

Marden Medical Centre Report for the PRG AGM May 9th 2019

In the last year we have again increased the amount of primary care activity we deliver. This is a consequence of an increased list size but also an aging population and more complexity of health care. Patient satisfaction remains high as judged by our own surveys but also governments postal GP survey run by MORI. This places us as sixth highest rated practice in Kent where all five above us are smaller practices. However, we do see demand and expectation that we can't always meet. Likewise, our partners in social care and in hospitals are also facing resource and staffing challenges.

This year we announced the retirement of Dr Graham Streeter in April after giving nearly 33 years of loyal service to the patients of Marden Medical Centre as a GP partner. He was also GP trainee in Marden before qualifying and has lived in the village all this time. The guiding principles of NHS General Practice and his own commitment have, however, remained unchanged so that for some families he has been the defining GP for many generations. The PRG led the event to mark Dr Streeter's retirement on April 4th with a "Gathering" at the John Banks Hall which was a sell out with a marvellous spread of food, a perfect cake, and some moving speeches. The PRG helped to run a patient collection in lieu of a gift which has far exceeded the target and is well over £2000 given to Dandelion Time. This was Grahams choice to support a trusted local charity working with children in unique holistic way.

We are happy to announce that Dr Johnathan Wentzel will be joined us in May as a sessional GP working up to six sessions in Marden over three days as well as having some outside interests in medical innovations. He is left partnership at what was an "outstanding" practice in Maidstone and is as experienced as any of the current partners having been a GP trainer and appraiser.

We have also persuaded our popular Paramedic Practitioner, Matt Cooper, to work for us on 5 days a week. He has a key role in dealing with acute emergencies, patient triage, some home visits and in seeing acute illness in his own surgery clinics. He also works shifts for the Ambulance Service and is training in leadership and in prescribing.

Our other two sessional GPs, Drs Hannah Decourcy-Hallinan, and Peter Wilford continue their tremendous contribution and we have a GP in training at all times, currently Dr Beatrice Taylor-Roberts.

The nursing team have all expanded their roles through the year. Marianne became the team leader, Juliette has added a contraception qualification and Sam is now in charge of the Cervical Screening programme. HCA Yvonne has undertaken more complex tasks such as spirometry, and dressings which used to be the province of the nurses. Sadly, however Marianne Hamlyn is moving out of the area and will be leaving us in May. The good news is that Alison Tinsley has just started working for us having worked for many years in Maidstone and she will be offering all nursing services including asthma and diabetes checks.

We have also been developing the role of the receptionists, led by Mary-Jane Bournes, to work as Medical Assistants who may ask more detail from the patient and meet their needs

without direct contact with the GP. They are also trained to “signpost” patients to other sources of help and advice. There is increased emphasis on team working, training, proper governance and professional development. This was never more tested than with a CQC inspection in March with 2 weeks’ notice at a very busy time.

The breaking news from that CQC inspection is that we have been rated as “outstanding” overall with special credit for being “caring” and “well-led”. I have a copy of the report summary if anyone cares to read it. To put into context of around 60 practices in west kent at any one time 2-3 will be “outstanding” and 45-50 will be “good” and some hard working practices will “need improvement”. We are just digesting this news now and would want to share any credit with the tremendous staff we have, former staff, and not forgetting the PRG committee and supporters who were involved with the inspection and are mentioned in the report.

The emphasis from the centre has been to develop Primary Care Networks for which our local Cluster with practices in Yalding, Cranbrook, Goudhurst, Staplehurst and others is already up and running. We are leaders in that group which is already proving extra appointments on a Saturday morning in Staplehurst and should offer great admin and training support. The other drive is to promote “Social Prescribing” as a complement to GPs, to medication and referrals which could mean a walking group, an advice line or a singing group. We are a pilot for a scheme having an advisor Hannah in surgery on two days a week.

Our list size has risen more steeply than last year from to 6540. The house building already agreed will see an estimate of up to 1000 more patients in 1-2 years even with our efforts to reduce numbers living in neighbouring villages. We aim to continue from the current building despite room and parking pressure. We are considering a modest extension on the site if funding can be agreed and are talking to planners and architects. In respect of the MBC call for further sites and the prospect of many more houses we are currently opposed simply because it is not possible to recruit new GP partners and senior staff to run a practice even if a building became available. Our website says *“We strongly oppose any further housing developments In Marden on the grounds that the medical centre could not cope from a manpower, recruitment as well as an estates perspective. Large scale development would risk destabilising the care provided to our current patients.”* That last bit is the key that we don’t have a contractual or ethical obligation to people that don’t yet live here, only to those that do. We don’t mind being quoted on our current position but we are also careful to listen to all sides and not to align with anyone.

We are very grateful to the Patient Reference Group for their support for what we do and representing the needs of patients to the practice and to the Clinical Commissioning Group. Members have volunteered at times including the flu clinics and we were pleased to have the Chair sit in on several interviews for key staff. We are also grateful to the Friends of Marden Medical Centre and those patients who donate money to them for the purchase of equipment. This year has seen record amounts spent and has required them to find new needs for an already well-equipped surgery. Their AGM is in June.

General Practice is still under tremendous strain at present despite some minor improvements in the GP contract. The admin and the demand make the days longer and

potentially less safe. The basic income per patient is still only under £90 per year for unlimited contacts and for all the staff and overheads. A sum for which you couldn't insure a rabbit and this helps to explain why the central drive to challenge instant access to a GP for problems that could be resolved by a Clinical Pharmacist, a Paramedic, a Social Prescriber or a reliable website.

On a final positive note we will undertake another sponsored event this year with the Cycle Horsmonden 2019 – Walking with the Wounded on April 28th however we didn't really publicise that over Dr Streeter's retirement collection. 12 brave cyclists took on options of 25 50 or 75 miles all around our patch on a dry but windy day without incident. It is a well-run event which we can recommend.

So thank you on behalf of the practice for showing your interest and coming to this AGM, thanks to the PRG it's committee, to Mo, Peter and Sian especially. We are happy to take any questions as best we can if time allows.

Dr Neil Potter