**PPG Goes Virtual!**

With the help of Southend CCG, Central Surgery (Southchurch) held its first Lockdown PPG Meeting on 13 July. Practice Manager, Christine Lloyd made all the arrangements and all we had to do was click within the Email she sent to access Microsoft Team. There was no need to load the programme.

7 Members, one by telephone, were joined by Paula Dunley, Social Prescriber for Southend East Primary Care Network (PCN) and Ellen Hinkley, the PCN Manager for Southend.

**Southend East Primary Care Network (PCN)**

Dr Irlam (Central Surgery) is the Clinical Director for the Southend East PCN including 6 GP practices, East of Lifsten Way.

**Care In Your Neighbourhood**

Links to the STP Website “Care in your Neighbourhood” giving information about the activities of PCNs and short videos from each of the new posts that can be selected by PCNs, were circulated beforehand.

**Social Prescribing**

Paula has been contacting patients who may be alone, from the 6 surgeries forming the East Southend PCN. Some patients may be lonely or isolated, be a carer or have problems relating to emotional wellbeing, housing, relationships, domestic abuse, financial and debt problems or have difficulty coming to terms with a long term health condition. Paula puts them in touch with an appropriate community agency who can give assistance. She also links those shielding with food supplies.

Many people are referred to a range of befriender services and loneliness and isolation projects, for example GoodSam volunteers, Hello Life, Folk Like Us, Parish nurse befrienders, or the confidential Silver Line Friendship Services [on 0800 470 8090.]

Paula had a list of residents aged from 75 years upwards who hadn’t been contacted who were navigated to other services.

Some people don’t know who to talk to, but contact with the GP surgery and Paula had helped them to feel supported. Central Surgery has 250 patients shielding who the surgery staff and Paula have been contacting in addition to contacts from the other surgeries in the PCN.

**PCN Support**

Ellen reported that a pharmacist is due to be appointed on 1 October for the PCN with a physio looking to run services. A PCN plan is being prepared for submission to the CCG by the end of August. A Clinical Auditor is due to be appointed for Southend East, funded by Public Health England. The Clinical Auditor will work with the Patient Groups in the PCN. It is hoped to convene a PCN PPG with representatives from each surgery.

Each PCN has a Social Prescriber who gets sent focused referrals from the surgery to engage with as well as the many activities outlined above. The Mental Health pilot that was carried out in 3 other PCNs in Southend has now had agreement to be expanded and so a mental health nurse, as well as a band 4 assistant will be appointed to all the PCNs in the area which will mean faster and more effective integrated services between primary care and mental health.

Within the PCN, Paramedics are doing home visits and there are Navigators on GP receptions to direct patients to the most appropriate service.

The PCN won a bid for digital funding and so Ellen and Christine are getting a website for the PCN to explain what support is available and how to obtain it. The PCN will be having meetings over the next few weeks with website developers and other stakeholders about how to create an informative and easy to navigate website which will bring many services together in one place and also provide direct links out to other websites and sources of information for patients.

**Central Surgery Services**

Christine confirmed that the health event we had planned cannot go ahead. The

‘Mym Health app’ though is being piloted by the Surgery for patients with Diabetes or Asthma. Patients take measurements at home and pass them to the surgery using the app for analysis. 250 patients had been contacted and 24 have declared an interest in the project.

**Telephone appointments during Covid -** Telephone consultations had been given to most patients recently. There are a few appointments for those that the Doctor needs to see. Patients are being advised to use home blood pressure monitors.

**Administering flu jabs in the autumn** - Will need some thought to keep all distanced. It is expected that a path through the Surgery leading to the rear door, would be formed. Special flu jabs for patients over 65 would be used this year.

**Others** - the Surgery is starting to book medical reviews. The North Shoebury Centre is available for blood tests to be booked through the usual number. This is subject to change so if in any doubt please call the number on the back of your form to be directed to the nearest open blood test clinic and follow government guidelines and advice.

**AOB**

Members expressed concern that Stroke Consultants had been lost from Southend Hospital.

Members expressed grateful thanks to all the surgery staff for the effort they have made and are still making due to the Covid crises.

**Review of the Meeting**

All members said they appreciated the opportunity to catch up on activities at the surgery and to give their appreciation to the surgery staff and those working within the PCN. They would recommend other PPGs to try the service and agreed to have another virtual meeting on 7 September.

Chris Gasper

PPG Chair