

Stanhope Mews West - Patient Participation Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 10 June 2025

5.30 – 7.00pm at Stanhope Mews West Surgery

Present: Sally James (SJ) (Acting Practice Manager), Jan Du Plessis (JDP) (New Practice Manager, starting 23rd June) Carol Joseph (CJ) (Chair), Elisabeth Burman (EB) (Secretary), Fay Amias (FA), Viorica Bergman (VB), Camilla Cazalet (CC), Zarrina Kurtz (ZK), Catriona Ritchie (CR), Colin Ussher (CU), Donald White (DW).

GPs in attendance: Dr Shuman Hussein (partner), Dr Jenny Bedford (partner), Dr Alexandra Lowdon (Sash) (GP registrar)

1. Welcome

Carol welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Jan Du Plessis, the new Practice Manager who is taking up the post on 23rd June.

2. Apologies

Lynden Easton, Caryl Harris, John Walker, Michael White

3. Minutes of the last meeting 18 March 2025

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

CJ asked whether the Patient Handbook is now attached to the 'welcome email' that is sent to new patients. It was thought that 'file size' might be an issue but **SJ** is dealing with this. Alternatively, a link to the handbook from the website was suggested.

An update and clarification were requested by **VB** over administrative procedures concerning District Nurse communication with the surgery. They have been told not to use the practice email address to give information, as it has to be scanned and forwarded to the relevant person.

SJ: District Nurses usually telephone the practice to pass on information. However, if they do send an email, they receive a disclaimer reply saying that the email will not be dealt with immediately.

4. Updates from the GP

Dr Bedford updated the PPG regarding the medical staff:

Dr Will, a partner at SMW, is leaving the practice in September. The PPG members were very sad to hear this news.

Maternity leave: Dr Orr, Dr Moon, Dr Barlow and Dr Morgan are at various stages of maternity leave.

Retained:

Dr Sliney is staying on at the practice.

Dr Lowdon (Sash) a GP registrar will be helping out more with the clinical services.

Dr Hussein introduced Jan Du Plessis who joins the SMW practice on 23rd June.

5. Introductions from our new practice managers

Sally James (SJ) has been the deputy practice manager at SMW surgery for many years and has a wealth of experience. She is currently 'acting practice manager' until Jan takes up his post later this month. It was interesting and nostalgic to hear some of her reminiscences dating back to when the practice was at Pelham Street. Sally asked the PPG to introduce themselves to Jan Du Plessis.

Jan Du Plessis (JDP) introduced himself to the PPG and confirmed that he will be working at SMW surgery from Monday to Friday, although initially he will spend one day a week at Earls Court Surgery. He came to the UK from South Africa in 1994. He qualified as a Doctor of Medicine in South Africa where he initially worked in a hospital environment and then in general practice. Since deciding to give up medicine, he has been working in administrative roles involving data science, computing and practice management. His interest in the Friends and Family Test, which gathers feedback on patient experience, has led him to develop an analysis tool for measuring results.

JDP explained that there are two metrics involved in the analysis of the results: Sentiment Analysis (positive or negative) and Sentiment Classification. By using these two metrics it is possible to analyse the feedback better and see trends.

SJ puts the F+F test results on the SMW website.

PPG members were keen to know what aims he has for the practice. He will talk about these when he is in post but mentioned staff morale and Patient Engagement as being issues that are important to him. **Dr Hussein** agreed with the importance of staff morale.

Regarding Patient Engagement, **JDP** spoke about organising a Patient Survey and a Patient Event to ensure that patients' voices are heard.

DW asked about surveys in relation to the government. The Patient Survey will be modelled on the National General Practice Patient Survey and will be PCN based.

CJ commented that the response rate for patient surveys is not good and is possibly associated with poor attendance from individual practice PPG members of the PCN PANPPG meetings. Only CJ and EB attend from SMW and sometimes we are just one of two or three practices out of twelve represented.

JDP commented that some of the patients attending the Earls Court surgery PPG meetings (where he currently works) come to the meetings so that they can speak to their GP!

The government is setting a target for greater use of the **NHS App** with practices expected to increase its use by their patients. At SMW it is apparently only used by 67% of patients.

SJ explained that there was a new QR code available to scan and upload the App, but not all patients have smart phones. She said she would put posters up in the practice to encourage greater uptake of the App.

Texts sent to patients: **SJ** explained that texts are also sent to patients from outside the practice, by the NHS.

VB asked **Dr Hussein** if the practice was doing more investigations now. He said that more maybe done at PCN level, but that he would still like SMW to be a hub for ECGs etc.

DW who has been involved in drug trials for the last 10 years, asked the doctors present if they were finding that patients are collecting their own medical data from private consultations and sources outside the GP practice, to present at GP consultations.

Dr Hussein said this issue is really confined to smart watches and patients recording their own heart rate.

DW commented that the NHS is beginning to open-up data and data sharing since the demise of NHS England.

6. Patient issues

- Repeat prescription information
- Telephone call back system

Repeat prescription information

When requesting repeat prescriptions online, there is a "notes" dialog box that can be filled in. **CU** reported that he has frequently entered text in this box which should have prompted a reply from the practice but heard nothing and wished to know what the practice policy was on this issue. **SJ** to investigate.

JDP: the facility to order prescriptions should be available on the App and advised ordering them in the morning when the GPs are available to sign them as they are in clinic in the afternoon.

SJ explained this is the reason that 24 hours are needed to prepare a prescription as there is no guarantee that a doctor will be available to sign them in the afternoon.

FA submitted a prescription from a cardiologist and was impressed because the pharmacist phoned her to say that she first needed to have a blood test. She also commented that the voice on the new automated answering system for the practice, sounded rather stilted.

Telephone call back system

CU also used the telephone call back system which necessitated a telephone call back from the GP. After several attempts by the GP, they were all unsuccessful and went to voicemail. His mobile does not accept unknown number calls which then go to voicemail. The practice does not withhold its number so it was suggested that the doctor calling him may have been using a mobile from home or that the patient's phone may be registered abroad.

SJ said it may also be due to some teething problems with the system.

DW found the 'call back' system worked well but had been told that he would know if his prescription was ready by going to his pharmacy!

Dr Bedford: some patients don't answer the emergency call back from the doctor.

Reception Photo Board

SJ asked Helen (receptionist) to update the board before the meeting today.

Dr Hussein suggested that Helen should be given permanent responsibility for updating it.

7. Website updates

Dr Hussein said that not everything we wanted on the website met with NHS design and format regulations, but the SMW website is now distinctly different from other websites.

8. Any other business

Beacon Award: The Beacon Award was discussed at the last PANPPG meeting and is an award introduced to encourage and incentivise PPGs and Practice Managers to set up and develop dynamic PPGs. It has not been approved yet but there has been a proposal to introduce a set of PPG standards by the Brompton Health PPG. Practices would have to adhere to these proposals to be eligible for the award.

In addition, it is proposed that an award and financial prize is given annually in recognition to the practice which has met both the minimum standards and achieved outputs which further improve the work of the Brompton Health PPG in supporting good practice, or the work of an individual PPG which has led to improvement in the experience of patients.

CJ will investigate this further as it was generally considered that SMW PPG would be a serious contender for this award.

9. Date of next meeting: 16 September 2025, 5.30 - 7.00pm at the surgery