

**Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting
Gower Street Practice
Patient Participation Group
held on Wednesday 7 December 2022
at 2.30 pm**

Present:

Patient members: Esther Murray, Rosemary Nag, Jorge Ornelas, Roy Prentice in person plus Robert Lane online

Staff: Dr Jessica Harland, Marcia Menichetti, Suzanne Pavitt plus Dr Frances Baawuah and Amal Wicks online

This extraordinary meeting was convened to discuss the proposed merger of Gower Street Practice and Brondesbury Medical Centre. It was discussed that both would continue to function as two practices, with the same management. Both practices currently form one Primary Care Network. There is already a joint telephone system but separate clinical systems. A merger would enable better planning across both sites. The proposed date for the merger is 1st July 2023, or 1st October 2023 if the earlier date is not possible. All employees would be contracted to the single organisation.

Advantages discussed include the ability to offer appointments to all patients at either site. Additional facilities would be available to Gower Street patients, such as lump and bump removal and coil fittings, which are available at Brondesbury. It was discussed that local resident patients were unlikely to wish to travel so far. The usual doctors would remain at their current sites and not rotate between the two.

Dr Harland confirmed that the current Same Day Clinic at Gower Street would continue. Recruitment continues to be a difficulty. It was discussed that the definition of an emergency can be interpreted differently by different people according to their needs. PPG members acknowledged that staff do their best in challenging circumstances.

Dr JH expressed that the merger would make a much more resilient organisation. Spare space at Gower Street can be shared with Brondesbury, it will offer staff job variety and finances will be simplified into one set of accounts. Patients were unlikely to notice any day-to-day change. Extended Access 6.00 – 8.00 pm and on Saturdays is available to patients of both sites (telephone only).

The process of the merger is to apply to the CCG after consultation, which includes with the PPG, a survey texted to patients, posters in reception and on social media over the next three months then an online open meeting. It was discussed that online/text does not suit everyone. It was agreed to have a paper copy of the survey available. Members felt it was important to retain the ethos of the practice whilst changing, in order to preserve and strengthen. Speaking to the same GP to discuss test results was discussed and it was confirmed that this would not be affected by the merger.

Dr JH is now based at Gower Street as the Lead Partner here. Dr AD remains the Lead GP. PPG members were pleased to have a partner regularly in attendance.

JO asked about the lease on the building. There are no plans to move to Brondesbury as this is too far away. He felt that decisions that might have future implications should not be rushed. Dr JH explained that renovation work is planned for Gower Street in the New Year.

2. **Any Other Business:**

- Unfortunately Francis Lillie tried but was unable to join the meeting remotely.
- EM brought up difficulty encountered when attempting to book an urgent appointment. To be discussed outside of the meeting.

There were no further matters to discuss and the meeting ended at 3.30 pm.

3. **Date of next meeting:** Thursday 12 January 2023.