

## Ariel Healthcare PPG Minutes of meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**Date:** Thursday, 6th February 2025

**Location:** St. Mary's & Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:	Apologies:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dave Crozier (Chair) (DC)</li> <li>• Bernard Darvill (BD)</li> <li>• Peter Clifton (PC)</li> <li>• Richard Wayland (RW)</li> <li>• Roy Harkness (RH)</li> <li>• Jim James (JJ)</li> <li>• John Saunders (JS)</li> <li>• Karen Whitehead (KW)</li> <li>• Caroline McKenna (CM)</li> <li>• Paul Brice-Bullows (PBB)</li> <li>• Karen Henning (KH)</li> <li>• Sylvie McKewan (SM) (Joined Online)</li> <li>• Ben Overd (Ariel Healthcare)</li> <li>• Julee Moon (Ariel Healthcare)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jean Gill</li> <li>• Sara Wayland</li> <li>• Tracey Richards</li> <li>• Liz Rosser</li> </ul>

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

- DC welcomed attendees and introduced himself as Chair.
- All attendees introduced themselves.
- DC suggested the use of name tags in future meetings.

### 2. Approval of Previous Minutes (September 2024 Meeting)

- PC mentioned that a follow-up discussion with the pharmacy team would be beneficial. The pharmacy team is currently under immense pressure..
- Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

### 3. Matters Arising

- BD raised concerns about long-term sickness within the team.
- DC also expressed concerns regarding sickness levels.
- Due to bad weather, minutes were not recorded at the last meeting.
- It was suggested that the PPG reach out to local pharmacies to arrange a visit or discussion.

## **Ariel Healthcare PPG Minutes of meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

### **4. Appointment of New Secretary**

- KH stepped down as Secretary.
- RH Proposed PPB for the role and the members agreed
- DC and the group thanked KH for her hard work.
- SM joined the meeting online.

### **5. Practice Update & Winter Pressures**

- DC acknowledged that high demand is not unique to the practice, attributing it to winter viruses.
- DC welcomed SM to the group.
- Several members praised the callback feature, stating that it works very well.
- BD raised concerns regarding the KLINIK online form timing out.
- DC suggested simplifying the online consultation form to reduce repetition.

### **6. Practice Representation at PPG Meetings**

- PC suggested that a member of the practice team should be present at every meeting.
- PBB suggested attendance would be better for a shorter time towards the end of each meeting
- It was agreed that a clinical team member should attend for at least 15-30 minutes towards the end of meetings.
- The majority of the group supported this proposal.

### **7. Next PPG County Meeting**

- Scheduled for 8th April 2025.
- DC intends to attend.
- Julie Wilson to be invited to a practice PPG meeting.

### **8. Financial & Development Updates**

- Discussion about COVID vaccinations:
  - No funding or capacity available, so the practice will not be offering them.
  - COVID vaccinations available elsewhere.
- BD mentioned changes to blood tests:
  - Hospital blood tests to be conducted at the hospital rather than at the practice.
  - Some members found this change surprising.
- PC mentioned that some members received leaflets about a new online self-referral system.

## Ariel Healthcare PPG Minutes of meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025

### 9. Premises & Expansion Discussion

- **Summerfields Road & Fore Street Developments:**

- Concerns raised about the future of Fore Street.
- Discussions on potential funding from developers for new practice sites.
- Ben clarified that the practice was only made aware of a proposed £95k funding a few days ago.
- Julee mentioned that this funding will not cover the cost of a new building.
- Ben confirmed that once the practice moves to Summerfields Road, they will not return to Fore Street.
- Julee mentioned a possibility of expanding a clinical room at Summerfields Road, but this is not a long-term solution.
- Working across three sites is not feasible as it would further dilute practice resources.
- The practice assured members that any new building would remain within Chard and not be located on the outskirts.

- **Expansion of Summerfields Road:**

- Discussions about whether the practice could take over the entire building.
- Current agreements with the landlord must be finalised before confirming a move-in date.
- The site needs suitable heating, hot water, and internet before occupation—possibly by mid to late March (no guarantees).
- No possibility of expanding St. Mary's due to foundational limitations.

- **Services at Summerfields Road:**

- The site will mirror the services currently offered at Fore Street.
- Blood tests and GP appointments must be available at all sites due to the need for GP presence.
- St. Mary's will continue handling the majority of urgent on-the-day cases.

### 10. AOB

- **Concerns About Prescriptions:**

- BD mentioned a pharmacy statement claiming it takes two weeks for GPs to sign off medication.
- Ben and Julee clarified that the practice's turnaround time is 3-5 working days.
- DC overheard pharmacy staff discussing delays; Ben explained the internal process.
- Patients can request medication two weeks in advance.

## **Ariel Healthcare PPG Minutes of meeting 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

- BD noted difficulty seeing GP authorisation status online; Ben explained how to access updates.
- KH mentioned she had no issues recently when collecting antibiotics.
- **Appointment Timescales & DNAs:**
  - RH asked for clarification about appointment waiting times.
  - Ben confirmed that routine appointments are now scheduled within 13-14 days, a significant improvement from the previous 4-6 weeks.
  - Urgent cases continue to be seen on the same day.
  - DC asked if patients arriving late (e.g., 10 minutes late) would still be seen. Ben stated that this is at the clinician's discretion; otherwise, it is marked as a Did Not Attend (DNA).
  - Around 30-50 appointments per week are DNAs. The practice cannot charge for missed appointments.
  - 5% of DNAs are due to hospital admissions and are not counted in the statistics.
  - Ben encouraged patients to cancel appointments if they cannot attend.
- **Practice List & Capacity:**
  - JJ mentioned appointment availability remains a concern.
  - Ben confirmed that the practice cannot close its list as it is the only primary care provider in Chard.
  - Julee explained how much funding the practice receives per patient per year.
  - The practice advised the group that larger quantities of over-the-counter medications, such as paracetamol, can be purchased from the pharmacy.
- **PPG Input & Future Meetings:**
  - Ben encouraged the group to provide suggestions for service improvements.
  - The group agreed to meet every three months, continuing both face-to-face and online meetings.
  - Future meetings will now be held on Mondays.
  - Ben explained upcoming GP team changes to improve appointment availability and internal support.
  - The practice will look at securing a larger meeting space or table.
  - Ben to send the PPG members' directory and dedicated email login credentials to the new secretary who will look after communications to members from now on.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, 12th May 2025, 7:00 PM at St. Mary's