



West Byfleet Health Centre Patient Participation Group

Newsletter - September 2026

Welcome to the first newsletter from the West Byfleet Health Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG).

In this edition, you'll find information about the PPG and our next meeting in November, as well as useful information about NHS self-referral services, flu and COVID-19 vaccinations, Rapid Health triage system update, and what happens after someone dies in the community.

We hope you find the newsletter helpful. We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future editions at editor@wbhc-ppg.org

About the PPG

The West Byfleet Health Centre (WBHC) PPG aims to promote good relationships between patients and the three GP practices at West Byfleet Health Centre. We work constructively with Practice Managers and their teams to help improve patient experience and satisfaction.

The PPG currently has more than 450 members and is managed by a Steering Committee of seven volunteers.

All WBHC patients and carers aged 18 and over are welcome to join. Membership is free and provides opportunities to:

- Attend PPG meetings and learn more about how your Practice operates.
- Gain a better understanding of the roles of Practice staff.
- Share your experiences, suggestions and ideas to deliver positive change.

Find us online at <https://wbhc-ppg.org>

Next PPG Meeting - A Conversation with Roy Lilley

As part of the PPG's outreach programme, we are pleased to continue our twice-yearly meetings. These meetings give members the opportunity to hear directly from GPs and Practice Managers at West Byfleet Health Centre.



Our next meeting will take place on 10th November 2026 at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Pyrford and online.

We are delighted to welcome **Roy Lilley as our special guest speaker**. Roy is a former NHS Trust Chair, and now a writer and broadcaster on Health and Social Care issues. His widely read blog, **nhsManagers.net** is issued four times per week and reaches over 300,000 mailboxes both here and abroad. He is regularly invited to be the keynote speaker at major NHS and Social Care conferences and is a strong supporter of Primary and Community Care.

The PPG meeting will take the form of a conversation with Roy and will be participative with plenty of opportunities for you to ask questions on any aspect of NHS and Social Care services.

We expect this event to be popular and pre-registration is essential to secure your seat at <https://plus4events.com/host/wbhcppg>

NHS Self-Referral Services

Some NHS services can be accessed without seeing a GP first. Using these services may help you receive the right care more quickly.

Services available through self-referral include:

- Mental health services
- Physiotherapy
- Smoking cessation and weight management
- Sexual health services

Our **Self-Referral Services Factsheet**

<https://www.wbhc-ppg.org/self-referral> provides details of all locally available services, including how to contact them.



Rapid Health — An Update from the Practice Managers

In January 2026, all three GP practices introduced a new online triage system for patients requesting GP appointments. The system, called **Rapid Health Triage**, was introduced to make it easier and more flexible for patients to access care, while also helping practices manage increasing demand.

Following a period of use and review, it became clear that the system was difficult for many patients to navigate. Patients were often required to follow lengthy pathways and answer a large number of questions before they could submit their request. For some patients, this made the process frustrating and unnecessarily complicated.

We also found that the triage system did not always direct patients to the most appropriate service. In a significant number of cases, patients were directed to Accident & Emergency services when this was not necessarily appropriate.

In addition, the information received by the GP practice did not always clearly describe the patient's main concern. This could make it difficult for clinicians to understand the situation fully from the submitted information alone.

The system was also not particularly well suited to patients with ongoing or chronic health conditions, where continuity, previous medical history and direct communication can be especially important.

After careful consideration, the decision was therefore made to stop using Rapid Health Triage and return to the previous triage systems.

Thank you for your patience while we assessed the new system. Please be assured that the three Practices will continue to look for ways to improve access to care and communication with patients.

Flu and COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

This year, each GP Practice at West Byfleet Health Centre will run its own flu and COVID-19 vaccination clinics rather than holding a joint clinic.

Most clinics will take place on Saturdays in October, starting 3 October.

Flu vaccinations

The following groups can receive their flu vaccination from **1 September**:

- Pregnant women
- Children aged 2–3 years
- Children aged 6 months to under 18 years who are in a clinical risk group

From **1 October**, flu vaccinations will also be available for:

- People aged 65 and over
- People aged 18 to under 65 who are in a clinical risk group

COVID-19 vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccinations will be offered alongside seasonal flu vaccinations to:

- Adults aged 75 and over
- People aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

What Happens After a Death?

When someone dies in the community, there are a number of practical steps that need to be followed. Our **What Happens After a Death? Factsheet** <https://www.wbhc-ppg.org/after-a-death> explains the process, including:

- The role of the GP surgery
- When and why the Coroner may become involved
- What happens next
- Where you can find further information and support

We recognise that this is a sensitive subject, particularly for anyone who has recently lost a loved one. Our aim in providing this information is simply to explain the process and reduce some of the uncertainty at what can be an overwhelming time.

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web: <https://wbhc-ppg.org>

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