



**ST STEPHEN'S GATE MEDICAL PARTNERSHIP
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING
24 March 2025 16:30 pm – 18:00 pm
Held at St Stephens Gate Conference Room
MINUTES**

Present

Noreen Neal (Chair)	Christine Fox
Pat Spallone (Joint Minutes)	Elizabeth Groves
David White (Joint Minutes)	Dr Melissa Korn (GP Partner)
Mark Dunn	Anna McMillan (Executive Assistant to
David Edmonds	James Foster)

Apologies:

Annie Cook	Henning Sieverts
Regine Godfrey	Maggie Wheeler
	Christopher Preston

1. Welcome and apologies

Noreen welcomed everyone and noted apologies. She introduced new member Christine Fox, who also signed the Confidentiality Form.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 25 November 2025

The Minutes were approved.

Action:

- **Anna to post Minutes (25 November 2025) on the website.**

3. Actions from last meeting

Noreen reviewed Actions from the last meeting, notably:

- We had still to obtain Mendip surgery PPG's patient survey, the PPG winner of the recent NAPP Corkhill Award.
- Victoria House. Melissa reported that the Practice had been refused their request to add a consulting room on the ground floor of Newmarket Road Surgery; they would consider re-applying on the grounds that residents in Victoria House, when completed, would increase patient numbers significantly.

4. Potential collaboration with other neighbourhood practices

Anna reported that she had contacted the neighbourhood Practice Managers regarding looking into joint work among the PPGs of our Central Norwich Primary Care Network (PCN - Castle, Lakenham, West Pottergate and UEA).

Castle Surgery had responded positively and will take the idea of a PCN PPG forward on their end in April and get back to us.

Ideas for joint work discussed included: lobbying regionally and at national level; recruiting new members.

There may be a role for meeting virtually (via Teams) to make this work.

Action:

- **Keep the plan of setting up a collaboration with our closest neighbourhood PPGs on the agenda.**

5. Practice Update

Melissa reminded us that Dr Cafferty retires end of March. Dr Harriet Limmer joins the Practice at the end of June in her place. Until then, Drs David Daley and Hannah Lee will between them cover Dr Cafferty's surgeries. Nurse Associate Nell Gibbs is on maternity leave from early May. A locum Health Care Assistant will cover Friday surgeries.

In response to a member's queries about Government's plan to abolish NHS-England by bringing it back within the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Melissa said she felt that there would be little impact on the care our GPs provided to patients.

6. Response to proposed cuts/closure of the Walk in Centre (WIC)

Noreen felt that the consequences of anticipated cuts or closure of the WIC were the same as those identified when the PPG responded to its threatened closure in 2023. She proposed using our response to the survey at that time, including a cover letter, and send to the Director of Primary Care who is leading on the WIC.

This was agreed with having another look at the original response in view of the current situation. Discussion reiterated: the WIC is undervalued and underfunded; it benefits and supplements other surgeries and the A&E department, taking the pressure off these services, covering extended hours.

Melissa pointed out that the estimated savings of £1.5 million would be used to help meet the needs in areas of deprivation across Norfolk and Waveney ICB. If this were to be spread across the 26 Norwich GP surgeries, it would be far too little to provide sufficient resource to cover the workload of the probable increase in appointments required.

Action:

- **Noreen to circulate PPG's 2023 response to the then threatened closure of the Norwich Walk in Centre to members to review for our response to 2025 situation. Comments should be sent to Noreen in quick time.**
- **Noreen on behalf of PPG will respond to the proposed cuts to the WIC.**

7. Chit Chat

Noreen reported the very successful final ChitChat in December, a Christmas special, with many visitors saying they will miss the coffee morning. A handout was provided showing the many other similar events now happening in and around Norwich.

8. Practice Survey

The PPG discussed the possibility of undertaking a patient survey based on that used by the Mendip PPG (see Minute 3 above) on patient experience. The importance of following best practice, and in particular being clear about the purpose of a survey was emphasised. What would we like the survey to deliver? How would a survey be disseminated?

Melissa on behalf of the practice and other PPG members supported the idea.

Action:

- **Keep the idea of undertaking a patient survey on the agenda.**

9. PPG Finances – Noreen

The table below shows the transactions since the last meeting. The available funds are now £1,057.18.

PPG Finances	Paid out	Paid in	Balance
Balance in SSG PPG a/c 25 Nov 2024			£901.76
Bookstall Donations Nov'24-Mar'25 NRS		£66.00	
Bookstall Donations Nov-Mar SSG Main		£45.23	
Bookstall Donations Nov-Mar SSG Back		£79.68	
Transfer to Chit Chat	£35.49		
Totals and Balance from 24 Mar 2025	£35.49	£190.91	£1,057.18

Details have been finalised for the purchase of a dermatoscope for nurses to use, which had been agreed by the PPG at previous meetings, at a cost of £349 + VAT. PPG approved this expenditure, noting that the cost to the PPG would not include the VAT.

Melissa reported that the practice was looking into the possibility of purchasing a Paediatric SATS monitor ('standard assessment tests' for blood oxygen measurement - oximeter) for babies. In response to a member's question, she explained that while the paediatric finger pulse oximeters bought in 2023 are suitable for young children, they are not suitable for newborn babies for which measurements could not be taken on fingers but elsewhere on the body e.g. soles of the feet. This measurement can be decisive in making the decision whether a hospital admission is necessary. Melissa will obtain further information.

Action:

- **Melissa/Anna to follow up purchase of dermatoscope.**
- **Noreen to keep the possibility of purchasing a SATS monitor on the agenda.**

ChitChat Finances

Noreen presented her paper showing the transactions since ChitChat restarted after Covid in 2022. The total cost of supplies and associated expenses over this time was £174.49. Although coffee/tea and biscuits were provided free, many of those coming to ChitChat contributed to a voluntary donation box, and the total collected in this way was £139.30. A transfer of £35.49 from the PPG account (shown above) closed the ChitChat account with a zero balance.

The meeting thanked Noreen for the outstanding way she had undertaken the ChitChat finances.

10. NAPP (National Association for Patient Participation)

Noreen noted that many GP practices had withdrawn their membership to NAPP following its recent doubling of affiliation fee to about £80.

The meeting discussed the merit of being part of the national network. Melissa said that the Practice would wish to continue being a member and supporter.

11. Kings Fund (Do With)

Mark brought to the attention of the PPG an upcoming all-day meeting of the King's Fund to discuss their 'Do With' project, a network of people and organisations calling for and enabling a radical shift in the public sector from 'doing to' to 'doing with'. Mark will attend the meeting on 26th March and report back to PPG any notable take home points.

Action

- **Mark to report on the "Do with" meeting of the King's Fund.**

12. Books

Noreen reported on the continued success of the bookstalls and indicated that despite having many bags of donated paperbacks, more donations are welcome in the hope that they would provide different genres.

Action

- **Book donations welcome, no medical themes please, to Noreen or drop off at a surgery reception desk and let Noreen know.**

13. Newsletter

Resignations

Introducing this item, Noreen paused to note that Pat Spallone and David White had indicated their resignation from the PPG, having been active members for some eight years, since its first meeting. She added that Henning had also sent her notice of his resignation and his good wishes to the PPG for the future; she added that although he had been with the group a shorter time, had contributed with great energy, ideas, and enthusiastic commitment.

Next Newsletter

A consequence of David and Pat's resignation is that another lead for putting together the Newsletter is needed. This is an opportunity to rethink the design, although a template is available to follow current format.

The meeting discussed potential future content including identifying and describing the variety of vaccines, for which Melissa would provide information; a focus on the PPG to raise awareness and recruit new members.

Action:

- **All members: consider stepping up to take responsibility for the next Newsletter and to send Noreen ideas for content.**

14. Any Other Business

Noreen reminded the meeting that she wished to cease being the Chair within the next twelve months though would continue as a member and be happy to support a new chair if that was helpful.

Recruitment of new PPG members was discussed. Ideas included: an 'open house' in the surgeries to create an opportunity to talk to patients about the PPG; a patient survey focusing on the PPG; a special edition of the Newsletter;

Anna gave a beautiful bouquet of flowers to Pat and David (W) on behalf of the practice partners with their thanks for a long and active membership of the PPG.

15. Dates of 2025 meetings

All on Mondays at St Stephens Gate 16:30 – 18:00.

- 2nd June 2025
- 28th July 2025
- 22nd September 2025
- 24th November 2025

Pat Spallone and David White
31 March 2025

Summary of Actions

- Keep the plan of setting up a collaboration with our closest neighbourhood PPGs on the agenda.
- Noreen to circulate PPG's 2023 response to the then threatened closure of the Norwich Walk in Centre to members to review for our response to 2025 situation. Comments should be sent to Noreen in quick time.
- Noreen on behalf of PPG will respond to the proposed cuts to the WIC.
- Keep the idea of undertaking a patient survey on the agenda.
- Melissa/Anna to follow up purchase of dermatoscope.
- Noreen to keep the possibility of purchasing a Paediatric SATS monitor on the agenda.
- Mark to report on the "Do with" meeting of the King's Fund.
- Book donations welcome, no medical themes please, to Noreen or drop off at a surgery reception desk and let Noreen know.
- All members: consider stepping up to take responsibility for the next Newsletter; and to send Noreen ideas for content.

PPG Membership for Information

Noreen Neal (Chair), David Edmonds (acting Health & Safety Officer), Annie Cook, Mark Dunn, Christine Fox, Regine Godfrey, Wayne Govender, Elizabeth Groves, Caroline Norledge, Christopher Preston, Maggie Wheeler, Anna McMillan (Executive Assistant to James Foster), Dr Melissa Korn (GP Partner).

QR Code for Newsletters

