

THE STATION PRACTICE

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting Minutes

Date: 9.10.2025

Time: 13:30 – 15:00hrs

Location: Station Practice

Attendees:

Corinne Martin - Practice manager

Ioana Gergely – QOF manager/care coordinator

Lorand Gergely – Reception/IT manager

Christine Orme- Estates Coordinator NHS Property Services

SH - PPG Chairman

GD - PPG member

NH - PPG member

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from :

CH - PPG member

JL - PPG member

TH – PPG member

GV – PPG member

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed.

Building Maintenance Issues

- **Lifts and Cleaning:** Christine confirmed that the lift issues have been resolved. Doors and windows have been cleaned, and outdated posters from the front doors have been removed. Graffiti has also been cleared. PPG members expressed satisfaction with these improvements.
 - **COVID Posters on Staircase:** Members raised that some old COVID-19 posters remain on the staircase. Christine explained that removal would damage the walls, requiring redecorating, which NHSP cannot approve as the building was recently refurbished. Members were happy with this explanation. Christine will, however, explore possible solutions.
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Security Staff Concerns

- PPG members shared patient feedback about security staff behaviour, particularly on Saturdays, being perceived as unfriendly.
- The issue seems to arise when the inner doors (to stairs and lifts) are kept closed, and patients arriving for appointments are questioned by security staff.
- PPG members explained that this is due to the lack of internal communication systems for security on Saturdays.
- **Action:** Christine will explore creating a leaflet or notice to inform patients attending on Saturdays to report to the security desk upon arrival.

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- It was confirmed that during flu walk-in clinics, doors remain open and no access issues have been reported.
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2. Building Maintenance Update

Christine provided the following updates:

- As part of the building maintenance update, Christine informed the group that a new floor plan for the building will be completed soon.
- **Fire Extinguishers:** Lorand raised that the fire extinguisher plan does not match the actual equipment available in the building. Christine will review this to ensure compliance with CQC requirements.
- **Parking Concerns:** Members raised that some patients are unaware they need to enter their vehicle registration number at the ground floor reception to avoid parking fines when using the spaces from the front of the building. Christine clarified that this is not **managed by the building**.
 - **Action:** Christine will ask security staff to assist patients who appear to struggle with entering their registration numbers in the pad available at the main Front Desk Reception.

4. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the Practice

- **Introduction of AI Discussion:**
Corinne and SH. discussed the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in general practice and agreed that this topic should be discussed within the PPG group. The practice already uses **GP Automate**, an AI-supported system that helps screen and file normal and abnormal results for clinicians.
- **Fathom AI (Note-Taking Tool):**
The PPG previously raised questions regarding **Fathom**, the AI note-taking tool trialled by the practice. In response, the practice sought guidance from the **ICB** regarding **data protection and compliance**.
 - A **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)** has been recommended and is currently in progress.
 - Challenges were noted because Fathom is a **US-based company** with data servers in **Oregon**, and therefore not fully aligned with **UK GDPR regulations**.
 - Jo is currently in communication with both **Fathom** and the **ICB** to finalise the DPIA.
 - As a **risk mitigation measure**, the practice does **not record or store identifiable patient data** using Fathom, and any recordings used for demonstration are **deleted after use**.
 - The practice has also asked the ICB to identify any **UK-based, ICB-approved AI transcription or note-taking tools** as potential alternatives.
- **Accurx Scribe AI:**
Another AI tool introduced at the practice is **Accurx Scribe**, which provides **real-time transcription and summarisation** of clinical consultations. This enables clinicians to focus more on patient interaction rather than administrative tasks.
 - **Patient consent** is always obtained and documented in the patient record before using the tool.
 - The system has been reviewed and **approved by the Data Protection Officer (DPO)**.
 - PPG members welcomed this innovation and noted that it may improve patient experience, as clinicians will be able to maintain better eye contact and engagement during consultations.

5. DNA Statistics / Call Back System

Corinne (PM) presented the weekly **Did Not Attend (DNA)** figures covering the period **21 July 2025 to 29 September 2025** for nurse and healthcare assistant appointments.

- The data shows an **average DNA rate of 6.31% per week**, equating to approximately **35.8 missed appointments** weekly.

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- This represents a **significant reduction** from the previous rate of **12%** recorded earlier in the year.

The PM explained that while the practice had trialled the use of Remote Reception to contact patients and remind them about upcoming appointments, the service was discontinued after a review showed no significant improvement compared with previous DNA levels.

The PM highlighted that the main contributing factor to the reduction in DNAs appears to be the booking process change, whereby the administrative staff in charge with the monitoring now calls patients directly to arrange appointments rather than sending automatic text message bookings.

Feedback from PPG member SH:

A recent patient experience was shared where a call was received early in the morning (8:35 am) from the practice but was missed. When the patient attempted to return the call, they had to go through the main surgery line, making it difficult to reach the staff member who originally called.

It was suggested that if a call is missed, the administrator should send a follow-up text message explaining the reason for the call and providing the direct call-back number.

Action: The PM will feedback this suggestion to the administrative team to improve communication with patients.

6. Any Other Business (AOB)

1. Patient Titles Displayed on Calling Screens:

A PPG member raised a concern regarding **titles (e.g., Mr/Mrs/Mx)** being displayed on the calling screen when patients are called in for their appointments.

The group discussed whether it would be appropriate to remove this feature, considering patients can now choose or change their titles.

The PM explained that this is currently not configurable, as titles are automatically pulled from the **EMIS system**. However, the suggestion will be noted and could be fed back to EMIS for possible future updates.

2. COVID Vaccination Clinics:

PPG members expressed disappointment that the practice did not provide **COVID vaccinations** alongside the **flu clinics**, as this creates inconvenience for patients who must travel to pharmacies for their COVID jabs.

The PM explained that the decision was made by the **nursing team and partners** after considering logistical and staffing factors.

Actions: The PM agreed to take this feedback back to the nursing team and partners for reconsideration. Members noted that offering both **flu and COVID vaccines at the practice** would be much more convenient and beneficial for patients.

The PM also agreed to **invite one of the nurses** to attend the next PPG meeting to discuss this topic further.

3. Patient Questionnaires:

T.H. has kindly completed **20 patient questionnaires**.

The PM will email the rest of the PPG members to ask for volunteers to carry out more questionnaires on another day.

4. Attendance of Christine Orme.:

It was agreed that **Christine** will continue to be invited to PPG meetings on an **ongoing basis**, but attendance **twice a year** will be sufficient.

5. Funding for East Sussex and Hastings:

N.H raised a query about reports of new NHS England funding being allocated to **East Sussex**, particularly for Hastings.

The PM clarified that this funding is part of a new Neighbourhood Project, aimed at improving integration and communication between local healthcare providers and community services.

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Action: The PM will provide a further update at the next meeting as more information becomes available.

6. **Attendance of a GP partners at the next meeting**

Action: The PM will try to invite one of the GP partners to attend the next PPG meeting.

7. **Date of Next Meeting:**

8th January 2025 at 1:30pm