Trainee Registrars (who were all fully qualified doctors completing their GP training). Recently, 2 Clinical Pharmacists and a Pharmacy Technician had joined the team to provide expertise in medication management, chronic disease care and patient education. A review of frequent attenders was taking place to improve continuity of care to those patients as over the past 12 months 1,000 patients had more than 20 appointments each. Further enhancements were also being considered to use AI to improve the triage system. However, for those who were not computer savvy the option of telephoning the surgery would remain.

Faye Harvey, Madeira Medical Practice.

Faye said that the Practice had 2 GP Partners, 5 salaried GP's and four Trainee registrars. Additionally, they had 2 Practice nurses, phlebotomists and Clinical Pharmacists in the Practice. As with Wey Practice they were also studying repeat attenders. She stressed the importance of responding to the feedback text patients received after each appointment as the Practice team regularly reviewed these to identify common themes and to thereby improve the service.

Kim Austin, Parishes Bridge Practice.

Parishes Bridge had 2 GP Partners, 9 salaried GP's, 3 Practice nurses and 2 phlebotomists shared with the other Practices. Two more part time GP's had recently joined the Practice and a further part time GP would be joining in May.

She stressed the importance of feedback to the Practices. Face to face physiotherapy appointments had been extended across all three Practices at West Byfleet Health Centre to make the service more accessible to those who needed it. Kim also referred to improvements planned for the Health Centre car park including clearer signage and better drainage and reminded everyone to remember to enter their car registration number on the machine in reception when attending their appointment.

3. GP presentations

Dr Donnelly, Parishes Bridge Practice.

Dr Donnelly opened by talking about the triage system which the Practice had introduced in September 2024 in line with the other two Practices which had proved a very positive development for both patients and clinicians. Morning telephone calls had reduced significantly thus reducing the time patients spent 'holding' on the line. The time released to doctors had allowed a tripling in the number of 'face to face' appointments over the past 12 months. Triage was giving the most appropriate care by the correct clinician. Although it was not always possible the GP's sought to provide continuity of care particularly for those patients most in need. Dr Donnelly also referred to the work being done on frequent attenders.

Dr Soin, Madeira Medical Practice.

Dr Soin referred to the specialist Cardiac Heart Failure Clinic and also ultrasound services run by the Practice and thanked the League of Friends of the Health Centre for the support provided for specialist equipment. He was looking forward to further changes to the Triage system using AI enhancements over the next few months but stated the system works very well and allows the GP's to quickly sort out the best referral for the patient. He said that for example the submission of a photo for a skin condition could really help the doctor to quickly triage the patient. To give an example of normal workload Madeira Medical provided between 220 and 250 appointments per day but on average 6/7 patients per day failed to attend (DNA's) which was regrettable as these appointment slots could have been allocated to other patients in need. The Practice was also working on frequent attenders who take up about 60% of all the appointment slots offered by the Practice. He also supported patient feedback which was discussed at a Practice meeting every week and they were committed to changing things to improve patient care.

Dr Jesshop, Wey Family Practice.

Dr Jesshop outlined the changes that had happened at Wey Practice over the past 5 years. The list size (number of patients) had increased by a third. Five years ago, they had 3 or 4 GP's on site during the day, now it was often 8 GP's at any one time to accommodate the growing number of patient appointments. Primary Care Network (PCN) funding has allowed for additional staff such as Physiotherapists, Pharmacists, Paramedics and others. The triage system had been introduced in part to reduce the early morning rush of telephone calls but also to ensure that patient demand was managed based on clinical urgency rather than who got through first on the telephone. She had been the duty doctor the previous day and had processed 186 online triage forms all of which had received a response from the Practice that same day. Of those patients being given a routine appointment 98% were within two weeks or sooner as opposed to the pre triage situation where patients often waited four weeks. The triage system was fairer to patients and much more efficient than previously.

4 Q&A session moderated by Carol Leong-Son.

See Appendix A for a list of all questions and answers.

5 Chair's closing remarks

The Chair thanked everybody for attending and hoped that they had enjoyed the event. It had been very gratifying to hear from various attendees how much they appreciated the services provided by the Practices. He thanked Carol Leong-Son for moderating the Q&A session and again urged anyone interested in joining the Steering Group to speak to him after the meeting or to send him an e-mail. PPG members would receive a copy of the minutes including the answers given to all questions.