

Open Meeting, 12 September 2026, at Medical Centre Minutes

Text in underscored italic is post meeting information

Present: Jean Alden, Sennen Chiu, Matt Edwards (Practice Manager), Keith Marshall (Chairman), Noreen Marshall, Ewa Siwiec

Apologies: Dr Bhatoa, Rhian Ingram, Harsha Mortemore (Vice-Chair), Bharti Sadhu, Mark Turkish

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1. The minutes of the Open Meeting on 18 July 2026 were agreed and signed.

2. Accurx Update

1. Matt was asked to update the meeting on the switchover from eConsult to Accurx for requesting appointments etc. The following points were made:
 - a. Overall there has been a positive response from patients, although there are the inevitable grumblers.
 - b. Reception are now happy using the system and are assisting patients where necessary.
 - c. All appointment requests now go directly to the doctors' triage queue and are not seen by reception. This improves the pick up rate for those needing an urgent appointment.
 - d. The phone lines are now much less jammed; calls are often getting straight through. Keith & Noreen, having been in the waiting area most of a recent Wednesday afternoon, confirmed that they didn't hear a phone ring at all.
 - e. Keith also observed that the waiting area was very quiet in the early afternoon, but got busy from around 15:30; this was when people started arriving for face-to-face appointments the doctors had scheduled earlier in the day.
 - f. However the Monday morning triage queue is frequently 60 or 70 requests; this is more than a single doctor can handle and there is a need for an additional GP just for Monday morning triage.
 - g. Another downside is that reception are needing to do many more admin tasks.
 - h. Once there is two months data this will be analysed with a view to refining the system. This may include things like implementing bespoke messages on the Accurx screens.
 - i. Thought is also being given to scheduling double appointments when needed. Matt suggested these could be scheduled manually by the relevant GP, as the system currently cannot handle this.
 - j. Accurx is accessible from the front page of the Practice website, and should now be available via the NHS App.
 - k. Overall the switchover has been a positive experience all round.

3. Focused Discussion: Improving Patient Self-Care

1. The group was asked to think about ways in which patients could be encouraged to self-care, and what we could do to help drive this.
2. The following ideas were discussed:
 - a. The need for government, specifically the NHS, to advertise self-care options more to educate patients.
Radio is seen as the best advertising medium, rather than TV.
This does need a concerted push from government.
 - b. Need for increased messaging (via Accurx?) of the Pharmacy First service.
Also for doctors to reject Accurx submissions, and point the patient to their pharmacy.
 - c. More messaging on the Accurx service to encourage patients not to submit unnecessary requests when they could self-care.
 - d. Before Covid there were posters advertising self-care.
These have not been reinstated, and should be.
 - e. The overriding impression was that people will not take personal responsibility; they're needy and entitled.
 - f. Keith has created a flowchart to help patients decide what service they need.
However Matt was doubtful that we would be allowed to put this out as a handout, but will ask. **Action: Matt**
3. The overall feeling was that there is not a lot we can actually do.

4. Members Feedback & Issues

1. Keith reported that the rate of Covid infections is on the rise again, especially in London.
It appears that we are getting an autumn wave although it is not yet clear to the experts how big the wave will be and when it will peak.
However we would be wise to start taking care again.
2. Sennen pointed out that simple surgical masks are designed to prevent the wearer from infecting others, and offer little protection to the wearer – although they are better than nothing.
To get good protection in both directions a well-fitting N95 mask is required.
Noreen asked if the practice could go back to making disposable masks available. Matt to investigate. **Action: Matt**
3. Sennen also observed that if you are in the phone queue when they switch over at 18:00, you get cut off.
Matt is awaiting a visit from the engineers to implement the callback system and update the system.
4. Ewa was concerned that doctors are not taking into account that parents of school age children need appointments outside school run hours.
5. Keith commented that he had been reprimanded for putting three (probably related) concerns on one Accurx – and saying that they were together because he sees them as related.
Sennen agreed that this should not warrant a reprimand.
Matt will follow up. **Action: Matt**
6. Concern was expressed that GPs are not reading and actioning specialists' letters requiring prescriptions, so this doesn't happen unless the patient realises and follows up.
The same is true of test results such as echo cardiograms where the patient receives no explanation or follow up.
7. Ewa pointed out that PIP disability payments require a detailed and recorded doctors face-to-face appointment every six months to ensure there is no loss of benefit.
This seems to be being missed.

5. Other Practice Updates

1. *Staff Updates*
 - a. The Practice hopes to have two additional receptionists in place in early October.
2. *Real Estate & Waiting Area*
 - a. The Practice has applied for funding and is awaiting a response.
 - b. The patient toilet is currently out of order with a leak. Dr Kooner is on the case.
 - c. It was asked if we could crowdfund for Practice improvements.
Answer, no – the Practice cannot legally accept gifts of money, but equipment is OK.
Crowdfunding the amount needed for refurbishments would likely take years.
3. *Check-in Screen*
 - a. Matt is still chasing a supplier for a new screen.
4. *Covid, Flu etc.*
 - a. Flu vaccines are in the process of delivery.
Invitations have been sent out to the pregnant, and the immunocompromised.
5. *ICB Merger*
 - a. The ICB still seems to be organising itself and Matt still has no contact route.
 - b. Overall funding for IT has been slashed.
This is rumoured to mean that Practices now have to fund their own laptops, and PCs.

Other Group Updates

1. *Annual Member Validation.*
 - a. This has now been completed
 - b. There were at least 12 Facebook members who cannot be identified. Keith to follow up.
Action: Keith
2. *Volunteers*
 - a. More volunteers are still welcome to help with the “Meet the Patients” sessions and the Book Exchange.
3. *Ideas from March Meeting*
 - a. Matt is trying to fix a date for a meeting with Dr Bhatoa.
October now looks likely. **Action: Matt**

6. Matters Arising & AOB

1. There was again positive appreciation of the friendliness and helpfulness of our Clinical Pharmacist, Shazmeen.
2. Ealing Hospital A&E is getting £1.65m refurbishment, to improve patient flow and safety. This is scheduled for 14 weeks and to complete thus autumn.
3. *Provisional dates for 2027 meetings will be available no later than the next meeting.* **Action: Keith**

Next Open Meeting: Wednesday 18 November; 13:00; on Zoom.

Keith C Marshall, Chairman
14 September 2026

Scheduled 2026 Meeting Dates

- Wednesday 18 November; 13:00; on Zoom

Link for All Zoom Meetings

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