



PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION GROUP

Annual Report

2018--2019

Report compiled by Carol McKeough, Chair of the Len Valley Practice PPG.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PATIENTS' PARTICIPATION GROUP

Since April 2015 it is a contractual requirement for all GP Practices in England to form a Patients' Participation Group (PPG) and to make reasonable efforts for this to be representative of the practice population.

PPGs are grass roots organisations which respond to the needs of their own patient and practice community. They aspire to contribute to continuous long-term improvement in quality of patient care and improvement in the patient experience.

The PPG acts as long-term critical friend to the Practice to contribute to continuous improvement in the quality of patient care and in the patient experience. The PPG aims to

provide the patient perspective and may include health promotion, surveys, newsletters, service development, or support.

The current PPG meets every 2 months, upstairs at the Lenham surgery. The meetings this year have usually started at 6.30 but this will be reviewed. Currently the meetings are held at the Lenham Surgery to facilitate representation from GP's and the Practice Manager. The PPG need to have representatives of the practice at the meetings and in the last year we have had the practice manager to most meetings and latterly her assistant has also attended and taken notes. One of the GP's has attended for a short session at some of the meetings held. Dates for future meetings will be agreed at or after the AGM.

All PPG meetings are open to all registered patients. The PPG aims to be representative of all patients. Our PPG needs to recruit more young people and young parents so that we can ensure that their needs are taken into account by the PPG and the practice.

The current PPG has 11 members 8 of whom attend most meetings plus two virtual members who receive papers and minutes and are able to send their views and comments to the PPG chair. Most communication is carried out electronically and the practice kindly prints off papers for those attending the meetings.

2. The terms of reference for the Len Valley Practices' PPG were agreed at the 2017 AGM. They include the following 3 sections of this report.

i. Our purpose is to:

- a) Consult with and between the practice and its patients in order to ensure any changes or developments to the surgery and the service it provides are relevant, fully thought out, understood and implemented smoothly.
- b) Receive information from external organisations, e.g. West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group and respond accordingly with local feedback to inform their commissioning plans

ii. To achieve our purpose, we will:

- a) Canvas and provide feedback on patient's needs concerns and interests

- b) Represent patients and help them to understand the practice's procedures
- c) Promote good health and health literacy by supporting such activities within the practice e.g. walking groups, assisting the practice at flu clinics, developing questionnaires, promoting preventative initiatives.
- d) Raise key or controversial issues with the practice.
- e) Give patients a voice in the organisation of their care by influencing the provision of primary and secondary healthcare and social care locally.

iii. Constitution of the PPG

- a) Number of members to be a maximum of 15: a quorum will be 6.
- b) The aim will be for members to be a representative sample of patient demographics.
- e) There will be a minimum of 4 general meetings a year.
- d) Chair and Vice-Chair to be elected / re-elected at the AGM, Membership to be reconfirmed annually
- e) Terms of reference to be reviewed annually
- f) Minimum of 1 practice staff member to be in attendance at every meeting
- g) Apologies must be received before meetings where possible to the chair.
- h) Routine meetings to last 1 hour, currently starting at 6.30 pm. Meetings to be extended to accommodate visiting speakers or an additional meeting where appropriate.
- i) Meeting agendas will be developed by the PPG in consultation with the practice.

3. Changes in the Practice.

Elaine Moles Hawley is the Practice Manager and in taking on this role she has retained her responsibility as the Pharmacy Manager. Part way through the year an assistant to Elaine was recruited and we were very happy to welcome Carol Cable to our meetings. Elaine has been with the practice for 8 years. Dr Lee Welsh has joined a couple of the meetings when he has finished his surgery.

All practice staff have now a name badge as suggested by the PPG.

The practice has a new website and currently this shows:

The Practice Partners are: Dr. Hagan, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Reed, Dr. Kendrew and Dr. Welsh

Our Salaried GP is: Dr. Westerbeek

Our Registrars are Dr Eason, Dr. Mayala, Dr. Kandasamy

GP Retainer Dr. Streeter

The website also names all clinical and other staff. The section for the PPG is rather out of date. Hopefully this will be remedied in the near future.

With the increase in the population of Lenham and Harrietsham the need to further develop the surgeries in Harrietsham and Lenham has been the subject of discussion at PPG meetings. The challenges posed by additional patients especially with the possible growth in population from the development of up to 5000 new homes in Lenham Heath.

4. Activities and Achievements

The PPG has met 5 times since the October 2018 AGM. Our meetings have included the practice manager her assistant and Dr Welsh has attended for sessions at a couple of meetings. We have discussed a range of issues during these meetings including:

- a) The need to expand the practices facilities at Harrietsham and more recently Lenham and the liaison with the Parish Councils and the CCG.
- b) Discussing the range of Walks organised by Patients of the Practice and supported by PPG members, and training/refresher training for the walk's leaders.
- c) Receiving feedback from the practice including new staff in post and the thorny issue raised by patients of getting appointments.
- d) Receiving information from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and responding to consultations surveys. I attended most of the BI Monthly PPG chairs meetings organized currently by the West Kent CCG.
- e) I attended a West Kent and Medway CCG 's PPG Conference at Rochester Corn Exchange on 4th September. It introduced some changes to NHS services being discussed through the Transforming Health and Social Care Programme. Issues raised included the likelihood of all the CCG in Kent and Medway joining together, the newly developed Primary Care Quality Standards and more information about the introduction of Primary Care Networks.
- f) We continue to encourage sign up to Patient Access to enable on- line appointment booking and cancellation and requesting repeat prescriptions. You can now pre-book a limited number of GP appointments on-line.
- g) We have discussed issues with getting through on the telephone and the introduction from Dr Hagen when you get through. This relies on the caller having good hearing and memory to enable the choice of the correct number to get through to your chosen area in the practice.

- h) The importance of recognising that with the demand on GP time, other clinical pathways may well be able to meet the patients need.
- i) We have talked about the Physio first opportunity which can assist in diagnosing musculoskeletal conditions and recommend treatment without the patient having to be seen first by the GP to make a referral.
- j) PPG Finances: These are rather limited and a there is a new notice about the book library at the back of the waiting room, where donated books can be bought for a donation. This money can be used for health promotion or other activities identified in consultation with the practice.
- k) It is important to note that for many patients of the practice who do not have access to the internet, appointments can still be booked via phone and of course by visiting the surgeries. Repeat prescriptions can also be requested by posting the prescription request form to either of the surgeries.
- l) More recently a discussion about the difficulties in parking in the large car park lead to my being asked to meet with representatives of Lenham Parish Council about the local plan. The car park is to be enlarged to the east of the site, but parking will still be a challenge when large meeting take place in the community center.
- m) I attended a very interesting asthma workshop on 26th September which sought the views of patients about their experiences of current asthma support services. I was surprised to learn that research showed that over 50% of patients were not using their inhalers effectively. I also learnt that steroid inhalers were not the only treatment available for asthma sufferers.

Further similar workshops are being held for:

Diabetes, at the Julie Rose Stadium on 27th November from 18.30 to 20.30 and

Cardiovascular Diseases, at Gillingham Football Club (ME7 4DD) on 4th December from 18.30 to 20.30

To book a place ring: 07920873682 or email

designandlearningcentre@kent.gov.uk

5. Primary Care Network

From Summer 2019 Len Valley Practice became part of the Ridge Primary Care Network (PCN). The other practices in the Ridge PCN are, Bearsted, Sutton Valence, Langley and Headcorn. The Clinical Director of the Ridge PCN is Dr Faye Hinsley, a GP based at Headcorn Surgery. A Primary Care Network is a group of GP practices coming together to

share their experience, workforce and services, with the aim of better meeting the needs of their community.

The network has already accessed funding for what are called enhanced services. These Direct Enhanced Services (DES) are the additional clinics being developed and shared across the Ridge PCN and these will be funded through additional monies from NHS England. Information about some of the services can be found on the PCN website.

www.theridgepcn.co.uk. There is a patient survey available on the site that will enable patients to provide their views on the new services and to say if they or their family may wish to use these services. www.theridgepcn.co.uk/survey . A paper copy of the survey will be available from the reception within the next few weeks.

What does that mean to me as a Patient / Community?

In sharing GP practices resources and working together, they can widen the range of services offered to patients. These clinics/services can be offered in areas closer to you, (within the network of GP practices) and at times that are varied, so they can better meet you and your family's busy lives. It is not about cutting services it is about building on them and enhancing those that already exist - so they can be more available and effective for patients. The Ridge PCN has recruited to the new posts of a Pharmacist and a Social Prescriber. These practitioners will work across all 5 practices.

The following are the clinics that are planned to be running from November / December:

- **Adult Counseling:** *if you are experiencing MH problems such as depression, anxiety, stress or PTSD, there will be ThinkAction counsellors available either by referral at the surgery and your GP or nurse, or self-referral, which you will be able to do from the PCN website link. The service will run as a clinic from each practice within the PCN at a designated day.*
- **Family Support Group:** *this clinic is for children and parents. It will provide a children's counsellor, a parent volunteer and a health visitor to support both children and parents. It will run from Headcorn surgery on Saturday mornings. You will be able to get a referral through your GP, health visitor or the receptionists at your surgery.*
- **Home Support Clinic:** *these are to support patients in later life, to be able to achieve independent living for longer. Specialist nurses trained in supporting and anticipating problems that older people can encounter. They will provide the links to other support – such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social prescribers and community support. There will be a podiatrist coming to the service to deal with common foot problems in coming months. This will be run from Bearsted, but you will be able to book an appointment through your own surgery.*
- **Intensive Support Clinic:** *For patients suffering chronic pain or terminal*

illness. This will be run by a team of specialist nurses who will be able to assist you with a host of concerns around pain control, wider health and social care issues and support for wider family and family/friend carers.

- **Teen Support Clinic:** *this clinic is for teenagers between 12-18yrs. There will be an accredited counsellor to talk to on emotional issues or mental health concerns. This will run from the Langley surgery and you will be able to get a referral through your GP or nurse who will arrange an appointment for you.*
- **Diabetes Support Clinic:** *this is aimed at patients struggling with their diabetes medications or other health needs often related to diabetes. It aims to improve health and wellbeing so that long-term risks of diabetes are minimized, and your treatment strategy is easier for you to manage practically for you. This will be run from Bearsted surgery, but you again will be able to get a referral from any of the network practices to the service.*
- **Physiotherapy Neck & Back Pain Clinic:** *a clinic for recent onset neck and back pain which will be offered at Harrietsham and Lenham surgeries and will be open to the network patients to refer into.*

6. Clinical Commissioning Group

The West Kent CCG's September governing body report confirmed that there was a vote in favour of merging the 8 CCG's in Kent and Medway. It will be interesting to find out how the current work will be managed if the merging is approved by NHS England.

I noted that the GP federation section of the September report agreed to include Primary Care Networks (PCN).

I wonder if the PPG chairs meetings will continue and in what form in the future or will the PPG chairs meet only with the chairs of the other PPG in their network. This could lead to a rather parochial view of the delivery of services within the network if we don't look to learn from successes or problems happening elsewhere in the county.

PPG's in general continue to struggle to recruit chair- persons and members who represent their community. I have now been the chair of the Len Valley PPG for 2.5 years and I will continue to encourage a new chair to take over from me, hopefully soon.

7. PPG Plans for the Future

- To Explore the finances available for the PPG and how these can be used to support agreed activities. Maybe workshops on various topics/conditions e.g. diabetes, asthma, arthritis.

- To ensure that there is a brief report from the Health Walks group at each PPG meeting
- To support the work of the PCN, working to canvas the views of patients about the new clinics.
- To carry out surveys with patients of the practice about issues affecting them and to feed back the findings to the practice.
- To liaise with Health Watch, to consider if there may be activities the PPG could take forward with patients.
- I will continue to meet with Dementia Friendly Maidstone group to gather ideas to take forward across Lenham and Harrietsham and across the PCN.
- To aim to develop a dementia friendly community in Lenham and seek support to run a coffee morning or afternoon tea for people living with dementia and their families. To seek to work with representatives across the PCN to develop support services to ensure that people living with dementia can enjoy living in our communities.

8. LEN VALLEY HEALTH WALKS -- 2019 UPDATE

Jan Enever, Walks Co-ordinator

We are now 6 years old and still have 12 trained volunteer walk leaders. We have gained 14 new walkers this year, taking our total to 129 walkers from all around the Len Valley area now registered with us.

We started 2019 with a New Year Day walk; the first we have done and the walk around the Hucking Woodland Trust, followed by a warming drink in the Hook and Hatchet, proved very popular.

Our Thursday walks, which started this year on 21 February, have attracted 1063 walkers to date. Walks were in 18 different locations and averaged 28 walkers per week; high of 41 and the lowest of 10. These variations are due to holiday periods and of course the weather. Not many of us like walking in the rain! The variety of walk locations is very popular and attracts people from other Health Walk Groups who get bored with doing the same walk each week. Also the fact that we provide two walks, a 2.5 mile and a 3.5 mile is also popular.

The Saturday walks started on 05 January and have attracted 570 walkers to date, an average of 12 per week. With a high of 27 and low of 3 these variations are again due to

holidays and the wet weather. These 3.5 to 4 mile walks are centred around Lenham or Harrietsham.

The 2nd Monday monthly walks remain popular with a small group of dedicated walkers tackling the more challenging 5 mile walks. These like the Thursday walks start from a variety of locations.

Most of our walks end with coffee and a chat in a pub or coffee shop, and even the church on Saturdays. This social aspect, as well as the walk itself, is so beneficial to everyone's wellbeing. Many of our walkers live alone so enjoy socialising with the other walkers. Many friendships have developed through our walks. Walking within a group is good for our mental health as well as our physical health.

One Sunday in April, 26 walkers walked the 4 mile riverside path alongside the Great Stour from Chartham village into Canterbury. We stopped there for coffee before walking the 4 miles back to Chartham for a well deserved lunch in The Artichoke.

My big disappointment of this year is the demise of the Wednesday afternoon Lenham Stroll.

The Lenham Stroll was aimed at those who have difficulty walking due to medical problems or recent operations. We walked in and around the village for approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ hour and at a speed suited to the individuals. However lack of walkers turning up at 2.30 pm brought us to the decision to cancel the walk for the time being.

I do wonder how many of the surgery staff, from receptionists right through to the doctors, are actually aware of our walks, especially as there are quite a few new members of staff. "Referrals" from the surgery are always welcome.

Looking ahead to 2020 we are already planning our New Year Day walk and a Sunday walk in April from Herne Bay to the Reculver Towers.

I don't think many people realise that we are part of the "Only One You" campaign, so to this end I want to make our Len Valley Health Walks display boards, in the Lenham and Harrietsham surgeries more in tune with the "Only One You" surgery display board. I have already spoken to Elaine the Practice Manager and will be talking with her again next week on her return from holiday.

