

FALKLAND SURGERY OPEN EVENING 15.07.2024

The Chairman of the PPG, Adrian Barker (AB), opened the meeting at 19.00 and welcomed all those attending. After introducing the individual Committee members of the PPG he reported that in the latest national GP Patients' Survey Falkland Surgery had shown big improvements in patients' satisfaction and in the Friends and Family test, over the last year, had scored an excellent 92%.

A general discussion then took place on the topic of digital access to the surgery's services and how best to ensure that as many patients as possible can be persuaded to use this method of contacting the surgery. It was felt that a set of written instructions would be helpful plus a "help desk" where patients could be given personal instruction in how to use the system. Practice Manager Mark Betkowski (MB) emphasised that use of electronic communications freed up a lot of admin time which could be used productively elsewhere but there is no intention to ever stop direct or telephone contact with the surgery when necessary.

PPG Treasurer, Bettine Bly (BB), informed the meeting that the PPG would be present at the forthcoming Wash Common Community Festival on 28th September and appealed for assistance in running a tombola and some children's games in order to free up Committee members' time to sign up more PPG members.

Paula Challinor, the Pharmacy Technician gave a brief introduction to the role and work of the Clinical Pharmacy Team. As well as Paula, the Practice has two clinical pharmacists and an extended hours pharmacist undertaking medication reviews. The clinical pharmacy team offers face to face consultations on medications where desirable. MB stated that prescribing medication represented a huge proportion of the surgery's workload. Amongst the other points made were;

- The clinical pharmacists and the pharmacy technician can provide help on such things as: side effects of medicines; help if it is difficult to swallow pills; synchronising multiple prescriptions so they all become due at the same time.
- Two of the clinical pharmacists can prescribe for hypertension
- In person medication reviews are available on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons as well as Friday.
- Some medication reviews are done in the evenings (Mon.-Thurs, 5-8pm) which can be helpful for those who can't take a call during the day.

- A structured medication review is for patients taking 10 medicines or more with appointments on a Wednesday. These can be in person or by a telephone call if the patient is unable to come in.
- The pharmacy technician has appointments for discussing cholesterol to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease on Friday afternoons which can be in person or by telephone call if preferred. Face-to-face appointments for other medication or medicine issues including prescriptions are also available on a Friday afternoon

MB gave an update on the relationship between the Falkland Surgery and the NHS informing the meeting that the surgery is still awaiting confirmation of its next 5 year contract for funding. He also informed the meeting that future plans include proactive reviews of medication and, possibly, a move away from E-Consult to an alternative provider of similar services. There was discussion about whether alternative times should be offered for appointments.

Dr. Tallini then spoke about mental health stating that whilst it is good that more people feel that they can come forward to discuss mental health issues sadly funding for the treatment of the growth in cases is not keeping pace. There has been a massive growth in the need for anti-depressant drug prescription in the post Covid period. Dr. Tallini also said that whereas in the past only about 10% of registered patients would physically visit the surgery during a year that percentage is now around 90%. He noted that mental health problems were usually associated with physical and social problems and ideally they should all be addressed together. The importance of social connection for maintaining good mental health was discussed and the range of opportunities open, include the University of the Third Age (U3A).

After a brief Q & A session and the raffle draw the evening closed at 20.30