

BARING ROAD MEDICAL CENTRE PATIENTS' GROUP

Meeting: 6 September 2018
Baring Road Medical Centre: 4.00 p.m.

The business meeting followed a presentation by Stella Black of the Macular Society, who had been invited on our behalf by Patrick Connolly. The group wishes to record its appreciation this informative and very helpful talk.

MINUTES

Present: Bob Blunden (BB: chair), Pat Blunden, Robert Thompson (RT: minute taker), Gill Lewis, Patrick Connolly, Stephen Binns, Paul Howell (PH), Elaine Curley, Lee Walker, Janet Thompson, Chris Blake, Tuhin Miah (TM: BRMC), Chloe Brace (BRMC), Catherine Faithful (BRMC)

1. Apologies had been received from Jan Gimble and Suzy Wilkinson
2. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.
3. Matters arising from the minutes.

TM reported that Lewisham Council is to provide copies of *Lewisham Life*, which contains a great deal of useful information about local NHS services, for the waiting room.

4. Patient Engagement Event, 23 August

BB reported on this Patient Engagement Event about the current merger between BRMC and Rushey Green. Thirteen patients had attended.

- a. The letter sent to patients by the CCG had stated that the combined practice would be called 'The Rushey Green Group Practice', which had caused some concern to BRMC patients. This statement had in fact been a clerical error; the only overarching term covering the two practices is 'Novum Group Partnership'.

The meeting believes that this error will cause potentially serious confusion, and asks that the CCG circulate another letter correcting its mistake and clarifying the true situation. BRMC Patients may give their practice name as 'Baring Road Medical Centre', this being one of the two locations managed by the Novum Health Partnership.

- b. BB had been assured that the use of the term 'branch' in reference to BRMC should not cause any concern; he had been assured that it makes no difference and that there was no intention of reducing services at either practice. The

merger is meant to improve the range of choice open to patients; the success of the partnership depends on both of its sites.

- c. The partnership will employ physician associates, working under a doctor's supervision. Patients will have the right to decline an appointment with a physician associate if they wish.
- d. BRMC will take part in a pilot scheme using smartphone consultation. BB had been assured that the system will use sophisticated algorithms to ensure that clients are properly serviced.
- e. The overall manager of the combined practice will be Dr Judy Chen.
- f. There had been no discussion of or information about the future of the Patients' Groups at the two practices.

There was some frustration that the Patient Engagement event had been held at short notice and in August when many people are on holiday.

4. Surgery report

- a. The Rushey Green and Baring Road EMIS systems are to be merged between Friday 14 September and Monday 17 September. During this time, callers will be referred to SELDOC.
- b. TM reported on GP resignations and appointments.
- c. TM announced that he will be leaving BRMC on 20 September to take up a post in Thamesmead, and thanked the group for its co-operation and support. The Patients' Group wishes to record its appreciation of Tuhin's exceptional management and leadership over the past years; while we regret his departure from BRMC, we wish him the very best for the future.

In response to Tuhin's announcement, the group expressed particular concern about two issues.

- i. The overall management of the combined practice. It was hoped that the responsibility of management would not detract from Dr Chen's availability as a physician; the group expressed surprise that, as they understand the situation, a non-clinical practice manager is not to be appointed.
- ii. The local management of BRMC. At the meeting on 23 August it had been stated that Tuhin would continue as manager; while neither the partners nor the CCG could be expected to anticipate his departure, or to announce it if his resignation was still confidential, it was felt that the statement made at that time clearly indicated that BRMC would continue to have a full-time manager of Tuhin's seniority. The PPG wishes to record its unanimous and strongly-felt wish that such will indeed be the case.

5. AoB

- a) The Patients' Group noted that no further action has yet been taken about starting a COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) support group at BRMC.
- b) Advice has been received that it would be more cost-effective to replace the waiting room chairs than to try to restore them.
- c) A communal allotment (available without charge) has been made available through the Ringway Centre and is to be advertised at BRMC.
- d) PH had tidied up the PG table in the waiting room and information from the talk on macular degeneration will be placed there. He pointed out that the notice board also needs some attention.

6. Next meeting: Thursday 25 October, 4.00 p.m.

The meeting was declared closed at 5.30