



Patient Participation Group - PPG

Newsletter - Autumn/Winter 2018

WHO ARE WE?

The PPG was initially formed in April 2017 when the three surgeries (Adcroft, Bradford Road and Widbrook) merged to become Trowbridge Health Centre (THC). We are an independent group of volunteer patients which has been formed to listen to patient's ideas and suggestions. As a group we are keen to build a positive relationship between the patients and the practice and equally we are open to receiving feedback and ideas from the THC staff as well.

The PPG would like to develop a more active role in communications with patients such as a Virtual Group or by printed Newsletters available in the surgery or via the THC website. Hopefully providing you with more information, including a summary of our meeting minutes and by arranging discussion groups to share our mutual concerns. This would enable the PPG to establish a wider knowledge range of patient's needs and concerns.

Our first year was largely devoted to supporting the Practice and patients through the merger of the 3 surgeries and the opening of the new Trowbridge Health Centre. The range of issues we are currently addressing include:

- The new Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) system. The PPG have met with the POD to discuss the implementation and how the PPG can help.
- The TV monitors and the promotion of the PPG - how best the PPG can help to improve communication to the patients.
- Boots Pharmacy at THC - A meeting has been held with the new manager to pass on the PPG's recognition that since his appointment, many of the original problems had been overcome. Both the manager and our Chairman would continue to monitor the service in the coming months.
- Flu Clinics - the PPG provided support to the THC staff and took the opportunity to discuss issues with patients.



The Suggestion Boxes!

Suggestion Slips are available at both surgeries. The slips are collected on a regular basis from the RED BOXES by the PPG volunteers OR you can email us at:

ppgenquiries.thc@nhs.net

A really simple way for patients to communicate whilst visiting the surgery is via our suggestion boxes. Patients can fill out a small form with their suggestions, comments and ideas. The boxes are emptied weekly and if the patient provides contact details, a member of the PPG will contact them. We summarise all the suggestions and these are discussed within the group and with the Practice staff representatives at our following meeting. On occasions some ideas may not be practical or possible for various reasons, however some have been taken forward and implemented. It is our aim to update patients on the outcome of these discussions via the methods mentioned earlier in the Newsletter. These are just a small selection from the last 12 months.

- Q: In the early weeks and months of the new practice opening there were regular concerns about delays in answering the telephones and this was one of the main issues raised by many patients.
A: Over the last 12 months extra staff were employed and trained to manage the telephone appointment system. Additional telephone lines were installed and many patients were encouraged to use the online appointment system as well.
- Q: "Why couldn't the appointment booking-in screen indicate how long you may have to wait"
A: It wasn't possible to determine actual time. However the Practice were able to set the screen to indicate how many people were in front of you waiting to be seen.
- Q: "A water dispenser in the waiting room would be a good idea"
A: This request has been discussed several times with the Practice Management looking at various options from a water cooler to jugs of water at Reception. The Practice had concerns around waste with regard to the cups and Health & Safety as well as cost. However, patients may request a drink of water from the Reception staff if they require it. The PPG will continue to monitor this.
- Q: "More disabled parking please"
A: The Practice Management agreed to review this and were able to allocate two additional disabled parking spaces for patients.

This is our first Newsletter and just an introduction to the PPG and what we are aiming to do going forward. Your views and ideas are most welcome, please contact us via our email or the Suggestion box in the surgery.

Norman Owen - Chair of THC PPG