Minutes of ALFORD Groupof Doctors Patient Participation Group

Held 23rd February 2024 at 12 Noon.

Members Peter Hawkyard (Chair , Pat Hawkyard(Secretary)Pam Mablethorpe,Pat Mowbray, Mary McCullagh.

Apologies Michael Jones, Amy Denman (Practice Manager)

Minutes of Previous Meeting Agreed.

Matters Arising

Chairman’s Report

Peter advised that he had received notification that a “ drop in” event focused on Health & Wellbeing has been organised by the ICB for to-morrow from 1pm at the Coastal Centre, Victoria Road, Mablethorpe. Refreshments will be provided. Various stalls representing organisations will be present.

Sessions have been set up by the West Lindsey Section to pass on information and simple ways to better manage knee, hip and joint pain. There are 2 sessions each Wednesday in the afternoon. The sessions are not free (£3.75) and of course you have to travel to Gainsborough. It is to be hoped that is a success and is taken up more local to us.

New data out shows that there 81 GP Practices in Lincolnshire providing care for around 817,000 patients with 14 Primary Care Networks with the aim of providing more joined up care.

Pat and I attended the Area PPG meeting held on7th Feb at Swineshead Boston Surgery. There was a decent turn out of around 75%. We were advised of bad news from EMAS that they had declared that all 999 responses had been downgraded to Category 2 status. This decision had been made in view of the fact that it is unable to meet Government targets (.In truth it never has). This is yet another blow to our area and will mean survival rates remaining low. The only suggestion made was that when making a 999 call, the caller state that the patient is unconscious. So much for the “golden hour”

Boston Hospital has no longer got the facilities to deal with stroke/heart cases with Lincoln now being declared a “Centre of Excellence”.

It is unfortunate that at the same time as releasing this bad news, the NHS is launching a life saving campaign to encourage people to call 999 when they are having signs of heart attack, as heart attack admissions return to pre-pandemic levels.

NHS figures show there were more than 84,000 heart attack hospital admissions during 2021/2 Up by more than 7,000 on the previous year when fewer people came forward during the pandemic.

Chances of surviving are far higher if earlier care is sought. 7 in 10 survive to 9 in 10 if earlier treatment given.

Professor Nick Linker (cardiologist) states that nearly all damage takes place within the first couple of hours.

NHS figures show that whilst 70% understood that pain in the chest was a symptom and 41% knew sweating was a symptom only 27% understood feeling weak and light headed and general unease were also symptoms.

Much confusion is being caused over the so called enhanced programme of assistance being provided by pharmacies. In many cases they are already overwhelmed by high demand for medicines and totally unable to carry out consultations.

A reminder was given that 111 and surgeries (in opening hours) can arrange out of hours appointments.(one PPG member even admitted to using this route all the time, as it saved ringing his surgery, thereby saving up to an hour hanging on the phone only to be told “sorry” all slots have gone.

Also X rays/Scans are now available at week-ends.

The meeting ended on a sad note with one member advising that after a CQC inspection his practice has found itself in serious trouble. He was not able to discuss but confirmed that they were receiving support.

Practice Manager’s Report

Dr Tant stated that he thought EMAS would be unlikely to have their decision to downgrade 999 calls accepted by the Government. The demands on EMAS has increased beyond the capacity available and is continuing to grow. It is a problem throughout the whole of NHS services. All services are under pressure and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

Members Freedback None.

Any Other Business None.

Date of next Meeting 12th April.