

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Annual Report 2024

At the start of the year and continuing throughout the year The Practice like all GP Practices has been extremely busy. As the patient's group, we have had the opportunity to work with the Practice to listen to their plans for managing this high volume of work, feedback to them on our concerns and those of the patients we have spoken to, and to make suggestions for possible change.

The aims and objectives of the PPG are as follows:

- To support and build a two-way relationship between patients and the Practice.
- To advise on the developments and the continual improvement of the Practice.
- To seek out and listen to the views of patients, carers and staff, especially those individuals and groups whose voices are not usually heard.
- To raise issues for consideration which are evidence based, and which demonstrate that they are a matter of wider concern.

What we have done 1.

Communication was an area that we felt we could try to improve. A small group of members worked to read all of the standard forms of communication that are sent to patients e.g., letters emails and text messages. The group looked at where change could be made to ensure that patients could understand easily the correspondence they were receiving. They worked to remove medical jargon wherever possible as patients had said that they struggle to understand some of it.

A number of members reviewed the Practice website again looking at terminology, duplication and general understanding and readability.

In both pieces of work the Practice accepted and implemented all the recommendations we made.

The biggest area of involvement for the group has been the appointment system.

What we have done 2.

At each of our monthly meetings The Practice has shared with us information and data relating to the number of daily calls, and how these regularly outstrip the resources that are available.

- We discussed the varied work requirements undertaken in the Practice to get a better understanding of what happens daily. Talking to patients their main focus of concern has been around the time it takes to get an appointment. We wanted to find out what other clinical duties are undertaken and how much of a GP's time it takes. We found the following:

For the week starting 20.01.25

- Total appointments - 862
- Hospital and patient letters processed - 750
- Medication enquiries actioned - 1451

- Telephone calls answered – 1024
 - Online enquiries answered – 482
 - Pathology reports actioned and filed - 380
- This information we felt needed to be communicated. It was suggested that a display in reception showing the volume of work carried out for the safe and ongoing clinical care of patients. We have had feedback saying that they had no idea about this workload and the time it takes, and they had a better understanding of why it takes longer to get an appointment.

In September members attended one of the Flu Clinics and took the opportunity to speak to patients. Specifically asking 3 questions, what is good about the Practice, what doesn't work so well, and do you use online services. We found the following:

- Patients were full of praise for the staff both clinical and non-clinical. They reported the friendliness and high level of clinical help provided, always feeling confident in what was being provided.
- The highest level of concern was around the appointment system. The length of time to get an appointment, uncertainty about how long they would have to wait.
- A high number of patients could not access the online booking system. However, a number of those who used it said they preferred it to ringing in on the day

What we have done 3.

Taking all the information from the day, we presented a report to the Practice. They very quickly accepted the information and wanted to try to bring about change.

The practice invited us to a meeting with the Business Manager, a Partner in the Practice, and other senior members of the administration team.

The findings were discussed and changes on the day were made to the recorded messages on the phone system. (This was a major area of patient concern). A weekly text message was also introduced to be sent to patients still waiting for an appointment to inform them they have not been forgotten.

During the year we have been pleased to welcome new members to the group, and we value the contribution they bring.

The group meets on the 2nd Thursday monthly at 5pm (apart from August and January). We always meet with one of the Practice Partners who shares with us openly the plans for the development and operation of the Practice.

As we move into 2025, we will as a group continue to seek the views of the patients. Our meetings always give us the opportunity to feed them back to the Practice. It is only from hearing from you that we can do this. I should add that all comments are valued by the Practice good and areas which you would like to see changed. Please let us know. Therefore, we ask Patients to get in touch with us via our email address ccmqppg@gmail.com with suggestions and matters of concern. **Please remember that we cannot deal with individual**

complaints, these should be raised through the Practice complaints procedures.

We have also planned for guest speakers to attend some of our meetings to provide an insight into other health related areas. All in all, we have a busy year ahead. As a PPG along with the excellent relationship we have with the Practice we will continue to act as the critical friend of the Practice, giving us the opportunity to give feedback, opinion, and suggestions for change.

If anyone would like to consider joining us, please contact me on ccmgppg@gmail.com leaving a contact number, I will get back to you.

If you would like to know more about the work of the PPG, please go to the Practice website www.charnwoodcommunitymedicalgroup.co.uk Click on the tab for PPG and you will find a lot of interesting information about us.

So, we look forward to a new year, as a group we will continue to work with the Practice and will offer any support that we can. On behalf of all the group I would like to give thanks to all the staff within the Practice for the support they have once again given to us, and in particular to Paul Hanlon, Business Manager, and a Partner in the Practice, for his continued and valued support during what has been a very busy and challenging year.

All Patients are welcome to attend our AGM which will be held on Thursday 13th March at 5.30pm at Rosebery Medical Centre.

Mick Gregory
Chairman Patient Participation Group