



**Minutes of a Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at Haddenham Medical Centre**

Present: Brian Rogers (Chair) Barry Lynch (Vice Chair) Dr Mark Howcutt, Ciar Munn (Practice Manager) and 25 PPG members.

Apologies received : Alan Watkins, Angela Hiam, Ann Warburton, Marie-Helene Usherwood, Michael Smith, Mike Wheeler, Peter Freeman, Steve Smirthwaite, David Stevens, Lorraine Gooch, Carol Mason.

**Welcome and Apologies**

1. Brian opened the meeting and gave a short introduction to Primary Care Networks (PCNs), which were established in 2019 and our local PCN Phoenix, which is now based at HMC. He then welcomed and introduced Social Prescriber Team Lead Suzi Donnelly and her colleague Stephanie Garrard from Aylesbury Central PCN to talk to us about their work and the role of Social Prescribers (SPs).

**PCNs and the role of Social Prescribers**

2. Suzi described the role of PCNs (approx. 1250 were set up across the UK). Each typically serves between 30 to 50,000 people and involves multiple GP practices working together with community services, pharmacies, mental health services and social care providers to deliver integrated care.

Social prescribing uses a holistic approach to focus on an individual's needs. The aim is to increase a person's control over their health and their life. An example given was working with diabetes patients to help with lifestyle changes and weight loss. Other support has been given with newly discharged hospital patients to check in with them and make sure they are coping. The overall aim is to improve the mental health of patients allowing for GPs to focus on medical issues and lead to cost savings with fewer appointments needed.

It was discussed how the work of a PCN depends very much on the needs of the local population.

Question – How do interactions with local government work? – Suzi had met with the leader of the council and Mayor but more difficult since Bucks unitary council formed.

Question – Was this work previously done by “Social workers” – yes, social care is very busy now so they pick up some areas

Question - What is patient population for your PCN? Think approx. 30,000

Question – Are SPs medically trained? – No, but they make use of the GPs in their practice if needed.

Question – Will PCNs be affected by the closure of NHS England? No, ICBs (integrated care boards) and PCNs will be staying.

Question – Do we have information/ signposting for social prescribing at HMC? – Basic info is available on the notice board and Ciar and the PPG management team will be disseminating more info as we go forward. Ciar described the current staff roles making up the Phoenix PCN team. Ciar also informed the meeting that there will be a Health and well-being coach speaking in the library on 29<sup>th</sup> April open to all.

## **Practice Report – Dr Mark Howcutt and Ciar Munn.**

3. Ciar said that there has been little change in staffing; one nurse has been off sick and locum staff had been used. There are also some new faces on reception who are being trained, so there was a plea for patients to be patient while that is underway.

Dr Mark Howcutt said that medically things are stable, there was a 2<sup>nd</sup> peak of norovirus which has now settled down. They were pleased to be invited to the launch of 'Carrie' the community vehicle for people with significant mobility difficulties, which is a great asset for a rural practice. It is important that everyone gets to know about it for people who are experiencing difficulty getting to the medical centre, hospital or even shopping. The vehicle can now take 2 wheel chairs and is run completely by volunteers. Unlike the fish scheme, it is not limited to residents in Haddenham but is available to residents in surrounding areas. More details are available on the PPG page of [www.haddenham.org](http://www.haddenham.org)

### **Q & A**

Q. Why is ear wax removal no longer available at local surgeries?

A. There is no funding for this at HMC and the preferred micro-suction method can be done privately locally with trained staff.

Q. How will NHS changes affect things?

A. It is not yet known exactly what this will involve.

Q. With more housing developments being planned, will HMC have capacity for the resulting additional residents?

A. This is not an issue as an increase in patients gives an increase in funding for additional staffing levels. HMC did not foresee any difficulty getting extra staff, especially GPs, if that becomes necessary.

Q. Why was a patient who rang reception and held number 1 in the queue waiting for 25mins+?

A. Ciar considered that this would have been due to a recent shortage of reception staff, resulting in one person having to deal with both the phone and front desk.

Q. What progress had been made on PPG funding?

A. One of the PPG management team had identified sources of income/grants and we would now attempt to get firm funding commitments from them.

An update on the Phoenix PCN: The Medical Director is Dr Dan Salmond, and Ciar is currently acting as the Interim Network Operations Manager while recruiting for a full-time manager continues. The total team including physios is now 13.

### **AOB**

4. Brian discussed whether we should reduce the number of PPG meetings in a year, especially as it is difficult to get out in the winter months. It was proposed that the next meeting will be in July, with the aim of reducing to 3 meetings a year, or even, potentially 2 with a view to holding speciality subject briefing sessions for interested members during the year. There were no objections to this proposal. Brian will also update with a newsletter detailing information from the practice as needed. The PPG management team were investigating ways of attracting younger PPG members.

5. The date of the next PPG meeting would likely be Wednesday 9th July 2025 at 7.00pm at the Haddenham Medical Centre but this would be confirmed closer to the time.

6. The Chair thanked the members, HMC staff and PPG management colleagues for their attendance and declared the meeting closed.