

Message from the Chair – Marie Fuggle

I am relatively new to the post of Chair of the Addington Road Surgery PPG and when asked “What is the purpose of the PPG? What is our role?”, I could give a glib or official sounding answer but it is more important than that.

Life is all about change, we used to listen to live football match commentary on the radio, then black and white TV, followed by colour TV, now 3D TV in HD. Computers used to be about punched cards and floppy disks, now we all have megabytes and gigabytes on our smart phones. We used to get on our bikes, then came petrol or diesel cars and now we have hybrids, electric, and driverless cars. We used to pop to the local shop to buy our groceries and now we have supermarkets with self-scanners or we shop online and have home deliveries. 60+ have witnessed more change in every dimension of life than any previous generation.

When we speak of change, healthcare, the NHS and the GP surgery are no exception, gone are the days for goose fat and brown paper on the chest, onions cooked in raw sugar..... We have moved from a single GP to group practices and now Patient Care Hubs that offer a wide range of services, doctors, physiotherapists, diabetes specialists, paramedics, blood test, vaccinations..... Etc. These are supported by new computer systems, apps and working methods all of which must also be learnt by staff and patients. Added to this there have been huge strides forward in diagnosis and treatment of illnesses. Changes and the speed of change are not always the choice of the surgery.

Health and healthcare are very personal. It is in our interests that the surgery runs smoothly, fairly and efficiently for both staff and patients. We must encourage patients to embrace change and use the new technology in order to release time for the surgery to spend with people who are unable to cope with it. We must identify problems and give feedback to the surgery, and once in a while say “Well done you are doing a good job”. I refer to ‘problems’ not ‘complaints’ deliberately – problems can be solved and the PPG will work with the surgery and patients to solve problems and to keep patients informed of changes being made at the surgery.

The PPG is a two-way communication bridge between the surgery and the patient community.

**It is in our interest to get informed, get involved
and make it happen!**

