

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Annual Report 2022

The PPG review of the year.

As we entered January 2022, the country was slowly recovering from the latest wave of Covid 19. As in the previous year the whole of the NHS found itself dealing with high numbers of patients. Hospital wards were at maximum capacity, high numbers of patients were attending emergency departments, ambulance services were under huge pressure with 999 call volumes far higher than normal and primary care (GP's) busier than normal. This increasing pressure on the whole health system continued throughout all the year.

The mass vaccination centre at the Southfields Council Offices, operated by the Charnwood GP Network, (a network of all the GP surgeries in the Charnwood area working together) continued to operate in the first part of the year before eventually closing at the end of March. During its whole operation administration and clinical staff from the Practice heavily supported the operation, and PPG members put in a huge number of volunteer hours working at the clinic.

The Practice held a very successful Flu vaccine programme at the end of the year and a record number of 2978 Patients were vaccinated. A very busy clinic operated on a Saturday 1st October and PPG members were present to help out guiding and supporting patients.

As a PPG we have continued to meet monthly in what we describe as a hybrid style. This means that those members who have been able to attend in person have done so, and other members have joined the meeting via Zoom. This provision enabled all members to remain engaged, and able to express patient views and observations to the Practice.

The Practice have had a very busy year with high numbers of patients receiving clinical care daily. As a PPG we were able to give suggestions on the new telephone system that was installed with new features to help patients navigating the call system. Nationally in the media GP's have come under a lot of scrutiny and this has been of concern to us as a group. We have and continue to have open and honest discussions with the Practice around access to a GP. Some patients we have spoken to reported very positively but others have found access difficult.

We ask Patients to get in touch with us via our email address with suggestions and matters of concern. **Please remember that we cannot deal with individual complaints, these should be raised through the Practice complaints procedures.**

During the year we have been pleased to welcome new members to the group and we value their contribution. The group meets on the 2nd Thursday monthly at 5pm (apart from August and January). We always meet with one of the Practice Partners who shares with us openly the plans for the development and operation of the Practice. As members we can bring forward our views and suggestions looking at how things from a patient's perspective could be changed where possible.

During the year a project group worked and developed 2 documents looking at bereavement support. One document provides advice on what to do in the event of a bereavement at home, together with advice on what needs to be undertaken in the days leading up to a funeral. The second document lists several things that will need to be located following a bereavement. Individually we all know about our bank details, where our wills can be found, who our insurance companies are to name just 3. There are many more. But would our relatives know this information? And where to find it. The document lists and allows you to enter all the information so that it is safe in one place. These documents have been widely circulated and very positive comments have been received regarding how valuable they are in supporting and guiding people in the difficult times they may find themselves in. Both documents can be found on the PPG link on the Practice website www.charnwoodcommunitymedicalgroup.co.uk

Our plan had been to undertake a patient survey during the year to enable us to obtain your views and opinions. A lot of preparation is in place for this, and we hope to launch it during 2023.

We do have some vacancies on the PPG, and if anyone would like to consider joining us, please contact me on ccmgppg@gmail.com leaving a contact number, I will get back to you.

So, we look forward to a new year, as a group we will continue to work with the Practice and will offer any support that we can.

We have also planned for guest speakers to attend some of our meetings to provide an insight into other health related areas. All in all, we have a busy year ahead. As a PPG along with the excellent relationship we have with the Practice we will continue to act as the critical friend of the Practice, giving us the opportunity to give feedback, opinion, and suggestions for change.

On behalf of all the group I would like to give thanks to all the staff within the Practice for the support they have once again given to us, and in particular to Paul Hanlon, Business Manager, and a Partner in the Practice, for his continued and valued support during what has been a very busy and challenging year.

Mick Gregory
Chairman Patient Participation Group (February 2023).