

So, what is a Patient Participation Group (PPG)? (also referred to as a Patient Reference Group)

A patient Participation Group is

Patients working with the Practice to:

- Help themselves and other patients to take more responsibility for their health
- Provide practical support for the Practice
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of services

Varied to suit local needs

- The activities of each group are determined by the needs of the community and in consultation with Practice staff

Based on co-operation

- It works by building a relationship between the Practice staff and patients that breaks down barriers to communication
- It enables the sharing of information
- It can provide a springboard for public involvement in wider aspects of the NHS

Aware and sensitive

- It is confidential when needed
- It communicates widely throughout the local community

A Patient Participation Group is NOT

A Forum for complaints

By providing a channel for communication, a PPG can reduce the risk of complaints. Many groups agree to forward concerns to the Practice Manager or the PCT PALS team.

Implementation of a pre-determined agenda (the governments or anyone else's)

The Independence of the PPG's is a major strength. They are informally accountable to all the patients in the Practice and should therefore take a balanced view of needs. This is why the first meeting is being chaired by the Amber Valley and Erewash Patient and Public Involvement Manager from the PCT who is independent of the GP Practice.

A time consuming activity for GP Practices

Most PPG groups are self-organising. Many groups undertake activities that help the GP Practice staff

New

Patient Participation Groups have been around for quite a while with the first one being formed in 1972