

S&BV (Stroud & Berkeley Vale) PPG Network, Zoom Meeting, 9 March, 2023

Minutes

1: Present Liz Ashton (Culverhay PPG, Berkeley), Tim Crouch (Frithwood PPG, Bussage), Shirley Hill (S&BV PPG Network Chair), Ian McPherson (Minchinhampton PPG secretary, Network joint secretary) Dr Simon Opher (Guest, May Lane Surgery, Dursley), Jonathan Pape (Cam & Uley Surgery), David Rawlings (Guest, Children's and Young People's Development Officer for Stroud District Council), Liz Shankland (Rowcroft), Jennifer Skillen (Price's Mill PPG, Nailsworth), Rachel Sleigh (May Lane Surgery), Geoff Swallow (Culverhay PPG).

Apologies Becky Parish, Hannah Drew, Pat Eagle, John Hobson, Jonathan Ionides, Robert Maxwell, and Lori Taylor.

2: Minutes of the previous meeting (12/01/2023) were accepted without amendment.

3: Dr Simon Opher (Walnut Tree Practice, May Lane, Dursley)

(a) First Responders (Arising from previous meeting, linking with Vale Hospital, raised by Liz Ashton). Dr Opher will investigate this further. The out-of-hours GP service for the county had been contracted out to a company called "Practice Plus", which was also responsible for the out-of-hours NHS 111 service. This company's services had been reviewed highly critically by the CQC and were under review at county level. These out-of-hours services need to be redesigned and this is being pursued.

(b) Primary Care Quality Improvement Projects: Rachel Sleigh asked about a reported lack of communication by text messages with Berkeley Culverhay patients about arrangements. Dr Opher replied that this was a project for Berkeley Vale patients only. Not all texts had been sent to eligible patients at the same time. Dr Opher was working on a project in Berkeley Vale with the frail elderly. All areas have 18-month projects. Some Care Assistants were doing home visits for the frail elderly. Other projects include young people with eating disorders, and suggestions on mental health and life-styles. Each project will be evaluated on completion.

(c) Staffing issues: Dr Opher referred to some shortage of practice nurses, GPs and locum doctors. This did not at present amount to a huge issue for our area. However there are some repercussions for waiting times for patients. The new Three Counties Medical School should in due course help to supply more GPs, along with other plans. The new government contract for GPs is to include targets for GPs on patient access. Information about this contract is available online at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/changes-to-the-gp-contract-in-2023-24/#:~:text=In%20January%202023%20General%20Practice,out%20in%20Investment%20and%20Evolution>

Spring booster: People aged 75 years and older, residents in care homes for older people, and those aged 5 years and over with a weakened immune system will be offered a booster of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine this spring. At least one surgery may be starting about 10th April. Patients are asked not to contact their GP for a vaccination appointment, but to wait to

be contacted as usual, at least until the process is sufficiently advanced. Post-meeting note: for more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-spring-booster-resources/a-guide-to-the-covid-19-spring-booster-2023>

4: Presentation by David Rawlings (Children’s and Young People’s Development Officer for Stroud District Council)

David Rawlings gave a wide-ranging and impressive presentation about his work for SDC. He undertook to make his graphics available online. See also:

<http://www.stroud.gov.uk/community-health-and-wellbeing/children-young-people>

He introduced the “Young People’s Forum on Eating and Body Image”. This successfully involves young people’s own contributions. He also introduced “The Little Blue Book of Sunshine”. The original ideas had first been produced elsewhere but can be easily adapted, with permission, for other areas. David also outlined current options for free school meals and for help with food and energy at home. He was also working with the school library service on the “Reading Well” project, to provide free book collections, with a focus on health and wellbeing, for schools. He invited people to contact him by email at:

David.Rawlings@Stroud.gov.uk

5: ILP (Integrated Locality Partnership): Notes had been attached to the agenda for this meeting. Lucy Orr-Ewing (NHS Digital) had been asked to forward her graphics used for her detailed presentation on the Federated Data Project (FDP). The FDP is intended to improve connectivity between existing data projects in the NHS. This huge project is at an early stage. Various private companies, perhaps including Palentir, might be included, subject to appropriate regulation. In theory FDP would include or overtake local work on Gloucestershire’s JUYI (Joining Up Your Information) project, but only in the longer term. Post-meeting note: for more on JUYI see:

<https://www.juyigloucestershire.org/what-is-juyi/>

Parking at the new Five Valleys building (Stroud centre, former Woolworths building) for NHS secondary care patients (podiatry and physiotherapy): the NHS Trust had tried to arrange free parking for these patients, as the GPs at Five Valleys surgery had done. However the fee demanded by the private company that owns the parking was unaffordable by the Trust. Patients were being given a letter explaining options for parking. The new NHS premises can only be accessed by entering the sliding doors, to the back of the building, signed for the foyer for the new Stroud library. It seems the owners of the building, not the NHS but a private company, will not allow the NHS to put up signs on the outside of the building to guide new patients. Hence the makeshift information board inside the entrance to the Library foyer, directing patients to the lift. The ILP had noted the problem with signage and was told this was being addressed.

6: Updates from Local PPGs

Geoff Swallow reported that Berkeley PPG had considered a gradual process of merger with the two other local PPGs. There would be some practical difficulties in such a merger – the possible size when all three combined, and the difficulty for some people who would need or wish to travel to such meetings. A gradual process would allow time for addressing such difficulties.

Jonathan Pape (Cam & Uley) reported on the availability of nurses and the departure of the surgery manager without the PPG being informed.

Tim Crouch (Frithwood PPG, Bussage) reported on continuing work towards starting a volunteer emergency telephone service that could assist with defibrillator support to take account of ambulance delays. The PPG was also raising awareness of mental health issues for young people by sharing information through social media and newsletter. Health walks would be restarting in May. Equipment for a new clinical room was being bought through the PPG's fundraising.

Post-meeting note from Ian McPherson: Minchinhampton PPG is continuing to support and manage its volunteer drivers scheme for patient transport. Suggestions for extra services in the new building have been supplied by the PPG. Attempts are being made to widen patient membership of the PPG Committee, by including younger patients, while the surgery is well represented by the surgery manager and GPs. The PPG is looking forward to buying extra equipment for the new surgery/health centre. It is hoped building work could start this summer, with opening to patients about 24 months later. The archaeological survey of the site has not produced any evidence that could require postponement of building work.

Ian McPherson (13 March 2023)