



## Eye Health Centre

### Patient Participation Group Quarterly Newsletter March 2018

#### The EYE Practice Manager from day to day

What is it that makes the Eye Health Centre work so efficiently on a day to day basis? Who ensures that the practice meets the numerous NHS mandatory demands and keeps the practice on a level keel with regard to financial restrictions and personnel management? The Partners? The receptionists? Or perhaps it is the PRACTICE MANAGER working behind the scenes. How many patients know that every time they enter the surgery they pass the manager's office door?

Imagine a company which has a Financial Manager, a Human Resources Manager, a Procurement Manager, a Training Manager, a Premises Manager, an IT Manager and finally a Logistics Manager. Now transfer all of those functions to the person who encompasses the issues that would normally be handled by the various posts identified above and you have an idea of the areas that are covered on a daily basis by the Eye Practice Manager, Julie Ashley. Those of you who have been involved in the management of a company or department will appreciate the areas that MUST be covered both legally and practically to enable that company to operate successfully. So it is with the Eye Health Centre.

Working quietly and efficiently in the background at the practice, Julie not only has to make sure that day to day matters are dealt with effectively, but also to ensure that the longer term plans for the surgery are on schedule. She has the unenviable task of ensuring that the practice remains financially sustainable, whilst still delivering good customer service to patients. An important part of the job is working closely with the practice partners to develop and improve patient services. In addition, this also entails working with the practice nurses and with visiting medical practitioners to ensure that they have the necessary support whilst they are administering to patients.

Patient facing involvement means dealing with any complaints in a compassionate and timely way, supporting the local Patients Participation Group and gaining feedback about the patients' perception of the way in which the practice is operating.

Julie was the first Practice Manager to be employed by the Eye practice. Starting out as project manager, she soon moved into fully fledged Practice Manager status and in the ensuing 17 years has seen and implemented some dramatic changes in not only how the practice is organised, but how it continually changes to take account of the ever changing demands of the NHS in general. Patients who have been with the practice for many years will have noticed changes in the use of several rooms within the building, this has been an integral part of developing the practice for the benefit of the patients and staff. One of the most important tasks is to look after the financial side of the practice which involves the administration of the NHS contract, public health contracts and local enhanced services. Added to this function is the day to day bookkeeping, VAT returns, reconciling the monies paid to the dispensary and so it goes on. We haven't even touched on staff matters which encompass recruitment, training etc. We should not forget Health and Safety issues and the legislation which must be adhered to on site.

This brief letter serves to indicate only a few of the important and necessary duties that the Practice Manager includes in her day to day, week to week and month to month working hours. I suppose what I am trying to convey to you, our patients, is the reason that we have such a successful, smooth running practice is down in no small measure to our Practice Manager.

So we have a lot to thank Julie for. However, in the near future (May 2018) Julie is taking well earned retirement from the hectic day to day bustle of running a busy and successful Health Centre. We offer her our very best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

Stepping into Julie's shoes will be Alison Soon, who has worked in the health industry for several years and is well known in "local" health circles. We wish her every success and look forward to her input in continuing the smooth running legacy from Julie and stamping her own personality on the Practice Manager's position.

If you have any comments about the issues raised in this newsletter, please contact me direct at [tony.white@awaconsulting.co.uk](mailto:tony.white@awaconsulting.co.uk) or c/o Julie Ashley, Practice Manager at the Health Centre.

**Tony White (Chair PPG)**