

BRIDGE HOUSE MEDICAL CENTRE AGM CHAIR REPORT 2024-2025

Committee: Hedli Tanner (Chair), Richard Dubber (Deputy Chair), Nina Haines (Secretary), Lynn Hill Chandika Cheekhory, Sheila Donovan, Pauline Edwards, Angela Martin.

A reminder that the gap between the last AGM we held in July 2020 and this one in March 2025, is due to Covid and its aftermath. It is a great pleasure to feel that we are at last resuming normal service.

Our thanks as always to committee members for their work on behalf of patients and the Practice during the year. Thanks also to Dr James Scrivens and Operations Manager Bridget Acock for attending our meetings and liaising between Patient Voice and the Practice. We are grateful too to our Disability Adviser, Elizabeth Dixon.

Practice Update

In addition to their other duties receptionists are trained to help patients with smart phones, showing them how to download NHS apps and helping them navigate the BHMC website. **The Practice** applied to the council for a drop-down kerb to help wheelchair users, to take down the small wall at the front and to set up bicycle racks. The application was turned down but is now on record for a future application/appeal.

Refurbishment has continued as and when the budget has allowed.

Extended Hours. The Practice elected to take responsibility for its own extended hours service which is offered until 20.00pm on weekdays with a weekend clinic almost every month.

Collaboration. Rother House and BHMC work together closely, pooling resources and sharing some auxiliary staff such as the physiotherapist.

New Appointment System. This is being implemented whereby patients no longer book appointments over the phone but fill out a concise questionnaire online. There will be telephone assistance for those unused to navigating the website.

Patient Voice Online

We have an informative Patient Voice section on the BHMC website. We took an executive decision to describe the section as Patient Voice, as well as the more formal Patient Participation Group, to encourage patients to feel that the committee exists to speak on their behalf and that their feedback is important.

Forum. We now have a forum for committee members and patients share their experiences on the website. We are grateful to committee members Lynn Hill and Angela Martin for their contributions. Lynn Hill has written a useful article about Carers, drawing from her personal experience, with valuable tips for accessing the support networks out there. Meanwhile Angela Martin has written about the excellence of the service offered by the practice and what it has meant to her and her husband.

A big thanks to Jodie Oxford, Bridge House IT Manager, for her skill in creating and updating the Patient Voice section on the website. She has also included information about Patient Voice on the practice TV which looks very good.

South Warwickshire Patient Engagement Group (SWPE)

As Chair I represent our PPG at bi-monthly meetings of the SWPE. Dr Cristina Ramos, who works at Rother House and is Chair of the South Warwickshire GP Federation, believes it is vital that patients are at the centre of decision making. She attends the meetings and ensures we are across the latest NHS incentives.

The SWPE piloted a survey, texted to patients for their feedback. This was so successful we piloted a similar survey to BHMC patients with positive results. In the main patients are very pleased with the service they receive from BHMC, commenting on the friendliness of staff and GPs. We were pleased to get some email addresses from people interested in Patient Voice.

Pharmacists: Arran Konkon, Integrated Care Board Pharmacy Lead for Coventry and Warwickshire, gave an excellent presentation and took on board our suggestions.

Patients want clearer advice about non availability of medicines, when they can expect them and what to do. Aaron has set up a local group to create a more consistent approach and patient notification across the system.

Pharmacists signed up to Pharmacy First are paid more to advise and prescribe. They can also offer vaccinations once they have gone through the approval process.

They are contractually obliged to take back unused medications although there is no financial advantage to them, and there is an NHS service to collect them. Unused medicines can be returned to the pharmacist if the patient is still on the premises and will not be discarded.

Pharmacy waste is a national problem, costing the county up to £300 million a year for prescribed medicines that patients may receive automatically and don't use. Dorset ICB (Integrated Care Board) created an 'Only Order What You Want' campaign and saved £450,000. Aaron is looking at introducing a similar incentive for Warwickshire.

Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme

This scheme was set up in 2019 to improve patient care and direct patients to the services they require. There are a variety of roles such as Social Prescriber, Care-Coordinator, Health Well-Being Coach, Physician Associate, Physiotherapist, and Active Monitoring Practitioner.

Bridget Acock explained how the system helps free up GP appointments so that they now 15 minutes long which means GPs can see patients with more complex conditions. Patients also have accepted that the GP is not always the right care professional to see, although that's an ongoing project.

Looking Ahead

There are many changes within the NHS as we all adapt to new technology. It is an exciting time, and we are fortunate for the efficiency and friendliness of the service we receive within our Practice. What Patient Voice is seeking to achieve is increased ways and means for patients to let us know what works for them, where they find problems and how they think they may be helped. We can feed this information to the Practice and make a positive contribution to the services we receive. We will continue to keep the news on our section of the website fresh, and Patients can view more detailed information about our Patient Group, including previous Minutes of our meetings.

<https://www.bhmc.co.uk/patientgroup>

**HEDLI TANNER
CHAIR PATIENT VOICE**