

**Minutes of Meeting  
Gower Street Practice  
Patient Participation Group  
held on Wednesday 6 January 2021  
at 1.00 pm (online)**

**Present:** Patient members: SH, FL, RN, JO, RP  
Staff: Dr RM, Dr MH, MM, SP

1. **Apologies for absence:** EM
2. **Minutes of last meeting:** these were agreed
3. **Matters arising:** none
4. **Lockdown:** the current lockdown has not caused any further changes to the practice: patients are booked for an initial telephone triage and then are invited face-to-face if needed. New registrations are still incoming. The practice receives regular updates from the CCG in terms of procedures including non-covid referrals. It is a constantly changing scene and adaptations will be made as necessary. Covid-positive patients are monitored by phone. It was felt likely that numbers of such patients will rise. The majority who need hospital referral are to UCH but this could be elsewhere if the patient lives further away, e.g. to the Homerton or St Mary's etc. Clinicians wear PPE when seeing face of face patients and these patients are asked to wear a mask and use hand sanitising gel on arrival. JO enquired about cancelled hospital appointments: the Practice has no control over these but it was hoped that the situation would begin to improve following the roll-out of the vaccination programme. The two-week suspected cancer pathway continues to work well.
5. **Covid-19 vaccinations:** the Practice is in one of the first areas to begin vaccinations. There are three locations in Camden, the local one being at Hunter Street. The Primary Care Network contacts our patients, beginning with age 80+, moving to 75+ next week. Around half of our 80+ patient have been vaccinated already. There was a discussion regarding the recent government instruction to postpone second doses and concentrate on first doses for more people. FL asked which vaccine will be given: RM said this depends on which has been delivered to the centre. JO asked if it is possible to choose which vaccine and RM replied that this was unlikely at present. RM and MH said both were very effective. RN asked if these vaccines protected against the new variants: RM replied that it was likely they did against the UK variant but information about the South African variant was less clear. When the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine becomes available it is likely to be offered at more sites as it is easier to store.
6. **Any other business:**
  - FL asked advice on purchasing a thermometer: the Practice uses in-ear Braun infra-red.
  - The Practice can supply a blood pressure monitor free of charge to patients who need one.
  - SH enquired about changes to the Boots prescription service. RM and MH were unaware of this specifically but changes have been made to avoid waste. Patients can phone the Practice or use eConsult to request medication.
  - JO enquired about the nurse situation: since Eileen left, there is currently a locum nurse twice a week. It was hoped this would improve by April.
  - JO asked about funds for repairs in the basement. The situation was currently uncertain.
  - RP asked about long-term plans: RM and MH still plan to retire soon, are working on a legal framework, want to find the right people to take over and continue the way they ran the Practice.
7. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 15 April 2021 at 1.00 pm (online).