



December 2020

**Report by Dr Eloise Scahill, PPL's 'Link' Doctor**

This year has been unprecedented for the whole country and the health service has been put under enormous pressures. Our role in primary care has been integral in planning, risk stratifying, providing continuity of care and looking after our patients and staff in the best and safest way possible.

From this pandemic we have utilised new, innovative ways to communicate and consult with our patient population which has increased our scope and ability to reach people beyond the model previously used. Patients have been able to have telephone, video and e-consults, send pictures alongside face-to-face appointments when clinically necessary and home visits. We have jointly set up and have worked alongside a 'hot hub' providing assessment and care to those patients with Covid 19. Our staff rapidly adapted our way of working to ensure we could provide our service to the standard PMG strives to achieve.

Both secondary and primary care were instructed in July, by the Health Secretary, to be doing virtual consultations as much as possible, and all patients are offered face-to-face follow up if this is needed to help diagnose and manage their problems.

To help with our growing community and to further develop our team we have recruited two new salaried GPs during this time and our GP registrar also has become a salaried GP, (*further detail below*) alongside increasing our reception and admin staff. Our nursing team have provided excellent continuity of care doing a range of face-to-face appointments, home visiting blood tests for shielded patients and telephone consultations for chronic disease reviews such as asthma, diabetes, copd (*chronic obstructive pulmonary disease*). They have also delivered an exceptionally well organised flu clinic this year.

From April to August 2020

- We have provided 22,800 appointments for our patients
- Our receptionists have taken 81,000 telephone calls
- The clinicians have reviewed 8,500 test results
- The staff have processed 11,000 documents

This prompted us to compare appointment capacity with last year as we are keen to see whether appointment availability has declined now that we are in the restoration phase.

For the period:

July – September 2019 we offered 13,700 appointments of which 11,900 were booked

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So we can conclude that we are currently operating a normal service for our patients.

We also do a weekly ward round of our nursing homes with me, as GP nursing home lead, virtually for triage and visiting if necessary. This is working well and we will continue to develop this service having established a supportive relationship with our care home staff.

We have worked with our neighbouring Practices supporting one another and learning from one another.

Given the changes we had to make as a primary care population as a whole, we have appreciated the support and working with our patients to help their needs. We welcome constructive feedback and appreciate the positive comments we have received alongside suggestions to help us continue the PMG service in the best way we can during this time.

As we are in this second wave - and with a hard winter to come - we feel more familiar with our means to help and care for our patients, and together to improve on what we feel will be a practice for the future.

Regarding the Covid vaccine programme, this is currently in discussion with NHS England and our local CCG and Practices, and we will be working together at local and national levels to deliver this programme. Once more information and plans have been made then we will update our PPL and patient population accordingly.

### **Update from Liz Eades, Practice Manager**

#### **Doctors**

Following Dr Murphy's resignation in October last year it was a while before we were able to recruit a replacement. Despite the pandemic we managed to employ 2 GPs to replace Dr Murphy's 4 days – Dr Rebecca Ogilvie started at the end of April and works Wednesdays and Fridays and Dr Isabelle Sheridan started in May and is available on Mondays and Tuesdays.

As you are aware, Dr Fooks retired in March and Dr Eloise Scahill was appointed as a partner which created a further salaried GP vacancy for 3 days. Dr Joy Lumsdaine who was in her final year of training under Dr Ray's supervision was very keen to stay once she qualified. This was a great opportunity for both PMG and Joy and she was appointed to replace Dr Scahill's sessions. Dr Lumsdaine works Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

In summary, we have 5 GP partners:

Guy Mitchell, Ray Ghazanfar, Nikki Tooley, Carole Campbell and Eloise Scahill

Plus 6 salaried GPs:

Katie Armstrong, Lucy Oxley, Leigh-Anne Bascombe, Rebecca Ogilvie, Isabelle Sheridan and Joy Lumsdaine.

#### **Appointments**

Since June we have been operating a revised appointment system and introduced a duty support doctor who has 4 pre-booked appointments and then assists the duty doctor with phone calls and visits. This means there are, in effect, 2 duty doctors each morning apart from Monday when there are 2 duty doctors plus duty support.

During the afternoon a GP is allocated some time to help the afternoon duty doctor. There are 6 face-to-face appointments for each non-duty doctor and some duty doctor appointments which can be either for face-to-face appointments or telephone consultations. We also have 12 e-consult slots available each day.

Most of our GPs, Anna (*our lead nurse partner*) and I have online access and can work from home if self-isolating or shielding.

As many of you will know, since April we have been using one of the ground floor offices as our main reception. This has kept our staff safe as no patients are allowed upstairs without being temperature screened and asked a series of questions. We have employed an additional receptionist so that the first floor reception can be re-opened to assist patients and clinicians. Any patient failing the screening is either asked to leave and await a phone call from a GP or wait separately for a doctor to decide the best course of action. Staff are also available to hand out letters or specimen pots as well as dealing with new registrations, booking appointments and general enquiries.

#### **Uniform**

As a result of the pandemic we have introduced the wearing of scrubs for all clinicians. The advantage of these is that they are worn at work only which is important for infection control. The clinicians have navy sets embroidered with the PMG logo, while the reception team have green scrub tops also with the logo which are equally smart and comfortable.

**Macmillan Cake Sale** - we raised £331 for this great charity from our cake sale in September.