

**LOUGHTON HEALTH CENTRE
PATIENTS GROUP**

Minutes of Meeting at Loughton Health Centre on Wed. 28th January 2015 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Dr H U Khan, Dr P Prashner (Chair), Ann Harrison (Minutes), Elizabeth Prashner, Carol Barrell, Sheema Sherman, Helen Reynolds, Ken Hearn, Gary Crawford, Peter House, Peggy Howes

APOLOGIES from Janice Wheatley, Pat Prichard, Elna Green, John Lindsey, Heather Murray. John Lindsey and Heather Murray would not attend future meetings. The Group expressed gratitude for their participation for many years.

- 1. Appointments.** Dr Khan was pleased that letters were sent to the Practice by members of the Patients' Group following discussion about appointments at our last meeting. As a result, several improvements had been made.
 - One doctor would be conducting routine booked appointments until 6.30 p.m.
 - One doctor would be available for booked emergency appointments until 6.30 p.m.
 - There would be an additional 6 daily appointments available with each full time doctor.This results in 111 extra patients being seen each week. The Practice contract is a "global" one, i.e. that the surgery is open until 6.30, not that each doctor is present until that time. Dr Khan expressed his personal opinion that all doctors should be present for the contracted hours. However, he reminded us that LHC is the only Practice open for appointments on Saturdays.
 - Government Funding will increase over the next few years allowing for increased GP hours.
 - More merging of GP Practices to be expected.

- 2. Specialist Clinics.** Sheema Sherman was concerned about Diabetic Clinic in particular, which appears to be running at least three months behind for routine annual check-ups, while the number of diabetics is increasing. Dr Khan reported that CCG funding is being withdrawn from individual Practices in order to set up centralised clinics. The major disciplines must be open to Europe wide tender so there may be delay in setting up such clinics and a gap in services. Patients who are concerned about their own health should book an appointment with the GP, and not wait to be called for check-up.
 - Dr Khan suggested that we write to CCG to ask for clarification about current situation and future plans.

- 3.** Dr Khan has not yet decided about his retirement. He reported that Janice Wheatley is still off sick –possibly until April – and Breda Tite, the Business Manager was standing in as Practice Manager. It is a difficult situation for LHC. The meeting asked that our best wishes be sent to Janice. There is a general shortage of GPs. 74% of new doctors are female and many of them seek part time employment on salaried basis.

- 4. Telephones.** Peter House asked about difficulty of getting through. Dr Khan suggested that, where appropriate, patients should be encouraged to make their next appointment on their way out after seeing the doctor. **On Line Appointments** Still very few patients are making use of this.
 - **Waiting room notices** should be clearer about **On Line facilities**.
 - **30 Staff** are engaged in multiple tasks involving hundreds of items each day, e.g. 500 letters per day scanned into computer and highlighted for doctors' attention.
 - **Skype Consultations** a future possibility.
 - **Did Not Attend (DNA)** patients still 250 – 300 per month.

5. **"Choose and Book"**. Carol Barrell was concerned that choices allowed for patients to choose a hospital that might not have the necessary aftercare services. Dr Khan said that the chosen venue should triage to eliminate such situations. However patients should first take care and consider their own doctor's advice . Carol Barrell would write to "Choose and Book" admin to suggest more helpful wording on choice form.

Action Required: See No. 2 above. Dr Khan suggested that we write to CCG to ask for clarification about current situation and future plans.

Date of Next meeting Wednesday April 29th 2015 at 7.30 p.m.