

PPG Network Support Group

Date: Friday 15 December 2023, 1:30pm – 3:30pm

Venue: The Old Fire Station, Gipton, Leeds (LS9 6NL) and on Zoom (Hybrid meeting)

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) Network support group aims to work on developing initiatives, share ideas and good practice as well as providing support to PPGs and its members.

Meeting notes

Attendees

Chair

Adam Stewart (AS), Senior Insight, Involvement and Engagement Advisor for the Integrated Care Board (ICB) in Leeds

Attending

10 PPG members and people who support PPGs were in attendance at the meeting. Practices and Primary Care Networks (PCNs) represented were:

- Burton Croft Surgery, Woodlsey and Holt Park PCN
- Alwoodley Medical Centre, Central North PCN
- Allerton Medical Centre, Chapeltown PCN
- Collingham Church View Surgery, Wetherby PCN
- Shadwell Medical Practice, Central North PCN
- North Leeds Medical Practice, Central North PCN
- Leeds City Medical Practice, Beeston PCN

For more information on PCNs and to find your practice's network, please visit:

<https://www.leedsgpconfederation.org.uk/about-us/our-practices/>

Updates from the ICB in Leeds

PPG Resources

AS briefly mentioned that he was in the process of updating the PPG Leaflet, PPG email guidance and the PPG Toolkit that he hopes will be available soon.

The PPG leaflet and toolkits will be printed and sent to practices so they have physical documents. They are also available online; the leaflet being customisable, and the toolkit having several appendices that can be customised to individual practices (such as terms of references, ground rules etc.)

The current versions of the resources can be found on the following link. Updated versions will also be available here: <https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/have-your-say/shape-the-future/ppg/resources/>

AS also noted that the PPG email guidance has been updated following some feedback and will be re-circulated shortly to practices to get their emails up and running. The emails can be setup by group members if they are happy to be run it. Full details around emails, including a contact list of existing PPG emails, can be found here: <https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/have-your-say/shape-the-future/ppg/ppg-emails/>

AS also told the group that the GP survey that has been developed together with PPG members and the wider PPG Network is ready to roll out. The idea is that practices don't need to worry about administering their own surveys about general patient experience; they need only ensure that patients are given this opportunity to share their feedback. The feedback will then be shared periodically with practices and PPGs to review how they are going to respond to the feedback and demonstrate how it will be used to develop the service they provide.

A range of ways to promote the survey is being considered to ensure as many people as possible can easily share their feedback on an ongoing basis. The survey can be viewed and completed here: <https://re-url.uk/W6CA>

The survey is ready to use and practices and PPGs can begin collecting feedback. Paper surveys are available, please contact adam.stewart1@nhs.net to request. It is expected that a yearly report will be produced outlining the feedback from the responses received. Individual practices can request the feedback they have received to date as needed.

Practice staff views on PPGs report

AS outlined the report that had been shared with group attendees ahead of the meeting. He explained that practices were surveyed to ask them for feedback on their thoughts about PPGs.

During the autumn of 2023, members of the Integrated Care Board (ICB) in Leeds' Primary Care team asked practices to provide feedback on PPGs. The aim was to understand how practices feel about PPGs, including:

- Current PPG status (active or not)
- How PPGs are run
- What type of promotion is done to encourage involvement.
- When the group last met.
- Views on PPGs in general.
- Barriers to having an effective PPG.

We received 62 responses from 60 practices, representing all 19 Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in Leeds. Some of the key themes from the feedback included:

- There is a general agreement that PPGs are an important part of the practice and are useful in representing the patient voice.
- PPGs help bring new ideas and points of view to practice development.
- Lack of engagement and enthusiasm from patients is a barrier to making PPGs work.
- A lack of diversity in membership is a barrier to making PPGs effective and representative.
- A lack of understanding on the role of PPGs from members can lead to the group losing focus and becoming a 'complaints forum'.
- Practices have a number of ways to promote and advertise their PPGs, the most common methods being practice websites, in-practice noticeboards and Facebook.

The group shared their thoughts and feedback on the report:

- The group thought the responses were interesting and noted the disparity between practices that had good experiences with PPGs and placed value in them and the practices who felt they were a waste of time and had had a negative experience.
- The group suggested it would be interesting to know what the practices with positive experiences were doing so that other practices could share and learn from them.
- For the practices that suggested that the practices were a 'complaints forum', the group were interested in what actions the practices were taking to challenge the members complaining or change the focus of the group. The members discussed how important it was the PPGs maintained their group purpose and reiterated that when it wasn't the case.
- The group queried some practice's complaints process and noted that there may not be an effective complaints process if PPGs were being used as a complaint's forum.
- The group discussed the importance of outlining the benefits of PPGs to show the value they can bring. They noted that negative experiences and feedback, and feelings of 'doing it because we have to' can make practices feel resistant to PPGs and what they can do.

Following this discussion, the group raised a question about what other elements of Primary Care were doing around patient involvement and engagement. As of 1 July 2023, Primary Care involvement responsibility in Leeds also included dentistry, ophthalmology (opticians), and pharmacies as well as GP practices.

Peer support

Each PPG Network support group meeting has time allocated to it for attendees to share ideas, challenges and offer support to fellow PPG members. There is no agenda for this section, unless there is a request to discuss a particular subject, either during the meeting or ahead of the meeting taking place.

- **Getting help with a new PPG** – one of the members sought feedback from other attendees about what they could do to get going with their new PPG. The group suggested ensuring that they review the PPG toolkit as well as visiting other PPGs to see how these groups are run. PPG toolkit can be found here: <https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/have-your-say/shape-the-future/ppg/resources/>
- **Funding** – a few members were interested in what funding should be made available to PPGs as part of the practice's contract to support delivery of a group. AS said he will enquire if there was a specific amount allocated for PPGs, but expect it isn't that specific. It was noted that practices should provide enough resource to allow the PPG to run, including a space to meet and resources, such as printing, as needed. Specific projects that require additional funding would need to be worked out on a case-by-case basis with the practice.
- **Representation** – the group briefly discussed representation and having a representative view on the PPG. It was noted that it can be difficult to get that view in the meetings and the PPG should be advising and querying how the wider patient population view is feeding into practice decision making. The PPG shouldn't be the place to ask for the opinions on the change, the PPG is where the practice should go to check they're hearing from everyone they need to in the right ways. It was also mentioned that PPG members weren't expected to know everything about its practice population, but should be able to query if a group is missing or has been considered in the practice's plans. PPG members can explore breakdowns on populations in a couple of places:
 - **Leeds Observatory** (a place to explore breakdowns of demographics by Local Care Partnerships, such as Armley, Beeston etc.): <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/>
 - **GP Practice profiles** (see a breakdown of population of people registered with a particular GP practice): <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/general-practice>
- **Staying up to date** – the group briefly touched on dissemination of information. To stay up to date, people should ensure they are signed up to the Involving You Network and indicate they are interested in PPGs. People can sign-up here: <https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/have-your-say/shape-the-future/join-our-network/>
- **Communication** – a lot of conversation through the meeting referred to the issue of communication and how it is vital to making PPGs work in both promoting of them and building working relationships with the practice. The group noted that it was one of the most important things to get right, from both a PPG member and practice perspective. The group noted that it was important that PPG members were patient and understanding with relation to communications but also commented that practices needed to value PPGs and respond to them, acknowledging that given how busy practices were, that it might take some time. On the subject of communication to promote and advertise PPGs and helping inform behaviour change (in relation to uptake of the NHS app), the group suggested:
 - Helping practice with sign-up and use of NHS app

- Supporting development of promotional campaign nationally, such as on Emmerdale (getting a character to use NHS app to book an appointment).
- Local radio stations
- Advertise PPGs / patient involvement in local wellbeing groups – get staff to come talk about particular subjects / PPG.
- Practice websites – discussed the need to make sure they're up to date (including current minutes) and are easy to find. The group suggested centralising GP websites into one place to make it easier for patients to navigate.
- The group discussed the 'Expert Patient Programme' and developing communications for 'how to get the most out of your appointment' guides for people.
- The group suggested projects around the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) and communication for carers too.

Future of PPG Network and the support group

AS provided an update to the group regarding the changes happening with the teams at the Integrated Care Board in Leeds. These changes means that there may be a need to change the way in which the support groups are delivered.

AS suggested to the group that a working group is created instead of the support group for the upcoming few months to work on what this could look like. There would be an opportunity to pull together and review all the tools and resources created to support practices in Leeds and ensure that there is as much support and resource available as possible.

Please visit the following website for updates: <https://www.healthandcareleeds.org/have-your-say/shape-the-future/ppg/ppg-network/>

Please contact adam.stewart1@nhs.net or call 0113 221 7723 for any questions.