

This is our first newsletter and we hope to produce one quarterly.

Each quarter we will let you know what we are doing. We hope to introduce members of the practice and to let them write short articles about their jobs.

This newsletter will be left in each surgery and is free to be taken away. Please take a copy with you and also further copies for friends .

Have you had experience of a PPG elsewhere or do you know anyone who has? If so, we would like to hear from you to tell us about other ideas that work.

We are contacting other PPGs to see what we can learn from them.

If you would like to know more about PPGs try www.napp.org.uk/

The Committee

Jim Day (Chairman)	Michael Blandford	Dr Matthew Dolman
Steve Edwards	Niki Garland	Heather Hawkings
Alison Jameson	Richard Kilburn	Celia Townend
Shirley Wederell		

The committee can be contacted by leaving a message in the box marked PPG in the surgeries or by email ppg@axbridgewedmoredoctors.co.uk

Please give us ideas of things you would like us to do or your name and contact details if you would like to help.

Please leave this in the box marked PPG at the surgery

Issue 1

Axbridge & Wedmore Patient Participation Group News

Spring 2010

Patients and Practice working together

New Group launched

Hello and welcome to the first edition of our newsletter. My name is Jim Day and I will Chair the Group in its first year.

Four in ten practices in England now have PPGs working to make stronger links between patients and their GP practices. They develop in different ways to meet local needs but they all work towards that common aim.

The PPG is not a forum for complaints or even a fan club for our doctors (however good we think they are). As most of the work will be done by volunteers it will not be a time consuming activity for the practice staff.

We are a new committee and need to decide how the group can help in future. Our first priority is to link with you, the patients. We need your views on how we can develop this PPG to help our practice thrive. As a starter we thought that we would concentrate on four areas. Create a newsletter, set up First Aid Courses for patients, establish a library/resource room for patients and explore local community transport services that we could support to help people get to appointments.

These are our ideas but you may have others and we encourage everyone to think about what they would like a group like this to do. Also, we hope you might want to join in and become a volunteer. We hope to involve patients in many ways.

On the back of this newsletter is a list of the present committee, contact details and a box for you to use to give us ideas or let us know you would like to be a volunteer.

Wish us luck Jim Day



Dr Matthew Dolman writes

This is the first edition of the Axbridge and Wedmore Surgery PPG Newsletter and hopefully it will be the first of many. The Practice would like to thank the group of patients who have volunteered to lead this group and we are sure it will have an influence on how we operate the Practice.

The idea of having patients close to the running of the Practice is not a new one and now it is an expectation that every General Practice in the country will have their own Patients Participation Group.

The Group has met several times to discuss ways in which they could engage with the community we serve and improve the care that we give. Communication is always at the centre of any organization and the Newsletter has been chosen as a starting point.

One of the themes that was identified by the Group was the role of the Carer in the community. This group of people are often forgotten, not least because they don't recognize themselves as being "carers". There is something in the label that often distances people from the reality they find themselves in.

The PPG hope to explore the ways of helping Carers and to provide a sign-posting service to help the Practice get timely and appropriate support to them. The Practice has an attached Carer Support worker called Fran MacBean and she will write about her work in the next edition.

There are many national and Somerset based organisations that can support Carers and we set out some of the most important websites. We know that the internet may not be the best way for many people and if you are looking for information, please ask the Practice staff for help.

Carers UK <http://www.carersuk.org/>

St John Ambulance

<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/counties/somerset/carers-support-programme>

Somerset Partnership : (Mental Health)

<http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/>

Young Carers : (children or young adults who care for relatives)

<http://www.somersetyc.org.uk/>

You might also like to know that St John's Ambulance runs Carer's courses in the Axbridge Surgery.

The Nurse Team at Axbridge and Wedmore

As the nurses are such an important part of the Practice we asked Michele Caraffi, the lead nurse, to introduce them to us.

We are 6 nurses who work between the two surgeries. We are all part time and have many years of experience together, working in both primary and secondary care.

We all work in the treatment room carrying out general nursing duties, in addition we cover cervical smears, health education, travel vaccination advice and childhood vaccinations. All the nurses also have responsibility for their own areas of chronic disease management, as below:-

Michele Caraffi is the lead nurse specialising in respiratory disease

Jane Brazier has a specialist interest in the management of diabetes

Claire Bevan has a specialist interest in heart disease

Jenny Leonard has specialist interest in sexual health

Carol Taylor and Delyth Edmunds are our two health care assistants.

They are both responsible particularly for blood taking (phlebotomy) and new patient checks, ECG 's, smoking cessation advice, ear irrigations, hearing tests and blood pressure checks.

Community Transport

One of our priority areas is to try to find community transport schemes that we could support to help patients to get to hospital and doctor's appointments.

Jim Day, our Chairman, is investigating opportunities in Axbridge and Heather Banwell is trying to discover what support there would be in Wedmore. If you would like to know more please ring Jim on 733697 and Heather is holding a meeting Tuesday 9th March at 8.00pm in The George Inn. Everybody is welcome. Heather can be contacted on 712216.