

South Reading Patient Voice

Annual Report

December 2016 - November 2017

1 Officers

Chair: James Penn
Joint Vice Chairs: John Missenden, Phil Lowry
Information Officer: Tom Lake
Treasurer: Shaheen Kausar
Membership Officer: David Bales

2 Overview

We started with a Christmas social at RISC on 14th December at which no-one correctly solved the puzzle of assembling cut-up phrases into the first few lines of John Clare's poem, "I am" but we seemed to enjoy ourselves.

We headed into the year knowing that our expenses would not be paid by South Reading CCG which had put restrictions on paying for room hire and printing, in its straitened financial condition, but, as the accompanying Treasurer's report shows, we have been able to continue as we wished.

The CCG had offered the use of the community meeting room at NHS, 57-59, Bath Road which we tried out in January but neither timing nor location really suited us and we have returned gratefully to Reading Community Learning Centre.

This has been a period in which the NHS has seen stiff financial constraints and rapid change, with the BOB (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West) STP (Sustainability and Transformation Partnership) area starting up and the Berkshire West Vanguard ACS (Accountable Care System) approved by NHS England and running in shadow form. We have also seen the four CCGs of Berkshire West agree to merge, now with NHS England approval, although we do not know what will be retained in the proposed locality structure, who will be on the new CCG governing body and how we could interact with it.

We have seen a good deal of change in GP practices, with Melrose practice taking over the patients of London Road practice, which closed, Milman Road Health Centre becoming a single practice, University Health Centre amalgamating with Whitley Villa and firming plans to build a health centre for South Reading practice, which it is also due to join with. We have seen the Tilehurst branch of Dr Kumar's former Milman Road practice close as well as the the announcement of the proposed closure of the Whitley Wood branch of the Overdown Road practice. The practices not associated with the University Health Centre have formed an alliance with three clusters which will be set up as a company limited by shares, and which forms the basis for organising extended hours and services.

Building works at Milman Road, Melrose and Longbarn Lane practices have suggest that GP facilities are being improved. With a shortage of GPs we are seeing more nurses, health care assistants, pharmacists and potentially physicians associates in GP practices, and hope that they will integrate well into patient care. I think we are all grateful not to have experienced the difficulties seen at the One Medical Group run practices in North and West Reading CCG area.

3 PPGs

There are now 16 GP practices in the South Reading CCG area, and 10 of those appear to have face-to-face patient participation groups. Of those we have regular representation from 5 of those practices plus several others.

We have been very encouraged by the good start to the new patient participation group at the Milman Road Health Centre (Dr Mittal and Partners) and correspondingly disappointed that the patient participation group at Chatham Street, whose emergence we had been following closely, has not been established up to this point.

The absence of face-to-face groups from 6 practices is disappointing as is the absence of regular representation from 5 practices with such groups.

4 Presentations and Discussions

On 25th January 2017 we had a discussion on the outlook for 2017 and the STP.

On 22nd February 2017 we heard a very good talk about Latent TB and the work being done on detecting and curing cases in South Reading from Linda Dobrasczyk. We also discussed the CCGs 2-year plan and the need for cost savings it implied.

On 29th March 2017 we heard about the Connected Care programme, which allows access

to GP records from hospital and other GP practices, enabling flexible arrangements for extended hours and extended GP services.

On 26 April 2017, we discussed the importance of Health and Social Care in the recently called election. We hoped to hold a hustings on Health and Social Care but it was not possible to arrange this.

On 31 May 2017 we heard from Nisha Sharma and Chris Cowap about the Macmillan Cancer Education in the Community programme and how this was to be developed in South Reading. We have maintained links with Nisha Sharma and undertaken joint activities since.

On 28 June 2017 Dr Thava, Karen Grannum and Amy Hutchings joined us. Dr Thava engaged the members present in a lively discussion about the challenges facing the CCG and the way in which the ACS could engage with patients and the public, throwing the latter down as a challenge to the group.

On 26 July 2017 we heard from Lynda McAdam and Katy Beckford about the range of community nursing services, which proved a revelation to most members.

On 27 September 2017 we heard from David Cooper, recent ex-Lead Governor of the Royal Berkshire Hospital about the governance of the hospital trust, and how the unwritten role of the governors was to regulate relationships within the hospital.

On 25th October 2017 we heard from committee members of the local charity Arthritis Matters about their experiences as sufferers from rheumatic disorders and advances in treatments that have helped them.

Lastly on 29th November we shall hear about the work of Age UK, Reading and hold our AGM.

5 Other Activities

We have encouraged members to attend the meetings in public of the CCG, the Reading Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Primary Care Commissioning Committee, and to follow the progress of the STP and ACS.

We manned stalls during the year at an RVA event in Broad Street and at the East Reading Festival, jointly with Nisha Sharma, Chris Cowap and the Macmillan Cancer Education in the Community project. We have also given voluntary support to the Homeless Health Needs Survey carried out by Reading Borough Council.

We put forward to the CCG queries about the STP and ACS, which appeared to encourage the CCG to add a session on these topics to its public meeting on 9 March 2017.

We followed closely the development of a PPG at Chatham Street surgery and discussed the difficulties with Lisa Briggs of the Federation staff. It was very disappointing to hear that the Chair and Secretary had resigned.

We discussed Dr Thava's challenge on engagement and formulated a proposal on a broad assembly of stakeholders, including the voluntary sector, which we forwarded to the CCG and ACS, but it seems not to have borne fruit, as the ACS appears to be going forward through the local Healthwatch bodies.

6 Proposals for the Coming Year

We propose objectives for the coming year 2018 as:

1. Establish relations with all face-to-face PPGs in the South Reading CCG area / locality.
2. Recruit members so that we have resource and commitment to establish additional activities.
3. Maintain a programme of meetings with more time for PPG news and members discussion.
4. Establish a regular activity of producing a report on the state of care in our area /locality, using GP practice FFT figures, the CCG's performance figures, and other information from public documents.
5. Engage in survey work about the effects of restrictions on elective surgery.
6. Engage in work with GP practices to help more patients use online facilities.
7. Establish a press/media visibility.
8. Raise funds of (£600 - £1200 / year) to purchase public liability insurance (£200) and cover printing (£300 - £500) and media (£100), plus public meetings (£0 - £400).