

## Find out more about Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) in Barnet

### What are Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)?

PPGs are groups associated with local GP practices comprising staff members of the practice and a cohort of registered patients from the practice who volunteer to 'represent' the wider patient community. The PPG acts as a conduit for communications between the practice and the patients, enabling issues and ideas related to health service provision to be discussed and, hopefully, resolved at practice level. Some PPGs extend their role to provide complementary services at the practice. It is important to note that all GP practices are contractually obliged to create a PPG and that the CQC takes an interest (e.g. requests meeting with PPG Chair) in patient engagement during its practice inspections.

### How do you get involved in Patient Participation?

Staff in GP practices are generally unfamiliar with working with volunteers and the concept of patient engagement is relatively new. There are comprehensive 'toolkits' to support practices and patients in implementing the requirement for a PPG, as well a material on this website, but many practices in Barnet do have not established PPGs.

Practice staff who want to create or refresh their PPG should visit the resources area linked from the Patient Participation tab. Patients who want to get involved with their PPG should also find this useful. Otherwise they can go to their GP practice to ask about joining the PPG. Patients can only join the PPG at their registered practice (or be a carer of a patient registered at the practice.)

### Findings from the PPG Support Project

The Support Project concluded that there are a lot of opportunities to develop the role of PPGs in local GP practices and that both patients and practice staff have an important role in creating a 'successful PPG':

- creating a successful PPG requires the active collaboration of both parties (i.e. practice staff and patients) in what is effectively a joint enterprise
- practice managers are usually the 'lead' person from the practice in regard to the PPG but their efforts need the active support of the GP partners at the practice to ensure that this area of work is prioritised.
- although practices have a contractual obligation to create a PPG, the involvement of patients is entirely voluntary and in some locations it is difficult to recruit (particularly for an organisation not familiar with recruiting volunteers)
- some PPGs have a limited view of their role (i.e. quarterly committee-style meetings) whereas some successful PPGs have found it easier to engage the interest of patients in more practical tasks that are of direct benefit to patients and complement the work of the health professionals (e.g. giving health talks, assisting with non-confidential tasks in reception)