

LYME BAY MEDICAL PRACTICE

MINUTES OF STEERING GROUP PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING

HELD AT LYME REGIS MEDCAL CENTRE ON TUESDAY 28TH JANUARY 2025 AT 2.30 P.M.

1. Welcome and identification of participants:

Caroline Aldridge and Jane Gregory are the new Co-Chairs of the Steering Group - Jane was welcomed to her first meeting. Also present: David Hardman, Alan Kennard, Penny Duffield, Lynnette Ravenscroft, Andy and Elaine Taylor, Sarah Hill and April Boyle, Practice Managers, Kate Sturgess, Contented Dementia Trust Charity, Joanna Scotton, Secretary.

2. Apologies: Colin Bowditch, Susan Gale, Jane Mansergh, Vicci Stocqueler.

3. Kate Sturgess, the South West representative of the Contented Dementia Trust, gave an extremely informative talk about dementia and the Trust's recommendations on how to manage it – [see attachment for her précis.](#)

4. Minutes of last Steering Group meeting (10th September 2024) and matters arising:

The minutes were agreed as correct.

(a) Lobbying Dorset Integrated Care Board (ICB) in support of the Public Health Collaboration's Diet and Lifestyle course for all newly diagnosed diabetics.

Vicci Stocqueler had previously agreed to follow this up but she was not present at the meeting, so item postponed to next meeting. **Action – Vicci Stocqueler**

(b) Car parking concerns at Lyme Regis Medical Centre

The new path to enable patients to walk safely from the car park up to the surgery is almost completed.

April Boyle has taken photographs as evidence of illegal and unsafe parking outside Lyme Regis surgery. She will include these, along with the points raised by NHS Property Services, in the package of information being sent to Caroline. Caroline will then pass all of this on, together with a summary of the problem, to Belinda Bawden at Dorset Council, which is responsible for the matter, not the Town Council.

Alan Kennard proposed passing the registration numbers of offending cars to the police. Caroline felt it inappropriate for the Practice or the PPG to do this as the purpose of the photographs is to demonstrate the problem and find out how Highways can help resolve it. She did, however, point out that individuals can always take up Alan's suggestion if they wish to.

Caroline has spoken to the Enforcement Officer, who apparently has never seen a problem when he has visited the site – it was generally agreed that he had not been there at school drop-off and pick-up times! Jane Gregory offered to write another letter to Woodroffe School about parents exacerbating an already difficult and dangerous situation.

Sarah Hill reported that NHS Property Services did a survey and said that the gradient was unsuitable for two disabled parking bays. It was recognised that some people have

to park on the double yellow lines opposite the surgery entrance if they are dropping patients off, and also that Disabled Badge Holders can park on double yellow lines for up to 3 hours, though they should not do this if there is the potential for causing accidents.

Action – April Boyle, Caroline Aldridge, Jane Gregory

(c) Unsatisfactory physiotherapy appointments.

Sarah Hill has spoken to the First Contact Physiotherapist, asking him to explain his role clearly to patients i.e. he will do a diagnosis and assessment, and refer patients on if necessary. It was suggested he be invited to speak at a future Steering Group meeting, or possibly this year's Open Meeting.

(d) PPG Video – Sarah Hill reported that this has been put on the Practice website, and also on the television screen in the waiting room. Sarah will also check that the content on the television screen is up to date, and ensure that it is put on every morning.

Action – Sarah Hill

(e) PPG notice boards and red comments boxes.

Jane Gregory has kindly offered to take over responsibility for the Charmouth notice board and red box. She has some ideas for the notice boards, and will liaise with Susan Gale who keeps an eye on the Lyme Regis PPG notice board. Joanna Scotton will ask Susan's permission to pass on her email address to Jane.

Action – Joanna Scotton, Jane Gregory, Susan Gale

(f) Open Meeting and AGM

This was held on 20th November 2024, at Charmouth. The Social Prescribing Team described their work, and Andy Taylor gave a presentation on how to use the NHS App. The Steering Group again expressed its thanks to Lisa Jones, Lynnette Ravenscroft and Caroline Powley for kindly providing refreshments from The Old School Cafe at The Hub, Lyme Regis. Detailed notes of the meeting and AGM were sent out after the meeting.

It was agreed that November is not a good month to hold the meeting, expecting people to come out on a dark, cold and wet evening. Late September was suggested instead. Joanna will investigate venues in Lyme Regis. Uplyme was suggested as an alternative. We all agreed with Caroline that the next Open Meeting needs better publicity.

Action – Joanna Scotton

5. Practice Report

This was attached to the Agenda.

NOTE – if anyone has anything they would like included in future Practice Reports, please let Sarah or April know.

6. Issues raised by members – no comments or questions in the red boxes.

REMINDER TO PATIENTS – the Charmouth box is on the wall of the surgery waiting room, and the Lyme Regis box is on the left, just inside the entrance to the Medical Centre reception. The boxes are regularly emptied by a PPG member, not staff, and any questions, comments or concerns are passed on to the PPG Chair who will look into the matter for you. Please give your name and contact details for a response from the PPG Chair.

7. Steering Group membership

According to the Terms of Reference of our PPG (previously sent out with the agenda), Item 5(iii) states “.....Steering Group members may serve for up to 4 years, with the option of a further four-year term, so long as the maximum limit of 15 is not exceeded and no fresh volunteers for the Steering Group are thereby excluded.” The start date of this four year period is 7th April 2021, when Lyme Regis and Charmouth practices became one.

6 members of the current 15 members have served four years and one member of the Virtual Group has expressed an interest in joining the Steering Group. It was agreed that, in the absence of volunteers coming forward for the roles of Chair and Secretary, neither Caroline nor Joanna should be asked to stand down. Joanna will write to the other 4 members who have served 4 years, explaining they are required to retire and then reapply for a vacancy if they wish to stay on. Joanna will also check the situation with one other Steering Group member who has had difficulty regularly attending meetings.

Action – Joanna Scotton

Tuesday afternoons is still a good afternoon to meet for those present at the meeting, though Andy Taylor asked if we could avoid the first and third Tuesday of the month when he is committed to other voluntary work – agreed.

The Pre-diabetes Group also meets at the surgery on a Tuesday afternoon once a month. Sarah will give Joanna the dates of these meetings so we can avoid them.

Action – Sarah Hill/Joanna Scotton

8. Travel vaccines

Sarah and April explained that the surgery is contractually obliged to provide some travel vaccinations: some are provided free on the NHS, for others there is a charge as the Practice has to buy the vaccine in.

However, the Practice is struggling to meet demand, particularly from those patients who make a late request, e.g. requiring a vaccination within a week or two of travelling, despite the website making it very clear that a minimum of 8 weeks’ notice is required.

The Practice only has one nurse who is trained to do this work, but she is overwhelmed by vaccination requests on top of her other patient work. The appointments themselves are not a ‘quick jab’ – they are long appointments as the nurse has to do a thorough health assessment as well as look into the patient’s history to establish what previous vaccinations have been given etc.

The PPG suggested that the minimum notice period for vaccinations should be extended from 8 weeks to 12 weeks to see if this eases the situation. It was also felt reasonable for any late requests to be denied – if a patient needs a travel vaccination they can make an appointment at the Exeter Travel Clinic, 22 Southernhay W, Exeter EX1 1PJ, telephone 01392 430590 www.exetertravelclinic.co.uk/vaccines/

Situation to be reviewed in 6 months.

Action – Sarah Hill

9. Date of next Steering Group meeting - 11th MARCH 2025

The Contented Dementia Trust and the SPECAL* Method.

The **Contented Dementia Trust** is an independent charitable organisation with an innovative approach to the care of people with dementia. We aim to promote and sustain lifelong well-being for people with dementia through the application of the SPECAL method.

SPECAL stands for **Specialised **E**arly **C**are for **AL**zheimers - we now know it works for all dementias and at all stages, but the name has remained*

The SPECAL method is tailor-made for the condition of dementia. At the Contented Dementia Trust we view dementia as a disability and work positively with it using the SPECAL method, rather than trying to ignore or defeat it. When the SPECAL method is applied, dementia becomes a disability that can be managed with remarkable success and has been evaluated by the Royal College of Nursing and by King's College London with very positive findings.

Our unique understanding of dementia shows us why common sense can often cause more harm than good.

We have developed **SPECAL sense communication**, which begins with an easy set of general principles designed to equip health care professionals, care staff, families & friends with a set of highly practical skills and communication techniques which work positively with dementia, avoiding distressed behaviours and promoting dignity and well-being for all involved.

We use the **analogy of a photograph album** to help explain how we store memories and how we rely on that stored information to navigate every aspect of daily living. Individual memories are represented by photographs and each has 2 features: the facts of what has just occurred, and the associated feelings.

Each of our experiences is recorded as a photograph and stored in our mental photograph album, a split second after it has happened. Pages of photographs continue to build up throughout our life. We consult our album all the time for information, predominantly referencing what has just been happening – information on 'today's page', as it were.

Nothing changes to the process **as we age**, we simply get slower at the retrieval process.

At the **onset of dementia** a new type of photograph starts appearing in the album. This new type of photograph contains no facts because they did not store in our mental photograph album - although the feelings associated with the missing facts **are** stored. We call this fact-free, feelings-only, dementia-related photograph a 'blank'. It is blank in terms of facts.

These blanks intermittently, randomly & with increasing frequency reoccur. By the time of diagnosis, they are on average not storing about 50% of new factual information. The blanking process continues, as the dementia progresses. However, there will always, to the end of life, be an occasional normal facts-and-feelings photograph appearing in what is now a sea of blanks.

The person with dementia has not lost their reason, nor their wish to reason, but they are missing a great deal of factual information to reason with – information that they would normally expect to find on today's page.

BUT they still have all their pages of photographs from the days before dementia, and they will (very reasonably) turn back to those older pages to find the best match they can to what is currently happening in their life today.

They are living in the present moment, just like the rest of us, but they need to consult much older photographs in order to make sense of what they are currently doing, and we (without dementia) need to learn not to hinder them in the process.

SPECAL sense begins with **Three Golden Rules** which provide our starting point for communicating with any person with a blanking album and these can be easily picked up and implemented by anyone who comes into contact with someone who has dementia.

Each Golden Rule has a Tool to help us follow the rule and these enable lines of communication to remain open, reducing stress and promoting well-being for all involved.

SPECAL's Three Golden Rules:

- 1) Don't ask direct questions.
- 2) Listen to the expert (the person with dementia, expert at handling a blanking album!) and learn from them.
- 3) Don't contradict.

Don't ask Questions & Don't Contradict are in place to avoid forcing the person with dementia to consult today's page of their mental photograph album for information that may well not have stored. It also avoids disturbing the sense they are managing to make of the 'now' using facts stored in their older album pages.

We have other very effective ways we teach to find out someone's choice or wishes using statements rather than questions, and instead of instinctively 'putting someone right' or contradicting them, we use body language to encourage them to tell us more - which leads neatly into Rule No. 2: **Listen to the Expert.**

We 'Listen to the Expert' to help us understand what pages of their album they ARE using to make sense of things, and also to encourage us to take note of repeated questions, as these indicate exactly what information they are missing at the time, and enables us to begin working out the best answer which leaves them with a feeling of 'Oh! Phew. That's ok then'.

Once the Three Golden Rules are being implemented, we are then in a position to facilitate the use of pre-dementia, intact stored information, to make it easily relatable to the activities of daily living; the whole process simplifying as dementia progresses

Training courses - We offer a basic introduction to the method for professionals and families & friends, after which immediate benefits will be seen – these courses are available online or in person in small groups.

For families and friends, we also offer further training to tailor the method to their specific

person with a SPECAL practitioner.

For any more information, please contact kate@contenteddementiastrust.org

I am more than happy to talk to groups to explain the basics and our rationale. My aim is to have as many people know about the very basics as possible, so that when anyone meets someone with dementia, they instinctively know what to do and say, as readily as they would know how to help someone with a sight impairment or a missing leg.

Our website is www.contenteddementiastrust.org

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/specalmethod> - I post useful, informative content every day.

There is also a book, called 'Contented Dementia' by Oliver James, which outlines the whole method.

Kate Sturgess

South West Representative of the Contented Dementia Trust