

Primary care trusts

Promoting excellence in patient participation



April 2010

Foreword

I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to be part of this newsletter, and to describe the work we are doing in South Staffordshire.

We believe that investment in patient engagement is key if we are to capture the views, experiences and aspirations of our patients in a structured, consistent and meaningful way when commissioning services on their behalf.

Like a growing number of primary care trusts (PCTs), we recognise the vital role practice-based patient groups have to play in the planning and commissioning of services.

In South Staffordshire we have 98 GP practices and we made the decision 18 months ago to incentivise them to set up patient groups. We subsequently built this network of groups into our PCT-wide engagement structure. More details on what we did can be found further on in this newsletter.

For my part, I am totally committed to patient engagement and the structure we now have in place. Practice-based patient groups are a vital part of this. They open up opportunities for patients to get involved at a number of points from their local GP surgery right through to a PCT commissioning and strategic planning level; the choice is theirs.

**Stuart Poyner, Chief Executive,
South Staffordshire Primary
Care Trust**

Introduction

What is this newsletter for?

Across the country, primary care trusts (PCTs) are making great strides to increase the degree and quality of patient engagement at general-practice level. This newsletter has been created to showcase some examples of the work taking place.

A range of case studies, selected by the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP), is included on the following pages. These case studies illustrate the different types of activities taking place, from supporting GP practices with setting up effective patient groups, to PCT-wide engagement initiatives. We hope that these will prove interesting reading and provide some useful food for thought. NAPP is grateful to the PCTs that have contributed to this publication.



The Growing Patient Participation campaign

Despite the great work being done, there is still scope for many more practices to set up a patient participation group (PPG) and start reaping the benefits they can bring – in January 2009 only 41 per cent of general practices had a PPG.

The National Association for Patient Participation, NHS Alliance, Royal College of General Practitioners and British Medical Association, supported by the Department of Health, came together in June 2009 to launch a national campaign: Growing Patient Participation.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of the good work being done by PPGs to encourage more widespread involvement and to support practices and patients in setting up more groups.

The establishment of the campaign marked the start of a programme of activity to engage PCTs, practices, stakeholders and the public with PPGs.

To find out more about the campaign and to read about the work of existing PPGs, visit www.growingppgs.com



Why PPGs?

Most people have contact with the health service through their general practice. It is, therefore, natural to build patient and public involvement activity around GP surgeries. They are local to people and many patients have an ongoing relationship that gives them a stronger reason to participate.

PPGs are a 'grass roots' way of affecting change and involving patients in improving the health and wellbeing of their local community. They have an increasingly important role to play in helping to give patients a say in the way services are delivered to best meet their needs as well as the needs of the local community.

PPGs can play a range of roles, including: undertaking health promotion initiatives; establishing self-help groups; communicating with the wider patient population; influencing service development; establishing better information systems; raising funds and purchasing new equipment; creating local networks; supporting carers and producing newsletters.

PCTs have a duty to involve patients and the public in service planning as well as in the development of proposals for changes. With the advent of World Class Commissioning, this engagement with the local population is even more critical and PPGs are a natural mechanism to aid PCTs in achieving these aims.

A network of PPGs can help PCTs resolve difficult decisions about priority setting. For example, they can provide an important perspective on ways in which existing resources can be stretched as far as possible, waste can be cut and patients can be encouraged to access care appropriately.

PPGs can also help meet the objectives of the PCT by organising health-promotion activities, contributing to community development work and building social capital, and advising on service development and redesign.

By encouraging healthier communities, the activities of PPGs can reduce demand on the system as a whole.

Section I

Supporting patient participation groups

Many primary care trusts (PCTs) are already doing great work to support patient participation groups (PPGs) in their area. This support consists largely of creating an environment and a central network through which groups can share ideas and advice – as well as more direct tactics to encourage the creation of new groups.

This section highlights examples of what four PCTs are doing to support existing and new PPGs in their area, and to increase their impact on health and wellbeing within their practice area and beyond.

NHS Knowsley

PPG push

Since June 2008, NHS Knowsley has been on a drive to encourage all its practices to set up a PPG. Through support from the engagement and involvement team, and a sustained effort from the practices themselves, the number of PPGs has risen dramatically – 34 of the 35 GP practices in Knowsley now have an active group and over 145 members of the community are engaged through PPGs.

Getting started

The approach taken by each practice to set up their PPG has varied. Some used posters and leaflets to advertise the group, while others approached patients directly. Some PPGs have set up dedicated notice boards within the practice to raise awareness of their work and maintain interest.

Flexibility is key

The PCT provided practices with a range of support and advice on getting started through written guidance and visits to the surgery. However, ensuring that practices had the freedom to develop the format of their group to suit the needs of their members has been key to success.

Sharing experiences

Helping PPGs learn from each other has been a crucial task for the PCT. PPG members ran an information stand at the PCT's 2009 AGM to promote their work and share their successes. Representatives from every PPG are also invited to attend, and take part in, quarterly meetings with the PCT's commissioners for health and wellbeing services. The meetings offer PPGs the chance to network, share examples of their work and to ask questions directly of commissioners.

Following the first PPG-Commissioner meeting, 94 per cent of the PPG attendees said they have a clear understanding of the role of PPGs in commissioning and 83 per cent feel that the PPG model will be effective in supporting ongoing patient engagement.



NHS Norfolk

Involving PPGs in practice-based commissioning

The North Norfolk Patient Partnership was formed by the North Norfolk Practice-Based Commissioning (PBC) Consortium, with support from NHS Norfolk, to give patients at the 18 practices across northern Norfolk a say in the future design of their local healthcare. The Partnership brings together patient representatives from each practice. Some practices recruited their representative from within their existing PPG; those practices without a group recruited individual members, and have since gone on to form larger, permanent groups.

PBC has been at the heart of the four events held to date. Members of the Partnership were shown how they, as patients, can influence the commissioning of local services. This was done to ensure they meet the needs of the local population in the future. For example, they heard about a range of successful pilots aimed at bringing services closer to home for patients, which demonstrated a real benefit for the individual, their family and carers, as well as offering real value in cost savings for the NHS.

Continuing the conversation

NHS Norfolk is now working with the PBC Core Group to explore ways of establishing ongoing communication between events, and to give patients themselves a greater role in running the Partnership. The aim is to encourage patients to get more actively involved in PBC and the development of services from the very start.

The Partnership is also looking at how best to involve other community partners, such as the voluntary sector, to draw on their views and experiences.

More information on the Partnership can be found at www.northernorfolkppg.co.uk

South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust

A 'vision of engagement'

South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust initially developed its 'vision of engagement' to support patient and public engagement with PBC. It has, however, since expanded its remit to ensure that public opinion becomes an integral part of the PCT's strategic processes.

Although patients' experiences were being captured in a number of different ways previously, and the public was being engaged on an ad-hoc basis, there was no systematic process in place. As part of the World Class Commissioning programme, PCTs are required to "proactively build continuous and meaningful engagement with patients and the public to shape services and improve health", and to demonstrate how this patient involvement is making a difference.

Practice-based patient groups are at the heart of the vision of engagement. PPGs not only provide the PCT with complete coverage of its patch, but also link to the whole spectrum of diverse communities the practices serve.

Providing the right resources

To develop this PPG framework, the PCT's patient and public engagement team has been working with GP practices over the last 12 months to support them in setting up PPGs and help extend their remit beyond issues relating to a specific GP practice, to cover the wider PBC agenda as well.

The PCT also recognised that in order for the groups to be effective, they needed to be properly resourced. This led to the introduction of a local enhanced service agreement (LES).

At the start of the process, approximately a quarter of all practices had patient groups, but their effectiveness varied significantly. Following the introduction of the LES, 69 out of 98 practices now either have a PPG or are working towards setting one up.

Through the LES they are supported by training provided by the National Association for Patient Participation, and have a clear direction through the introduction of quarterly work plans.

Creating networks

The second stage of the PCT's vision of engagement was to set up district-wide patient engagement groups, one in each of the six district/borough council areas of South Staffordshire. These groups are made up of patients nominated from the PPGs and are linked to the commissioning consortia for each area.

The purpose of the district-wide groups is to discuss and take forward issues identified at a practice level, which may have an impact on the wider population. They feed their ideas directly into PBC consortia, for discussion and consultation.

The district groups also enable a two-way flow of information between consortia and PPGs, to raise awareness of the services being planned or developed in a particular area.

A patients' council

To complete the framework and to create a process for the outcomes of this public and patient engagement to be fed back into the PCT at a strategic level, a PCT-wide patients' council was established with representation from each of the district groups.

Representatives are able to feed in issues that lie outside the remit of PBC and that affect the wider community. This, in turn, influences the PCT's strategic and commissioning objectives.

The ultimate aim of the vision of engagement is to ensure that patients are able to influence decision making at every stage of health-service planning, so that the health needs of the local community are met.

NHS Westminster

Involving People in general practice

The Involving People team supports commissioners across the PCT in involving local people in service commissioning. It works to ensure that the voices of patients and the public are heard, their needs are met, and everyone learns from their experiences.

This means that patients, the public and carers can influence the needs assessment and priority setting within the PCT, having a say on the whole of the commissioning cycle.

The PCT is also focusing efforts on increasing patient engagement at general-practice level. It has set up a 12-month programme to encourage all 50 practices in Westminster, and its five PBC clusters, to establish mechanisms to involve patients in service improvement.

Providing practical support

The PCT has developed a toolkit that includes guidance on setting up a PPG, governance documents, a communications plan and an induction pack for patients. It is also running a borough-wide recruitment campaign and holding workshops for practices.

In the six months since the programme launched, an additional 11 PPGs have been, or are in the process of being, established. This takes the total number of PPGs in the borough to 20. Four of the PBC clusters now have a patient panel or PPG to work with, and the fifth is in the process of setting one up.



Give your GP practice a hand - get involved!
Join your patient participation group and work with your GP practice to improve services for everyone.
For more information contact NHS Westminster's Involving People team on 020 7150 8124 or email involving.people@westminster-pct.nhs.uk

Contact details for this practice:



MARYLEBONE COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

Tuesday 20th October 2009
2.30pm-6pm
Crypt Hall, St Marylebone Parish Church
17a Marylebone Road, NW1 5LJ

A wide range of health promotion, activities and information, including:
ADVICE ON HEALTH SERVICES, CANCER PREVENTION, HOW TO STOP SMOKING, ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE, COUNSELLING, MEDICATION, CARERS NETWORK, FIRE PREVENTION

ASK THE PROFESSIONALS

Dr Andy Goodstone: "Polyomics and the implications for GP services" - 3.30pm
Therapist: "Alternative Medicine & Massage - a demonstration" - 4pm
Hazel Brodie: "Westminster Breast Screening Services" - 5pm

EVERYONE WELCOME - RAFFLE

Hosted by the Marylebone Health Centre Patient Partnership Group

PATIENT PARTNERSHIP GROUP [PPG] BOOTH

The PPG is a group of patients, who meet regularly with the practice. Our purpose is to ensure that the Marylebone Health Centre is operating in your best interests and for us to discuss with the practice any concerns you may have of a non clinical nature.

The PPG booth will be located in the practice reception area and will be manned by PPG members on the last Tuesday of each month with three time slots.

11-12 Noon 2-4 pm 4-6 pm

Next Date

Come and talk, tell us how the PPG can best support you

Section II 'Making the Most'

The aim of the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) is to see a patient participation group (PPG) established in every GP practice, and to ensure that it is based on the mutual interests of the practice and its patients.

NAPP has received funding from the Department of Health, for the period of July 2008–June 2010, to support those primary care trusts (PCTs) keen to promote patient participation within their practices.

A number of PCTs have been involved in the Making the Most project over the past 18 months, and many have had real success in promoting the establishment of more – and better – PPGs in their area.

Below are some examples of the approaches adopted by these PCTs.

NHS Milton Keynes

A supportive environment

The project in Milton Keynes has been set up and run by four partner organisations: Health:MK; Quality:MK; NHS Milton Keynes; and LINK:MK (the local involvement network). With extensive involvement and leadership from patients and the public, they are well on the way to having a PPG in every practice – at the start of the project, only 20 per cent of practices in Milton Keynes had a group in place.

This has been achieved through: delivery of training events in partnership with NAPP; provision of financial support (£1,000 for every practice); offering hands-on support; encouraging face-to-face networking and an area-wide PPG newsletter; and developing a series of short videos, which can be viewed at www.healthmk.org/patient_participation_group_videos_p3465.html?a=0

NHS Somerset

Building links

NHS Somerset has been promoting PPGs for approximately two years. Led by a steering group with strong patient and public involvement, four local evening events were organised to provide practices with more information on PPGs. Those practices interested in setting up a PPG were put in touch with existing PPG 'champions' in their area, and invited to attend a county-wide PPG event. As a result, the number of PPGs has grown from 13 in December 2007 to 38 in December 2009, with many more on the way.

These foundations have been built on commitment from local PPG chairmen, the involvement of the local medical committee and the countrywide Practice-Based Commissioning (PBC) Consortium. There has also been support from public health primary care and public involvement at senior management level across NHS Somerset.

To find out more, visit www.somerset.nhs.uk/welcome/have-your-say

Shropshire County PCT

A networked PPG community

Shropshire County PCT is committed to growing the number of PPGs in its practices and ensuring they are equipped to make a real difference to local health and wellbeing. The first stage of its work was to set up two successful networking events for PPGs – one to share information about the work of PPGs, and the other to discuss the challenges faced by the PCT.

The next stage will be to pilot integration of PPGs with the work of the PBC group in one locality. The PCT is keen to ensure that PPG members are not overburdened, however it is also keen to widen the contribution of PPGs across Shropshire.

NHS Bradford and Airedale

Incentivising patient engagement

NHS Bradford and Airedale has taken the approach of incentivising its practices to achieve greater patient involvement. It has done this by making patient engagement part of all PBC quality schemes for the year 2009/10.

Practices that attend two modules of the available patient engagement training, then go on to develop and implement an action plan to achieve patient participation, qualify for £3,700 in extra resources (based on the average size of a practice patient list in Bradford). In addition, a one-year subscription to NAPP is included as part of the support package.

The PCT has also employed a dedicated project worker to support its practices in setting up a patient group, and has created a branded web resource through which practices can access promotional materials. This is available at www.bradford.nhs.uk/Pages/PPGs.aspx

A total of 55 of the 83 practices in the district have participated in the scheme, and 36 action plans have been submitted so far. Eighteen PPGs are now up and running in Bradford and Airedale, with a total membership of 172 patients. A new support network for PPG members is planned for 2010.

NHS Hillingdon

A more focused approach

NHS Hillingdon's patient and public engagement strategy was approved in October 2008, and includes a commitment to develop new PPGs across the borough. Working with NAPP, the PCT decided to support the establishment of a small number of new PPGs in practices that had already expressed an interest.

Informal workshops were set up, drawing on the experiences of existing PPGs, to share learning on issues such as recruiting members and setting objectives.

NHS Hillingdon has helped with the drive to recruit members to the PPGs and created a network for practice managers at the different practices to support each other as they all move through the stages of setting up a group.

NHS Hillingdon works closely with its Local Involvement Network (LiNK), and sees PPGs as a valuable component of those structures.

NHS Nottinghamshire County

A local action plan

Out of the 96 practices in Nottinghamshire County, only 34 had a PPG at the start of the project. The PCT's aim was to see the number increase through a local action plan and the number is now up to 42, with more in the pipeline.

This action plan included: a range of training events for practices and PPGs; the development of a "jargon buster" for patients and the public; a successful networking event involving representatives from 20 PPGs, the LiNK and local voluntary sector organisations.

The PCT's objective for the future is to increase the number of PPGs in Nottinghamshire County by 50 per cent. The PCT also plans to provide training for PPG members, to develop local and county-wide networking events and to strengthen the links between PPGs and the quality, governance and contracting functions within the PCT.

The county-wide networking Event for 2010 will include workshops on how PPGs can support their practice, patients and the PCT by promoting strategic health priorities, eg fragility and falls. Locality-based network meetings for PPGs have commenced and have been very successful. Many PPG members are already "plugged in" to PCT functions as lay advisers, eg for PBC boards, the county engagement committee, quality forum and the Quality and Outcomes Framework.

NHS West Sussex

The four 'Cs'

For NHS West Sussex, success in practice-based patient participation is based on the principle of the four 'Cs': communication; commissioning; campaigning; and capturing the patients' experiences.

Its work to establish more PPGs was kicked off with an evening workshop, attended by local GPs, practice managers, PCT staff, the local medical committee and PPG members.

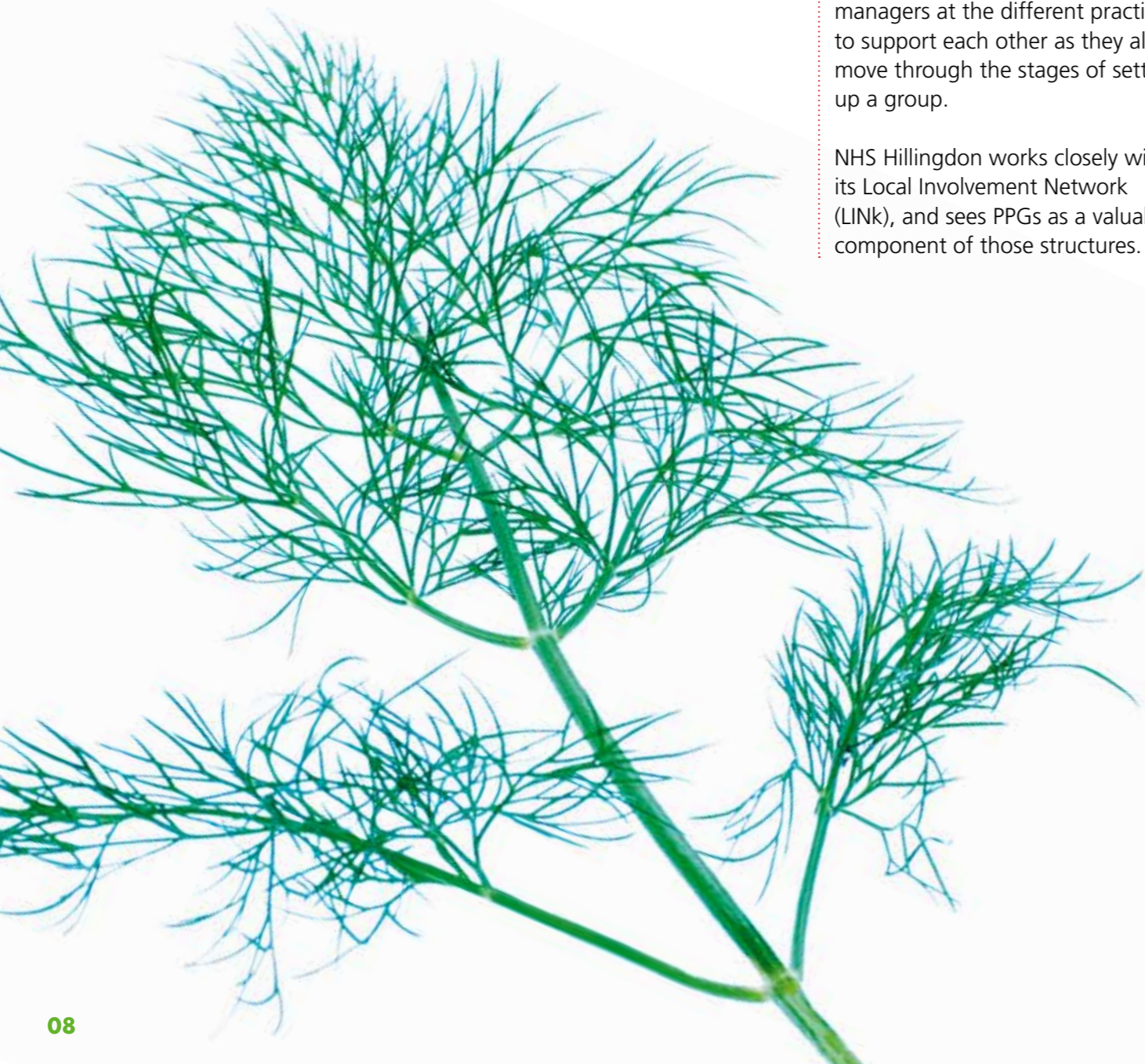
One of the initiatives that emerged from the workshop was the development of a £1,000 fund, offered to practices to help set up a new PPG or to improve the effectiveness of an existing group. Some 51 per cent of practices in West Sussex now have a PPG and are exploring how PPGs can be integrated within practice-based commissioning structures.

NHS Coventry

NHS Coventry has been promoting patient panels for a number of years and now brings the groups together in health summits that allow two-way communication about the work of the PCT and the panels.

The panels are part of a wider project to engage with the local community whereby the people of Coventry are invited to "join the conversation".

To find out more visit
www.healthcareincoventry.nhs.uk



Section III

Patient participation beyond the patient participation group



Patient participation groups (PPGs) are an established model of patient participation at practice level, based on a constructive and positive relationship between patients and their practice. However, they are not the only way for local health services to benefit from patient involvement.

Below are some examples of wider initiatives currently being undertaken by primary care trusts (PCTs).

Harnessing membership schemes



My NHS West Sussex

NHS West Sussex established a public-membership scheme in April 2009, offering access to information, newsletters and online discussion forums. It has attracted 1,030 members to date and has gained 1,077 'friends' through its Facebook page. The PCT has formed a Patient and Public Council, made up of independently elected members, which forms part of its governance structure; its Chair sits on the PCT board.

North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus

North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus is committed to public-led commissioning and has set up a membership scheme, Accord, to give the public a say on how their money is spent. Members are elected through the scheme to be part of four commissioning group boards, which decide where health and social care money is spent locally.

Targeted engagement

NHS Bradford and Airedale: a targeted approach

NHS Bradford and Airedale has built two databases to support its work. The stakeholder database identifies patients and groups with particular interests, who can be targeted through social marketing. The patient-experience database pulls together feedback received from local service users and carers, for use by commissioners.

NHS Oxfordshire: talking health

NHS Oxfordshire has purchased a consultation management system to support its public-engagement work. The system can be used internally, as documents are developed, and externally, to identify individuals and groups who could get more involved in the work of the PCT. According to Sara Price, Communications and Engagement Coordinator at the PCT: "the system is simple to set up, use and manage. All consultations can be branded with our own visual identity to ensure it is clear to stakeholders that they are engaging with NHS Oxfordshire. It is proving a very cost-effective solution, a key consideration for any public-sector organisation."

The next step is to develop a "You Said, We Did" section, to let those who have been consulted know how their input has been reflected in service delivery.

Ensuring every voice is heard



NHS West Sussex Customer Service Unit

NHS West Sussex has combined its Patient Advice and Liaison Service and its complaints teams to form its new customer service unit (CSU). The CSU is a 'one-stop shop' for people needing information or advice; support to resolve problems; or wanting to pass on a complaint or compliment. It also provides the PCT with real insight into patients' experiences.

NHS Nottinghamshire County: capturing real time experiences

Practices with a PPG in Nottinghamshire are being offered the opportunity to pilot in-surgery touch-screen patient survey devices. The PPGs ensure that patients are involved in selecting the questions and assist in the administration of the survey.

Further sources of information

The Growing Patient Participation campaign

To find out more about PPGs, and the work of the Growing Patient Participation campaign, visit the campaign website at www.growingppgs.com

To view a range of case studies of PPGs in action, visit www.growingppgs.com/case-studies

On the site you can also sign up to receive regular Campaign Update emails, with lots of useful information, case studies and the latest campaign news.

To make contact with the campaign team, email campaign@growingppgs.com

National Association for Patient Participation

NAPP is the umbrella organisation for PPGs within primary care. To find out more about its work, and for a wealth of practical advice and resources, visit www.napp.org.uk

You can also get in touch with NAPP by emailing admin@napp.org.uk

To learn more about these examples of excellence, please contact admin@napp.org.uk

This document has been produced as part of the Growing Patient Participation campaign (www.growingppgs.com), which brings together the British Medical Association, the Royal College of General Practitioners, the NHS Alliance and the National Association for Patient Participation, with funding from the Department of Health.

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