

**Key points of the Patients Participation Groups Meeting held on
Monday 19th January 2015 at 7.30 pm at Stag Lane Medical Centre**

Those present:

Dr Ajit Shah	GP Partner Primary Care Medical Centre
Dr Maliha Saleem	GP Partner Primary Care Medical Centre
Dr Upma Shah	GP Partner Primary Stag Lane Medical Centre
Mr Ravilal Gorsia	Practice manager Stag Lane Medical Centre
Mrs Varsha Dodhia	Merger Project Manager

Primary Care Medical patients

Stag Lane Medical Centre patients

Ella Ng Chieng Hin	Mr Bhupendra Gandhi
Arlette Ta-Min	Kumudbala Gandhi
Dennis Tyler	<u>Lakhman Mepani</u>
Rahat Siddiqi	<u>Isaac Grankin</u>
Farah Siddiqi	Jayant Lakhani
Deborah Lawson	Rupert Powell
Dakshesh Patel	Pauline Powell
	Kishor Hirani
	Dharmesh Kunverji
	Suguna Shailendra
	Shivji Khokhrai
	Dennis Wheatley

Meeting started at 7:30 pm. Dr Upma Shah introduced the proposed merger of Stag lane Medical Centre and Primary care Medical Centre planned for 1st April 2015 subject to NHS England approval. A business case is currently being developed for presentation to NHS England. A paper has already been presented to NHS Brent CCG. The practices are keen to involve patients and hear their comments and suggestions to find solutions to any concerns raised. Both PPGs have already discussed the potential for merger previously. The two Practices have a similar demography so there is a good fit for merger. All the GP partners have worked alongside the others in different capacities over a number of years. The GPs all share the same ethos about providing excellent person centred care. She covered the general house-keeping.

Varsha introduced the format of why the meeting was called and gave a brief introduction. Patients introduced themselves. There was almost equal representation from both practices.

A short presentation was made Varsha to introduce the position of the two practices, their close proximity, what patients have said services they like and some improvements that can be made. Ten priority areas were introduced followed by a short description about why the two practices have agreed to merge.

The three doctors presented short biographies.

Dr Maliha Saleem has been a GP since 2010 with wide range of experience in children's health, gynaecology, urgent care, integrated care programme of which she is co-chair. She is a director of K&WH (network Provider Company) and Clinical Lead for the Kingsbury and Willesden Primary Care Network. She is also a GP trainer.

Dr Ajit Shah has worked as a Care of Elderly hospital doctor and a GP since 1992 and has a specialist interest in cardiology and long term conditions. He is a Brent CCG Board member. He is interested in teaching medicine and is involved in research at the West London Research Network. He said "Small-scale GP practices are not sustainable and will have to merge into super-practices covering up to 100,000 patients in order to offer seven-day care",

Dr Upma Shah has been a GP for last 20 years. She was a Partner in a bigger Practice and has been the Lead Partner at SLMC since 2009. She is a director of K&WH (network Provider Company) and a GP appraiser. She has developed the Practice and in the last years has made substantial improvements to the premises to its current welcoming environment with a wide range of services. She is passionate about providing a person centred service. She said "a larger Practice can achieve a greater capacity and flexibility of delivery than a smaller unit, and has a wider skill-mix to enable new service development".

Key questions from the patients

How will the merged services be delivered, from one site or both?

Both sites will have practices. For a short time it may be that the staff will be based at Stag Lane when the proposed building work is carried out at Primary care.

What about the proposed building extension planned for Primary Care Medical centre?

The extension work is planned for end of April and the works will be mainly to develop the Ground floor accommodation. The proposals for the loft extension have been put on hold.

How will patients be supported to be seen at both sites?

GPs and nursing staff will offer appointments from both sites. During the building work, there will be an offer to provide shuttle service between both sites.

There has recently been a change in the staff at both surgeries. What is happening?

It is true that staff from both practices have sought alternative opportunities. New staff have been recruited and there is an induction process so that they can be deployed at either of the sites. Both practices have GPs who provide services on salaried or long term locum basis. All GP partners are committed to a minimum number of patient facing and telephone consultations. A formal agreement about how the GPs will work is being drawn up.

Will there be two different numbers to call the surgery?

A new telephone system is being considered so patients call one number and a new appointment system called "GP Access" is being looked at and the staff are looking at the best way to use this system. There are plans for email and video consultations where appropriate and chosen by patients. On-line booking of appointments and repeat prescriptions has already started and this service will be extended. Better use of e-prescribing is also being looked at.

We have been used to seeing mainly the doctor for last couple of years. Will it be possible to see the same doctor who knows us?

It may not always be possible to see a named doctor on the same day but if the patients have preference, it would be possible to book a forward appointment. There is analysis being done about demand for appointments and with GP Access there may be a different way of allocating appointments. For those people with chronic conditions, it may be possible to book a longer appointment.

If there are more patients, will this mean it will be more difficult to get appointments?

If the merger plans go ahead as planned, there may be more clinicians including a pharmacist, advanced care nurse practitioners who would also be able to see patients.

Locally, two GP Practices have closed. Previously, doctors left a practice and opened a new practice. What will happen if the merger does not work?

The direction of travel is GP practices merging. We are aware of 3 mergers in neighbouring Harrow. The work load for the GP does not stop when they have seen the patients in the Practice. There is an equal amount of work to look at test results, letters for referral, letters back from hospital, looking at really urgent cases, producing care plans for those people who need care from other clinicians or support staff etc. The work-load for the GP today does not offer a good work-life balance. Patients would have seen that the GPs are working on Saturday and Sunday and until late in the evenings.

The danger today is that young trained doctors are either choosing to emigrate to Australia or Canada and some are leaving medicine for work as other professionals. It is very difficult to recruit GPs who will make a long term commitment. In London currently a significant number of GPs are approaching retirement age and there is a difficulty in recruiting. This all means it is unlikely that the merged practice will not work.

Dr Ajit Shah has spoken about retiring, so will he still be part of the merged team?

Dr Ajit Shah said he is committed to make sure this merger is developed on a sound footing and he is committed for the near future as he sees this is in the best interest of patients, staff and his colleagues.

How will patients be able to express their views about the merger?

The meeting ended with the announcement of next joint PPG meeting on 23rd February 2015 at the same venue. Patients were invited to form a working group to develop a new terms of reference and memorandum of working in the future. Two patients from each surgery volunteered to work with Varsha to develop these.

Formal meeting closed at 9:30 pm.

Everyone joined for refreshments and networking.