

SSPCN NEWSLETTER

The Official Newsletter of Stevenage South Primary Care Network



WELCOME!

by Chief Operations Officer, Matt Charles

Welcome everyone to the latest edition of the Stevenage South PCN Newsletter. Firstly, thank you to everyone who has fed back on previous editions, we are keen to hear from patients and staff alike in order for us to ensure the Newsletter is relevant, helpful and accessible to all.

As we move from summer to autumn we would like to wish everyone well and also a safe transition as we move into the colder winter months.

Within this issue we have some excellent pieces regarding our current staff and services, as well as information and feedback on the latest vaccination programme. We also delve into our recent work with the Patient Participation Groups from your respective practices, which have provided us with some excellent insights and helped to shape our approach and ensure the patient voice is at the heart of everything we do.

I would also like to highlight that our PCN has recently been shortlisted for two prestigious local awards in relation to our work in training and development and patient engagement. We hope to share an exciting update regarding these in our next edition. For the time being, stay well, be kind and please enjoy the latest edition of our newsletter

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THE PPG - PCN RELATIONSHIP



by Graham Fothergill

From the outset of the formation of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in 2019, as mandated by the NHS long-term plan, there was no formal provision for the recognition of a role for, or interaction with, Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). From those early days, the PPGs of the four Practices in the Stevenage South PCN felt that, as a combined force, there needed to be a conduit for, at its most basic, the exchange of information between the two groups.

To this end, a joint working group was formed consisting of Lorraine Cator (King George and Manor House PPG), Ron Walker (Bedwell and Roebuck PPG), Derek Albone (Shephall PPG) and Rosie Chisnell and myself (Knebworth and Marymead PPG). Following discussions with Matt Charles, the PCN Business Manager at that time, we agreed to see what could be achieved by our group having regular meetings with him, and thus using Matt as the channel of communication between the joint PPGs and the PCN.

To date, we have had six meetings, with meaningful discussions and dialogue. These have enabled our group of PPG representatives to know and understand the directions that the PCN is taking and, where appropriate, report these back to our Practice PPGs.

Moreover, as a bonus, we had the support - both financial and practical - of the PCN for the recent meeting on diabetes that was organised by our joint PPG working group. The meeting attracted an attendance of almost forty with representation from all four Practices, together with several Practice staff (clinical and administrative). This was seen as a successful venture and will, hopefully, herald more of a similar nature in the future.

The PPGs now have a conduit to the PCN that we hope will continue and will strengthen the relationship between our patients and our Primary Care Network.

The next PPG/PCN collaborative event will take place on Thursday, 12th October, at Stevenage Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, SG1 1XN, 19:00 - 21:00. The event will delve into the important topic of Bowel Screening. We hope to see you there.



DAN TAYLOR - OPERATIONS LEAD

by Graham Fothergill

Dan, a Stevenage native, attended a local school where his favourite subjects were Music and Art

In 2010, Dan embarked on his professional journey at Cineworld Cinemas as a team member. However, he quickly discovered his passion for enhancing the experiences of others and advancing his career. Over the course of five years, he climbed the ranks, eventually becoming a Cinema Manager specializing in HR and Payroll. In this role, he effectively managed a team of up to 90 staff members.

After a decade in the cinema industry, Dan felt it was time for a change and sought a new opportunity in the healthcare sector. In 2021, he joined Stevenage South PCN as a Care Coordinator. One of his initial responsibilities involved overseeing the highly successful management of the COVID-19 vaccination program. This not only received positive feedback from patients and staff but also alleviated a significant burden on local surgeries

Following these accomplishments, Dan has recently taken on the role of Operations Lead. In this capacity, he manages a team of other PCN Care Coordinators and spearheads the implementation of ideas, projects and new ways of working.

In his leisure time, Dan finds great enjoyment in playing basketball, having previously competed at a high level until his back advised him otherwise. He now focuses on other activities that fuel his passion for self-expression.

As some of you may have already noticed, Dan has a keen interest in tattoos. While he contemplated the potential regrets that may arise in the future, he believes in addressing those concerns when the time comes.

“Working for Stevenage South PCN has proven to be an exceptional journey so far. The four core practices are staffed with remarkable individuals, and the invaluable support from our PPGs has played a crucial role in our achievements”

Dan Taylor

Another creative outlet for Dan is his love for making music. Through self-taught skills, he has successfully recorded songs in the comfort of his own home and even managed to have one of these distributed on popular music platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music.

Looking ahead, Dan aspires to further develop in his role as an Operations Lead. His goal is to implement impactful projects and strategies that benefit all practices within the PCN. Additionally, he intends to continue nurturing his personal interests and hobbies alongside his professional growth

AUTUMN COVID-19 BOOSTER: PROTECTING AGAINST THE NEW BA.2.86 VARIANT

by Dan Taylor

As autumn arrives, our commitment to battling COVID-19 grows stronger. The appearance of the Ba.2.86 variant serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing importance of vigilance. To fortify our defences, we are delighted to introduce the Autumn COVID-19 Booster campaign. This endeavour is designed to offer added protection to those most in need and reinforce our community's immunity.

Who's Eligible?

To ensure that the most vulnerable among us are safeguarded against COVID-19 and its variants, the booster is available to the following groups:

- **Individuals over 65 years old:** Age remains a significant factor in the severity of COVID-19, making older adults a priority.
- **Residents in care homes:** Protecting the elderly in care homes is a top priority to prevent outbreaks and severe cases.
- **People 18 and older in clinical risk groups:** If you have any of the following conditions, you are eligible.
 - Respiratory disease
 - Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)
 - Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD)
 - Chronic Liver Disease
 - Chronic Neurological Disease
 - Diabetes (Type 1, Type 2, or gestational)
 - Addison's Disease
 - Immunosuppression
- **Frontline health and social care workers:** Those working tirelessly to care for the sick and vulnerable are offered protection to keep our healthcare system strong.
- **Household contacts of immunosuppressed patients:** We understand the importance of protecting those in close contact with immunosuppressed individuals.
- **Carers:**

Booster vaccination clinics are being held at **Roebuck Surgery** every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoon. Eligible patients will receive invitations via text or phone. However, if you meet the criteria outlined above, you are welcome to proactively contact your own surgery to book an appointment at one of our clinics. Please note that these clinics are **exclusively** for COVID-19 boosters; flu vaccinations are not administered at these clinics. For flu vaccinations, kindly schedule an appointment with your regular healthcare provider.

The Autumn COVID-19 Booster campaign represents another crucial step in our collective effort to protect our community against the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and its variants. Your health and safety are our top priorities, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and let's continue to look out for one another this autumn.

For the latest updates and information, please visit <https://hertsandwestessexics.org.uk/covid-19>.

PATIENT SURVEY FEEDBACK

by Lauren McNicholas & Dan Taylor.

As many are likely aware, Stevenage South Primary Care Network offers a wide range of accessible services to our patients. Our primary goal is to deliver a patient-centered experience by offering additional appointments with both clinical and non-clinical staff, thereby reducing waiting times and striving for the best possible patient outcomes. Below, you'll find some valuable feedback from our patients regarding our services.

“The whole process was good. I’m not very good with technology but the support from the service was great and helped me”

Acute Same Day Hub

“The way the appointment was carried out was very patient friendly and very informative and extremely helpful in understanding what could be done for me for future care.”

Clinical Pharmacist

“Although no appointments were available at my surgery, I was offered this same-day appointment when the receptionist was aware that I had an urgent need”

Acute Same Day Hub

“The lady who saw me was very helpful and understanding of my issue. Offered plenty of advice and added me to a waiting list for further treatment”

Social Prescriber

“Very helpful advice, I think if I’d have seen a GP I would probably have been referred anyway, this was a much quicker resolution”

FCP (Physio)

“This is a fantastic service and I was impressed that I was able to make an appointment so quickly”

Acute Same Day Hub

“Very friendly and professional appointment. The pharmacist asked lots of questions to understand my health, made some good suggestions and made me feel very valued.”

Clinical Pharmacist

“I thought the lady who saw me (Lisa Mardle) was really good and I left feeling a lot better. She suggested the course of action she thought I needed and gave me links to four websites to look at before I saw her for my second appointment. I did this and together we decided that I should fill in the self-referral form for the Wellbeing Team. I have since done this and I am waiting for a response. So all in all it has been a very positive experience and I am pleased that I made contact with Lisa.”

Social Prescriber

“Helped me to be seen quickly on the same day, and deal with an infection that could have worsened my symptoms if I hadn’t been seen. It prevented me from being seen by out-of-hours GP / walk-in at QEII”

Acute Same Day Hub