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From: Barnabas PPG <barnabas.ppg@gmail.com>
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To: Barnabas PPG
Subject: Barnabas PPG Monthly Bulletin, September
Attachments: PPG_Minutes_20200917.pdf; PPG_Minutes_2020_VideoConf_Notes.pdf; NWL_Proposed_CCG_Merger.pdf; C0638-nhs-vc-patient-quick-guide-a4.pdf; C0638-nhs-vc-nhs-staff-quick-guide-a4.pdf; PPG Newsletter-August 20.pdf; NAPP_202009.pdf

To All Barnabas PPG Members ...
[Printed copies to those PPG members without email]

[If you can't read any of the attached documents, or want printed copies of anything mentioned, please contact me and I'll try to send you a copy.]

Welcome to the September bulletin for Barnabas PPG members.

*** There are some changes to PPG meetings (see below). Please make a note of the changes in your diary! ***

Coronavirus

There's not a lot of real news on Covid-19 this month, apart from the omnishambles being perpetrated by our government. So just a couple of items ...

NHS Covid-19 App

The new NHS Covid-19 Test & Trace app has been released and everyone is being encouraged to install if they have a smartphone. There's more information at <https://www.covid19.nhs.uk/> or download it from your App Store. However there are serious concerns being raised about the app, which were highlighted to me by a senior A&E consultant of my acquaintance. See this *Guardian* article <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/26/nhs-covid-app-does-not-log-test-results-from-hospitals-or-phe-labs-in-england> or (if you have a pass through their paywall) this from the *Times* <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/flaw-stops-millions-putting-test-results-into-covid-app-6002xkxj>. It isn't just access to test results which is a problem.

Vaccines are not Magic Bullets

Another recent article in the *Guardian* quite rightly points out that no vaccine will work by magic and return us to normal overnight. Even when we do get a vaccine for Covid-19 we'll still be playing the long game to win a return to anything resembling normality. Full article at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/06/lets-get-real-no-vaccine-will-work-as-if-by-magic-returning-us-to-normal>

PPG News

PPG Meeting, 17 September

We a small number of us held a very successful formal PPG meeting via Zoom on 17 September. During this we agreed that we would reinstate full PPG meetings every two months using Zoom – see below for more details. There were also quite a few updates as this was the first meeting since February. The meeting minutes are attached.

Next PPG Meeting, Wednesday 18 November

The next full PPG meeting will be held using Zoom on Wednesday 18 November, 1330-1430 hrs. I will be sending everyone a meeting notice containing the details and a link for the meeting. The agenda will follow nearer the time.

It is worth a few notes to reassure everyone that using Zoom does not automatically exclude anyone ...

Where do I download the latest version of Zoom?

You can download the latest version of Zoom from <https://zoom.us/download>. But you do not need to do so: you can join via your web browser by just following the link in the meeting notice and electing not to download the app.

Do I need a Zoom account to use Zoom?

No. A Zoom account is not required if you are joining Zoom Meetings only as a participant. If someone invites you to their meeting, you can join as a participant without creating an account.

Do I have to have a webcam to join on Zoom?

No. You are not required to have a webcam to join a Zoom Meeting. However without one you will not be able to transmit video of yourself – but (as long as you have a microphone – fairly standard in most laptops, at least) you will still be able to listen and speak during the meeting, and view the webcam video from other participants.

Can I join a Zoom meeting without a computer?

Yes. There is an option to join a Zoom meeting using only your phone (mobile or landline), although naturally this will give you voice only access (you can listen and speak). Using this option does mean you will pay call charges. The dial-in numbers will be in the meeting notice.

PPG Regular Contact Calls

We have continued our roughly 2-weekly contact calls using Skype; the notes from all these meetings are attached.

Our next call is this week, on **Wednesday 30 September, 1300-1330 hrs.**

Dates for these calls up to Christmas are below. **These calls will remain on Skype**, at least for the time being. Note also that the call previously scheduled for Thursday 19 November is cancelled in favour of the full PPG Meeting (above).

- Wednesday 30 September, 1300-1330
- Tuesday 13 October, 1800-1830
- Monday 26 October, 1000-1030
- Friday 6 November, 1400-1430
- Wednesday 2 December, 1300-1330
- Tuesday 15 December, 1600-1630

Join at : <https://join.skype.com/gnjlg1FQs7GA>

Local Healthcare News

Hillingdon Hospital

The Hillingdon Trust has been told by CQC that it must make immediate improvements to infection control in order to "protect the safety of patients and staff". BBC News report at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-54078809>.

North West London CCGs Merger Update

I have been copied on an update (attached) about the proposed merger of the eight NW London CCGs into a single CCG from April 2021. We were consulted on this a couple of months back, and all the GPs in NW London area were asked to vote on the proposals. Although there is a majority in favour of the merger, it is not across all the boroughs. In consequence there is more work to be done before the merger can proceed. Watch this space.

General NHS News

Video Consultation Guides

Consultations by video are being used more and more by both GPs and hospital consultants. The NHS have produced two, simple, guides on how to have a video consultation: one for patients and one for clinicians. I'm attaching both guides, on the basis that it may be helpful for everyone to understand that the clinicians approach is actually no different to a normal face-to-face consultation.

Ear Wax Syringing

The government have confirmed that people suffering from a build-up of ear wax are not entitled to have their ears syringed on the NHS in England; it is no longer one of the core services GPs are obliged to provide. This treatment has been frowned upon for some while as being potentially dangerous. GPs may still treat ear wax using electronic irrigators or suction devices, or they should refer patients to local audiology services.

(My personal experience is that it can take weeks to get an audiology appointment for ear wax removal, during which time one is in discomfort and has little hearing – which is hardly acceptable; simple treatment by a practice nurse is needed within a few days if dignity and quality of life are to be maintained.)

There's a BBC report at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54296737>.

Newsletters

Finally my round up of useful newsletters I've received:

- Ealing CCG Newsletter for PPGs (dated the end of August) is attached.
 - NAPP bulletin for September is also attached – this contains links to many useful news items.
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That's all for now. More next month. Meanwhile, stay safe!

And remember, in the words of our government: HANDS : FACE : SPACE !