

Open Meeting & AGM 17 May 2025, Medical Centre Minutes

Text in underscored italic is post meeting information

Present: Jean Alden, Sennen Chiu, Lyn Duffus, Matt Edwards (Practice Manager), Rhiann Ingram, Keith Marshall (Chairman), Bharti Sadhu, Ewa Siwec

Apologies: Andy Dawson, Purminder Gandhu, Joe Hamilton, Sheila Hayles, Noreen Marshall, Harsha Mortemore, Phiroze Munshi

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1. The minutes of the Open Meeting on 15 March 2025 were agreed and signed.

2. Chairman's Annual Report

1. Keith presented highlights of his annual report (previously circulated):
 - Easing of restrictions over the year
 - Membership is 83
 - 6 Open Meetings; half in person; 14 patients attended at least one meeting
 - No clinician attending Open Meetings is disappointing
 - Continued highlighting of patient issues & desires to the Practice
 - Able to restart "Meet the Patients", Book Exchange
2. Looking forward Keith mentioned:
 - The need to grow our active membership
 - Open Meetings to continue
 - Now working on the 2025-27 Plan
 - Need to remain a critical friend to the Practice and push the boundaries to improve healthcare for all
3. Keith expressed the group's thanks to all Practice staff for the care during the year – despite all the patient grumbles we do still have one of the best teams in the area.
4. Sennen proposed a vote of thanks to Keith & Noreen, which was unanimously endorsed.

3. Election of Officers

a. *Chairman*

Keith was again asked to continue as Chairman.

Some months ago Keith was considering not continuing as he felt that the Practice was not moving forward and the group were not able to unlock this.

However as can be seen from this, and other recent meetings, change is beginning to happen. Keith therefore agreed to continue as Chairman.

b. *Vice-Chair*

In her absence, Harsha was again asked to continue in this role if she is willing to do so. **Action: Keith**

4. 2025-2027 Plan

1. The group was given another opportunity to comment on the (now current) plan.
2. Keith emphasised that there are a number of “wish list” items in the plan, which although likely not to be achieved should be kept visible in case the opportunity arises.

Consequently there is no expectation that we will achieve everything in the plan, especially as priorities and requirements change.

3. There were no further comments.

5. Members Feedback

1. Bharti mentioned that on a recent occasion she had been unable to get an appointment and been advised by reception to call NHS 111. On doing so, NHS 111 booked her an appointment for later that day.

Matt replied that NHS 111 have six reserved appointments every day, and these are always used.

2. There was discussion about condition-orientated interest groups.

While this is a good idea, Keith emphasised that they are viable only if there is a willing organiser and enough participants.

Ewa commented that her experience of such groups even at a borough level is that attendance is always poor.

Groups need to be patient lead, with clinician attendance optional.

It was suggested that the Practice has sufficient numbers that a group for diabetic patients might work. It could be held on a Saturday morning alongside our Open Meetings. Matt will discuss this with Henny. **Action: Matt**

Jean suggested there might be interest in a group for osteoporosis.

Matt also commented that our mental health worker (see below) already runs a local carers group.

3. A concern was expressed that the text message response from eConsult does not indicate when the patient may get a call-back.

Matt replied that this is one of the known concerns with eConsult, and that from June all Practices are required to respond to requests within 24 hours with the expected progress.

4. Mention was made of the Practice's desire to push the use of Pharmacy First.

Ewa and Keith also mentioned the new service for NHS eye care (not sight test) appointments with local optometrists – to which patients can be referred or self-refer.

Keith has a leaflet on this and will put copies in the waiting area. **Action: Keith**

5. Sennen asked about doctors security checking the patient when phoning them. He is concerned that often there is no security check and it is assumed that the person on the phone is the right patient.

Matt agreed that there should be simple checks (eg. date of birth) and will remind the GPs of this. **Action: Matt**

6. Lyn asked if the Practice would provide any guidance on Assisted Dying.

Matt suggested that once this becomes law there will be a lot of guidance and information coming down from NHS England.

7. Patients can use PlusBus for travel to the medical centre, but can they also use PlusBus to go to the pharmacy? Answer, no.

6. Practice Updates

Staff Updates

- a. The Practice now has two new receptionists, both of whom were recommended by another Practice Manager who had interviewed them.
It is hoped to appoint a further receptionist.
- b. We will soon have a mental health professional visiting the Practice for face-to-face consultations on Monday afternoons, and telephone consultations on Wednesday mornings.
As may be expected this is causing a rearrangement of consulting room use, which highlights just how short of space the Practice is, and why we can't offer additional services or GPs.
- c. The Practice is undertaking succession planning for Dr Kooner's retirement (although we've not been told when this may happen).
- d. Dr Bhatoa will be on 6 months sabbatical from September. There will be cover.
- e. Dr Talwar and Dr Hussain are now accredited trainers, so from next year the Practice will have some GP Registrars.
(GP Registrars have to do 7 sessions a week, putting further pressure on space.)

Appointments System etc.

- a. The Practice are looking at replacing eConsult with SystmConnect, although this may not be centrally funded.
Practices elsewhere using the system say it is a much better system for both practice and patients, and does free up the phones. It is also highly tailorable by the Practice. The Practice recently had a team meeting to discuss developments such as this, and they are now looking to have an in depth demo of SystmConnect.
If implemented members will be asked to act as guinea pigs to test the system.
- b. Everyone wants to be able to offer more face-to-face appointments. However this is being constrained, at least in part, by the level of demand.

Phone System etc.

- a. The phone announcements have been rewritten to be very short.
Matt has shared them with Keith, and has asked Noreen to record them.

Real Estate

- a. Despite the government's recent announcement of money to improve 1000 (of over 6200) practices, it is as yet not known who will benefit.
Matt thought it likely the beneficiaries will be those practices in houses, and that (yet again) Barnabas would lose out.

Website

- a. Keith and Matt met earlier in the week to discuss possible redesign of the Practice website.
Matt is trying to progress this and it remains to be seen what is possible and permitted. **Action: Matt**

Barnabas Bulletin

- a. The decision has been made to cease *Barnabas Bulletin*.
This because it is almost impossible to distribute it effectively, given that all practices have had their budget for text messages halved in the last year; and texting is the only good way to reach a majority of patients.
- b. The intention is to replace *Barnabas Bulletin* with a single page “newsletter” highlighting the current hot topic (eg. flu jabs, holiday vaccinations) at appropriate points in the year. This would be available in the waiting area and on the websites.

Other

- a. The Practice is looking at putting a DIY blood pressure machine in the waiting area.
- b. The Practice has around 8800 actual patients, but because of the highly complex, very old, Carr-Hill formula used by NHS England they are funded for just 8600.

7. Other Group Updates

1. Unfortunately Keith has had to cancel a couple of recent “Meet the Patients” sessions due to illness.
2. Ewa’s idea of a poster/banner announcing “Meet the Patients” is with Keith.
Thanks to Ewa for input on possible wording.

8. Any Other Business

1. There was no further business.
2. **Next Open Meeting:** Saturday 19 July; 10:30; at the Medical Centre.

Keith C Marshall, Chairman
19 May 2025

Scheduled 2025 Meeting Dates

- Saturday 19 July; 10:30; Practice
- Saturday 20 September; 10:30; Practice
- Wednesday 19 November; 13:00; Zoom

**Dates/times may change, particularly depending on the availability of the Practice.
Please watch the Members’ Monthly Update for confirmation of dates and venues.**

Link for all Zoom Meetings

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7279594414?pwd=VmYwODdoWGg2eTFvTlVjVlZyRmhSQT09>
