

Annual Chairman`s report of Wish Park Surgery PPG for the year 2013

Eight meetings were held in 2013 including a reception on 13.11.13, attended by 25-30 people. There now are 34 names on our mailing list compared to 17 a year ago. Three of these are managers of local care homes where some of our GPs` patients reside. The average number attending our meetings has increased from about 5 to 9. The Terms of Reference and minutes of meetings are published on the PPG page of the surgery website, www.wishpark.gpsurgery.net/other pages. Every patient is eligible to join us and we actively welcome new members.

There are 47 GP practices in the city of Brighton and Hove, 16 do not yet have a PPG. 13 have held several meetings, 12 have email lists or `virtual` PPGs and 6 are still setting up so we are ahead of most, although not as active as some e.g. Woodingdean and the Charter practice.

We are affiliated to the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP.) Some of our members regularly attend public meetings of the Clinical Commissioning Group and make representations to them.

Our Chairman is a member of the local PPG Network. Through this she has made contact with the Chair of Woodingdean PPG who is happy to share ideas and also established a link with Rosemary Chapple the Patient Public Lead for Hove (a new post) whose remit is to help PPGs establish an effective role.

The Chair is also in touch with Brighton and Hove Healthwatch, the local health and social care watchdog which, on 1st April 2013 replaced the Local Involvement Network (LINK) under the terms of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Reports produced by LINK are available via Healthwatch and we have consulted some of these during the year e.g. "Medicine Wastage," "Getting the most out of your GP appointment" and "Patient Participation Groups in B&H: Building Inclusive Involvement" We have also consulted the Care Quality Commission paper "A guide to working together The CQC and patient participation groups. (June 2013)

The purpose of our PPG is to work with professionals, primarily with the Wish Park Practice team, in finding ways of improving patient care and experience by encouraging patients to take more responsibility for their own health, and allowing them to have a voice in how things are run.

This year we have begun to focus on making people aware of our existence by producing display posters and new leaflets encouraging patients to get involved - sharing news, asking questions and suggesting ideas. The leaflets are available at the surgery. Advertisements for our meetings were placed in the West Hove Directory. The PPG has its own page on the surgery website where our Terms of Reference, and minutes are published. Additionally, there is now also a PPG email address so patients wishing to contact us will find it easier to do so in future.

Brighton and Hove Healthwatch publishes a free monthly newsletter with a section devoted to PPGs. (Anyone wishing to receive it can telephone 01273 810236 or contact them via www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk.) An article was submitted by the Chair prior to the Wine and Cheese evening. It explained a little about PPGs

and advertised the social event. Several committee members delivered invitation flyers through doors in the surrounding roads as well.

Supported by the Senior Partners' presence the evening was a success. Some came who had not heard of the PPG before, and several signed up as new members on the night. Rosemary Chapple came along 'for a few minutes' and actually stayed all evening. She was impressed by the positive atmosphere and made some suggestions to help our organisation run more smoothly in future. The 'wishlist' is providing issues for us to carry forward next year e.g. parking problems, preference for evening meetings etc.

On 1st April GPs took over collective responsibility for commissioning NHS treatments. As this money comes from us all as taxpayers, patients should be involved in how GPs spend it. This is a new way of patients interacting with the NHS, and requires a positive culture shift in attitude from passive to active. At Wish Park surgery we have established patient involvement through dialogue with the staff, particularly with Mr Sanket Patel, the practice and patient services manager. We have made representations about the new surgery at 193, Portland Rd, the computer system, the annual patient survey, repeat prescriptions, the pharmacy, telephone difficulties, booking appointments, waste of medicines, and the new 111 system.

The group has made a number of suggestions and recommendations including the following:

- We should approach residential homes and sheltered housing to invite them to send representatives to the committee.
- That the receptionist should unlock the door promptly at the opening time, to avoid patients waiting outside unnecessarily.
- Wheelchair-using patients should be able to book an accessible room when they arrange appointments.
- Music might be played in the waiting rooms to soften the atmosphere and relax patients.
- The 'non-attendance' message on the screen should be reworded to avoid mis-understanding.
- A suggestions box should be placed in the downstairs waiting room, to be managed by the PPG committee. (Only one suggestion was received.)
- Patients should be informed that they can book double appointments if they have two issues to discuss.
- When mail drops are sent out by the surgery, but paid for by outside companies e.g. pharmacy chains, then the wording should make it clear that this is not an endorsement for that particular company.
- The computer system (systmonline) was opened by the practice in April 2013. Those who wish to register can now book appointments and order repeat prescriptions online. The registration form can be collected from reception. It will reduce telephone usage and speed up some interactions helping both staff and patients.

Publicity is needed to ensure patients are aware of this option. In July we were told that take up has been higher than 5%, which is normal for GP surgeries.

- Information about the PPG should be displayed on the overhead screen in the waiting room. It could include a photograph of the current committee or a PPG meeting and that ...
- the screen could also be used to publicise targeted events e.g. flu jab clinics.
- A notice should be placed in the waiting room – “Staff will assist with opening windows or replacing cups at the water cooler etc if requested.”
- Did Not Attends (DNAs) could be reduced by sending appointment reminders via text to patients who have given their mobile numbers to the surgery.
- ‘Other pages’ on the website should be changed to ‘Patient Participation Group’ with a “click to join our group box.”
- The PPG should have its own email address for patients to contact and no one in the PPG is to delete anything from these emails.
- Patients should be informed that they have the right to check their medical records for accuracy.

In conclusion

This is an important, exciting time to be part of the PPG. The improved IT system has great potential for improving practice-patient communication. We also have a golden opportunity to be involved in consultations about the new purpose-built surgery on the corner of Portland Road and School Road. This will occupy rooms on the ground floor of a new block of flats and we will be putting forward ideas about how it could be organised to the benefit of all. This process has already begun.

Patient and Public involvement is in the NHS constitution. The long planned £420 million redevelopment of RSCH will start soon. We will be watching and contributing ideas through various channels e.g. CCG, The Council Health and Well- Being board, PPG network, Healthwatch and Patient Experience Panels.

An active PPG is vital to enable patients` views to be heard. It has been pleasing to see membership numbers grow in 2013, but we must keep up the momentum aiming to become representative of all. This means looking at the make up of patients who are registered at Wish Park and finding ways to engage with everyone e.g. by organising targeted events such as a family picnic in the park etc. Most of those who attended the social evening indicated a preference for evening meetings, and so we should consider varying the day and times in future to enable as many as possible to attend in person including working people and parents of pre- and school age children.

S. N.

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