

## Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter Summer 2023

The PPG is a group of patients who liaise with the surgery to provide feedback and help improve services.

In order to better understand what patients think of Carrington House and what is considered important, members of the group undertook a survey during the week beginning March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Patients attending for appointments that week were asked informally and anonymously what their experience of the surgery was and what they thought would help to improve it.

The responses were varied but most were within two particular categories: the appointment system and communications. The findings were reported back to the practice manager and various steps have been put into place to help resolve the issues.

### **1. Communication**

The reception staff have had further training and the practice is in the process of recruiting more staff to ease the workload.

The PPG has offered to manage the information in the waiting room to ensure that it is more current and relevant.

### **2. Appointment system**

The main problem is the lack of GPs at the practice. As in many surgeries, recruitment is difficult which means that there are fewer appointments available than previously.

To help with this, several new members of staff are now available to see patients and reduce the GP workload. It is not always necessary to see the GP when the following personnel are available and can resolve many issues within their area of expertise.

- a. Clinical Pharmacist – is a medicines specialist who can deal with all issues relating to medication, including dosage adjustment, change of medication, advice on side effects etc. Will also undertake asthma and blood pressure reviews.
- b. Physiotherapist- can diagnose and advise on treatment of muscle and joint problems, including referrals on to specialist services.
- c. Physician Associate- is trained to diagnose and treat a wide variety of health conditions, arranging tests and analysing results. Can also perform physical examinations.
- d. Paramedic – can also diagnose and treat health conditions, ordering appropriate tests. Will see patients with a variety of minor illnesses and will conduct home visits.
- e. Social prescriber- can connect those feeling lonely, overwhelmed or in need of help to a range of local support, from community and activity groups to work, debt, housing or employment support and thereby help people to improve their health and wellbeing.
- f. General Practice Nurses- give vaccinations and injections, support people with long term conditions such as asthma and diabetes, give healthy living advice such as stopping smoking and weight loss. Also give family planning and sexual health advice and perform smear tests.
- g. Health care assistants- can help with health checks such as blood pressure monitoring or taking blood samples. Can also give healthy living advice.

More detailed information on what each member of staff at Carrington House does will be provided in future newsletters.

### **E consult**

This is a new appointment system which is being rolled out over the next few months. It allows the practice to triage patients, better manage demand and ensure that patients are seen by the right person at the right time. Currently there are a restricted number of applications available, but these are being increased regularly as the system is developed. Patients needing medical advice are invited to access the system from 2pm each day (8am on Friday) and complete the online form. Submissions are reviewed by a GP or Physician Associate and the patient contacted the next day (later in the day on Friday) with either an appointment arranged or appropriate advice or referral. More information will continue to be available on the surgery website.