

# The Grange Medical Centre Patient Participation Group

Welcome to the first joint newsletter from the Grange Medical Centre (GMC) and its Patient Participation Group (PPG).

## What's a PPG?

Due to changes made by the Government & the NHS all GPs need to involve patients in the running of their Surgeries. This is being achieved via by setting up a PPG. They are made up of Patient volunteers & Staff. They are to meet regularly to discuss:

- issues facing the surgery
- listen to patient concerns
- learn of new initiatives from the NHS/Surgery
- look at ways to improve communication & services

## What does our PPG do?

We currently meet every couple of months having only recently been set up under this new initiative. We have 17 patients from GMC currently registered as members of our PPG but of these only four to five attend meetings regularly. All are kept up to date by email but we would of course like more people to attend the meetings. Meetings are usually around 18:00 and last about 60-90 minutes.

## How can I join?

Just leave your details with reception ie your name & email address, and that you wish to join the PPG and you will be contacted by Andy Slater, Practice Manager who will provide last minutes and when next meeting is due to be held.

## Who can join?

All you need to be is a patient of GMC. There are no qualifications or pre-requisites required. Obviously, an interest in health issues & the GMC service provided to you and other patients is advisable. You should also remember that we do NOT discuss personal issues/cases relating to any patient including PPG members.

## Any other questions?

Please leave your details, including your phone number & email address, with reception and you will be contacted. Failing that please read the following short introductions from a few of the current PPG members to give you an idea of why people have joined.

**“Improving Our Surgery for the Benefit of All Users”**

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## Some PPG Members Introductions:

### **JOHN HOWIE, patient for over two years**

I volunteered for the Patient Participation Group (PPG) as I had the spare time and wished to learn more on the issues faced by the Surgery & its patients. I felt my experience would be of assistance, as I have lived in various places using different surgeries. I have suffered from Insulin Dependent Diabetes for 30 years and have other complications due to it. I felt my conditions & heavy use of the surgery, would mean I had a good understanding of the issues at hand. Prior to being retired due to my ill health, I worked in the Pension industry for 25 years. Hopefully, my finance experiences will also help. I look forward to helping the surgery & its patients move forward and seek to continued improvement to services.

### **STEWART FRANCIS, patient for over twenty two years**

I have been a patient at the Grange for 22 years and now suffer from a long term condition. My wife and daughter are also patients at the Grange. I believe all Public Services should be centred on those they are designed to serve, including the NHS and where possible all of us can contribute to the process in many different ways.

I was previously a non-Executive director of the Cambridgeshire Health Authority before becoming chair of the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health authority. I also had a long spell as the National Rail Passengers Watchdog. I am now a Trustee of Vivacity, a Governor of two Peterborough schools and football referee tutor.

### **GILL METCALFE, new patient**

I have only been a patient at the Grange for a short time and was previously involved in the Patient Participation Group at my last GP practice.

I have always been committed to a free health service provided when it is needed without discrimination. Initially I trained as a nurse and health visitor working (in those days) in Peterborough's developing New Towns. I later went on to work in Public Health both in Research and Project Management and my last job was working for North West Anglia Community Health Council representing the public viewpoint of health service provision.

I am now a Voluntary Director of Healthwatch Peterborough whose work involves improving local health and social care services and am also Secretary to Peterborough Breast Cancer Support Group.

### **ROY POOLE, patient for over twenty years**

I have been a patient at the Grange for over twenty years, and now welcome the chance to become more involved if I can contribute in any way, even if I have not made a great start! I am, and have been, in good health, but advancing years do mean that attendance at the Grange is becoming a little more frequent. I want to see the NHS retain the basic principles of free health care for all, funded by NI contributions and taxation. I am fearful that we are on the same track as NHS Dentistry, and I very much oppose this. I do believe though that local support in ways other than financial can only be good, and I welcome constructive patient participation at any level where it can be helpful.

I am a software engineer in the Aerospace and Automotive industries, but am now close to retirement.

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## What have the PPG achieved so far?

We worked on the results of the patient survey which GMC undertook earlier this year & made some suggestions that have/are now being put in place:

- We suggested name badges & all staff should now wear
- We agreed that the feedback from the survey should be shared and the large white board in the waiting area now details some of this along with more detailed feedback in the laminated pages around it.
- We have taken the proposed budget cuts up with NHS England and a response is awaited. The correspondence so is available under the PPG area in the waiting area.
- We have produced this newsletter which, will be issued quarterly, and are planning to further improve communication by having a "Getting to know you" coffee mornings, again probably quarterly.
- We are looking at ways to aid GMC get additional funds to improve services. These are still being investigated but we will be doing the next annual survey, saving the money a private firm would charge.

## GOOD NEWS FROM THE GRANGE!!

In the recent Friends and Family test **98%** of Grange patients would recommend the surgery to people they know!

The Care Quality Commission recently reported the Grange as being **Level 6** in their rating system of practices who may or may not be of concern. Level 6 is no concern. They will do their full inspections in Peterborough in April –June.

The NHS choices website is often a site people visit when researching which surgery to join. It is also a place where you can leave comments good or bad and we can respond. Please take a moment or two to visit and if you think we are doing a good job please leave a comment!

There is a link below

<http://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=38131>

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## Surgery News

With the changes to the NHS and particularly the budget cuts GMC is having to adapt ie doing more for less! Most of these changes have been forced upon us rather than being done with our prior agreement. Some changes that have occurred or to begin soon are:

### Medications

We have to strive to reduce these costs following NHS instructions. Patients are being moved to less costly medications. In effect, they are the same medications but no longer the brand names you are used to as these are considerably more costly. For example, those who were previously on Omeprazole for stomach problems are now using Lansaprole which, is merely a different brand of the same drug. It's estimated such changes will save the NHS £xxxxx per annum.

### Reducing Hospital Referrals

The NHS see more and more services transferred from Hospitals (Secondary or Tertiary care providers) to primary care providers ie GP's & Nurses. Our services have/are being extended to include things like skin tag removal. Reductions in referrals is estimated to save the NHS £xxxxx per annum.

### Making better use of resources

A sad fact is that a nurse's time is less costly than a GP's. Hence, regular treatments such as testosterone injections will be provided by Nurses rather than a GP. If you have any regular treatments which you currently have from one of the GP's you can ask for one of the nurses to provide. We will be moving these treatments over to nurses in the coming weeks

### Extended Opening

We have always wished to open for longer than we currently do but this is not possible due to the planning restrictions put in place in the past. Failure to open for longer hours will lead to a further reduction in our budget which we cannot afford. We are currently liaising with Peterborough Planning department and written to the local Councillors seeking their support. A copy of the letter is under the PPG board in the waiting room feel free to write/speak with your local councillor if you are in agreement or not as all views are sought.

## How Can You Help?

We are looking at ways involve and be involved in the local community via:

- Flyers to new developments to encourage new patients
- Seeking volunteers to help decorate the surgery
- Inviting local Pharmacies to explain the benefits of using them for repeat prescriptions pick-ups and even deliveries

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