

How to set up a Patient Participation Group ... A quick view ...



Broad areas a PPG can work within ...

- Health information
- Health promotion
- Visiting speakers
- Health Forums
- Health and Social Fairs
- Patient Surveys
- Patient Communications – leaflets, websites, newsletters
- Improvement of practice facilities
- Networking with other PPGs
- Affiliations – see Appendix 1

The group can establish ...

- Information sessions on medical and related health topics of interest to patients
- Regular (quarterly) newsletters
- Help with the updating of the practice website (or even create a site of its own)
- Ways to support patients who request social or practical support
- A point of contact for other patients who would like to contribute to the practice
- Ways to influence the practice – or the wider NHS – to improve commissioning
- Fundraising to improve the services provided by the practice
- Practical help for practice events – eg: flu clinics, offer handouts and support on special days (National No Smoking Day), etc.
- Ways to improve practice facilities – eg: new children's area, maintaining plants
- Designs of new services and initiatives – eg: extending opening hours
- Health Fairs

Potential complications ...

- Members of the group may have unrealistic expectations
- Conflicts of Interest
- There may be exaggerated focus on one particular issue
- Become a complaints forum, rather than a forum for expressing and sharing constructive ideas
- The work may become time-consuming

Establishing a Working Group

A PPG is only as good as the people in it ... in particular, the Committee who run it. The skills needed to set up a group are not necessarily the same as the skills needed to run an established group.

Those involved in the group will need to have:

- The confidence of the practice
 - Enthusiasm for patient involvement
 - Willingness to learn
 - Absence of a personal agenda
- A successful group must:
- Involve everyone
 - Develop a clear plan for setting up and developing the group
 - Establish clear goals for the group
 - Good recruitment – the right mix of members

Recruitment

Open Access Democratic

Consider whether the practice might prefer to open the membership invitation to all patients. Call a meeting or advertise for members.

Established User Groups Service Users

Approach established user groups in the area – ante / post-natal, mothers and toddlers, elderly groups, diabetes clinics, well- women and men clinics, etc.

Local Groups May have pre-conceived ideas Conflict of interest

Approach members who already serve on other groups – Rotary, Lions, Round Table, Women’s Institute, Councillors and local representatives of charities.

Direct Approach Pre-selection ... undemocratic

GPs could be invited to select two or three patients who, in their opinion, would serve both the practice and the patients’ interests.

Frequency of Meetings

Initially, it would be good for the group to meet once a month, until everybody agrees to change this. Giving the Group a Title The group will have to decide upon a title. Ideally, open up the discussion and decide democratically upon a name that will reflect the practice name, but will be equally distinct.

Nurturing the Group

Hopefully, members will be pro-active. At this juncture, the group could seek to inform patients about their proposed activities and who is serving on the group.

The group will be generating its own impetus, but it is necessary for representatives of the Practice to attend the meetings, as without their support, the group may tend to drift and equally feel that they are not valued.

- Elicit any burning issues raised by the patients.
- Create a Practice Participation Group newsletter and, possibly, a website.

Getting the group up and running ...

- Ideally, the priority in the early stages will be given to establishing:
- The Terms of Reference
- Electing officers
- Deciding upon a title for the group
- Setting up a bank account (if the practice wished to actively fund the group)
- Agreeing the number of actions that the group feels that they would like to embark upon.

Terms of Reference

The elected Chair may wish to delegate the task of formulating a Constitution to a small working party with the brief to report back. A Constitution will be necessary if:

- The group intends to become a Charity.
- Expects to influence organisations other than the practice – especially if the PPG wishes to be represented on groups advising NHS organisations.
- Read the Charity Commission Publication CC21 (Starting and Registering a Charity).
- If the group intends to become an Unincorporated Association, read the Charity Commission Publication GD3.

Election of Officers ...

Elect a Chair, a Treasurer and a Secretary

- The Chair's main function is to guide the group, formulate the meeting's Agenda and act as an arbiter
- The Secretary will be responsible for taking the Minutes and for circulating them.
- The Treasurer will need to open a bank account and be responsible for financial matters. Recommend two signatories on issued cheques.

APPENDIX 1 – Affiliations / Memberships

Become Affiliated to and join the following:

Healthwatch and Public Involvement Association – (HAPIA)

www.nalm2010.org.uk

NALM (National Association of LINKs Members) has transformed into HAPIA (Healthwatch and Public Involvement Association) and welcomes membership from Healthwatch (LHW), its members and volunteers, and all who support the development of a powerful public voice in all health, social care and public health services.

HAPIA, the 'Healthwatch and Public Involvement Association', is launched today to continue the national campaign to build independent, powerful, community led organisations, that actively inspect, influence and challenge health, social care and public health services, to provide safe, effective and accessible care.

Affiliation Fee: £50.00 per annum

National Association of Patient Participation – (NAPP)

www.napp.org.uk

The National Association for Patient Participation promotes and supports patient participation in primary care.

Groups are an effective way for patients and GP surgeries to work together to improve services and to promote health and improved quality of care. PPGs are making a real difference across the UK.

Join N.A.P.P and benefit from support to your practice and PPG.

Affiliation Fee: £60.00 for the first year
£40.00 thereafter

Healthwatch Surrey

www.healthwatchesurrey.co.uk

Healthwatch will give people a powerful voice locally and nationally. At a local level, local Healthwatch will work to help local people get the best out of their local health and social care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow.

Local Healthwatch is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. Not just people who use them, but anyone who might need to in future.

Healthwatch Surrey, part of the Healthwatch England national network, is a new independent organisation that will give people a voice to improve and shape services and help them get the best out of health and social care services.

Membership: Free

Ashford and St. Peters Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk

Becoming a member of the Foundation Trust gives a greater opportunity to have a real stake in the future of Ashford and St. Peter's.

Key benefits to becoming a Foundation Trust member. You are able to:

- Take part in discussions and consultations about changes and developments at Ashford and St. Peter's
- Vote to appoint Governors
- Stand as a Governor (if over the age of 16)
- Receive regular communications about developments
- Join special interest groups
- Join the NHS Benefit and discount scheme

Membership: Free

Appendix 2 - Thoughts ...

Information for Patients

- Revalidation of Doctors
- Repeat Prescriptions through the Pharmacy
- NHS Health Checks
- Flu Vaccines
- Message in a Bottle
- Jargon Buster
- NHS Flowchart

Think About ...

The number of DNA's – (Did Not Attend) and the cost to the practice – eg: send letter to patients whose DNA = 3+ times (pointing out their personal responsibility whilst, at the same time, asking if there is a problem preventing them from attending.

Brockelbank Group Practice PPG Minutes

Computers –Wandsworth Clinical Commissioning Group (WCCG) has funding to replace computers in general practices throughout Wandsworth. It is our intention to try and keep 2-3 of our old ones for use by patients in the waiting room.

The Balham Park Surgery PPG

Simple Constitution – visit: <http://www.balhamparksurgery.co.uk/bpsplg/bpsplg-constitution.html>