

## **Latest News from Priory Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of Priory Surgery patients who volunteer to meet every three months with Practice staff to discuss patients' experiences of the Practice and how they might be improved. The Practice sees the PPG as providing valuable input supporting its efforts to offer the best service it can to its patients.

### **Connexus PCN Community Lead**

At its December meeting the PPG heard from Alice Cranston, who is the new Community Lead for Connexus (the Primary Care Network of which Priory Surgery is part).

Alice's role is to help build and strengthen the connections of the five Practices in the PCN with the communities they serve. She will be in contact with voluntary, community and social groups in the area to help identify and improve ways in which people can work together for better health and wellbeing. She will also be liaising with the Social Prescribers and Health and Wellbeing Coaches who work across the PCN, including at Priory.

We questioned Alice about aspects of her role, thanked her for coming to introduce herself and stated that they looked forward to keeping in touch with the work she does.

### **Total Triage approach to accessing Practice services**

As reported to the PPG's September meeting, the Practice has been trialling having an allocated GP looking at online appointment requests and triaging these between urgent and routine appointments. The Practice management team stated that this has been found to be an effective use of GP time as the number of things the doctor can action whilst triaging online requests exceeds the number of appointments lost by taking them off the rota for appointments, therefore access is being improved.

The team reported that they are starting to look into the possibility of introducing a total triage approach, which would involve all patients' requests for Practice services being processed in this way. Under this approach, where patients phone in or visit the surgery, the Patient Navigation team on reception would complete the online triage form for the patient. The request form would then be put into a queue for triage by the GP on duty. The aim of this approach is to encourage those who can complete an online service request form to do so and thereby reduce the number of phone requests.

The team explained that they are conscious that, if this approach was introduced, some appointment slots would need to be kept for those patients who would be unable or not



wish to make an online request, to avoid disadvantaging them from those making online requests.

The team are looking to speak to other local Practices who have already implemented the total triage approach to find out what has worked well and not so well. They will report further to the PPG prior to any decision being made to implement this approach.

### **Missed Appointments**

The PPG was pleased to hear that in the last three months over 97% of patients who booked appointments attended their appointment on time. However, as the Practice generally provides 4,500-5,500 appointments per month, there are still a significant number of occasions where patients are not cancelling their appointment when they cannot attend.

We would like to see everyone remembering to tell the Practice if they can no longer attend any appointment they have booked.

### **Strengthening PPG connections with Priory's patients**

At the PPG's next meeting we will discuss how we might strengthen the connection between the patients who form the PPG and the wider population of patients who use the Practice.

If you have any ideas you would like to contribute, please email: [bnssg.prg.priory@nhs.net](mailto:bnssg.prg.priory@nhs.net) or leave a note at the Surgery reception desk marked "For the attention of the PPG".