

Minutes

Hill Surgery Action Group (HSAG)

Date: 13th November 2024

The meeting was held at Swallow House, Theaklen Drive, St Leonards on Sea, TN38 9AZ.

In Attendance

Nick Andrews, Maxine Green, Karen Purser

Main Meeting Summary

The committee has convened to evaluate the current relevance of the Hill Surgery Action Group (HSAG) in light of the substantial enhancements in service delivery at Hill Surgery and the significant reduction in complaints. Although HSAG continues to attract membership requests, complaints have markedly decreased.

It is imperative to note that HSAG has operated without a formally recognised position within the Patient Participation Group (PPG) structure and has not garnered the respect of the Hill Surgery Management Team, who perceived the group as obstructive rather than constructive. However, members' concerns brought forth by our committee have been primarily addressed, demonstrating there was genuine cause for complaint. Our constructive engagement with the Integrated Care Board (ICB), their action plan implementation, and the CQC audit failings have led to tangible improvements in service quality and vast improvements to the website and online services provided by the surgery.

The HSAG's original intent was not to function as an ongoing platform for patient grievances; it was to highlight and address issues following the merger of Hill Surgery; there was a notable decline in primary care services that caused significant anxiety among patients of the combined practice. Establishing this formal group was designed to represent patient concerns, a goal it effectively achieved.

The recent disbanding of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is considered a regressive decision, as it was an impartial avenue for patients to voice their concerns regarding primary care services. Despite this setback, the group's primary objectives have been realised. It is now the members' responsibility to determine the future direction and potential continuation of the group in some capacity.

Agenda Point 1: Survey to access members views

We decided to conduct our own patient survey to determine whether members believe there is an ongoing need for the HSAG in its current format. The survey will be anonymously conducted through our website, via Survey Monkey, and by inviting HSAG members on Next Door to participate. It will be an editable online survey.

Surveys questions:

1. How would you rate the overall responsiveness of Hill Surgery over the past 12 months?
(Improved, Stayed the Same, Declined)
2. Have you noticed any improvements in the responsiveness of prescription services at Hill Surgery?
(Yes, No, Not Sure)
3. Are you satisfied with your ability to access your patient records via the NHS App?
(Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied)
4. How would you evaluate the improvement in telephone responsiveness at Hill Surgery?
(Much Improved, Somewhat Improved, No Change, Somewhat Declined, Much Declined)
5. Has there been an improvement in the appointment-making process at Hill Surgery?

(Significant Improvement, Some Improvement, No Change, Some Decline, Significant Decline)

6. How would you like your patient views represented to Hill Surgery?

(Regular surveys, PPG committee, Newsletter, HSAG, Other)

7. How frequently do you use the website services for your healthcare needs?

(Regularly, Infrequently, Never)

8. In the past 6 months, have you encountered difficulties when scheduling an appointment with a GP or Practice Nurse?

(Yes, No, Not needed to)

9. On a scale of 1-5, with one being very easy and five being extremely difficult, how easy was it for you to use the website services?

(1,2,3,4,5)

This is not an exhaustive list, and additional questions or amends will be agreed upon by the committee.

Next steps: The committee will review and approve the survey questions. MG will create a website-accessible survey. NA will verify the Next-Door membership against our members' database. We will encourage Next Door members to visit the website to participate in the survey, utilising a QR code or link for easy access.

Agenda Point 2: CQC Audit

Has the CQC audit scheduled for October 2024 been undertaken, and what were the findings? MG will check the website and with the CQ/ICB.

Agenda Point 3: Instagram & Facebook

Paul and Nick set up Instagram and Facebook pages, but we have limited interaction, most probably due to the patient demographic's limited use of technology and social media. Patients continue to participate at the Next-Door site.

Agenda Point 4: Personal Experience

Both NA & MG reported satisfactory personal interactions with the surgery recently.

Agenda Point 5: Call-Back

It appears that there is now a clear policy regarding callbacks after a request has been made through the call centre. Patients are no longer informed that they need to call back the following day if they haven't received a response. There are assurances that requests are entered into the call-back system based on the request's urgency or nature.

Agenda Point 6: Repeat Prescriptions

MG has received approval for a three-month prescription for her ongoing medication, reducing her annual prescription calls from 12 to 4. This change will ease pressure on the surgery and pharmacy, making it a sensible decision for patients needing long-term treatment. She is unsure if patients must request this on a 'per case' basis. In the past, this was refused, but outlining why it would be a sensible thing to do, seemed to have got through to the surgery administration team.

Date of next HSAG Meeting: Not agreed. We will await the survey findings.
