

Churchmere Medical Group Patient Group

Meeting

Date: 12 February 2025

Venue: Senior Citizens Club, Pearl Yard, Whitchurch

Present:

Practice Representative: Jenny Davies (JD), Managing Partner, Elaine Ashley (EA), Data & Quality Assurance Manager, Olivia Barker (OB) Patient Services Manager

Whitchurch: Peggy Mullock (PM), Bev Duffy (BD), Terrie Hewitt (TH), Janet Howarth (JH), Chris Crowther (CC), Dorothy Wright (DW), Bernise Tasker (BT), Paul Sweetnam (PS), Cathy Purt (CP), Mike Valentine (MV)

Ellesmere: Ruth Bridgwood (RB), Sue Francis (SF), Connie Mason (CM), George Rook (GR)

Apologies: Sheila Stringer (SS),

1 Welcome (meeting opened at 1730 hrs)

Meeting was opened by PM. Round table introductions made, a welcome to our new members and apologies accepted.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of last meeting agreed and no matters arising.

3. Actions from last meeting

Ellesmere Help Yourself to Health event. This continues as work in progress and will remain as an agenda item. OB has discussed this with JN and is proposing an event in May in Ellesmere to tie in with Mental Health Awareness month – more info to follow

4. Update on new Health Centre in Whitchurch

At our last meeting we had issued a 'save the date' to members for the afternoon of Saturday 15 February when we had hoped to hold an open day for patients to view the health centre prior to opening on 17 February. Unfortunately, this date slipped to 15 March and has slipped again.

We hope to have our open day on the afternoon of Saturday 22 March and EA will confirm this nearer the time. It would be really helpful to have members of the patient group attending on the day to help show the general public around the building.

EA had been on site today and the internal signage was being fitted. Whilst the Practice is disappointed regarding the further delays, the health centre is looking fantastic and we are looking forward to opening this new facility.

At our last meeting a suggestion was made regarding contacting the League of Friends Ellesmere, League of Friends Whitchurch and Whitchurch Rotary Club for donation/support in providing a couple of high back raised chairs for our waiting areas. These chairs are really helpful to those patients who have recently undergone orthopaedic surgery or have mobility problems. Sadly, all three organisations have declined support.

Action: EA to contact group regarding open day information when confirmed

5. My Recovery App

OB discussed the new app which has been created in partnership with healthcare professionals from across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. The app aims to deliver the right information at the right time for patients who are suffering from joint and muscle pain. It provides information, support and encouragement to help take control of your health.

Information on how to sign up is sent to patients who request help with joint or muscle pain by our Patient Service Advisors. The app 'myrecovery app' can also be downloaded from the app store. You simply enter your NHS number, date of birth and GP practice to get started.

OB encouraged group members to share this information.

PM commented that she had seen the physio in Whitchurch and found him to be very helpful.

6. 2024 – A Year in Numbers

OB shared information on practice interactions over the last twelve months and this is shared in our patient newsletter.

	2023 Figure	2024 Figure
Total Practice Population as at 31/12	20,854	20,857
Total Number of Appointments	134,219	126,253
Total Number of Blood Tests undertaken	3,162	3,331
Total Number of Home Visits	2,372	2,732
Total Number of DNA's	4,720	4,515
Total Number of eConsults	1,285	25,144

The practice moved to Total Triage in September 2024 and it will be very interesting to review the eConsult figures in 2026 to review the impact this has had on the service.

EA shared data published by NHS Digital which looks at the workforce of Doctors from 2010 to 2024.

It is of note that the number of doctors within secondary care (hospital) has increased over this period by 48% whilst GPs (primary care) has reduced by 12%.

A discussion was then held on the reasons for the reduction in GPs which included repeated negativity in the media around general practice, training, financial etc.

EA commented that all GPs are delivering more appointments than ever before and as a practice we strive to work as efficiently as possible. We ask that everyone remains kind and respectful when interacting with the practice.

Changes in hospital medical staff since 2010, by specialty

FTE, England, as of July in 2010, 2017 and 2024

Specialty	Jul 2010	Jul 2017	Jul 2024	Change 2010–2024	
General medicine	25,225	29,492	40,407	+15,182	+60%
Surgical	20,652	23,019	28,507	+7,855	+38%
Anaesthetics	11,058	13,292	17,047	+5,989	+54%
Psychiatry	8,652	8,821	10,889	+2,238	+26%
Paediatric	7,097	7,961	10,424	+3,326	+47%
Emergency medicine	4,823	6,320	10,356	+5,533	+115%
Obstetrics & gynaecology	5,160	5,673	7,410	+2,249	+44%
Radiology	3,335	4,089	5,703	+2,369	+71%
Pathology	3,709	4,047	5,085	+1,376	+37%
Dental	2,015	2,283	2,685	+670	+33%
Clinical oncology	996	1,267	1,734	+738	+74%
Public health & community	2,284	1,218	771	-1,513	-66%
Total	95,005	107,482	141,018	+46,013	+48%
General Practitioners *	31356	29112	27662	-3694	-12%

Source: NHS Digital, [NHS Workforce Statistics - July 2024](#), Doctors by Grade and Specialty data file

* FTE Fully qualified GPs <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/general-and-personal-medical-services>

7. Useful Patient Websites

- My Planned Care www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk
This gives advice and support while you wait and helps you to prepare for your hospital appointment or surgery. You select the region in which you live ie. Midlands and then the speciality. This means that if you have been referred by your GP to a specialist, you can review the website and look at the waiting times for the hospitals that provide the service you require. When the patient receives their call from the Referral Assessment Service, they are then in a position to select the most appropriate hospital. (Some private hospitals ie Nuffield, Spire offer NHS clinics as well and these often have shorter waiting times)

TH commented that a recent referral for cataract surgery had resulted in calling RAS after a period of 6 weeks or so. At that point the patient was told that there was a long wait time at SaTH and after the patient asked if they could be referred to Spa Medica, they were seen in 3 weeks.

JD mentioned that it can take 6-8 weeks for the Referral Assessment Service (RAS) to contact the patient to arrange the appointment following referral from the GP practice. This obviously means that lots of patients contact the practice chasing their referral.

Action: The practice to look at whether the SMS message currently sent to patients can be edited to include more information to the patient on how to chase their referral.

- Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital Trust www.sath.nhs.uk



Click here for our Emergency Department (A&E) waiting times

This tool gives an indication on the waiting times in both the Princess Royal Hospital and Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. However, you must bear in mind that the time stated is **after** the patient has been triaged (the triage process can take some hours)

8. Feedback on Woman's Health Event – Ellesmere – 4 January

The practice held its first Woman's Health Event on 4 January which was really successful. During this day, we had stands referencing cancer screening which were really well received. The practice received positive feedback from women who found it ideal to visit for their health check at a weekend and to also meet and discuss issues with other ladies.

The practice plans to have a further health event in Whitchurch when the Clayton Health Centre is open. We also hope to have some speakers at this event to discuss concerns such as the menopause.

The practice advised that on the back of these events, we plan to run a Men's Health Event on both sites followed by regularly quarterly events looking at other topics.

RB asked whether Ellesmere patients would still get services in Ellesmere when the new health centre opens as she has heard in the town that this will not be the case. Ellesmere patients would not be able to attend Whitchurch as there is no bus service.

JD responded that there are many rumours circulating and any questions around services in Ellesmere should be directed to the Practice rather than listening to rumours.

With regards to transport, PM said she would contact Lakeside coaches. CM advised that this firm had recently been taken over. Both Ellesmere and Whitchurch have community car services but there is a charge for these.

EA responded that the practice aim to provide equitable services across both sites.

GR asked if patients could choose which site they would like to attend. EA confirmed that patients can attend whichever site suits them best.

Action: PM to follow up re bus route between Ellesmere and Whitchurch

9. Coffee & Chat Group

The practice has been involved in a collaboration with project between Shropshire Council, Bethpage and Shropshire Carers Support in setting up a new support group every third Thursday between 0930 and 1130 hours at Our Space in Ellesmere.

Information and support is available for family life, mental health support, domestic abuse support, housing and finance support, dementia and Alzheimer's support, parenting support, carers support, health promotion and prevention, social isolation support, Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) support and food share available

BT (works within adult social care) is involved in this project and is very passionate about social isolation and loneliness. BT provided an overview of the background in setting up this group and the benefits it will provide.

A discussion was then held on the various groups available within the community and the need to have a fully up to date directory. CP will take this forward with Whitchurch Town Council and link in with the social prescribing team.

Action: CP to review directory of local services.

10. Any Other Business

GR – runs a group called 'A Good Life with Dementia' that meets at Our Space, Ellesmere on the fourth Monday of the month. This group is led by patients with dementia and is for those with dementia.

SF – asked about the Shropdoc contract which has recently been on the news. JD advised that the only information the Practice has is the same as that shared to the general public. GR advised that an online petition had some traction and currently had circa 7000 signatures.

CP – is part of the Health and Wellbeing Group for Whitchurch Town Council. The group is working with Public Health Shropshire in promoting healthy living/eating. The Town Council will be present at the Whitchurch Food Festival, Blackberry Fair and Christmas events.

PM – Dialysis Unit – with the closure of the Claypit site, PM suggested the setting up of a dialysis unit in that space to save patients travelling to Shrewsbury for this. PM explained that the patients have a long day and are often returned home very late by hospital transport. EA commented that this may not be possible as patients have to have blood tests before and after dialysis and there

is no path lab at Whitchurch Hospital. However, it is something that could be explored.

Action: PM to explore further

Date of next meeting:

To be confirmed

The meeting closed at 7 pm