

# PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUPS NEWSLETTER

Issue 2 – July 2010



## Introduction

**Phil Brice, Director of Corporate Services and Communications, NHS Somerset**

The two-year pilot programme working with NAPP has come to an end but the focus on developing and supporting PPGs in Somerset continues apace. We now have 37 established or emerging PPGs in the county and the articles in this newsletter give just a few examples of the excellent work that these Groups are taking forward in their local communities.

On 14 July, we held the first meeting of the Frome Health Forum which is bringing together the PPGs from the East Mendip Federation practices with the Friends of Frome Community Hospital, Frome Town Council and the Somerset LINK to discuss with local healthcare providers (GPs, Urgent Care Service, Somerset Community Health) and NHS Somerset, what patients and the public think of NHS services in the area and how they might be better provided and better communicated. It is a model that we hope could work across the county as GP Federations and their PPGs develop and we would be interested to hear from other communities how we might take this forward in other parts of the county.

We have benefited greatly in Somerset from impetus that working with NAPP has given us and I would like to offer my personal thanks to Graham Box for his insight and contribution to the work we have done here and my best wishes to him and to Audrey Hoggard as they move on from NAPP to their future roles.

## NAPP South West Regional Conference

The Conference was held on 2 February 2010 in Taunton School with 110 delegates attending, the largest ever NAPP event. Local steering group members (Bob Bryant, Clive Oakley and Barbara Tilbury) all came from existing PPGs and they designed the day around three work streams:

- Practices and individuals interested in establishing a Patient Participation Group in a GP surgery
- Patient Participation Groups seeking to network with other ideas and pick up some fresh ideas
- Individuals with a personal or professional interest in promoting patient participation



The opening presentation was given by Dr Michael Dixon, chairman of the NHS Alliance and a GP at College Surgery Cullompton. He spoke with passion and wit about the crucial relationship between patients and their practices in primary care. With frustration in his voice, Dr Dixon regretted the excessive influence wielded by hospitals within the NHS and the continuing centralisation of decision-making. More positively, he argued for patients and their practices working together to improve outcomes and inform local commissioning decisions so that services are designed around the needs of particular localities.

In addition to the workshops the conference included a question and answer session and a superb closing address from the NAPP Patron Sir Denis Pereira Gray. Sir Denis spoke with authority and insight about the challenges and opportunities facing the NHS, many of which relate to the precarious public finances.

Although drawing heavily on published research, Sir Denis did allow himself a prediction – that in ten years' time the country would be spending 12.5% of its Gross Domestic Product on health (compared with the current figure of around 10%).

## Graham Box, Chief Executive, NAPP

(taken from the NAPP Winter 2009/10 Newsletter)

### Wincanton Health Centre Patient Participation Group

"Living with Parkinsons" – Monday 13 September 2010 – Wincanton Memorial Hall starting at 7.00 pm.

**Are you a sufferer? Are you a carer? Are you a relative? Do you just want to know more?**

Speakers will be:

**Dr Kristina Baker MBE, LRCP, MRCS, DGM**, Specialist Doctor and  
**Ruth Goodland**, Parkinsons Specialist Nurse, Queensway Treatment and Rehabilitation Unit, Yeovil District Hospital  
**Jayne Dunn**, South West Regional Information and Support Manager, Parkinson UK

Free admission to all – a real opportunity to find out more and to ask questions

This event will be advertised in the local press and the Wincanton Window

**Wellington Medical Centre Patient Participation Group**  
**Sheila Winborn – Wellington Medical Centre PPG Newsletter Editor**



**Helping Hands**

At 8.30 am on a cold blustery October Saturday about twenty people were huddling around the surgery door waiting to get in – flu injection day had started. My colleague from the PPG who was manning the door urged patients to remove their coats and follow the signs to the waiting area.

Positioned strategically outside the rooms being used I directed the patients to the next available doctor or nurse. I felt a bit like an Italian policeman, madly waving arms but minus the white gloves. Getting an arm available was not always straightforward especially when one doctor only wanted the left arm exposed. For one lady it was a bit like peeling layers off an onion. Long sleeved thermals, a blouse, cardigan and a top coat – somewhere under all this was an arm whilst another patient insisted she had to lie down to have her injection. We had few problems with children and those who looked a bit anxious were directed to the room with the 'sweetie jar'.

A sense of humour seemed to prevail throughout the morning especially when I sometimes assumed that two people standing together were a couple and were surprised when I suggested they both went into the same room. No one panicked and no one fainted.

As I sipped a much needed glass of water one man offered to take me to the local coffee shop, I had to decline but it was good for my ego (I'm 76) !!. There wasn't time to chat to people I knew but hadn't seen for a while, a previous GP, my son's old headmaster and former neighbours, we settled for a 'hello' or a brief hug. At last it was 12.30 pm, we all stopped, drew breath, collapsed and handed over to the afternoon shift. As members of the PPG we felt it was a job well done and certainly earned us 'brownie points' from our professional colleagues.

Will I do it again this year- of course I will !!!



**NETWORKING – SOMERSET PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP CHAIR NETWORK**

The first meeting of the Somerset Patient Participation Group Chair Network is being held on **Thursday 26 August 2010** from **10 am to 12 noon** at **Lyngford House, Taunton**. This group is being established to share information and explore ways of supporting and sustaining Patient Participation Groups across the county.

For further information please contact Christine Lincoln on 01935 385020 or email [Christine.Lincoln@somerset.nhs.uk](mailto:Christine.Lincoln@somerset.nhs.uk).

**LISTER HOUSE SURGERY – PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

**Peter Berman, Secretary**

The impetus for starting the Group came from discussions last year between the Wiveliscombe Area partnership and the Surgery. With a new Surgery planned for the next few years, this seemed an appropriate time to start such a Group.

We took advice from Clive Oakley at Dulverton and also attended a Training session at Lyngford House. It became clear to us that we should start slowly with inviting people to join in the first instance to avoid being swamped by the "single issue" brigade. We also needed to ensure that our membership was spread both geographically (there are two surgeries covering a large rural area) and demographically. In particular we wished to see younger people who used the surgery (e.g. young mothers) on the Group as it was all too easy to attract the more elderly.

We have been holding regular meetings since last autumn (away from the Surgery itself) at about five weekly intervals. Normally these are attended by one of the GPs, The Practice Manger and a receptionist, since many items discussed relate to the booking of appointments. We have found the meetings very helpful in understanding the problems faced by the Practice and have been able to help with publicity in the Community Newspaper and Parish magazines.

We are also in discussion about the new premises and have now put an article in the Community Newspaper drawing attention to the Group and inviting new members to join.

**The Blackbrook Surgery Open Day on 12th June** was a great success. The newly transformed surgery proved to be a winner with everyone and there were several different exhibits on show, including stands on Health Checks for diabetes, blood pressure, weight and cholesterol; travel advice and up-to-date information on immunisations when going abroad, and healthy eating. One of the doctors gave guided tours "behind the scenes" and the team members were available to answer any questions. If anyone felt thirsty there was plenty of tea or coffee on hand.

The day ended with a raffle, with all proceeds going towards a new Panoptic Ophthalmoscope machine. The surgery would also like to say a big thank you to all the Patient Group (PPG) members for all their hard work in raising money for the new equipment for the surgery.

**Gale Berryman Practice Manager Blackbrook Surgery**

## Medical group wants ideas from patients it can put into practice

Article from the Central Somerset Gazette – 6 May 2010

Good ideas are being sought by a new group aiding Axbridge and Wedmore Medical Practice.

The Patient Participation Group has four ideas to start working on. But they want patients to contact them with ideas, or to sign up as volunteers.

Steve Edwards, practice manager, said: "Having such a forum for patients to be involved with the practice is key to the further development of services that will directly benefit all of our patients.

"Already the group has identified some key areas to work on which will enhance the delivery of primary healthcare in the area."

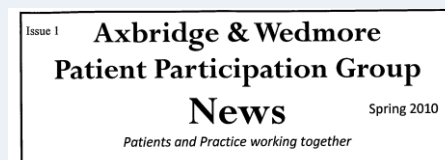
These areas are creating a newsletter, setting up first aid courses for patients, creating a library room and community transport to help people attend appointments.

Dr Matthew Dolman said: "Involving patients in decisions about new services for them is now established practice within the NHS.

"We welcome the formation of the Patient Participation Group as a way of directly involving our patients in having a say on developing services we may provide in the future."

Chairman Jim Day said: "Our new group committee has had some early successes but we need your views to keep the momentum going.

"If you would like to contribute please contact a member of the committee, details can be found in our first newsletter available in both surgeries."



**Steve Edwards, Practice Manager at Axbridge and Wedmore Medical Practice** sent the following useful information

*Hints from me for starting up a PPG .....*

- Rather than advertise for PPG members initially, get a short list drawn up by GPs, Nurses and Reception staff of potential patients
- Write to each patient personally explaining the aims of a PPG and inviting them to help form it
- Hold initial 'briefing' meeting for patients that respond.
- Ensure you have a reception representative, Practice Manager and one GP on the PPG.
- Advertise the new PPG as soon as the main committee is elected...get the wording from the Chair.....at this stage ask for more patient volunteers to either join the committee or subcommittee or just to be volunteer supporters for various projects in the future.
- Have a brain-storming meeting once the Committee is formed to thrash out key objectives and prioritise these (mind mapping is ideal for this).
- Get at least one project going that makes the PPG feel valued and will be measurable. (SMART)

### Carers Champion Training

Thanks to a grant from Carers UK, WyvernHealth.Com and St John Ambulance have offered Carers Awareness training to all practices in Somerset and so far 45 have taken part and identified a **Carers Champions (CC)**.

The CCs are members of the practice team who have a role to play in communicating Carers services to patients and highlighting issues to the rest of the practice team. They are also tasked with ensuring the carers register is completed to ensure carers can be made aware of services available to them i.e. flu jabs and respite breaks.

All participating surgeries should have a Carer's Area where information is displayed including copies of "If Only I'd Known That" booklet – look out for it when you visit your practice!

During the autumn we will be contacting the remaining surgeries to offer Carers Awareness Training and identifying more Carers Champions.

**Jayne Nicholas, Implementation Manager, WyvernHealth.com**

## Cycle Marathon Ends in Wincanton

Graham Box, Chief Executive of the National Society for Patient Participation who is about to end his term in office, decided to draw attention to the growth of Patient Participation Groups across the country by visiting them all, cycling from branch to branch, starting at Stockton on Tees and ending in Wincanton.



Here he was met by enthusiastic members of our Patient Participation Group together with medical members of the practice team. He congratulated the Wincanton PPG for having got off to such a good start here.

Patient Participation Groups are a new initiative in some parts of Somerset but as Graham Box explained, they are well established and flourishing in many parts of the country where they act as an effective link between medical staff and patients. While fund raising for needed kit can be accomplished, their real purpose is far wider, being there to facilitate feedback about services and suggesting ways in which things could be improved, or helping communicate a better understanding of local health issues.

The photos show Graham's arrival in Wincanton being celebrated with fizzy liquid and him telling the group about what he had found about PPG groups as he cycled across the country.



Article and photographs by **John Baxter** for the **Wincanton Window** who has kindly given us permission to use them. (<http://www.wincantonwindow.co.uk/headlines.htm>)

### Feedback on the Wincanton Window from Graham Box

Thank you for your super article and photos covering my cycle ride. I had a lovely welcome in Wincanton – the perfect end to a very enjoyable week. My journey saw me visit ten areas but there are now more than 3000 Patient Participation Groups up and down the country. Some of the groups in Somerset are well-established but it has been great to see real growth in their numbers in the past couple of years. The Wincanton PPG shows just how valuable these Groups can be.

## West Somerset Joint Needs Assessment – PPG consultation

**Jo Purvis, JSNA Project Manager, NHS Somerset**

In October 2008, as a statutory requirement of the Department of Health, NHS Somerset and Somerset County Council produced a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for the county.

The JSNA is an ongoing process by which Somerset County Council and NHS Somerset describes the future health, social care and wellbeing needs of our local population to inform the commissioning of services, the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy. It is produced through collaborative partnership working, including the involvement of District Councils, Local Strategic Partnerships, patients, the public and voluntary sector. It addresses evidence of effectiveness, identifying not only what works well, but highlights gaps and health inequalities where further work is required.

Whilst the county-wide JSNA will be updated every three years, NHS Somerset and Somerset County Council are looking at local health, social care and wellbeing needs in detail and in 2009 focussed on Glastonbury and Street. In 2010, a joint needs assessment is being carried out in West Somerset.

As part of gathering information, the views of local people to support the 'VOICE' section of the joint needs assessment is an important element. Consultation with young people is underway and members from the Local Involvement Network (LINK) who live in the district have been asked to give their views. Two PPGs in West Somerset have also been consulted in the form of a discussion group, one on Exmoor and one in Minehead.

They were asked to consider four broad questions:

- What factors might influence the health and wellbeing of people living in West Somerset?
- What do you think is working well in health and social care?
- Where do you think there might be gaps?
- What might be needed to improve health and wellbeing in your communities and across the district?

The results of all the consultations will be included in West Somerset Joint Needs Assessment (available in October). We are very grateful to PPG members who were willing to take part and contribute so much to the discussion. Thank you.



**News .... Interesting articles .... PPG events .... News .... Interesting articles .... PPG events .... News**

The next newsletter will be published in October 2010. If you would like your PPG to feature in this edition please send an article (and photograph if possible) to Christine Lincoln. [Christine.Lincoln@somerset.nhs.uk](mailto:Christine.Lincoln@somerset.nhs.uk).

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