



## **Len Valley Patient Participation Group**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

**September 2015 to September 2016.**

#### **Message from the Chair**

Len Valley Patient Participation Group (PPG) has been running successfully for a number of years, albeit with different names. This success is based on the enthusiasm & commitment of both the Practice and the PPG members who voluntarily give up their time to identify & remedy concerns & ensure that the patient's voice is heard. This is our fourth Annual Report. Our challenge is to ensure that we reflect the views of the widest number of patients when we look at matters both specific to the practice but also through our input into the way health services are both commissioned and provided in the wider area.

I hope that you find this report useful & informative. We are always seeking new members to our Group. Should you be interested in getting involved please see our page on the Practice web site or contact the Practice Manager.

Diana Allwood  
Chair

#### **Our Mission Statement**

'Our purpose is to consult with and between, the practice and its patients, in order to ensure any changes or developments to the surgery and the service it provides are relevant, fully thought out, implemented smoothly and understood'

#### **What is Len Valley Patient Participation Group?**

Most GP practices set out to promote active engagement with their patients to ensure they are involved in ongoing planning and decision making about the practice. Since April 2015 it has been part of the national GP contract to have a Patient Participation Group. These come in many shapes & forms. Our PPG is considered one of the more active formats for delivering this requirement.

Len Valley PPG is made up of registered patients (with the aspiration to be representative of the practice population) who meet regularly to discuss issues and ways of improving services for the benefit of patients.

In addition, with the advent of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) PPGs such as ours have been increasingly involved in providing insight and views to support or inform the broader commissioning decisions that CCGs are required to make about all our local health services.

### **Our activities this year includes:**

- Ageing Well event

This event took place with the two 'flu clinics' in October 2015. A subgroup was formed to ensure hands on organisation. It met initially every 3 weeks to scope & implement the approach. A number of external organisations participated and funding from the CCG was secured to support this event.

- Healthwatch

We had a presentation from Healthwatch, the "consumer champion" for health and social care services. They have significant statutory powers to ensure the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services. There is a Healthwatch in every local authority area across England. They are independent and act on behalf of all consumers of health and social care.

- Local Plan

We continue to monitor the information regarding the Local Plan in respect of the impact on all the local health service provision to cope with the potentially increased demand. If & when the Local Plan is deployed there is a need for the PPG to continue to lobby for timely investment in health facilities.

- Practice appointments system

Len Valley practice operates an appointments system for patients seeing health care professionals at the practices' two locations. From time to time the PPG receives concerns about this system. Often they are related to an individual's experience but, on occasion, they have been broader & concern the system itself. The Practice Manager responds to individual concerns that are brought to her attention as they arise.

Booking on-line is now available and all new patients are given the opportunity to register for on-line booking when they register with the Practice. Generally, the take up of this has been slow, the cause of which is not known. It is now possible to cancel an appointment on-line thereby freeing up appointments which can be usefully reused.

The continuing dilemma of what to do with regular 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) is more challenging. The current approach of the practice is to send out a letter to those who DNA more than 3 times. The PPG members agreed that this was a useful approach as it considered the impact on other patients could be significant if allowed to go unchallenged.

- On-line ordering of repeat prescriptions

This service became available earlier this year and initially there were some comments from patients to members of the PPG advising that the system was not very “user-friendly”. This was brought to the attention of the Practice and Pharmacy Manager and work was done on the system to make the re-ordering of drugs more simple.

- Walking for Health

Walking for Health is based on a national scheme with research showing that walking promotes both Physical & Mental well being. This initiative continues to be successful and regularly attracts more participants and a Saturday walk is now taking place as well as the regular walks during the week.

- Mapping the Future

With the advent of Clinical Commissioning Groups, PPGs have been encouraged to get involved with the ‘bigger picture’. This is through a Patient Participation Groups (PPG) ‘Chairs Group’. Mapping the Future is a five year blue print which looks at the local issues, such as ageing population, increased demand etc to develop a model of proposed future health care which is sustainable and acceptable to patients. As part of this particular project the PPG receives updates about other plans & proposals put forward by the CCG. Our discussions are then relayed back to the CCG via the PPG Chair at the PPG Chairs Group which meets every six weeks. This year we have commented on a number of proposals including Musculo-Skeletal care and Transforming health and social care in Kent and Medway

- Lenham Family Festival and Flu Clinics

We held a stall at the Festival called “Sugar Wars” to promote awareness of hidden sugar in foods and drinks. There was a “guess the amount of sugar in an item of food/drink” game and “shoot the sugar ducks” arcade game, the prize being a piece of fruit. This proved popular with young and old alike, many of whom were shocked at the amount of sugar in so-called “healthy” foods. Funding was obtained from the CCG to support the event.

As a result of the positive feedback, we were asked to run the same stall (minus shooting the ducks!) at both the Flu immunisation clinics held in September. Again, this was well received.

- CQC Inspection

This took place at the end of September and a number of PPG members were invited to talk to members of the inspection team. The results of the inspection are still awaited.

- New Telephone System

The Practice is aware that the current telephone system is out of date and have asked members of the PPG to be involved with the procurement of a new system, dates to be advised.

- **The Wrinkly Roadshow**  
A presentation was given by Kelly Duke and Kevin Collier, the founders of the Wrinkly Roadshow. Roadshows have been held across Kent this year with the idea being that information, support and advice for older people was joined up and brought to venues such as village halls and community centres throughout the county. The idea is to keep retirees as informed and independent as possible so that retirement can be enjoyed. Exhibitors such as lawyers, financial advisors, care home finders, home care providers, healthcare teams, community safety groups etc attend the roadshows, they are all known and trusted by the founders. They held a roadshow in Lenham in February 2016 and the PPG have agreed that they would follow the progress of this organisation and perhaps offer support at a later date.

### **Finances**

The CCG has agreed that monies would be available to PPGs in return for their help with commenting on a number of proposals that they wish to take forward. This money is held by the Practice for the PPG to use on projects as yet not finalised.

### **Do we make a difference?**

Looking at our Mission Statement the various projects that we have undertaken this year provide evidence that the PPG does make a difference to the way services are delivered at the practice. The strong relationship between the PPG and the practice itself has enabled productive discussions and collaboration in developing & implementing agreed changes to the way the service is provided.

Our role in the 'bigger picture' is still emerging but the potential for patients to be involved in defining what local services are commissioned is exciting & long overdue.

### **Our Group during this year (Sept 2015 to Sept 2016)**

Chair	Diana Allwood
Vice Chair/ Administrator	Teresa Denbow
Practice Manager	Diane Anderson
Members	Sadie Curtis
	Gio Clements
	Jan Smith
	Margaret Conan
	Megan Bensilum
	Sue Southon
	Jim Myers
	Margaret Phillimore
	Margot Lawlor
	Mairin Holland
	Aneta Jerrett
	Carol McKeough

A GP from the practice also attends each meeting.