



Patient Participation Group Meeting

Friday 25th September 2026

Attendees:

John Cornhill – JC

Linda Rule – LR

Shenene Fontenelle- Struthers - SS

Apologies

Alan Rule - AR

Joan Miller – JM

Peter Miller – PM

Helen Holmes – HH

Ginette Tweddle – GT

AT

Jim McCloughlin – JM

Gill Rodgers - GR

SMG Staff

Dr Jonathan Booth – JB – GP Partner

Caroline Morris – CM – Practice Manager

Nicola Johnson – NJ – Clinical Services and Operations Manager

Paige Hall – PH – Staff Services Manager

1. Introduction

Previous minutes went through. All happy.

2. 7am Starts

Core contract is now 7am-6.30pm. Changing from 1st January 2027 to a 8am start for clinical staff and the surgery will open from 7.30am, an admin worker will cover the desk and man the sickline. 3 months' notice will be given to staff to inform them.

JC – asked the need for the change for the practice?

CM – we don't get paid as a practice to be open earlier, we provide the service for our patients to be open earlier and we've looked at it and the pull is at the end of the day now.

3. Phone Systems

Currently we don't have a call back facility for our phones. JC mentioned that they have improved he felt in the last few years and you can get through quicker. CM advised we are having issues with our current provider and we are trying to arrange a date for the switch over to take place but some phone lines cannot port over. Planned move for the phones is the end of October, provisional date of 27th and 28th October. Managers can join the calls to assist admin if needed, something new we didn't have previously.

4. Recruitment

Nadine Waugh has joined the team as a Home Visiting Practice Nurse to assist with second part Chronic Disease reviews in the community as part of the SMART Team.

5. Flu Season

We will be holding walk in and appointments at our Saturday clinics on the 3rd and 10th October at Newbiggin Hall only. For anyone that cannot attend on the Saturday, we will be holding appointments with nurses through the week at both sites throughout October onwards.

6. Registrations

Currently taking on more students with it being Freshers season at the Universities. Our list size has grown to 41,185.

7. NHS App

It now costs the practice to send text messages to patients, therefore email addresses are used as a preferred method for patients to send information. The NHS App will send notifications to your phone when messages from the GP Practice have come through, important to have notifications turned on within the app. The practice is looking at turning on prospective access to patients, some issues still to look at before this happens, this would reduce SARS/Phone calls as patients would gain access to more of their record.

8. Website

New practice website has been approved by the Partners, will be looking at this in the coming months, should be more user friendly/NHS standard – before the end of December.

AOB

NJ – TV screen at both sites coincide with national campaigns – i.e sepsis/smoking – we keep this up to date with what is in the news.

Next meeting – January 2027 TBC