**HIGHLANDS SURGERY PRG**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2024**

**PRESENT** Dr Shaw, Carrie Reid, (**Practice Support Manager)**, Pat Holden (Chair), SC VC JdT RE LE DG MG PHa WH JJS AJ ML-B RL-B EM MP LS SW

**APOLOGIES** Katie Baker, KB JB GC VCr SM JS MS DT

**PH** welcomed all present to the meeting and introduced Carrie, Practice Support Manager, who joined us at this month’s meeting.

**Minutes of the last meeting** were read and agreed by all. There were no matters arising.

**EXTENDED PHARMACY SERVICES**

We were reminded that as of the end of January pharmacists were being given extra powers to see and treat patients, the intention being that this would free up GP capacity. Under the NHS Pharmacy First Plan, people can visit pharmacies to receive treatment for simple and common illnesses instead of seeing a doctor. Pharmacists have been told they can treat and prescribe medication for seven conditions: - earache, sore throats, sinusitis, shingles, impetigo, urinary tract infections and infected bites and stings.

Those present had several questions around perceived potential problems with the extended services. A member asked would the pharmacists be paid. **Dr Shaw** said pharmacists would be able to claim through NHS funding.
Another asked what would happen about updating our records if visiting a pharmacist for treatment. **DR Shaw** advised that pharmacists will send communication to the surgery and although a patient may not be able to see this, a doctor definitely would.
He also explained a that pharmacist treating a patient would have access to their Summary Care Record informing them of medication currently being taken, but they will not be aware of any previous medication.
It was agreed this was a good service and time would tell its effectiveness.
It was hoped a list of local participating pharmacies would soon be available.

**SURGERY IT SESSIONS**

We were advised that future sessions were being planned for those who would appreciate some help with uploading apps, signing up to Voice Connect etc. PH will be informed when these would be and will circulate the dates.
We were also advised the **NHS App** was continually being updated, and will contain a barcode which can be shown at any pharmacy.

**CONSULTANTS LETTERS – CONFIDENTIALITY.**

A member asked if consultant’s letters being outsourced compromised confidentiality**. Dr Shaw** advised that consultants do write with confidentiality in mind, and any out-sourcing would be through a legitimate company, and of course data protection would be observed.

**ADVISORY NOTES**

A member asked what advisory notes can go on the front of a patients records, how do the surgery know next of kin, and can anyone under 18 be next of kin?
**Dr Shaw and Carrie** advised that questions were asked at patient registration such as next of kin and these were put on the front/home page. No-one under the age of 18 can be accepted as next of kin, and that next of kin is just a contact facility. Alerts, tasks sent, allergies, urgent alerts amongst other things would all show on the front page of patient records.

**STAFFING UPDATE**

**Carrie** informed us that 2 new apprentices had joined the surgery – a business administrator, Amelia, and Hannah for reception. The surgery is now linked with S.E. Essex College’s apprenticeship scheme. Apprentices come for 18 months and are trained on the job as well as spending 6 hours each week in the college. Apprentices get a qualification at the end. This requires considerable support from the practice, but all that is necessary is in place.

**AOB**

A question was asked about the pneumonia vaccination. **Dr Shaw** advised it was only given once and gives protection against meningitis, sepsis and other things as well as pneumonia. It was asked if information about it could be put in the newsletter. (a leaflet will be attached)

A question was asked about the take-up for MMR vaccination. **Dr Shaw** said that take-up was only at 80% and for herd immunity 95% was needed. He explained there were pockets where measles was being seen, especially so in the North, and possibly this was not helped by negative comments on social media. He said that parents whose children had not yet been vaccinated would be contacted.
(There is a walk-in MMR vaccination clinic on Monday 19th February between 10am and 3:30pm (during half term), at the Civic Centre, Southend. PH)

A question was also asked on the number of tetanus jabs needed. **Dr Shaw** said everyone had 3, for lifelong immunity 5 were needed, but most people have another 2 somewhere in their lifetime, so are covered. If a patient is travelling and unsure how many they have had, or if they present with a dirty wound, they would be given a tetanus injection.

Dr Shaw recommended that it was worth everyone having the **‘what3words’** app on their phone because, in case of emergency, it can pinpoint exactly where you are within a 3 metre square. The app is free and the emergency services all use it to locate where they are needed.

Next meeting **Tuesday 27th February, 12.30**

**at St Margaret’s Church Meeting Room, Lime Avenue/London Road SS9 3PA**
please use the northerly entrance, facing the Church

**New members always welcome.**