

Minutes of Patient Participation Group Meeting held at 5.00 p.m.  
on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2025 In the Meeting Room at The Cottons Medical Centre

**Present:** Samuel Adams (SA) Practice Manager, Helen Boto (HB), Chair, Janet Harper (JH) Secretary, Jenny Randall (JR) Treasurer, Sue Wathen (SW), Ruth Stokes (RS), Lynn O'Shea (LO), David Moreton (DM), Tony Mayes (TM), Jenny Chatley (JC)

**1. Research Talk:**

SA and HB welcomed Ms. Fenglin from the National Institute for Health and Care Research, a Government funded body whose aim is to promote and encourage people in primary care to take part in research into conditions.

This body are able to help shape new practices and standards of care and anyone taking part would be checked more regularly than normal and their condition monitored. Individuals could register to join and those taking part in a programme would have access to new treatments or devices. Ways to get involved were by completing questionnaires, online activities or participate in a study. For instance, a dementia study would not only be open to dementia sufferers but also to their carers and people who had dementia in the family as well as perfectly healthy people. It should be noted that it was also possible to sign up on behalf of somebody else.

PPGs could help promote interest in registering by word of mouth and by displaying relevant material on their notice boards.

TM was concerned with anonymity for those taking part in a study and also remarked that it was important that those not suffering from a condition were allowed to join a research programme, otherwise it would simply be research into how the condition was managed. Ms. Fenglin replied that a person who had registered to take part in a programme would be given an ID and the researcher would not know their identity, The surgery to whom the patient belonged could, however, identify the participant. She confirmed that studies were open to all those interested, not just those suffering from the condition being studied.

In answer to a query from HB, Ms. Fenglin replied that as yet they had not asked surgeries to approach patients, but were hoping to do so in the near future. She stated that if PPG members had any questions that occurred to them at a later date, then they could always ask the Practice Manager to forward them to her. TM remarked that in his opinion the value of research could not be underestimated.

HB thanked Ms. Fenglin for her interesting presentation.

**2. Apologies:** Inga Bain, Mary-Anne Burch, Karen Carr

### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting in May 2025:**

These were approved as a true record of the meeting. SA apologised for the fact that he had not attended the meeting, but he had been caught up in a traffic jam caused by an accident.

### **4. Practice Manager's Report:**

At the present time there were 9,491 patients on the Practice list. There had been 124 DNAs in the last month, 11 of which were with GPs and 94 with nurses.

Regarding the Flu Clinics, these would commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October and there would be a number of smaller clinics this year in order to avoid the chaotic situation last year.

Patients over 65 years and the clinically vulnerable would be receiving texts throughout the month inviting them to make an appointment. In answer to a question SA replied that the Covid vaccination was for those over 75 years of age and the clinically vulnerable.

Anima had now been in use a couple of months and appeared to be working well, however, there was to be a Practice meeting soon to discuss changes that could be implemented to make using the system easier for patients. SW remarked that it was good that GPs were triaging Anima. TM said he had used Anima satisfactorily a number of times, but once it had come back with the statement 'Anima does not deal with emergencies'.

Doctors were aware that booking blood tests was a problem and that appointments available were weeks in advance. Corby, however, did have earlier spaces. SW remarked that she needed to book blood tests regularly in Bedford and they did seem to have a much more efficient system.

HB reported that she had had a number of people complain to her about the length of time it still took to get through to the Practice by telephone.

In answer to a question as to how many doctors we had at present and were we still looking for another GP, SA replied that there were 6 at the moment and he was still hoping to recruit an extra doctor in the future. He reported that in our PCN there were 8 Practices and Rushden Medical Centre, who had left our PCN, were going to rejoin. The long term plan seemed to be to set up more urgent care centres, like Corby, and leave doctors to deal with chronic conditions.

He confirmed that The Cottons still did Hub appointments on Saturday mornings, but the hours had been increased to 8.00 a.m. until 2.00 p.m.

The play centre toy was given back to the PPG as it could no longer be used in the Waiting Room owing to infection risk. The Secretary was to take it to a children's play group – Little Treasures in Stanwick who had said that they would gratefully receive this addition to their equipment. HB pointed out that the PPG had bought a number of leaflet stands before Covid. With the onset of Covid leaflets had been banned, but they

were now being placed on tables throughout the surgery. She asked that these stands be located and used to display leaflets.

#### **5. Report from the Chair:**

HB commented that the need to arrange an AGM was now pressing and suggested either 17<sup>th</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> September. Discussion took place and it was agreed to hold the AGM at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September.

She confirmed that an Autumn Newsletter would be produced and asked for any ideas for inclusions in this edition to be sent to the Secretary or herself.

#### **6. E.N.P.A. Report:**

JH said that there was really nothing to report as she had been on vacation for the July meeting, there had not been a meeting in August and the September meeting was to be the day following (4<sup>th</sup> September).

#### **7. Any Other Business:**

SA answered a question on the efficacy of Surveys and said that a recent text survey had resulted in only 97 replies out of 267 questionnaires sent out. JH remarked that in the past when the PPG had conducted surveys at the Flu Clinics they had only managed to get 30 – 40 completed and this was not very representative when it was considered the Practice had over 9,000 patients.

#### **8. Date of Next Meeting:**

This was set for 10<sup>th</sup> December at 6.00 p.m.

These minutes have been recorded for accuracy purposes only.