

PPG History

August 2011

Advertising for the PPG began; several posters were placed throughout the practice advising patients to note their interest and ensure their contact details were correct by completing a form available from Reception. Very keen to increase the demographic of younger patients into our PPG we also attended and ran stalls at the Fresher's Fairs at the local University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk New College during which time an effort was made to encourage a younger cohort. We gathered email address from patients as part of our 2011/12 'flu campaign (through September to January) as a means to contact patients about the PPG and other important patient events.

January 2012

Our first practice email campaign was sent to all gathered addresses (494), reminding patients of the PPG. It advised them that to be a part of the PPG they should complete an eSurvey that would be sent to them via the same method.

During this period we proactively attempted to gain interest in our PPG and sort the views of a wide range of patients to help us develop a survey in order for us to look at the issues that genuinely concerned our patients. We used our walk in flu clinics as a relaxed method to approach our patients and asked them informally, what sort of things they were concerned about. Many patients suggested that everything was great as so many of you do but it became apparent that appointments continued to be a problem especially those with a particular doctor, which unfortunately we can do little about. The other overriding issue of concern was the lack of nurse appointments.

Our aim is to be as inclusive as possible, we have a wide demographic of patients, Our patients include British, Indian, Lithuanian, Russian, Latvian, Polish etc to date we have not been able to have a wider representation, but welcome interest from everyone. Email is our preferred method of communication as it is a more direct form of contact, our email list incorporates the entire practice demographic, so although we have not had the response to date that we like we are assured that we are contacting the everyone and our aim is to have better representation on the PPG of the patient list – we will continue to work on this.

February 2012

The posters were replaced to emphasize our first PPG meeting (14th March), again inviting people to note their interest.

March 2012

The survey was produced and distributed in a second email (email list size: 576); it incorporated questions previously used in other surveys (unrelated to the new PPG initiative) for comparison. It was also presented and discussed with the PPG at our meeting in March.

During the PPG meeting on the 14th March, we had animated discussions regarding the outcome of the questionnaire and the issues surrounding appointment times and availability, particularly

difficulties in getting nurse appointments. We agreed it was currently an issue due to the loss of nursing staff at the time. We have since increased our nursing team and the problem appears to be resolved.

Some of those present had personal issues that they wanted to discuss and we agreed that the forum was not about personal issues rather personal experiences that we could learn from and build upon to improve our service for the wider practice population.

We agreed that we would convene another meeting during the next 2-3 months, this would allow time for us to induct and train new staff – we could then review the situation to see if improvements had been made.

From August 2011 to March 2012, we were pleased that 29 people came forward to advise us they wished to be a part of the PPG. 24 patients completed the survey (one of which failed to give the correct survey reference, so could not be identified), 5 gave their details at reception. It is our hope that with time this number will increase significantly to give us a good representation of patient opinion.

The survey was left open for two and a half weeks, by which time it was gaining no further interest or responses. During this time, 24 people completed the survey (4.1% of the total emailed).