

Appendix J – summary of Ammonite Patient Participation Group meeting held 4 June 2024

Maiden Newton Surgery – Patient Participation Group

All GP practices are required to have a Patient Participation Group (PPG). The PPG for the Pound Piece surgery has been revived this year, partly in response to the public meeting in Maiden Newton in January. The PPG includes representatives from the 6 parishes that are served by the surgery (Maiden Newton, Frome Vauchurch, Cattistock, Toller Porcorum, Compton Valence and Frampton). The role of the PPG is to act as a 'critical friend' for the surgery, raising concerns on behalf of the community, keeping the community informed about developments at the surgery and championing initiatives that can benefit patients.

At the PPG meeting in March we discussed some of the issues that had been raised in the public meeting, including concerns about the dispensary, communications, booking appointments, continuity of care and difficulty for some patients in accessing services in Bridport or Beaminster. Dr Finucane, the senior medical partner at Ammonite, gave a presentation about the difficult national context for the health service, the local issues for health provision in West Dorset, and the steps that Ammonite are taking in response. He also talked about the unreasonable behaviour of a small minority of patients towards Ammonite staff, including an incident which required police attendance, and the impact this has on him and his colleagues.

It is important to note that lots of people gave positive comments about the surgery at the meeting in January, and expressed their appreciation for the people who work there. As a PPG we are determined to work positively and in partnership with Ammonite, recognising that we all have a shared interest and responsibility to support the health of local people.

The PPG met again on 4 June. News from the surgery includes the following:

- The dispensary is being moved this month to the room adjoining the waiting room.
- Future plans include swapping the current reception and waiting rooms, funded by the partners.
- Two new receptionists have been appointed.
- A new salaried GP, Dr Saw, has been appointed to the partnership. He may spend some time in Maiden Newton.
- Three trainee GPs will join the practice in the summer.
- Interviews are being held in June for a new practice nurse, to support the practice's work with patients with long-term health conditions.
- A dispensary assistant is being recruited, to work across the surgeries in Maiden Newton and Beaminster.
- Recruitment is also planned for a non-medical staff member to support the reception and dispensary work.

The PPG is looking to support the work of the surgery. Ideas being discussed include fundraising for a blood pressure machine in the waiting room, reviving the book sales in the waiting room, and

supporting the good work done to offer transport options for patients to attend appointments or receive their medications.

In the meeting we talked about the telephone system. It is not possible for the automated response to give an estimate of how long you are likely to wait for your call to be answered, but if there are 10 or more people ahead of you in the queue, you will be offered the option for a call back. Please avoid ringing for non-urgent issues on a Monday morning when the phones are always busy. Patients are also asked to use the automatic check-in option when arriving for an appointment. A private room is available if you are concerned about confidentiality.

If you would like to contact the PPG to raise any issues about the work of the surgery (not individual complaints), or if you would like to become involved, please email us on ppg.ammonite@dorsetgp.nhs.uk. We would like to build up a mailing list so that we can send update emails about the PPG and the surgery, and seek patient views. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please email us at the above address.

David Webb (PPG Chair)