

What are Patient Participation Groups?

“We are patients just like you.....”

Working in partnership with GPs and practice teams, Patient Participation Groups (PPG) ensure the patients perspective is at the heart of local provision so that services are of high quality and continuously improve. PPG groups also provide practical support in the surgery, foster improved communication between the practice and its patients and help patients to take more responsibility for their health.

PPGs are groups of active volunteer patients that work in partnership with practice staff and GPs. This unique partnership between patients and their practices is essential to achieving high quality and responsive care.

Groups meet face to face with practice staff at mutually agreed intervals.

Virtual PPGs now also exist operating alongside the established PPG enabling a dialogue with the larger proportion of the patient population through email and online surveys.

The first PPG was started in 1972 by GPs.

What PPGs and Virtual PPGs do:

PPGs both face to face groups and Virtual groups work in a unique partnership with their practice built on mutual trust and respect to:

- Provide a patients' perspective ensuring services, plans and activities respond to patients needs and priorities – a 'critical friend' to the practice
- Provide practical support to practice teams e.g. conducting and analysing patient surveys, etc
- Organising presentations on important health needs
- Producing a directory/folder of self-care support groups
- Distributing regular newsletters
- Building two-way relationships between patients and the practice
- Promoting awareness of and access to local health services
- Developing a patient library or information resource centre
- Improving the practice leaflets
- Make stronger the relationship between patients and their practices, which is critical to the provision of modern, high-quality general practice

What PPGs and Virtual PPGs do and what Patient Participation is...

P ATIENTS who are
A CTIVE in taking
R ESPONSIBILITY for their health and work as a
T EAM with their practice to ensure that patients are well
I NFORMED about health matters which affect the
C OMMUNITY,
I NDIVIDUAL patients and the
P RACTICE, to raise
A WARENESS of wider issues in the NHS, including the use of
T ECHNOLOGY. PPGs are
I NVOLVED and can have influence in improving the quality of care
O BJECTIVES are to improve the patient experience in primary care in the
N HS

What our PPG does

- Attend regular meetings and discuss topics of interest to both patients and practice.
- Undertake specific roles with the PPG, eg Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer, Information Officer.
- The Chair of our PPG attends various meetings hosted by the NHS, these meetings extract information on topics from a group of PPG members from across our area, not just our practice to influence how the NHS works.

Commissioners within the NHS group have the task of hearing from providers, service users and others as to what can be provided or is needed whilst also responding to the challenges in the system. There are many different ways of enabling these consultations.

In Huddersfield there are some 18 different groups involved. There is also feedback from Health Watch Kirklees and various stakeholder events.

Virtual PPG member's role

- Respond to emails
- Becoming a focus group when the practice needs input on a certain topic
- Attend if able, specific meetings on a topic that needs a wider patient participation
- Complete surveys and questionnaires
- Assist the PPG by giving input on what would be useful information on documents for the patients and practice
- Help with collating information to be used by the practice, if possible
- Work with other members of the PPG if a topic is of interest and the PPG are developing documents
- Giving a wider population of views on topics that will be of benefit to the practice

Who can be a Virtual PPG member?

- Anyone from the age of 16 with parent's consent
- A patient of the practice ONLY
- All ethnicity welcome/desired to enable a wider opinion gathering
- Patients with long term illness (not a requirement)
- Good communicators
- Patients with access to the internet and emails