

Patient Participation Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is to establish a system of communication with all registered patients in the practice so that their views and concerns are fed back into the practice. The PPG will work collaboratively and positively with the practice to improve services and facilities for patients and to act as a sounding board for practice staff on issues affecting patients.

The PPG will feedback relevant concerns/issues/good practice to the practice via the Practice Manager.

Key Tasks and Objectives

The key tasks and objectives are to:

- Contribute to practice decision making and consult on service development and provision.
- Provide feedback on patient's needs, concerns, interests and challenge the practice constructively whenever necessary.
- Serve as a 'sounding board' for dealing with concerns and criticisms about the practice – represent patients as well as enabling them to understand the practice's point of view.
- Provide a means for patients to make constructive suggestions about the practice and their own healthcare.
- Help develop practice surveys and review/discuss the results of any practice surveys and help to develop an action plan as required.

Membership

Membership of the group is voluntary and open to all patients registered at the surgery, excluding those who have received a zero-tolerance letter within the past 12 months. This is to avoid potential conflicts of interest and to help ensure the safety of staff and other Patient Participation Group (PPG) members.

Any PPG member who receives a zero-tolerance letter will be required to leave the group with immediate effect and will be ineligible to rejoin for a period of 12 months.

Efforts will be made to ensure a balanced and representative membership, reflecting the diversity of the patient population, including factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

Patients can indicate their interest in becoming a member of the PPG by contacting the Practice Manager. Information about the PPG will be included on the practice website.

The maximum membership shall be 12 in addition to practice representatives but up to a maximum of 8 additional members may be co-opted at the discretion of the PPG.

Membership will automatically terminate if a member ceases to be a patient at the surgery.

Meetings

The group will elect a Chair from the membership of the PPG. A practice staff member will act as Secretary and will take the minutes which will be circulated to all members and made available to any patients on request.

The meetings will be attended by the Practice Manager and/or Assistant Practice Manager. Other members of the practice team may be invited to attend to discuss specific issues.

The meeting will be held when four or more members of the group plus a practice representative are in attendance.

Agendas and meeting notes will be circulated to all PPG members by the practice using email where possible and otherwise by post.

Decisions shall be reached normally by consensus among those present. However, if a vote is required, decisions shall be made by simple majority of those present and voting. In the event of a tied outcome, the Chair may exercise a casting vote in addition to his/her deliberative vote.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings may be virtual or face to face as considered appropriate by the PPG. The group will meet four times each year at least two of which must be face to face. Notice of each meeting should whenever possible be given a minimum of 30 days in advance.

Additional meetings may be arranged as and when necessary.

Confidentiality

All members of the PPG must be made aware of the need to maintain absolute patient confidentiality at all times. Any member whose work on behalf of the PPG includes work in the practice or consulting with other patients or members of the public should sign and return a copy of the practice's Confidentiality Agreement before undertaking any such activity. All PPG members must abide by the Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct

The PPG Membership is not based on opinions or characteristics of individuals and shall be non-political and non-sectarian, at all times respecting diversity and exemplifying its commitment to the principles contained within the Equality Act.

All Members of the PPG (including any Virtual PPG) make the following commitment:

1. To respect practice and patient confidentiality at all times.
2. To treat each other with mutual respect and act and contribute in a manner that is in the best interests of all patients.
3. To be open and flexible and to listen to and support each other.
4. To abide by the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
5. Not to use the PPG as a forum for personal agendas or complaints. These should be taken forward through appropriate channels.
6. To accept that the ruling of the Chair or other presiding officer is final on matters relating to orderly conduct.
7. Otherwise to abide by principles of good meeting practice, for example:
 - a. Reading papers in advance

- b. Arriving on time
- c. Switching mobile phones to silent
- d. Allowing others to speak and be heard/respected

Conflict of Interest

Members must declare any interest that may conflict with their role in the group. If any member is unclear about conflicting interest, they should declare it and seek further guidance.

Representation

Members of the group must not claim to represent Holmhurst Medical Centre to the public, media or other bodies.

Review of Terms of Reference

The terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis and the review recorded in the minutes.