

Ashley Patient Participation Group (PPG) (March 2016)

One of the key objectives behind the government's most recent changes to the NHS was to ensure that local people were fully engaged in the process of delivering healthcare within their own community and in having a say about local NHS services. "No decision about me, without me" was the mantra on which the government based many of its reforms.

As a consequence, all GP practices were urged to develop a local "Patient Participation Group" (PPG).

Members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) are volunteers who work with the practice to represent patients, offering views on the services and facilities that are provided.

In Ashley, the PPG meets every other month to discuss a range of issues and to hear about and give views on developments within the practice. Notice of the meetings and copies of the minutes are advertised within the surgery and also on the Surgery website which contains lots of other useful health related information.

Check it out! www.ashleysurgery.co.uk

We are not a group dealing with personal medical issues and complaints. These are personal to you and must be dealt with by the professionals who are there to help you (Doctors, Nurses, practice staff). We hope to broaden our PPG over the coming months and recruit additional patients to the group.

It is expected that the PPG will become more visible and assist the practice with new initiatives and ideas.

At the last meeting of the group we met with Dr. Stewart McVerry, a new GP to the practice as well as Denise Smith our new but very experience Practice Manager. Dr. Mc Verry and Mrs. Smith join us from different practices in Cheshire.

Denise and colleagues have introduced a number of new initiatives.

We now have a new Practice Leaflet describing services available at the surgery.

We also have a new and very welcome phlebotomy service, thanks in part to the PPG. This reduces the need for local people to travel to other areas in North Staffordshire for their blood tests

The practice now receives regular visits from Age UK. They visit elderly people in the community and help with a range of issues confronted by elderly people who live at home and alone in their local communities.

Recipients of the service say that they really value the visits they have received.

In addition to the activities outlined above, the PPG also administers the "Ashley Patients Fund". This is a fairly small fund which is derived from donations from appreciative patients or their carers for the excellent care they have received from the Practice. The fund can then be used to support innovations which cannot be funded through usual NHS budgets.

Please feel free to share any comments or suggestions you may have with us. These can be forwarded to Denise Smith our new Practice Manager or to Bernard Bester the current PPG Chair and will then be discussed with the PPG where appropriate.

We shall endeavour to answer or put into practice your suggestions. If this is not possible, we shall respond to you and provide a reason.

We look forward to hearing your suggestions in the near future.

Please get involved!

Bernard Bester (Chair, Ashley PPG)
(bernard.bester@besterfamily.plus.com)