

Rowhedge Surgery – PPG minutes

Tuesday 4 March 2025

Held at Essex University Medical Centre, 5pm

Chairman – Steve Wilding

Vice Chairman – David Chapman

Attendees: Steve, David, Dr Richardson, Tania, Victoria, Sara, Malcom, Richard

Apologies: Caitlin, Keith,

Agenda items

1. **Minutes of last meeting** – no amendments. Tania apologised for late arrival of the minutes, due to illness
2. **Secretary role/membership** -proposal to establish the position of PPG secretary and co-opt an existing member – Tania elected. Stephanie is stepping down her membership due to personal commitments

3. **Verbal reports from each member and practice staff representatives**

Has been discussion between Steve, Victoria and Dr Richardson regarding role of PPG, suggestion between each meetings members speak to around six patients to get views/pick up on trends. *Action – members to report back views of other patients at next meeting.*

Dr Richardson - stepping down from her role as partner, Dr Speers will be new partner 1/4. A partner has ultimate responsibility for finances, major decisions. COLTE also has a board and a senate with doctors which Dr Dawson sits on, Dr Speers on the board. Partners do a lot of work outside running clinics. Practice chosen as pilot site for North Essex for LGBT and non-binary access project.

Victoria - new receptionist and administrator being appointed then will be fully staffed. Louise will be focusing on Anima and dispensary.

4. **University attendance** - discussion about challenges of getting student representative joining and attending meetings, but all agreed remains important to continue seeking their representation. *Actions – Sara to reach out to her university Health and Wellbeing Hub contact. David will speak to his dentistry contracts as are hygienist students on campus. Victor to speak to respiratory nurse who works at university*
5. **How can PPG support some practice activities** – has been discussion about how can complement the roles of Julie Harris (Social Prescriber) and Jo Clark (PCN Manager) and how PPG might support them with events such as volunteers for COLTE sessions. Surgery looking for volunteers to take over monthly Wellbeing Walks on fourth Thursday of month as Social Prescriber no longer able to organise from June. Future role of Social Prescribers at all surgeries currently unclear. Discussion that is another walking group that meets at the pub. *Action – David to find out about this group.* COLTE dementia awareness event Tiptree in May and menopause event in Tiptree 8 March – contact COLTE if want to get involved. COLTE

men's health breakfast with Mid and North Essex Mind in June (will feature in next PPG newsletter). *Action – Steve to speak to Jo Clark for more details*

6. **Newsletter** – members thanked David for his work on previous newsletter. Is sent out with prescriptions. Discussion about how can improve distribution – surgery is not able to send out to patients as an email/text attachment. Could a link be used instead and on Facebook page? Is on practice website. Due to infection control surgery not permitted to have paper copies for patients to take from waiting room. Future content – acknowledgement from members that are many non-doctor roles in practice so could focus one of these roles each issue such as physio and community psychiatric nurse; also is a way of taking focus away from doctors and encouraging patients to consider seeing another practitioner. Discussion about how to encourage patients to find test results alternative ways, rather than calling surgery such a NHS app, could be in a future issue.

Next edition - Dr Speers writing about men's health, Louise article about Anima.

Actions - practice to explore if reception team can give out copies. Members to give out to patients they speak to in between meetings, collect from reception

7. **Anima** – Steve said feedback he has had is 60% positive. Some members suggested an enhancement such when says someone will get back to you in three days. However, Victoria said this three-day wait is appropriate in non-urgent cases such as travel information, if is acute will hear back quickly. Some patients caught out in morning as get appointments very soon after contacting Anima so not attend, in response surgery has now put first four appointments of the day as bookable.

Patients can still phone up to book and receptionists can fill out form for patients to access Anima. Dr Richardson said they know it is not be used as effectively as it could be, but is a work in progress. Is a triage, not booking system. Clinical staff to sit with receptionists for a morning to see what they are dealing with and how their role may need to be adapted due to Anima. Receptionists have good experience of triaging and have expressed they feel de-skilled since nurses started triaging with Anima, so now this role is shared between them and nurses.

Surgery has to offer and promote access to a digital platform and is part of the national GP contract for England. From October practices have to offer on-line access to non-urgent queries. Future plan is to send out information on the topic appointment is booked for prior to appointment

8. **Enhanced Access** – advertised also on Facebook
9. **New member appointment** – Malcom Mattack attended meeting as wishes to join following Ken Jones' departure and was voted in
10. **Any other business** – none.

Next meeting June 17 2025 at Rowhedge.