

MINUTES OF PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP MEETING

TUESDAY 9th APRIL 2013

Present:

Dorothy Richardson
Vera Skipper
Keith McDaid
Keith Ratcliffe
Robert Pollock
Sue Barnes – Trinity
Carol Craggs – Trinity (Chair)

Apologies:

Brian Richardson
Dorothy Richardson
Margaret Young
Margaret McPherson

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Matters arising

(a) Commissioning News Update

It had been mentioned at the last meeting that the NHS used lots of abbreviations and people were not always aware of what these meant. Carol suggested that even staff found these hard to cope with especially with all the new changes.

(b) New Services

NHS 111 was talked about at last meeting and Keith had expressed concern about someone at the other end making decisions for him. This was on the Agenda again and further discussion was deferred.

One New Thing – Carol explained that this was still ongoing although some of the funding for the counselling service had been withdrawn and therefore there was now only one counselling session per week at the Practice. Sue confirmed that she thought One New Thing was a very good idea and she had referred quite a few patients into this service.

Telephone – Carol confirmed that Margaret had spoken with a couple of alternative companies but no one could get the Practice out of its current contract at a reasonable cost. It had therefore been decided to persist with the current supplier although provision had been put in place within the Practice to support anyone who needed calling back due to the cost of the call.

2. Commissioning News Update

Margaret was unavailable to give up to date information on this. However Carol gave a short update on a couple of new initiatives.

STIP – South Tyneside Improving Care Scheme. The aim of this Scheme is to deliver care in a different way to more vulnerable groups of patients in South Tyneside and therefore facilitate better health outcomes for these patients. For the Practice this will mean identifying a group of patients to work with

Patients who are at high risk of unplanned hospital admissions

Patients who are known to have at least one long term condition but are seldom seen or heard at the Practice

Patients with COPD who are not on GP practice registers

Sue is Lead Nurse for COPD on the Steering Group and she gave an update on how the Scheme will tackle those with COPD that do not attend the Surgery. Keith wondered how getting patients with COPD to attend GPs instead of going direct to hospital might help them (he had personal experience of this.) Sue explained the new initiatives around managing COPD in the Community.

3. New Services Under QOF

Dementia – Practices will be required to put in place a proactive approach to the assessment of patients who may be showing early signs of dementia to support improvement in the prompt diagnosis and care of patients with the condition. Patients targeted will be those over 60 with CVD, stroke, peripheral vascular disease and diabetes; patients with learning disabilities; patients with a long term neurological condition (Parkinsons) and ALL patients 75 and over. Some of the Group thought this may be a good thing if medication could be started early.

4. Any Other Business

NHS111 – Carol asked if anyone had used this service as there had been quite a bit of bad press concerning initial problems within the Service. Keith had already expressed his concerns over the way Call Handlers dealt with calls. Sue explained that they had to follow an algorithm which would ultimately lead to a diagnosis or decision and these were extensive. No one within the Group had actually used the service

Benefit Changes – Carol had found some very good websites on the local Commissioning Board website which may help patients with Benefit Reforms and she would put them on the TMC website. Carol explained that the new benefit changes had put a little pressure on GPs as so many more patients were now appealing against their benefits being stopped and this meant many more letters having to be done for the Citizens Advice Bureau. The Practice had just received a letter stating that the CAB were now no longer able to pay for letters for patients and this meant GPs doing more work for no reimbursement. Carol explained that Practice staff spent quite a lot of time photocopying records for litigations cases and it was wondered if the new laws on Legal Aid would affect this work with less claims being made. Someone asked if the new 'Bedroom Tax' had had any effect on the Practice but Carol said she had not received any requests for letters yet with regards this.

Birthday Card – Dorothy thanked everyone at Trinity for the birthday card she had received.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 9th July 2013

USEFUL WEBSITES

Link to directory of services on South Tyneside Info: <http://www.southtyneside.info/article/14778/Search-for-social-care-services> / <http://www.southtyneside.info/article/12985/Social-care-for-adults>

Welfare Reforms contact information :

Personal Independence Payment:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/disability/personal-independence-payment/>

General benefits and debt advice:

<http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/>

Council website about changes:

<http://www.southtyneside.info/article/17491/Changes-to-benefits>

South Tyneside Homes website about changes:

<http://www.southtynesidehomes.org.uk/article/16542/Welfare-Reform>