

Minutes

**Meeting 20th November 2024 – Location: Ainsdale Medical Centre, face to face**

1. **Chairs welcome and apologies**

Present – Ken Lowe (Chair), Heather Amer, Ann Rothwell, Jean Washbourne, Linda Macdonald, Paul Dykhuizen and Peter Lennon.

From the surgery – Jenna Jones (Deputy Practice Manager), Chelsey Byrne (Secretary), Jill Molloy (Receptionist) and Vicki Brown (Deputy Practice Manager from Cumberland House Surgery)

Apologies – Brian Kneale (Vice Chair), Bernard Carine, Carol Berry, Len Morris, Sheila Sides and Andrea De Cort.

Ken opened the meeting by taking a moment to remember Paul Ashby, the previous Practice Manager at Ainsdale Medical Centre who recently passed.

1. **Minutes of the last (AGM) meeting**

Minutes from the last AGM meeting have been published online.

1. **Actions arising from the AGM minutes**

No outstanding actions.

1. **Report on what has been achieved by the group in the past twelve months. (Circulated with agenda)**

No comments to be made.

1. **Appointment of members to serve on PPG – undertaken by those present stating they will continue, and names given from any member giving apologies.**

Ken Lowe will continue as Chair for the PPG for the next two years.

Brian Kneale is also happy to continue as Vice Chair.

No other nominations were received.

Mike Hilton has not attended this year and will therefore move to virtual.

This year we welcome Paul Dykhuizen, a new member of the PPG.

1. **Notification of any group members standing down**

Sadly, Bernard Carine will be standing down.

1. **Practice update for year to date.**

Jenna acknowledged the sad passing of Paul Ashby, the previous Practice Manager at Ainsdale Medical Centre. The Practice is deeply affected by his loss and our deepest sympathy goes to his family. Staff past and present attended his funeral. He was an inspirational figure for the surgery and helped to form this PPG group to provide a point of contact and ‘voice’ between the Practice and the patients.

Thank you to the PPG for help at this year’s flu clinic and for encouraging our patients to give feedback to analyse and improve our service. We vaccinated a total of 1800 patients over the two clinics and 828 questionnaires were completed. 99% of patients asked would recommend Ainsdale Medical Centre and 94% rate the communication with staff as either excellent or good.

Replacing our telephone system in January has certainly helped with the satisfaction of our patients trying to get through. The average wait time has come down and the ring back service has been well received. According to the patient questionnaire, 17% of people still struggle to get through but overall, it is much improved.

We need to do some work around promoting Patchs to the over 65s as 59% were not aware of what it is.

We have recruited a new Nurse, Sister Suzanne Clarkson. She is working 3 full days on a Monday, Thursday and Friday.

The same day GP service provision started back up on 4th November, based out of Lincoln Road Surgery. This is to help with the winter pressures and each Practice is allocated a certain number of appointments based on list size. These appointments are for new conditions that do not require a follow up such as chest infections, minor ailments which cannot be dealt with at the pharmacy. This service will be available until Match 2025.

We have another NHS App drop-in session arranged for 21st November and we are hoping this will be as well received as previous sessions.

Friends and Family data for September and October show that in September, we received 493 text responses and 4 paper responses, 94% of these would recommend the surgery as very good or good. In October, we received 640 responses via text and 95% would recommend the surgery as very good or good.

Stats:

Looking at the annual stats, we offer more clinical appointments than the recommended national average from the BMA (72 appointments per 1000 per week). Our average per month over the last year was 4322 appointments compared to the recommended 3314. There were more appointments available over the winter months due to winter pressures and demand being higher. There were a lower number of appointments in December 2023 due to Christmas bank holidays. Generally, appointment figures were higher in the winter months (Oct-Feb) compared to the summer months due to holidays and less illnesses.

Looking at DNAs over the last year, there was a low of 41 in September and a high of 76 In October. When changed into percentage, these figures are actually pretty low with 1.7% of appointments DNA’d in October. Average DNA rate over the year is 1.29%. Welfare texts are still sent to patients who DNA their appointment. Some people genuinely forget about their appointment, and some do phone the surgery to apologise. Previous figures have suggested younger people DNA the most. We are still hoping to display DNA figures on the TV screens once these have been fixed by IT. New equipment has arrived and we are waiting for IT to deal with this.

Looking at nurse appointments, there was a dip in availability from March to May which coincides with some staff sickness. From August, Sister O’Connor left the Practice which unfortunately made availability of appointments dip again. We have now recruited Sister Clarkson which should help to improve our figures and availability again.

Looking at the telephone calls taken, it was lowest in January 2024 as the phone system was only introduced in the second week of January. The number of calls were lower in June and August which coincides with popular holiday times. Calls were at their highest in April and October which interestingly coincides with when the covid spring boosters and flu vaccines were available.

Handouts of the quarterly stats were handed out to the PPG members. The two months’ worth of stats seem lower than usual as we usually compare three months’ worth of data. Our list size has increased, as have the patients registered for the NHS App. We have taken on more patients than usual due to another surgery closing.

1. **Q&A and Actions**

Duration of GP appointments were questioned. Jenna explained that it varies depending on the GP. Most are either 15 or 20 minutes and some are 10 minutes. All appointments should consist of one problem per appointment. All appointments were included in the stats.

Nurse appointments also vary depending on what the patients need to be seen for. A standard nurse appointment is 10 minutes, but many can be 20, 30 or even 40 minutes long for annual reviews, depending on what conditions the patients have. It was asked who decides how long an appointment should be. The appointment times are set by the nurses. Reception staff are prompted by the patients notes.

One member discussed a personal matter involving a Patchs request. During this conversation it was mentioned that Patchs requests are initially picked up and reviewed by the admin team. The admin team deal with any admin requests and signpost patients if necessary as they would a phone call. Anything clinical and requiring GP review/action is then forwarded to the GP. Members of the PPG were under the impression all Patchs requests were sent directly to the GP and were disappointment this is not the case, some now reluctant to use the service. Patchs can be submitted daily, clinical requests up until 2pm or until capacity is reached. A response is usually sent the same day although can take up to 48 hours.

The patient questionnaire highlighted lack of awareness of Patchs, especially in the over 65’s and therefore we need to raise awareness. It was suggested that a training session be arranged to take place at the surgery. Jenna will mention this to Sarah.

The Pharmacy First service was discussed and overall, we seem to have had a positive response with most patients happy to attend. It is quick and you are usually seen the same day. If the pharmacy feels the referral is not appropriate or that the patient needs to be seen by a GP, they will email us to let us know and the patient is usually seen the same day.

1. **Dates for future meetings in 2025/26 are:**
* 19th March 2025 at 13.30pm
* 18th June 2025 at 13.30pm
* 17th September 2025 at 13.30pm
* 19th November 2025 at 13.30pm including AGM
1. **Any other business**

Ken has received no nominations to date for on-line presentations and is therefore open to suggestions. The meetings have been moved to take place in the afternoons, four times a year.