



ATTLEBOROUGH SURGERIES

PPG NEWSLETTER NO. 1 APRIL 2025

MESSAGE FROM THE PPG CHAIR

Attleborough Surgeries have had a Patient Participation Group (PPG) before, but following the challenges of meeting during the Covid lockdown, the group was disbanded and the Practice Manager, Lucy McLean, put out a request to patients for volunteers to form a new, relaunched group in mid-2024.

Since summer 2024, we have been meeting every 4–6 weeks to gather information and to establish the group's objectives, and to develop a patient communication plan. The intention is for the group to then meet quarterly, and to publish a newsletter in April, July, October and January. Minutes of our meetings to date have been published on the Surgeries' website.

We have now carried out several patient surveys, which are reported on in the following pages in this first *PPG Newsletter*, and we also intend to include a quarterly summary of events and developments within the Station Road and Queens Square Practices, to hopefully provide improved communications between the Surgeries and patients. A directory of local support groups is also included in this issue, together with some background information on the role of the PPG and its objectives.

What is not generally appreciated is that the 'good old days' have gone for the Practice. Today, it typically manages over 600 requests daily from online forms plus up to 250 telephone calls. On an average day, the Practice can receive between 170–250 urgent requests, of which 25% are deemed non-urgent when reviewed by a GP. I understand that this is a typical pattern and demonstrates the different behaviour and responsibility that patients now have in managing their own health and that of their families. The behaviour towards A&E attendance and ambulance calls is broadly similar.

Given these demands, we all – patients and the Practice – have challenging times ahead.

Best Wishes,

David Branson

PPG Chair

You can contact the PPG at
dnwicb.d82034.ppg@nhs.net

Bank Holidays

Please note that the surgeries will be closed on the following dates:

- 18 and 21 April
- 5 and 26 May

If you need non-emergency help on those days, go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111.

In a medical or mental health emergency, call 999.

The Norwich Walk-In Centre is located at Rouen House, NR1 1RB. Tel: 01603 677500. This service is available from 07.00am – 9.00pm, seven days a week.

AUGUST 2024 – PPG AUDIT OF PRACTICE WAITING ROOMS



Two members of the PPG carried out an audit of both Station Road and Queens Square waiting rooms and provided a summary of their findings, after which the Practice developed an action plan for implementation across both sites. The aim was to improve the display and access to patient information available in the waiting room areas, by providing clearly

labelled noticeboards with grouped topics, and to also use corridor areas to provide additional display space.

New 'Key Topic' noticeboards were ordered and were installed across both sites at the end of March.

SEPTEMBER 2024 – PATIENT SURVEY – QUEENS SQUARE

Questionnaires were available and waiting patients were asked to complete these, with questions including the following:

	Question	Response
1	From past experience, how would you rate the Attleborough Surgeries on a 1–10 scale?	The average score across patients was 7.7, with the range being from 6–10. This was very much in line with the Friends and Family survey results collected and published each week.
2	Why did you give this score?	Typical answers were – no problems and seen regularly – delay sometimes in getting a response following a request – lack of specific time given for telephone appointments – mostly good experience – good experience with Reception, Nurse Practitioners and Nurses, but would like more access to a GP.
3	Have you had any difficulties in the past?	Responses ranged from no issues to requests for better telephone access and being able to get an appointment.
4	How do you normally make contact – telephone/online/NHS App/visit?	Visit 22%, Telephone 44%, Online 33%.
5	What changes would you like to see made – in order of priority?	Answers were – service back to how it used to be – nothing – additional GPs – quicker response on the telephone.
6	Do you regularly complete the after-visit survey?	Around 33% said they had completed one in the past.

NOVEMBER 2024 – PATIENT SURVEY – PRACTICE FLU DAY

Patients attending the Queens Square Flu Day were asked to complete a survey by three PPG members who were in attendance. 60 survey sheets were kindly completed by patients, and these gave us a better understanding of patient requirements and the points on which we should focus.

FEBRUARY 2025 – SMS TEXT SURVEY

2,000 SMS text messages were sent out inviting patients to complete an online patient survey. The 2,000 patients were selected at random from across five age groups, and the survey was also made available on the Surgeries' Facebook page. Paper copies were additionally available for patients who wished to complete the survey when they visited the practice.

The results are currently being analysed and will be summarised in our next *PPG Newsletter*.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS – FEB AND MAR 2025

Month	Appt. type	Appts missed	Appt. time lost
Feb	GP/Advanced Care Practitioners	28	44 hours
	Nurses	128	
Mar	GP/Advanced Care Practitioners	30	38 hours
	Nurses	119	

In February and March 2025, over 44 hours and over 38 hours respectively, of face-to-face appointments went unused at the surgeries due to missed appointments.

It's incredibly disappointing when patients have been declined an appointment – due to fully booked schedules – and then those with an appointment miss their booked time without letting the surgery

FUTURE EVENTS

SPRING COVID VACCINE CAMPAIGN – 1 APRIL – 17 JUNE

This is a reduced eligibility group compared to the winter campaign and will include:

- Adults aged 75 and over
- Residents in care homes for older people
- Individuals aged six months and over who are immunosuppressed

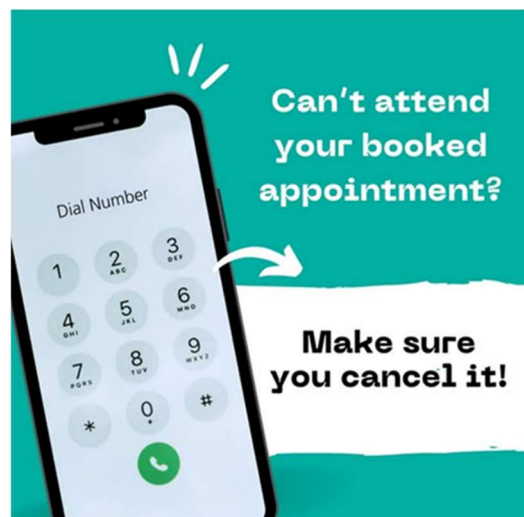
The Practice will only be vaccinating patients who are older people resident in care homes and those who are housebound, and will publish locations that patients in the other eligible categories can visit, once this information is available.

OTHER EVENTS COMING UP

APRIL Stress Awareness

MAY Deaf Awareness Week and Dying Matters

JUNE Healthy Eating and Men's Health Week



know. This prevents another patient from being seen.

Please remember: If you can't attend, cancel your appointment, so that it can be offered to someone else in need! Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

ATTLEBOROUGH SURGERIES PATIENTS PARTICIPATION GROUP

Aim

To act as a 'critical friend' to the Practice to improve its provision of healthcare and to strengthen the relationship between patients and the Practice by communicating Practice decision making to patients and giving constructive criticism to the Practice from the patient viewpoint.

Objectives

- Provide a range of ways for patients to share their views about services and the Practice environment
- Use information gathered from patients to discuss general or specific issues and to recommend / contribute to the implementation of improvements within the Practice.
- Represent the 'patient voice' within and beyond the Practice.
- Encourage communication of positive public health messages.
- Promote health and wellbeing in the community and consolidate links between the Practice and local groups, organisations and services.
- Link with other practice PPGs, and relevant locality forums.
- Represent the PPG at CQC inspections check.

Board Membership

- Membership is restricted to patients registered with Attleborough Surgeries (or their nominated representative).
- The PPG shall aim to reflect a cross section of the patient population without discrimination.
- The Group will elect a Chairperson. This person will serve for a 12-month period after which re-election will take place. The Board may like to establish the role of Deputy additionally.
- The PPG will appoint a Secretary, either from the PPG members or staff member from the Practice, who will be responsible for taking meeting notes and circulating agendas and other appropriate paperwork.

Meetings

- Meetings will usually take place at the Practice by arrangement every quarter.
- The date and time of meetings will be mutually agreed by the Chairperson and the Practice and communicated to all PPG members.
- An agenda will be circulated to all members and guests before the meeting inviting additional agenda submissions no later than one week before the meeting.
- The Practice Manager will attend the PPG meetings by invitation. The agenda will include a standing item 'Practice Update'.
- Agendas and minutes will be public documents and will be openly shared and uploaded to the Practice website.

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Name	Location	Details/Contact
The Kindness Cabin (social shop)	Queen's Square car park	<p>Nominal joining fee – then food can be purchased at subsidised prices.</p> <p>Members are entitled to free fruit and veg, bread and bakery items, and sanitary products, all as part of the Food Waste Scheme.</p> <p>Tuesdays 6.00pm–8.00pm, Thursdays and Sundays 10.00am–12.00 noon.</p> <p>Contact: Elaine Easthope or Clair Fisher at alittlemorekindness@hotmail.com</p> <p>Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/586982843522161/</p>
The Kindness Café	Connaught Hall	<p>Free lunch.</p> <p>Run by volunteers using donated food (including supplies from the Kindness Cabin).</p> <p>Thursdays, 12.30pm–3.00pm.</p>
The Chambers Community Café	Town Hall, Queen's Square	<p>Share a cuppa or a bite to eat, socialise and meet new people.</p> <p>Sundays, 12.00 noon–2.00pm, and Thursdays, 11.00am–2.00pm. Signposting to various services providing help, support and advice, if required, is supplied on Thursdays. (Both days are sponsored by local businesses.)</p> <p>Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/125291828181676/user/100068623161292/</p>
St Marys Church	Church Street	<p><u>Drop-in and Share Table:</u></p> <p>People bring donated food in and this is free to take for anyone who is finding it hard to manage. The Town Council also provides an annual grant to help purchase food for the share table.</p> <p>Thursdays 11.00am–12.00 noon, and Saturdays 10.00am–11.30am.</p> <p><u>Lunch Club:</u></p> <p>Held monthly on 1st, 3rd and 5th Friday at 12.00 noon, and costs £6. Booking for lunch is essential – please phone 01953 454977.</p> <p>Website: https://www.attleboroughchurch.org.uk/community-groups.html</p>