

Chairman's Report 2020

First of all, I would like to say that it has been a privilege to not only represent the patients of Marden Medical Centre for the last four years but also to try to support the excellent staff that serve us.

There have been significant changes in the structure of the NHS in Kent and more changes are proposed. Peter and I have attended many meetings where these changes have been explained. We have tried to report these in the minutes of our meetings and keep you informed. I will try to briefly outline the major points.

The commissioning of services for West Kent, how the money was spent in our area, were concentrated in the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group. There were 8 commissioning groups covering Kent. These have now been amalgamated into one Kent and Medway group. This is to promote greater efficiency and improved co-ordination of services. Within this commissioning group there are 4 Integrated Care Partnerships. GP Surgeries have been grouped together in clusters based on geographical areas. We are in the Weald Cluster.

The thought behind clusters is that each group of surgeries can share services, such as physiotherapists, district nurses etc and patients can be treated close to home, and for some specialities in their own surgeries. Each Cluster has a Primary Care Network overseeing the developments in the overall shared care for the cluster. There is a forum set-up to feedback the developments from the clinical staff and for patients to feedback to the clinical lead, I attended the initial meeting last October. I feel the more participation from our Centre, the better our needs will be met. No further meetings have been held. One should have been held in February, but an update was sent out by email. Then the lockdown came into effect. If you are interested in getting involved let me or a member of the committee know.

What has happened in our group over the last year? As in previous years we have been involved in formulating the Patient Survey and helping with the Flu clinics. We have been involved in and supportive of, the proposed setting up of allotments and the community dementia friendly garden on the Highwood Green site. Credit here must go to Dr Morgan for her initial liaising with Redrow and to the hard work of Jill Nicholls and Judy Taylor. Plans are now well underway, and the Parish Council is willing to take on the ownership, subject to legal finalisation.

Come and Sing has gone from strength to strength and the Living Memory Café is thriving. Gail and Rachel, who spoke at last year's AGM, are making headway in making Marden a dementia friendly village. I have attended their planning meetings and the PPG fully support all the initiatives they are planning for Marden. Most of these planned activities had to be postponed due to Covid-19.

We had our usual stall at the Big Musical Picnic, but unfortunately the weather curtailed the event and all our displays were soaked and had to be thrown away.

We managed, with many thanks to Anthony Sampson, to publish a colourful, informative and extensive newsletter. We changed our name in January from a Patient Reference Group to a Patient Participation Group to come into line with all other groups across, not only Kent but the country.

The outbreak of Covid-19 has changed how we all live, work and socialise, but caring for the well-being of the community has come to the forefront. The Staff at the Medical Centre have more than risen to the challenge, adjusted and worked hard to continue to provide excellent care to all their patients. On your behalf I would like to give them a very big thank you.

The last few months have been very different and have been a real challenge for this dinosaur to get to grips with 21st century technology and keep in touch with you all. I have been supported by John, and I am pleased he is putting his name forward to be considered as your new chairman.

As I am stepping down now as Chair of this worthwhile group, I would like to thank the committee for their suggestions and support over the last four years. Mo as our minute secretary, Jane for her expertise as our Membership secretary and web master and Peter for his friendship support and insight as my vice-chairman. Lastly but by no means least, the staff at the Medical centre for their endless patience and cheerfulness, especially Julie, Nikki and now Mary Jayne.

I hope to stay on the committee as an active member if the new chairman will have me so this may not goodbye. Finally, can I thank the Practice for the beautiful flowers I received this afternoon, and the lovely message on the card.