**Minutes of a Meeting of the Riverside Medical Practice**

**(RMP) Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

**on Wednesday 23rd January 2019 at 10.00am**

Present: Anita Fisher (RMP), Mohammed Riaz (Chairman), Sue Wilkinson (Sec), Steven Charlton, Alistair Wright, Michelle Carter.

1. Chairman’s opening remarks.

The Chairman thanked members for attending and giving their time to the group. Chairman asked members to introduce themselves around the table.

2. Birchtree.

Anita updated the Group on the current status of the Birchtree surgery. The surgery will close on 31st March 2019. NHS England will allocate patients to new GPs on 1st March 2019. Services for the individuals on the Violent Patient List (VPL) were discussed. There are currently 40 individuals on the list. Their services are currently out for tender. No practices in Stockton have tendered for the work. A practice in Hartlepool may be a possible solution and the CCG are looking at ways to manage provision of prescriptions for Stockton patients – perhaps via a large pharmaceutical company who has branches around the area – prescriptions could be collected from practice in Hartlepool and transferred internally to their Stockton branch. Alistair Wright asked if there were any facilities for them at RMP. Anita stated that were not. Anita went through some possible options but there is currently no decision on the continued service to these patients.

3. Medicine shortages.

Chairman raised the issue of shortages of prescription medicines. Pharmacies are under pressure to stockpile drugs in view of shortages – some of which are due to production problems. Patients are presently asking GP’s for two month’s supply of medicines. Anita reported that information had been received instructing GPs to maintain the 28 day supply at this time.

4. C-Reactive Protein (CRP) testing machine.

A CRP testing machine is used to help diagnose infections while patients are in GP appointments. The results can inform the GP’s decision making, referring on to Hospital, or to give different advice. This helps with accurate diagnosis as well as reducing unnecessary visits to A&E. Anita reported that a CRP machine is currently on loan to the Practice for a trial month with a view to purchase. Chairman suggested results are reviewed at the next meeting and an informed decision can be made about possible purchase.

ACTION BY: Anita

5. Fundraising for purchase of a CRP machine.

Suggestions for raising funds to buy the CRP machine were discussed. Steven suggested having a donation box in Reception for patients to donate individually. It was felt that security may be an issue and a number of other ways might be more secure. Michelle suggested holding a raffle as this has been popular in the past. A time problem may arise if staff had to manage the raffle as well as carry out their normal duties.

Anita suggested having a large visual representation of a thermometer in reception showing the progress of fundraising for the machine. This was felt to be a good idea by members.

Chairman suggested the possibility of a financial donation from members of the Mosque and requested Anita supply him with results to date with the aim of investigating possibilities.

ACTION BY: Anita and Chairman

6. Any other business

(a) Anita thanked Sue for volunteering to carry out the Secretarial duties. Sue said she was happy to help. Minutes will be produced by Sue, approved by Anita, published on the RMP website and circulated in other ways as required.

ACTION BY: Anita and Sue

(b) More PPG members needed

Anita stated that the PPG could do with more members to be recruited. The difficulties of finding new members was discussed. Ideas of how to go about this can be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION BY: All members

(c) Viability of RMP.

Anita reported that as RMP is still viable. Further information will be available in April. There may need to be some changes for staff but there will still be two GPs. A discussion took place about GP patient numbers across the country. The number of patients at RMP was presently being managed successfully. Several schemes and options were discussed including the possibility of a Practice Pharmacist. This person could be useful in other ways in addition to prescribing. For example, putting newly prescribed medicines on the practice system and discharge letters from hospitals. Anita is presently looking into this option, especially in terms of cost.

ACTION BY: Anita

(d) Remote Booking. Anita reported that a system of remote booking is now in place at RMP. If patients are having difficulty getting a GP appointment which suits them an appointment can be offered at other practices in Stockton via the HUB.

6. Date and time of next meeting.

The next meeting of the PPG will take place on Wednesday, 20th March 2019 at 10am in RMP.