

The PPG Guide

**Guidance for establishing and running a
Patient Participation Group**



Contents

Contents.....	1
About us	2
Introduction.....	3
Benefits of having a PPG	3
How can PPGs work with GP practices?	4
Setting up a PPG	5
Roles.....	5
Recruiting patients	7
Low membership of a PPG	8
Support.....	9
Working with Healthwatch Sunderland	10
FAQs	11
Terms of Reference Template.....	13
Minutes Template.....	15
Constitution Template	16
Code of Conduct Template.....	18
Thank you.....	20

If you require this document in an alternative format, please get in touch with us using the details on the back page.

About us

We are an independent voice for the people of Sunderland. We are here to listen to the experiences of Sunderland residents and give them a stronger say in influencing how local health and social care services are provided.

Our mission

We are a strong, independent, and effective champion for people that use health and social care services. We will continue to influence health and care services and seek to improve joined-up care for the people of Sunderland.

Our vision

We want to see people who use health and social care services centre stage, so that service providers and commissioners listen to what they have to say and use their voices to shape, inform and influence service delivery and design.



Introduction

What is a Patient Participation Group (PPG)?

- **A PPG is a group of volunteer patients, the practice manager and one or more GP. A PPG is open to every patient on the GP practice's patient list.**
- **PPGs are a route for patients to advise and inform the practice on what matters most to patients and to help identify solutions to problems.**
- **GP practices have PPGs as a way for patients and carers to:**
- **Work with GPs and practice staff to improve local services and the quality of care**
- **Improve communication with patients**
- **Promote health and wellbeing**
- **Ensure practices remain accountable and responsive to patient needs**
- **Be a representative of the practice population**
- **Assist where possible to improve the service**
- **Ensure the patient's voice is heard and used to influence the provision of local health services.**

Benefits of having a PPG

How can a PPG benefit patients, the GP practice, and the local community?

For patients:

- **Patients can feel more responsible for their own health and wellbeing**
- **Have a better understanding of the practice and staff**
- **Have a greater appreciation of wider NHS policies**
- **Improve communication of broader patient issues**
- **Contribute to the practice on National Patient Survey results and Friends and Family Test feedback.**

For the community:

- **The patient population will have a body through which they can help others in need, they will get an idea of what is needed to improve healthcare**
- **Encourage the patient population to contribute feedback to the practice on National Patient Survey results and Friends and Family Test feedback**
- **The PPG can encourage health awareness and patient education to improve health within the community.**

For the practice:

- **Help support and promote the practice's aims and objectives**
- **Plan services jointly with patients to increase effectiveness**
- **Improve communication with patients**
- **Have a forum to suggest positive ideas and voice concerns**
- **PPGs can help in meeting targets and objectives.**

How can PPGs work with GP practices?

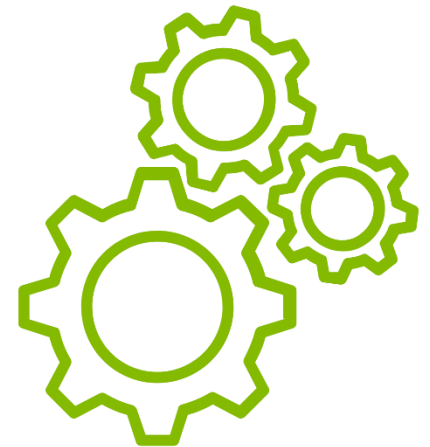
- Help gather feedback for the practice about patient experience
- Help design and carry out patient surveys asking for local views about services
- Work with the practice to develop self-help projects to meet the needs of fellow patients, such as support for carers
- Help with communication between the practice and the local population and monitor the accessibility of the communication
- Support the surgery practically by helping to organise health promotion days or helping at flu clinics
- Speak to charity groups to organise events that can reduce health inequalities

- Support the practice in producing a patient newsletter for the practice
- Encourage health and wellbeing activities within the practice such as basic first-aid training and awareness days
- Contribute if the practice is inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC may want to speak with the PPG chair and other members to seek their views.

Setting up a PPG

How do you set up a PPG?

Some PPGs may be well-established, but it may seem a bit daunting to set one up. It is important that a PPG is meaningful to both the patients and the practice staff. There are various ways to work towards this that are specific to each PPG.



For new PPGs, it may be helpful to join the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP). NAPP can help you to meet the contractual requirement to establish and maintain a PPG. It can equip GPs with the resources needed to establish PPGs and support them with ongoing questions and issues.

In the next section, you will find some recommendations that can be used for a first PPG meeting and a clear outline of the roles and responsibilities of a PPG.

Roles

Examples of roles and responsibilities

Be aware that every PPG is different, below is an example of how the roles could be set up. This can be discussed, and responsibilities shared between members.



PPG Chair and Vice Chair

The PPG Chair leads the PPG to enable it to fulfil its purpose and ensure there is an effective relationship between the PPG, the practice, and the patients.

- Establish and maintain the Terms of Reference, if they feel these are needed (template page 13)
- Maintain a good working relationship between the PPG and the practice
- Liaise with the practice and the PPG to develop an agenda for the meeting
- Chair the meetings (a practice staff member could do this instead of a PPG member), conduct them, contribute, and bring them to a close in good time
- Encourage the PPG to develop ideas and initiatives that will benefit the patient population
- Moving to a vote (if necessary) by the Terms of Reference
- Ensure there is a process in place to record minutes and follow up on any actions
- Represent the PPG at other relevant meetings.

PPG Member

- Represent the patients of the practice within PPG meetings
- Contribute views on practice matters
- Read the meeting agenda and be prepared for the meeting
- Provide advice to the practice on how to engage the patients
- Positively represent the PPG.

PPG Secretary

- Helps to plan the meetings and agendas
- May provide administrative support, if agreed with the practice
- Ensure that meetings/agendas are drawn up and sent out in advance
- Take notes during the meetings and distribute minutes following the meeting.

Treasurer (optional)

A treasurer may not be needed if there is no PPG income or expenditure. If there is, and a treasurer is needed, the account could be managed through the practice.

- Giving receipts for all monies received
- Presenting regular financial reports
- Agreeing budgets
- Arranging for an annual independent audit.

Recruiting patients

Examples of what has worked

- **Offer hybrid meetings:** Offering these where people can meet face to face and/or can join in virtually would make meetings less restrictive and mean more people can take part.
 - If PPG members are unsure how to offer online meetings this could be arranged by the practice
- **Open evenings:** Opening evenings for people with a learning disability to understand how they could improve their experiences of the practice. The PPG had a stall at the event to promote the work of the PPG and recruit new members.
- **Call for family and friends:** One PPG put a call out to their families and friends to generate interest in joining the PPG.
- **Meet and greets sessions:** One PPG arranged to have a meet and greet session within the practice. By speaking with patients as they arrived for their appointments the PPG representative(s) were able to explain the role of a PPG and generate some interest
- **Online mailing list:** This can encourage people to sign up for the patient group mailing list. This enables people to get involved in topics that interest them and reduces the need for people to feel they need to participate in every subject/topic.
- **Newsletters/updates on the PPG:** Create ways to update patients on the work the PPG is doing. Encourage patients to sign up for the updates.



- **School links:** One PPG works closely with the local senior schools to recruit sixth-form students. The students are involved in the work of the PPG for a year before they go on to university/work. The PPG Chair contacts the lead teacher once a year who helps with the recruitment.
- **Staff/Nurses:** Ask your staff and nurses to put a call out to their families and friends to generate interest in joining the PPG.
- **TV Screens:** Advertise your PPG through your TV screens.
- **Healthwatch:** You can contact us to advertise for new members to join your PPG.
- **Social media:** Use your social media platforms to advertise your PPG.

Low membership of a PPG

Where PPG membership is low, there are still many ways that the patient voice can influence practice management decisions.



- Community event attendance
- General patient insight from Healthwatch Sunderland
- Staff suggestions
- Patient complaints process
- Targeted community initiatives
- Patient comments on social media and websites
- Staff feedback from direct patient interactions
- Patient suggestions
- Service changes – specific surveys
- GP annual survey.
- Set up an online survey, display a QR code at your reception and get your staff to encourage user feedback – Paper copies should be available to those who are unable to complete the survey online.

Support

National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP)

NAPP can provide several PPG resources and information to support the development of PPGs, as well as ideas for meeting topics. Practices/PPGs can choose to become members of NAPP by paying a joining fee. Visit www.napp.org.uk for more information.



Working with Healthwatch Sunderland

PPGs can work with us in several ways to support their role

- Sign up for our Newsletter to keep up to date with current local information on health and social care as well as our research projects and insights, you can do this by visiting our website.
- Ask us to come and give updates about the work we are doing and listen to any issues you may wish to share about health and care services in your area.
- Follow our social media to see regular updates on health issues and patient engagement opportunities.
- Proactively come to us to give feedback about things relating to health and care services in Sunderland such as phlebotomy, podiatry, care homes etc. Contact us by:

Website: www.healthwatchsunderland.com

Call: 0191 514 7145

Text only: 07418 364 340

Post: Healthwatch Sunderland, The Co-op Centre, Whitehouse Road,
Hendon, Sunderland, SR2 8AH

Email: healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net

- Ask us for signposting information

FAQs

Why have a PPG?

- Since 2015, having a PPG has been contractual for all GP practices. It is an expectation for CQC assessments that practices have a functioning, proactive, and supportive PPG.

How many patients should be in the PPG?

- There is no fixed number for a patient group, but it is best to start with a core group of 4-6 members who can commit and participate
- If the practice is set up for it, there can be additional virtual members who participate through the website.

How often should PPGs meet and go to events?

- There is no fixed number of required meetings or events
- All PPGs are different and shouldn't follow a set rule
- Some PPGs meet every 2-3 months, some monthly
- The decision on how often PPGs should meet is based on what is helpful for the patients and practice
- How many events (such as health promotion days) are dependent on the practice and what the PPG members agree is helpful
- Working groups to codesign things such as surveys are again as and when the PPG members and the practice feel is helpful.

What time is best to meet?

- Getting the time right is vital. Timing depends on the preference of PPG members (if you already have them signed up), and the nature of your practice population
- If you have evening/weekend meetings or events, this may attract people who work full-time or have children.

How long should meetings be?

- Meetings should be long enough to discuss the relevant topics, but not too long that people switch off
- Some PPGs meet for one hour, some for longer.

Where can we meet?

- The meeting room should be supplied by the practice
- If the PPG cannot meet at the practice, a space in the community should be found
- Some PPGs hold their meetings online, a hybrid or virtual option can make meetings more inclusive and increase attendance
- PPGs can attend many other events relevant to the practice, such as health promotion days.

Templates

The following pages are templates for the following:

- The Terms of Reference
- Meeting minutes
- The Constitution
- Code of Conduct



The PPG can decide which templates they feel are necessary for their group.

Terms of Reference

Template

Patients making it better for patients

Name: (The name of the Practice) Patient Participation Group (the PPG)

Association:

- The PPG is affiliated with the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP).

Purpose:

- To develop a working partnership between patients and the [insert name of Practice] to support the continuous development and improvement of the Practice's patient experience.
- It is not a forum for individual patient complaints. These must be fed to the Practice through their complaint procedure.

Way of Working:

- The Practice will normally refer to the PPG membership whenever they are considering changes that may impact the patient experience whilst in the care of the Practice
- Practice reference to the PPG may be via mail/email or through calling a PPG meeting
- Where appropriate, the Practice may ask for a volunteer(s) to work with them on specific projects.

Membership:

- Any patient registered with the Practice, or the carer of a registered patient may become a member. The Practice will maintain a listing of members and will be run following the Practice's Data Protection Policy.

- Membership will normally be a formality, but the Practice reserves the right to turn down or remove membership if a member 's behaviour falls below the expected standards set out in the Code of Conduct
- Membership will cease when the member is no longer registered at the Practice or resigns from the PPG.

Officers:

- A PPG will normally have a chairperson plus one (or two) Deputy Chairs; a Secretary; (sometimes) a Treasurer; and several ordinary Members.
- At the inaugural meeting, and once a year thereafter at the annual meeting, the PPG members should appoint to these officer roles (by vote at the meeting if necessary, using secret ballot).

Management of meetings:

- A pattern of meetings for the year should be arranged (even if some need to be cancelled later)
- Any PPG members unable to attend should send their apologies in advance of the meeting.

Minutes Template

[NAME OF GP SURGERY] Patient Participation Group

Minutes of the meeting held on [DATE]

[LOCATION] of meeting

Present: **[List names and role titles]**

Agenda items:

- **Apologies [list names of apologies]**
- **Introduction**
- **Welcome to new members**
- **Minutes of the last meeting**
- **Actions/matters arising from the minutes**
- **PPG development**
- **Patient survey**
- **Report back from ICB/ICS meeting**
- **Practice website**
- **Any Other Business**
- **Date of next meeting and venue [insert date and location of the meeting]**

Constitution Template

The group shall be known as:

.....

Membership will be open to any patient registered with the practice.

Membership will be via the meeting group or the virtual group.

Aims:

- **The group can provide a communication channel between the patients and the practice**
- **With the help and assistance of practice, the group can seek suggestions from patients for improvements to the service and highlight any areas that need attention**
- **The group can assist the practice in monitoring quality through patient participation.**

Objectives:

- **Communication: The group can influence the development of policies in the practice by representing patient views. This will ensure patients make the best use of the facilities available**
- **Surveys: The group can conduct surveys with patients to inform the action plan**
- **The group can work with the practice to ensure changes are fed down to local community groups**
- **The group can be informed of the commissioning plans and policies of the CCG and engaged in consultations when required**
- **Information can be given to patients through poster displays and the practice newsletter (if the practice has one).**

Rules governing the group:

- **The group shall elect a chair to serve for two years and will be elected at a PPG meeting.**
- **The group will consist of at least a core group of four (4) patients**
- **A copy of the minutes from the PPG meeting will be sent out to members via the Secretary and will also available be on request or found on the practice website.**

DATE:

REVIEW ON:

Code of Conduct Template

Code of Conduct for [insert name of PPG] Patient and Patient Participation Groups

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:

- **Seek to understand the views and experiences of others and respect difference/s**
- **Approach our work with an open mind and a willing attitude toward engagement and change**
- **Take responsibility for our attitudes, actions, and behaviour.**

Compassion:

- **Seek to understand the experiences and views of others and use these to inform /improve commissioning and service provision/delivery where possible**
- **Avoid situations where our personal interests conflict with those of the group and avoid using our position for personal benefit.**

Communication:

- **Be a good communicator, seeking clarity and understanding to maintain constructive dialogue and respect and value all contributions**
- **Make written communications accurate, objective, and balanced**
- **Abide by the rules of data protection legislation.**

Competence:

- **Display attitudes and behaviours which meet with the expectations and standards of our colleagues**
- **Never misrepresent facts in any report, publication, record, or other document**

- **Never collect more personal data than needed: Process personal data in line with the scope the data was provided for, and never store personal data longer than necessary.**

Commitment:

- **Demonstrate that we are committed to the work of our group(s), and improvement to commissioning, delivery, and standards of patient care as they relate to our work**
- **Represent a range of different people and the interests of patients with candour**
- **Treat diversity as an asset and an opportunity for change**
- **Challenge and question discrimination and other areas where the standard of patient service falls short**
- **Work closely with others.**

Courage:

- **Speak up when we believe (in good faith) that standards of good patient care are breached**
- **Patient representative.**

DATE:

REVIEW ON:

Thank you

Thank you to Healthwatch Derbyshire, Healthwatch Central West London and Healthwatch Norfolk for letting us use information from their PPG Guides.




Healthwatch Sunderland
Co-op Centre,
Whitehouse Road,
Hendon,
Sunderland,
SR2 8AH

www.healthwatchSunderland.com

Call: 0191 514 7145

Email: healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net

 @HWSunderland

 [Facebook.com/HWSunderland](https://www.facebook.com/HWSunderland)

healthwatch
Sunderland