

Patient Participation Groups (PPG)

Top tips for patient participation at
your GP surgery

June 2018



Introduction

Your surgery has a Patient Participation Group (PPG), in order to understand patient views and help improve services. It is important for PPGs to work for patients and the surgery.

The CCG regards it as good practice to have at least three to four PPG meetings per year.

From 1 April 2015, it has been a requirement in the GP Contract for all practices to have a PPG.



Top tips

It is recognised that a one-size fits all model will not work in Southwark due to variations across GP surgeries.

Here are some top tips to support surgeries and patients develop strong and vibrant PPGs, encourage more people to become involved in your PPG to help offer better service to patients and for patients to have a better understanding of how surgeries work.

- Benefits of a PPG
- Recruitment and advertising
- Preparing, supporting and chairing
- Agenda setting
- Other ways of engaging patients
- Resources



Benefits of a PPG:

To patients

The importance of patient participation is becoming increasingly obvious to both patients and healthcare providers alike. Benefits to patients include:

- understanding and having a say on how your surgery works
- feeding back on what works well and what needs improving at your surgery
- learning new skills e.g. talking to or surveying other patients
- ensuring two-way communication with your surgery
- meeting new people
- providing peer support to other patients
- having a positive impact on your mental and physical health and improving your health outcomes
- supporting better management of your health.

To the surgery

When patients take an active role in their own wellbeing and participate in their healthcare choices, there can be significant benefits to the surgery, which include:

- providing an opportunity to listen to patients and providing a responsive service, leading to better patient satisfaction ratings
- testing and discussing potential changes before making them so that they work better for patients as well as the surgery
- responding to patient issues before they become problematic
- enabling the surgery to publicly demonstrate its commitment to patient engagement and having a positive reputation
- improved health outcomes for patients and less appointments
- supporting better CQC ratings.



Recruitment and advertising

- Create a simple and clear flyer about your PPG, what it does and future meeting dates, including surgery contact details, and:
 - display on the counter in reception
 - display on your PPG notice board
 - have in your consulting rooms for GPs and nurses to hand out to patients they think would be interested in the PPG
 - display at local community centres, groups, churches, mosques etc., pharmacies and other local businesses close to your surgery. See the end of the top tips for some organisations.
- Have clear information about your PPG including dates and who to contact prominently displayed on your website. Contact the CCG's membership and engagement team to link to the [CCG's GP PPG](#) page.
- Include details of your PPG and how to join and link to the PPG section of your website as part of your information pack for new patients.
- Proactively identify people from your list of registered patients who you think might be interested in joining your PPG and contact them.
- Contact patients who have provided feedback or made a complaint to see if they would be interested in joining your PPG. If they have taken the time to make a complaint they may be interested in providing feedback on other ideas / proposals.
- Create and continue to develop a PPG mailing list (email and / or post) of everyone who has shown an interest. Continue to

include people and enable them to feedback via email even if they cannot attend meetings.

- If you have an electronic screen in your surgery, use this to promote your PPG and dates of meetings.
- Use the back of prescriptions to promote PPG, what it does and dates of meetings.
- If your surgery has a Facebook or Twitter account, you can promote the PPG and dates of meeting on this.
- Use other local social media and websites such as the [SE1 forum](#), the [SE16 community website](#), the [Walworth SE17 twitter account](#), the [SE5 forum for Camberwell](#), the [Peckham Peculiar](#), the [East Dulwich Forum](#) or the [Love Nunhead website](#).
- You can also make links with your [relevant Community Council](#) and use their mailing lists, Facebook pages or have an information stall at one of the meetings. Invite active PPG members to help staff information stalls.
- Encourage active PPG members to promote the PPG verbally and with flyers to patients in the waiting room and ask them to promote to family and friends who are also registered at your surgery.
- Use the [my PPG forum](#) (a PPG chat forum with a Southwark PPG Network group) to recruit members and share ideas.
- Remember your patients and PPG members are a great resource for your surgery, so maintain member's interest and consider their ideas to retain their loyalty.
- Try and ensure your PPG is representative of your surgery and local population – not just individual personal interests.
- Younger people may prefer to interact virtually e.g. through social media, so reach out to them regularly.
- People who work have less time to offer – think of how you can involve them in shorter interactions, such as asking for views via texting with a link to the surgery website or via email.



Preparing, supporting and chairing PPG meetings

- A well run and organised PPG can make the whole meeting more enjoyable for everyone. Having [ground rules](#) and clear [terms of reference](#) as well as a strong chair can help with this.
- Before the meeting:
 - plan and time the [agenda](#) and this needs to be jointly agreed between the surgery and the patient chair (if there is one) ensuring there is space for both surgery and patient issues as well as feedback from and feeding into locality PPGs
 - distribute agenda and minutes of previous meeting to those on your PPG mailing list (at least a week before the meeting) and ensure they are on your website
 - organise some light refreshments (e.g. tea, coffee, biscuits).
- The role of the PPG chair is important as they help the meeting to run smoothly and efficiently, ensuring
 - members are clear of the purpose of the meeting
 - all items on the agenda are introduced and discussed and any speakers are introduced
 - everyone's views are heard
 - clear decisions are reached or discussions summarised at the end of every agenda item
 - meetings start and finish on time, thanking people for their time and contributions.
- The PPG chair is often a patient but may need support from the practice manager whose role is vital to encourage positive support from all surgery staff and who, on the day, can:
 - make sure the meeting space, refreshments and papers are ready so the meeting can start on time
 - help welcome members along with the chair
 - mediate any difficult behaviour.

- Remember everyone can learn how to chair well. Look out for CCG training on running successful PPG meeting including chairing skills, starting in the autumn.
- After the meeting, it is good practice to:
 - produce and circulate draft, clear minutes as soon as possible, with all decisions and actions clearly noted (check for accuracy with speakers)
 - respond to questions and queries as soon as possible
 - start taking actions forward as soon as possible
 - send out any additional information (i.e. presentations from speakers).
- Consider regular GP attendance to promote senior buy-in from the surgery. This also demonstrates that the surgery places importance on the role of the CCG.



Agenda setting

- The [agenda](#) needs to be jointly agreed between the surgery and the patient chair (if there is one) ensuring there is space for both surgery and patient issues as well as feedback from and feeding into locality PPGs and should also include:
 - start and finish times as well as timings for other agenda items as this can make the meeting easier to manage
 - speakers' names, titles and roles
 - note date, time and venue of next meeting.
- Agendas and minutes from previous meetings should be produced and circulated prior to each PPG meeting (at least a week beforehand), so members arrive knowing what is to be discussed and with sufficient background information to make relevant contributions.
- Agenda items can include:
 - Any changes the surgery is considering
 - [national GP survey results](#) (published in July every year)
 - the surgery's Friend and Family Test results and themes
 - the surgery's appointment systems and how it works from the surgery and patient perspective
 - online services
 - how the [8 – 8 \(the Extended Primary Care\)](#) service works with your surgery's appointment system.



Other ways of engaging patients

- You could organise particular themed meetings or health fair events on diabetes or mental wellbeing etc. and other health conditions depending on what would be beneficial to the surgery's patients and this could link with national campaigns and awareness days or months such as Carers Week, Diabetes Week, Men's Health Week, Breathe Easy Week, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Movember (Men's Health Awareness Month), Dry January, Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness week etc. [NHS Employers has a useful calendar of campaigns on their website.](#)
- Promote surgery open days, coffee mornings or 'bring and share' days to nurture community spirit and pride in your local surgery – this can be very important in areas with a high number of temporary residents.
- Invite demonstrations around healthy eating and lifestyle to promote opportunity for better health and wellbeing - a great way for local people to engage, interact, learn and enjoy!
- PPG members could start a healthy walking group through a local park or a gardening project at the surgery if the surgery has the space.
- PPG members might want to form links with local time banks or other volunteering activities so they can take part on local 'skills swaps'.



Resources

- MY PPG chat forum <http://www.myppg.co.uk/>
- National Association of Patient Participation - the CCG arranges for all surgeries to be a member of NAPP
<https://www.napp.org.uk/intro.html>
- GP Survey website <https://www.gp-patient.co.uk/>
- NHS Employers calendar of national campaigns 2018-2019
<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing/sustaining-the-momentum/calendar-of-national-campaigns-2016>

Local voluntary and community sector organisations

- Community Southwark <https://communitysouthwark.org/>
- Time and Talents <http://www.timeandtalents.org.uk/>
- Blackfriars Settlement <http://www.blackfriars-settlement.org.uk/>
- Pembroke House <https://pembrokehouse.org.uk/>
- Cambridge House <http://ch1889.org/>
- Pecan <https://www.pecan.org.uk/>
- Copleston Centre <https://www.coplestoncentre.org.uk/>
- Paxton Green Time Bank <http://www.pgtimebank.org/>
- HOurBank, Peckham
<http://www.timebanking.org/location/hourbank-peckham/>

Local community forums across Southwark

- SE1 community forum <http://www.london-se1.co.uk/forum/>
- SE 16 community website <http://www.se16.com/>
- Walworth SE17 Twitter @se17
- SE5 forum for Camberwell <http://www.se5forum.org.uk/>

- The Peckham Peculiar <http://peckhampeculiar.tumblr.com/>
- Love Nunhead <http://lovenunhead.co.uk/>

Southwark Council Community Councils

- Southwark Council community council pages
<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/engagement-and-consultations/community-councils>

NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group web pages

- GP PPG page <http://www.southwarkccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/Join%20a%20group/Pages/GP-Practice-Patient-Participation-Groups.aspx>
- PPG resources / top tips for PPGs
<http://www.southwarkccg.nhs.uk/news-and-publications/meeting-papers/locality-ppgs/Pages/default.aspx>
- 8 – 8 service <http://www.southwarkccg.nhs.uk/your-health/health-services-in-southwark/Pages/Extended-Primary-Care-Service-.aspx>

Further support and advice

Further support and advice is available from the CCG's Membership and Engagement Team:

Email: souccg.southwark-ccg@nhs.net

Telephone: 020 7525 7888

Web: www.southwarkccg.nhs.uk