



Patient Participation Group

Toolkit

healthwatch
Central Bedfordshire

healthwatch
Milton Keynes

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Overview

Since January 2003, all NHS bodies have been legally mandated to engage and consult with the public regarding the management of local health services. The enactment of the [Health and Social Care Act \(2012\)](#) empowers patients with a greater voice and involvement in healthcare decisions. Notable organisations involved in this initiative include local Healthwatch and [NHS England](#).

Healthwatch is the local consumer champion promoting choice and influencing the provision of high-quality health, social care & wellbeing services across the country and has significant statutory powers to ensure that the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services.

[Bedford Borough](#) (HWBB), [Central Bedfordshire](#) (HWCB), [Luton](#) (HWL) and [Healthwatch Milton Keynes](#) (HWMK) are the four local Healthwatch across the region whose services are commissioned by Bedfordshire, Luton & Milton Keynes [Integrated Care Board](#) (BLMK ICB).

The Denny Review

[The Denny Review](#) 'A Rapid Evidence Review of The Health Inequalities Experienced by The Local Communities of BLMK' was undertaken in 2022 and all local Healthwatch were involved. Following on from the review, the BLMK ICB have commissioned all local Healthwatch to undertake further work, focusing on priority areas of engagement and co-production with individuals and communities to agree actions to reduce health inequalities.

HWCB and HWMK have been commissioned to support General Practices (GP) in reducing health inequalities across BLMK by supporting the development of their Patient Participation Groups (PPGs).

Executive Summary

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) Toolkit, created by Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire and Healthwatch Milton Keynes, acts as a detailed resource for setting up, managing, and enhancing PPGs within General Practices (GPs) across Bedfordshire, Luton, and Milton Keynes (BLMK). This toolkit aims to empower patients, boost engagement, and assist practices in addressing health inequalities.

Key objectives

- Q Provide guidance for creating and facilitating PPGs.
- Q Promote diversity and inclusivity, ensuring participation from underrepresented groups.
- Q Support GP practices in engaging with patients to improve healthcare services.
- Q Equip PPGs with tools for effective governance, communication, and outreach.
- Q Align with national healthcare policies and Care Quality Commission (CQC) requirements.

Core components

Understanding of PPGs

- Q A PPG consists of patient volunteers, GPs, and practice staff.
- Q It acts as a bridge between patients and healthcare providers to enhance service delivery.
- Q Required under NHS GP contracts and considered in CQC inspections.

Benefits of PPGs

- Q Improves patient engagement and healthcare service quality.
- Q Helps reduce health inequalities through targeted outreach.
- Q Enhances communication between patients and GP practices.

Setting up and running a PPG

- Q Defines roles such as Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Q Includes guidance on recruitment strategies for broader community representation.
- Q Encourages virtual engagement and dedicated communication channels.

Promoting a PPG

- Q Utilising social media, digital platforms, and physical materials.
- Q Encourages collaboration with local community organisations.
- Q Provides templates for governance documents (Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Constitution).

Patient surveys and feedback

- Q Outlines methods for conducting effective surveys.
- Q Supports National Patient Surveys and Friends & Family Tests.
- Q Recommends tools such as Smart Survey for data collection.

Collaboration with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) & Regulatory Bodies

- Q Aligns PPG activities with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and NHS policies.
- Q Ensures compliance with CQC requirements.
- Q Encourages sharing insights at a regional and national level.

Conclusion

The PPG Toolkit serves as an essential resource for patients, GP practices, and healthcare networks aiming to promote a collaborative, inclusive, and proactive strategy for patient engagement. By adopting its recommendations, PPGs can facilitate significant enhancements in healthcare services and patient experiences within their communities.

What is a Patient Participation Group?

A Patient Participation Group (PPG) is made up of patient volunteers, the Practice Manager, and one or more General Practitioners (GPs). PPGs are open to all patients registered with their GP Practice, aged 16 years and over, and their carers (even if not registered with the practice themselves). A PPG is a requirement of the NHS GP Contract and can be a part of Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections.

These groups serve as a valuable platform for patients to offer counsel and insights to the Practice regarding your priorities and to collaborate in identifying solutions to challenges.

GP Practices establish PPGs to provide patients and caregivers with a channel to:

- 🗣️ Work with GPs and Practice staff to review practice processes and the quality of care.
- 🗣️ Improve communication with patients.
- 🗣️ Promote health and wellbeing by reducing health inequalities.
- 🗣️ Ensure practices remain accountable and responsive to patient needs.
- 🗣️ Be a representative of the Practice patient population.
- 🗣️ Assist (if necessary) to improve the service.
- 🗣️ Ensure the patient's voice is heard and used to influence the provision of local health services.

Benefits of a PPG

For patients:

- Q Patients can cultivate a heightened sense of responsibility for their health and wellbeing.
- Q Gain a deeper understanding of the Practice, its staff, and its procedures.
- Q Develop a broader awareness of NHS policies.
- Q Act as a conduit for overarching patient and practice communication
- Q Contribute to the Practice's performance in the National Patient Survey results and Friends and Family Test feedback.
- Q Enable patients to have a say in the way services are delivered.

For the practice:

- Q Assist in supporting and sharing the Practice's aims and objectives.
- Q Collaborate with patients to enhance the effectiveness of service planning.
- Q Enhance communication with patients.
- Q Establish a platform for receiving constructive ideas and addressing concerns.
- Q PPGs play a vital role in achieving set targets and objectives.
- Q Meeting NHS contractual requirements.

For the community:

- Q The patient population has an opportunity to provide insights into enhancing their care.
- Q The PPG can encourage and motivate patients to share their feedback on the practice's performance through the National Patient Survey and Friends & Family Test.
- Q PPGs can promote health awareness and provide patient education to improve community well-being.
- Q Identify needs and support the reduction of health inequalities in specific communities.

How can Healthwatch assist?

- Q Support membership growth by utilising social media platforms and online resources.
- Q Provide your Practice with valuable information and resources available through our e-newsletters and website.
- Q Assist individuals at your Practice in finding nearby health and social care services through our information and referral service, connecting patients with relevant organisations and providing effective solutions.

Where the PPG has a focus on their specific practice, your Local Healthwatch is able to collect, collate and share the experiences at a larger scale. Information is shared with the ICB to influence change at a BLMK level and shared with Healthwatch England in order to be able to influence policy and decision makers at a national level.

To reduce duplication of effort, a potential approach would be to assign one member of the PPG to liaise with their Local Healthwatch around the feedback and themes that have been shared with the PPG.

This PPG representative could act as a Healthwatch Community Listener, benefiting from the support and information that Local Healthwatch provide

Facilitating & managing a PPG

Every surgery is unique, which means that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to Patient Participation Groups that will suit every GP practice. Various surgeries have discovered successful methods to gather feedback and insights from their patients in different ways.

Organising PPG meetings & overcoming scheduling challenges

- Q Finding a suitable day and time for PPG meetings that works for most members and aligns with GP Practice schedules can be a challenge and involves trial and error. PPGs should share meeting dates and times well in advance for attendees to prepare.
- Q Meetings often take place at the surgery as a convenient and accessible location or consider alternative locations depending on the type of engagement activities adopted by the PPG e.g., school or village hall and if there is insufficient room at the GP Practice.
- Q Consider virtual meetings or a combination of both face to face and/or virtual meetings.

Roles

Each Patient Participation Group (PPG) is unique, and the following is a proposed structure for role assignments. These roles and responsibilities can be decided and delegated by the members .

PPG Chair & Vice Chair

The PPG Chair assumes leadership to facilitate the group in achieving its objectives, generate ideas and initiatives and formulate a PPG agenda: additionally, the role is to maintain productive relationships between the PPG members and the wider patient list and to, collaborate with the GP Practice.

- Q Establish and uphold the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct if deemed necessary.
- Q Implement a systematic approach for documenting meeting minutes and tracking action items.
- Q Act as the PPG's representative in relevant forums. e.g., at Primary Care Network (PCN) meetings or community engagement events.

Roles

PPG Member

- Q Represent the patients of the Practice during PPG meetings.
- Q Offer insights on Practice-related topics.
- Q Review meeting agendas in advance and come prepared.
- Q Offer ideas and suggestions to the Practice for enhancing patient engagement.
- Q Uphold a positive representation of the PPG.
- Q Identifying gaps within the PPG by using a self-assessment tool and devising an action plan based on its findings.

PPG Secretary

- Q Facilitates meeting and agenda planning.
- Q Offers administrative support, subject to practice agreement.
- Q Ensures timely distribution of meeting agendas.
- Q Takes meeting notes and circulates minutes post-meeting.

PPG Treasurer*

- Q Issuing receipts for all funds received.
- Q Providing regular financial reports.
- Q Approving budgets.
- Q Coordinating an annual independent audit.

*A treasurer will not be necessary where there is no income or expenditure associated with the PPG. However, some PPGs carry out fundraising exercises to support certain PPG-led projects. If financial management is required, appointing a Treasurer to oversee the account within the group will be necessary.

Recruitment & expanding membership

For a PPG to be effective, it is essential that it reflects the diversity and demographic of the patient population. Membership and awareness can be carried out in various ways:

- Q In the waiting room.
- Q GP Practice open days.
- Q On prescription slips.
- Q Newsletters.
- Q Through local voluntary organisations.
- Q Online.

Additionally, using platforms like the Practice's social media channels can broaden the group's reach. Maintaining current and relevant information about the PPG on the practice website is crucial. Outdated reports or incorrect contact details can be off-putting to potential members.

Consider a 'buddy system' where one GP practice supports another and/or visa versa. This could be within your Primary Care Network (PCN).

Also, you could consider Universal membership i.e., patients are automatically joined as part of Practice registration unless they 'opt out'. This option would involve extensive communication to the patient population of your Practice.

To ensure that the knowledge, experiences and opinions of diverse and under-served groups are heard, respectful and appropriate engagement with specific community groups is recommended.

Involving people from diverse & under-served groups

The definition of 'under-served' is highly context-specific: For a PPG, it will depend on the Practice population and the current makeup of the group.

PPGs are not always representative of the patient population. As a result, the knowledge, experiences and opinions of many under-served groups who could contribute to health discussions, are not heard. This matters because these under-served groups are often the ones most affected by health inequalities. Many of these issues are covered in [The Denny Review](#).

More information of under-served groups in your patient list can be obtained from your Practice Manager.

Examples of some under-served groups who may need extra support to take part are:

- 🗣 Asylum seekers and refugees.
- 🗣 Black, Asian & minority ethnic groups.
- 🗣 Children and young people.
- 🗣 Family carers, especially young carers and older carers.
- 🗣 Gypsies and travellers.
- 🗣 LGBTQIA+ community.
- 🗣 People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
- 🗣 People living in poverty.
- 🗣 People of working age.
- 🗣 Homeless people.
- 🗣 People with disabilities – mobility, sensory impairment, cognitive, long-term health conditions.

Involving children & young people

Joining a PPG offers young people the chance to have their voices heard and input on key health issues as users of NHS services. We know that young people want to be involved in their healthcare, so it is imperative to consult and value them. PPGs are encouraged to recruit young people, but some may find this difficult. The following gives you various tips on how to recruit and engage with young people:

Advertise using:

- 🗨 Posters, social media e.g., Facebook and/or Instagram and the GP Practice website, as well as encourage young people to offer feedback or ask questions about their PPG.
- 🗨 Consider text messaging the young people directly.
- 🗨 Tell young patients about your PPG via youth groups, schools, colleges and carer's groups. For example, consider contacting schools and ask to present information about your PPG at assemblies. Once a young person has registered as a patient, use their contact details to tell them about your PPG. This is especially useful in areas where health outcomes are poorer for younger patients. You can find more demographic health information in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). (see appendix).
- 🗨 Be specific about how you would like young people to be involved in your own Practice projects e.g., if you are seeking/providing sexual health guidance and information or target specific projects to young people.
- 🗨 Host a community event. This should be aimed specifically at young patients registered at the GP Surgery. This could be held at your surgery or a local community centre/village hall if you have sufficient funds to do so. Ensure the event takes place at the weekends or during the school holidays and include refreshments.
- 🗨 Attend community events. There are a variety of community events such as career or work experience fairs held at colleges and universities. The surgery could offer work experience or volunteering opportunities to young people.
- 🗨 Asking for views and feedback. Ensure that young patients feel their views count and promote feedback via the Friends and Family forms. Ensure that feedback forms are in an accessible format and are suitable for young people, for example, hold a focus group. You could produce surveys, aimed specifically at young patients, and distribute when young people are waiting for an appointment in the GP Surgery.
- 🗨 Acknowledge their contribution. Stay in touch and ensure that feedback is provided to the young patients who have made suggestions about the practice, so they remain involved and engaged.

Virtual engagement

A virtual group comprises patients who opt for engaging with the Patient Participation Group through digital means e.g., email, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams, rather than in-person meetings. They receive Practice newsletters, meeting minutes, and surveys electronically, enabling them to stay informed.

Members can share their opinions and participate even if they cannot attend physical gatherings due to various reasons such as caregiving responsibilities or work commitments. This approach allows for more flexible and inclusive involvement, ensuring that individuals can support the PPG on topics that interest them.

Although virtual groups offer several advantages, it is essential to acknowledge that not everyone may have access to technology. Therefore, it is imperative to explore alternative methods of engagement to ensure that all voices are considered and included.

Dedicated PPG email account

Establishing a dedicated email address for the Patient Participation Group offers significant advantages. This email serves as a centralised hub for staying informed about group activities, providing information to new members, managing requests for PPG enrolment, and updating people who prefer to engage by email. The biggest advantage to a dedicated PPG email address is that the information and history of the group are not lost when PPG members change.

To ensure consistency, it is advisable for the PPG Chair or Secretary (where applicable) to oversee the account.

Email address example: surgeryppg@gpsurgery.co.uk

Promoting your PPG

Top Tips

PPGs differ from Practice to Practice. However, a challenge shared by many lies in effectively promoting their presence to the broader community and attracting new members.

Notably, a significant hurdle for PPGs is establishing a group that authentically represents the diversity of the Practice's patient list.

Effective communication is important and needs careful consideration and planning. PPGs should allocate time to contemplate the following points:

- Q What are our goals for this promotion activity?
- Q Do we aim to attract more members to the PPG?
- Q Is our primary objective to enhance the PPG's size, diversity, or both?
- Q Are we looking to increase patient participation in surveys and Practice/PPG activities, even if we already have enough members?

The PPG should agree and be clear on the aims from the beginning and then consider:

- Q What past communication and promotion efforts have been made for the PPG?
- Q How effective is the current communication and promotion strategy?
- Q What information is available at the surgery and online?
- Q Is communication material in different formats i.e. large font, different languages?
- Q Are there clear and consistent messages to achieve the desired goals, like recruiting more patients for survey groups?
- Q Is there consistent branding in our PPG promotions, such as posters, flyers, newsletters, and the webpage? Do people recognise us?
- Q How can we alter our approach to reach a broader audience within the Practice?
- Q Is it possible to host open meetings?
- Q Can we attend local community engagement events?

Promoting your PPG

Online promotion

PPGs should work collaboratively with their PM to determine the relevant PPG info to be included on the practice website. They should also conduct a review of the practice website including the PPG section to ensure accuracy, relevance and accessibility.

Key areas to look at include:

- Q Is PPG information available via a link on the home page or is it 'hidden away' and requires navigation to find? Ideally the information should be accessible from the home page.
- Q Is the information clear for anyone who has no knowledge about the Practice PPG and its purpose?
- Q Does the website provide clear information about the PPG, such as meeting times, virtual or online status, and the group's activities or focus?
- Q What happens following an expression of interest in joining the PPG? Is there information provided about the next steps? It is important to avoid situations where people lose interest because they have not had a response.
- Q Is the website information current and are the PPG messages and promotions consistent across the website, social media, and information displayed in the Practice?
- Q Consider asking your patients to review the page(s) on your website and feedback their views on accessibility of PPG information and any ideas for change.

Leaflets/flyers

Producing and distribution of leaflets/flyers and determine how accessible they are for patients i.e. What format are they in? e.g., hard copies, digital copies, languages available. Consider costs of production e.g., printing. Consider using screens in the reception area if available.

You also may wish to consider:

- Q Are patient booklets available at the Practice, and do they include information about the PPG?
- Q Is the Practice Manager able to offer a dedicated space in the waiting room/patient accessible areas for PPG material e.g., noticeboard.

Promoting your PPG

Example flyers

Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire have provided an example flyer below.



Examples of other surgeries promoting their respective PPGs with flyers for membership, in-person and virtual meetings can be found online.



Promoting your PPG

Social media

Social media can be an excellent, low cost way to reach your audience and engage with many patients. It can be a great tool to highlight successful outcomes from issues raised within the PPG.

However, it can be challenging if you are new to social media platforms. Information on how to set up accounts are readily available online.

Social media platforms are applications accessible on your smart device or computer. The key platforms we will highlight are Facebook, X (formally known as Twitter) and Instagram, which are considered most suitable for PPG groups.



Facebook is an online community platform that is used by billions of people worldwide. Your practice will more than likely have a dedicated page so your key audience will already be familiar with you. There is no cap on characters meaning posts can be as in depth as you wish.



X (formerly known as Twitter) has characters capped at 280 so messages can be short and to the point. The use of hashtags is common to engage with your audience and for ease of searching for relevant posts.



Instagram is primarily a photo sharing platform. Use of hashtags are also used here as a way of searching for content. Links cannot be used on individual posts but can be added to the user profile. As with Facebook, there is no cap on characters.

Much like the setting up of a dedicated email address to ensure consistency, we would recommend that your PPG delegates the responsibility of overseeing any social media account to one or two members.

We would also recommend developing a policy around social media usage, especially if your PPG will be interacting with the public online. Your Practice may have a policy that could be adapted for use by the PPG.

Patient surveys

PPGs often support the Practice by encouraging patients to fill out routine surveys such as the NHS Annual GP Survey. Collaboratively, PPGs and Practices can develop surveys tailored to their community. Since 2015, Practices are obliged to take part in the national Friends and Family Test survey. Practices can seek assistance from their PPGs to coordinate and gather feedback for this survey. [Smart Survey](#) can be a great tool for collecting data online.

For more information about the Friends and Family Test, see [appendix](#).

Despite this requirement, some Practices and PPGs may find it beneficial to conduct additional surveys for patients, annually or at specific intervals, to gather feedback on their experiences or opinions regarding the services offered. Here are some suggestions and recommendations for your PPG to keep in mind while creating your survey:

- 🗣️ Make sure your questions are clear and in a language that your participants will understand.
- 🗣️ Keep the questions concise and straight forward.
- 🗣️ Ask only one question at a time.
- 🗣️ Refrain from using abbreviations and jargon.
- 🗣️ Steer clear of leading or loaded questions.
- 🗣️ Think about the length of the survey and the number of questions.

Open-ended questions allow patients to express their thoughts in detail using their own words. While some individuals might feel hesitant to provide lengthy responses, others may seize the opportunity to offer thorough feedback or share additional insights beyond the question's scope.

When designing surveys, remember that direct quotes from the public offer a glimpse into respondents' sentiments, bolstering your points, suggestions, and arguments effectively.

It is crucial to approach this method thoughtfully, as gathering representative feedback involves actively listening to people's perspective over an extended period, ensuring broad, diverse and an inclusive range of voices are heard.

Be prepared to take some action based on people's feedback, and remember to let people know what has happened as a result of their involvement.

Patient surveys

Other question types that can be utilised include ranked/rated/scaled questions. These types allow participants to easily express what matters to them when evaluating a service or sharing their service experiences. For instance, you could ask respondents to rate their visit experience on a scale of 1 to 5, providing options for two negative, one neutral, and two positive responses. By removing the neutral option, respondents are prompted to provide either a negative or positive response, streamlining the process of handling subjective feedback. However, this method might make respondents feel like they have not fully shared their story. If your organisation can review and report detailed narratives, consider adding a comment section to these questions.

Sample size

It is unlikely, and often not feasible, for your PPG to gather input from every patient and carer in your Practice. Therefore, PPGs should work on ensuring that respondents to the survey represent the patient population as closely as possible.

Survey findings are often used as supporting 'evidence' when deciding whether to make changes or not. If the change affects numerous individuals and involves reallocating resources or funds, it is crucial to collect opinions that accurately reflect those of the affected patient population. You can achieve this by ensuring the survey is available in various formats (hard copies and online) and by making efforts to reach a diverse sample of the population.

Consider engaging with your under-served communities using more innovative approaches, e.g., utilising social media platforms, translated documents, attending community engagement events

Using well developed 'easy-read' formats can often bridge the gap across a number of groups.

Primary Care Networks

A Primary Care Network (PCN) is a group of GP Practices working closely together, aligned to other health and social care staff and organisations, providing integrated services to their local population. Some key points:

- Q Typically made up of a defined patient population of at least 30,000 and tend not to exceed 50,000.
- Q The provision of care in different ways to meet individual needs of patients, including flexible access to advice and support services for healthier population groups, and integrated care for those with multi-morbidity, chronic and complex conditions.
- Q A focus on prevention and personalised care, supporting patients to participate and make informed decisions about their care and look after their own health, by connecting them with the full range of statutory and voluntary community services.
- Q The use of data and technology: to assess population health needs and health inequalities; to inform, design and deliver practice- and population-scale care models; support clinical decision making, and monitor performance and variation to inform continuous service improvement.
- Q Making best use of collective resources and collaborative working arrangements across practices and other local health and care providers to allow greater resilience, more sustainable workload and access to a collaborative working multi-disciplinary team.

NHS England believes it is at around this size that networks will best keep the features of traditional community-based general practice. The vision is to offer a balance between effective and efficient care provision within the local population whilst enabling the delivery of patient-centred care to meet the needs of individuals and the wider community.

There are around 1,250 PCNs in England, with over 99% of practices signed up to deliver the Network Contract DES (Directed Enhanced Service).

Whilst practices are not mandated to join a PCN, they will lose out on significant extra funding if they do not. Figures published in May 2020 showed that very few practices had chosen not to be part of a PCN. Those that do not sign up to a network need to be aware that 100% of their patients will still have access to network services via neighbouring Practices, GP federations and other member organisations.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) serves as the independent regulator for health and adult social care in England. It ensures that various healthcare services, including hospitals, dentists, GP Practices, ambulances, care homes, and home care agencies, comply with government standards of quality and safety.

Since 1st April 2013, all GP Practices are mandated by law to register with the CQC and demonstrate compliance with national standards. During inspections, CQC inspectors typically engage with Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) if present at the practice, comprising the chair and another PPG member. PPGs are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the CQC and the inspection process to prepare for future assessments.

Appendix

Templates

The following pages are templates for the following;

- 🔗 [Terms of Reference](#)
- 🔗 [Constitution](#)
- 🔗 [Code of Conduct](#)
- 🔗 [Meeting Minutes](#)

The PPG can decide and use which templates are necessary for their group.

Useful links and websites

N.A.P.P – <https://napp.org.uk/>

The Denny Review – <https://blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/denny-review/>

NHS Youth Forum – <https://www.england.nhs.uk/get-involved/get-involved/how/forums/nhs-youth-forum/>

The King's Fund – <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/>

GDPR – <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection>

Friends & Family Test – <https://www.england.nhs.uk/fft/>

CQC – <https://www.cqc.org.uk/>

JSNA Milton Keynes – <https://miltonkeynes.jsna.uk/>

JSNA Central Bedfordshire – <https://centralbedfordshire.jsna.uk/>

NHS equality, diversity and inclusion improvement plan – <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/nhs-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-improvement-plan/>

Healthwatch Milton Keynes – <https://www.healthwatchmiltonkeynes.co.uk/>

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire – <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/>

Easy read – <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/make-it-easy-easy-read.pdf>

Terms of reference template

Name: *[Insert name of Practice]* **Patient Participation Group.**

Association

- Q The PPG is affiliated with the National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P).

Purpose

- Q To cultivate a collaborative partnership between patients and *[insert name of Practice]* aimed at enhancing and advancing the patient experience within the Practice.
- Q This platform is not designed for addressing individual patient complaints, which should be directed through the Practice's formal complaint procedure.

Ways of working

- Q The Practice typically consults the Patient Participation Group (PPG) whenever contemplating changes that could affect the patient experience within the Practice.
- Q References to the PPG may be made through correspondence such as mail or email, or by convening a PPG meeting.
- Q When deemed suitable, the Practice may seek volunteer(s) to collaborate on particular projects.

Membership

- Q Individuals who are patients registered with the Practice, or caregivers of registered patients, are eligible to become members. The Practice will uphold a roster of members and operate in accordance with the Practice's Data Protection Policy.
- Q While membership is typically a straight forward process, the Practice retains the authority to decline or revoke membership should a member's conduct deviate from the prescribed standards outlined in the Code of Conduct.
- Q Membership will be terminated upon the member no longer being registered at the Practice or upon resignation from the Patient Participation Group.

Terms of reference template

Officers

- Q A Patient Participation Group (PPG) typically consists of a chairperson, one or two Deputy Chairs, a Secretary, a Treasurer (if required), alongside several regular members.
- Q During the inaugural meeting and yearly at the subsequent annual meeting, PPG members are advised to appoint individuals to these officer positions, potentially through a voting process, including secret ballot if deemed necessary.

Meeting Management

- Q A schedule of meetings for the year should be established, allowing for necessary cancellations if required.
- Q PPG members who are unable to attend should send their apologies in advance of the meeting.

Constitution template

The group shall be known as: *[Insert chosen name]*

Membership will be open to any patient registered with the practice and will include the Practice Manager or other Practice Team Members as a representation of the Practice. Membership will be via the meeting group or the virtual group.

Aims

- Q The group can establish a communication conduit connecting patients with the practice.
- Q Collaborating with the Practice, the group can actively solicit feedback from patients to enhance services and draw attention to areas requiring improvement.
- Q The group can support the Practice in quality monitoring by engaging patients in the process.

Objectives

- Q Communication: The group can play a pivotal role in shaping policy development within the Practice by advocating for patient perspectives. This proactive approach will enhance patients' utilisation of available facilities.
- Q Surveys: Conducting surveys among patients can serve as a valuable tool to gather feedback and insights essential for formulating an effective action plan. Collaborating with the practice to disseminate changes to local community groups is also crucial.
- Q The group should stay informed about the commissioning strategies and policies of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and engage in consultations as necessary.
- Q Sharing information to patients through poster displays and the practice newsletter can effectively enhance communication and keep patients informed about relevant updates.

Constitution template

Rules of governing the group

- Q The group shall elect a chair to serve for two years and will be elected at a PPG meeting.
- Q The group will consist of at least a core group of four (4) patients.
- Q The members will actively seek the views of the wider patient list to ensure that they speak with a wider perspective than personal experience alone.
- Q A copy of the minutes from the PPG meeting will be sent out to members via the Secretary and will also be available on request or found on the practice website.

Code of conduct template

Code of Conduct for *[insert name of PPG]* Patient Participation Group.

The role of the Patient Representative within these groups is to represent the wider views and experiences of patients and the public through engagement.

Patient representatives aim to:

Care

- Q Strive to comprehend the perspectives and experiences of others while valuing diversity.
- Q Approach our tasks with receptiveness and a proactive stance towards collaboration and evolution.
- Q Hold ourselves accountable for our attitudes, conduct, and demeanour.

Compassion

- Q Strive to comprehend the perspectives and experiences of others, utilising this insight to enhance commissioning and service delivery whenever feasible.
- Q It is essential to steer clear of scenarios where personal interests clash with the collective good, and to refrain from leveraging our position for personal gain.

Communication

- Q Be an effective communicator by prioritising clarity and understanding to foster constructive dialogues while appreciating and respecting all contributions.
- Q Ensure that written communications are precise, impartial, and well-balanced.
- Q Adhere to the regulations outlined in data protection legislation.

Competence

- Q Demonstrate attitudes and behaviours that align with the expectations and standards of our peers.
- Q Avoid misrepresenting facts in any report, publication, record, or document.
- Q Collect only essential personal data, process it within the intended scope, and refrain from retaining personal data longer than required.

Code of conduct template

Commitment

- Q Demonstrate dedication to the objectives of our group(s) by enhancing the processes of commissioning, delivery, and the quality of patient care within our scope of work.
- Q Advocate for a diverse representation of individuals, ensuring transparency in representing varying perspectives and prioritising the interests of patients.
- Q Embrace diversity as a valuable resource that inspires positive transformation. Address instances of discrimination and deficiencies in patient service standards by actively challenging and questioning such Practices.
- Q Work closely with colleagues and stakeholders to foster collaboration and cooperation to maximise effectiveness in achieving common goals.

Courage

- Q It is imperative to voice concerns when there is a sincere belief that standards of quality patient care have been compromised.
- Q Be a strong representative in advocating for patients' wellbeing.

Meeting minutes template

[Name of Practice] Patient Participation Group
Minutes of the meeting held on *[Date]*
[Location of meeting]

Present: *[List names and role titles]*
Apologies: *[List names of those unable to attend]*

Agenda

- Q Introduction.
- Q Welcome to new members.
- Q Minutes of the last meeting.
- Q Actions/matters arising from the meeting.
- Q PPG development.
- Q Patient survey.
- Q Report back from ICB/ICS/project meeting.
- Q Practice website and PPG promotion
- Q Any other business.
- Q Date of next meeting and venue. *[Insert date and location of the meeting]*

Self assessment template

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this self-assessment survey about your PPG. We hope these questions will support you to look at how your PPG currently works, how effective it is, and explore options for growing your membership, and ways that your Group can have a positive impact on your GP Practice overall.

Practice name _____

Date _____

1 – Start Up	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
I have read the guidance notes in starting a Patient Participation Group in the PPG Information & Support Pack.		
Do you have sufficient people (4-6) interested in being part of an organising committee?		
Do you have committee members such as a secretary, social media lead?		
Do you have a Practice Manager or GP lead who is happy to support the PPG?		

Have you held an open meeting in the day/evening to raise awareness of the PPG and to help to recruit members?		
Have you advertised the PPG on the GP Practice notice boards, electronic screens and/or on the website?		
If you are struggling to start a PPG, have you considered a 'buddy scheme' with other local practices or Primary Care Network?		
2 – Recruitment	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
Have you placed notices in the waiting rooms?		
Have you handed out leaflets to patients?		
Have you notified patients via the website, noticeboards & electronic screens in the GP Practice?		
Are Practice and other staff attached to the practice aware of PPG recruitment?		

Do your recruitment Practices also include recruitment of young people and/or different ethnicities?		
Have you considered approaching other local organisations/charities to inform and link-in with e.g., Healthwatch?		
Have you advertised on social media? e.g., Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter)		
3 – Meetings	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
Do you have an agreed venue?		
Have you identified the best time of day for a meeting?		
Have you decided on the meeting format? e.g., Face to face, virtual or both?		
Have you read the Template for Terms of Reference in the PPG Information & Support Pack?		
Do you have a minute taker for meetings and are points regularly actioned?		

Does the PPG have a 'Code of Conduct' towards each other and the Practice?		
4 – Communications & Publicity	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
Is there a dedicated PPG noticeboard for publicity material e.g., recruitment posters, meeting dates, etc?		
Do you have leaflets to hand out in order to recruit a broad cross section of the patient population of the Practice?		
Do you have an electronic screen to advertise information to waiting Patients?		
Do you have a regular slot in the local press for information and advertising events, etc?		
Do you have a PPG email address for patients to contact the PPG direct? e.g., ppg@thesurgery.com		
Do you have a nominated PPG member organising the PPG section of the Practice website supported by Practice staff?		

5 – Training & Development	Yes/No/ Unsure	Comments
<p>Have PPG Committee members received training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairing meetings.• Dealing with difficult situations.• Structure & work of the NHS• How a GP practice runs as a business.• Patient Leadership.• Confidentiality.• GDPR.		
<p>Have you incorporated a training and development plan into your overall action plan? e.g., Skills map.</p>		
<p>Have you carried out a Training Needs Assessment for your PPG Committee members?</p>		
<p>Have PPG committee members received information about the health needs of the different patient communities on the GP Practice list to help determine areas of priority? (Info can be obtained from your GP Practice/public health team & useful websites)</p>		
<p>Have you a strategy for patient feedback in your ‘workplan’ e.g., Friends and Family Test, GP survey, PPG survey?</p>		

Has a PPG member been trained or are they already trained in collating and analysing data from a number of different sources?		
Is there a nominated person who can feedback to the PPG on data received and themes identified?		
Do PPG members have a standing item on the agenda to discuss anonymised patient concerns and complaints?		
Does the group see the 'action and learning' outcomes from complaints?		
Does the group feedback at Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections?		
6 – Wider planning & Commissioning	Yes/No/Unsure	Comments
Does the PPG work with other PPGs to share ideas/concerns around health awareness, specialist topics etc.?		

Does the PPG receive information on: the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Acute/Mental Health Trusts Council, Community & Social Care, Health & Wellbeing Board, Other?		
Does the PPG have a representative on any of the following; PCN meetings, Hospital patient groups, Mental Health groups, Learning Disability Board, Older people forums, Citizen Pane, other forums?		
Does the PPG have membership of a national body e.g., Patients Association, National Association of Patient Participation Groups (N.A.P.P)?		
Does the PPG have good links with other key patient organisations: Patients Association, Healthwatch, N.A.P.P, other third & voluntary sector Groups?		
Does the PPG promote & publicise positive changes it has made in the Practice, local press, social media, other?		

PPG Goal(s)

Action What needs to be done.	Responsible person Who should undertake the action	Deadline When should the step be completed?	Resources What do you need to complete the step?	Potential challenges Any challenges that may impede completion & how will you overcome them?	Result Was this step successfully completed?



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