

Acorn Surgery Patient Participation Group Policy

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Introduction

Policy Statement

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) has a key role to play at the Acorn Surgery as it helps to ensure that patients and carers can influence the surgery and local services. All Acorn Surgery staff must understand the purpose of the PPG, the PPG organisation, and be able to explain to patients how they can become involved with the PPG.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with [CQC GP mythbuster 108: Involving and engaging with the patient population and local communities](#).

Status

In accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#), we have considered how provisions within this policy might impact on different groups and individuals. This document and any procedures contained within it are non-contractual, which means they may be modified or withdrawn at any time. They apply to all employees and contractors working for or on behalf of the Acorn Surgery.

PPG Overview

Purpose

The Acorn Surgery PPG meets on a regular basis and its role includes:

- Working with the Practice while helping to ensure that patients and carers can influence their local healthcare services
- Being a critical friend to the Practice
- Advising the Practice on the patient perspective and providing an insight into the responsiveness and quality of services
- Encouraging patients to take greater responsibility for their own and their family's health
- Carrying out research into the views of those who use the Practice
- Organising health promotion events and improving health literacy
- Regular communication with the patient population

Additional guidance can be sought from the [National Association for Patient Participation](#) (N.A.P.P.), [Patient Participation Groups in Scotland](#) and [Patient Participation Groups In Northern Ireland](#).

Structure

The Acorn Surgery PPG committee will comprise of the following:

- Chairperson
- Vice chairperson
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Organisation representative

Additional positions may be created at the AGM if proposals are made and unanimously agreed. The committee are members of the PPG, selected by members of the PPG. The group will not exceed 25 members, who may be part of face-to-face or virtual groups, and must be a registered patient at the Acorn Surgery. Should an individual cease to be a registered patient, they will no longer be a member of the PPG. Job descriptions for committee positions are at [Annex A](#) along with a PPG charter at [Annex B](#).

Membership

The PPG consists of a representative sample of the practice. To become a member of the PPG, the applicant must:

- Be a registered patient or a carer of a registered patient
- Work in a collaborative manner with all PPG members
- Declare any conflicts of interests
- Listen to the views of the other PPG members
- Adhere to the terms of reference for PPG members
- Commit to upholding [The Seven Principles of Public Life](#)

Ordinarily, membership will be for an initial term of three years and is not restricted to those patients or carers who can attend face-to-face meetings. Members can contribute to discussions virtually as a member of the practice PPG supporters. The personal details of PPG members will be stored electronically and in accordance with data protection guidelines.

Meetings

PPG meetings take place regularly and an agenda will be emailed to members by the secretary prior to the meeting, which will be in the following format:

Item no	Item	Lead
1	Welcome and apologies (for non-attendance)	
2	Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting (to be proposed and seconded)	
3	Matters arising from the last meeting	
4	Items for discussion (consider new members, local and national initiatives etc. and limit time)	
5	Any other business (an opportunity for members to voice patient/carers concerns/suggestions or compliments)	
6	Location, date and time of next meeting	

Role of PPG members

The Practice will encourage PPG members to:

- Liaise with patients and carers, discussing concerns and comments pertinent to the services at this organisation
- Champion the PPG, actively engaging with the patient population and local community
- Attend and contribute to meetings, sending apologies in advance to the secretary in cases of known absence
- Remain polite and objective throughout meetings, listening to and respecting other members
- Be constructive and balanced when contributing to PPG meetings
- Represent the patient population effectively, expressing the views of the population in an objective manner
- Undertake any training and development opportunities that may arise for the benefit of the PPG
- Avoid bringing personal matters affecting the Surgery to the PPG meetings

A Confidentiality Policy and Declaration Agreement for PPG members can be found on the PPG pages on the Practice Website.

Contact with PPG members

To be compliant with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) which incorporates the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), all members are required to give their consent for the practice and key personnel to hold information about PPG members; this will be limited to name, address and contact details.

Additional resources

Further guidance on PPGs can be sought from [The Patients Association](#) or [Healthwatch](#).

Annex A – Job Descriptions for PPG Positions

The following key members will have the roles, duties and responsibilities indicated.

1. Chairperson/Vice Chairperson (if appointed)

Appointment/Role

- The Chairperson will be elected by the PPG members to serve for a period of 3 years, at which time the Chairperson will stand down or be reappointed by the unanimous vote of the PPG members
- If the Chairperson wishes to terminate their role before their elected time has concluded, they are to inform the PPG Secretary, copying in the Practice Manager, in writing (an email will suffice)
- Any election will take place by a show of hands from those present at the meeting and must be unanimous
- Nominations for the post of Chairperson must be supported by a proposer and a seconder at the meeting
- In the absence of the Chairperson, one of the other PPG elected members will be invited to chair the meeting
- The role of the Chairperson is to ensure that PPG meetings are conducted in accordance with the PPG's terms of reference

Duties and responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities may include but not be limited to:

- Setting the agenda in conjunction with the organisation and the PPG Secretary
- Welcoming new members and making introductions
- Providing an annual Chairpersons Report
- Ensuring that formal annual accounts are raised by the treasurer and submitted for any necessary audit
- Introducing speakers
- Ensuring that the timing of the agenda is maintained
- Ensuring that each member has an opportunity to speak and controlling the meeting
- Ensuring that contributions will always be non-political and non-sectarian, respecting diversity and exemplifying the PPG's commitment to the principles contained within the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- Ensuring that meetings are conducted in an orderly manner and the ruling of the Chairperson is final on such matters

Qualities

It is desirable that the qualities of a good Chairperson should include:

- Previous experience in the role of Chairperson
- Leadership skills
- Good communication and presentational skills
- Correct assertiveness
- Being respected and active in the community
- Good at networking
- Diplomacy, tact and consideration for others

2. Secretary

Appointment/Role

- The Secretary will be elected by the PPG members to serve for a period of 3 years, at which time the Secretary will stand down or be reappointed by the majority vote of the PPG members
- If the Secretary wishes to terminate their role before their elected time has concluded, they are to inform the PPG Chairperson, copying in the Practice Manager, in writing (an email will suffice)
- Any election will take place by a show of hands from those present at the meeting. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have the deciding vote
- Nominations for the post of Secretary must be supported by a proposer and a seconder at the meeting
- In the absence of the Secretary, one of the other PPG members will be invited to act as secretary to the meeting
- The role of the Secretary is to assist the Chairperson in ensuring that PPG meetings are conducted in accordance with the PPG's terms of reference

Duties and responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities may include but not be limited to:

- Deputising for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at meetings in the event of them being unable to attend or resigning. This may continue until a replacement is elected
- Upholding the PPG's terms of reference
- Working with the PPG Chairperson and appropriate organisation staff to ensure relevant PPG documentation is circulated to PPG members in a timely and appropriate fashion prior to any PPG meeting in accordance with the PPG's terms of reference
- Working with the PPG Chairperson and relevant organisation staff to review all PPG documentation (e.g., meeting minutes and reports) to ensure that this is accurate and appropriately reflects the work of the PPG and that these are, where appropriate, displayed prominently on a notice board in the organisation and on the organisation's website
- With the assistance of the Practice Manager, providing an email address whereby patients can contact the Secretary to raise matters of importance. When patients contact the Secretary, he/she will subsequently discuss this with the PPG Chairperson and they will collectively agree the appropriate course of action
- Providing a brief induction to all new PPG group members (e.g., an explanation of how the PPG works and ensuring the new member signs the relevant paperwork)

Qualities

It is desirable that the qualities of a good Secretary include:

- Previous experience in the role of Secretary
- Well organised
- Good at note taking
- Punctual
- Ability to write clearly and concisely with a good command of the English language
- Good IT skills

3. Treasurer (only required if the PPG is involved in fund raising activities)

Appointment and role

- The Treasurer will be elected by the PPG members to serve for a period of 3 years, at which time the Treasurer will stand down or be reappointed by the majority vote of the PPG members
- It is expected that the Treasurer will have an accounting qualification and/or considerable experience of bookkeeping and accounting

- If the Treasurer wishes to terminate their role before their elected time has concluded, they are to inform the PPG Chairperson, copying in the Practice Manager, in writing (an email will suffice)
- Any election will take place by a show of hands from those present at the meeting. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have the deciding vote
- Nominations for the post of Treasurer must be supported by a proposer and a seconder at the meeting
- In the absence of the Treasurer, one of the other PPG members will be invited to stand in for the Treasurer at any PPG meeting
- The role of the Treasurer is to assist the Chairperson in ensuring that the finances of the PPG are properly accounted for and all receipts and payments are made in accordance with the PPG's terms of reference

Duties and responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities may include but not be limited to:

- Ensuring all PPG financial transactions are properly recorded in manual or electronic form
- Ensuring all transactions are supported by the appropriate and relevant purchase order, invoice or receipt
- Ensuring bank statements are reconciled monthly and that the account is kept up to date and presented to the PPG meeting for scrutiny as a standing agenda item
- Ensuring petty cash is properly accounted for and that receipts and payments are signed by the recipient or payee
- Ensuring any cheques are banked promptly
- Ensuring PPG accounts are audited independently at least once a year and when handing over to a successor

Qualities

The desirable qualities that a good Treasurer should possess are:

- An accounting qualification
- Well organised and numerate
- Good IT skills are desirable

4. The Acorn Surgery Practice Manager or Practice Representative

The Practice Manager or appointed deputy will participate, support and work with the PPG. Their role(s) and responsibilities will be:

- To support the Chairperson and other PPG members
- To provide inductions for the PPG so all can fully understand their roles and responsibilities
- To provide introductions at the first PPG meeting
- To provide information on scheduled activities or health campaigns
- To provide information on the Acorn Surgery staffing

Annex B – Acorn Surgery PPG Charter

The Patient Participation Group Charter

1. Group Structure

- 1.1 The Acorn Surgery PPG will consist of no more than 25 members drawn from the Acorn Surgery registered patients. Any member who leaves the Practice as a patient cease to be a member of the group immediately.
- 1.2 The group will be comprised of officers and patients of the Acorn Surgery with the following committee positions:
 - Chairperson
 - Deputy Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Acorn Surgery Representative

Other positions may be added as deemed appropriate at the Annual General Meeting.

2. Meeting Frequency and Attendance

- 2.1 The PPG will meet on a monthly basis; meetings must have in attendance at least five members if they are deemed to be quorate. To maintain momentum within the PPG, any members who fail to attend 3 meetings consecutively without prior notification to the Secretary will be asked if they wish to continue to actively participate in the group. If not, they will be asked to resign.
- 2.2 Members are expected to adhere to the following etiquette:
 - Submit apologies to the Secretary for non-attendance prior to the meeting
 - Be punctual
 - Be willing to voice opinions and contribute to discussions
 - Be able to attend or participate in meetings regularly
 - Promote the PPG
 - Read agendas and papers in advance of meetings
 - Be polite, objective and constructive in discussions and be aware of the Equality Act 2010 in those discussions
 - Be proactive and positive to both the PPG and the organisation
 - Be prepared to lead on agenda items
 - Respect the views of others
 - Turn off their mobile phone unless needed in an emergency
 - Acknowledge and accept the vote of the majority

3. Face to Face and Virtual PPG

- 3.1 This organisation will operate a face to face and may facilitate virtual PPG to members unable to attend face to face meetings. Both are intrinsically linked and members of both groups will adhere to these terms of reference and sign the PPG Confidentiality and Declaration Agreement as detailed at [Annex C](#).

4. Aims of the PPG

- 4.1 The PPG will establish and embed an effective relationship between the Acorn Surgery team and the registered patient population, communicating patient experience, concerns, suggestions, comments and compliments in an objective manner.
- 4.2 The PPG will work collaboratively with the organisation, on behalf of the registered patient population, ensuring the services of the organisation meet the needs and wishes of the patients.
- 4.3 The Acorn Surgery agrees to work collaboratively with the PPG on behalf of the registered patient population ensuring the staff listen to feedback, concerns, suggestions, comments and compliments in an objective manner, taking the necessary action to improve services where applicable.
- 4.4 PPG members will act as the information conduit between the Acorn Surgery, the patient population, and the wider community, ensuring that all parties are aware of any issues or initiatives which affect or are likely to affect registered patients.

5. Specific Activities

- 5.1 The PPG will obtain feedback from the registered patient population about the services delivered by the Acorn Surgery. Members will review the feedback, informing the Acorn Surgery staff accordingly and identifying areas for improvement. This information will then be relayed to the registered patient population.
- 5.2 The PPG will promote the Acorn Surgery at every opportunity, helping the community to understand the range of services available. In addition, members will promote online services, encouraging patients to register for such services.
- 5.3 The PPG will maintain a prominent presence online and within the Acorn Surgery such as displaying pertinent information within the patient waiting areas. Additionally, the PPG will meet with the registered patient population opportunistically, gathering information for feedback as well as promoting the services of the Acorn Surgery.
- 5.4 The PPG will be involved in all areas of organisation development, relaying patient feedback and/or concerns and promoting the Acorn Surgery and ICB led health initiatives wherever possible.
- 5.6 The PPG will liaise effectively with Acorn Surgery staff, sharing information regarding issues that may affect both patients and staff while relaying issues identified by staff in order to improve service provision or raise patient awareness.
- 5.7 The PPG will participate in local health care seminars and liaise with other PPGs in areas of mutual interest and benefit

6. Committee Responsibilities

- 6.1 In addition to the above, the Chairperson is responsible for:
 - Ensuring meetings are held on a regular basis
 - Facilitating the AGM
 - Ensuring all committee and group members adhere to the terms of reference
- 6.2 The Vice Chairperson is responsible for:
 - Supporting the Chairperson throughout his or her tenure
 - Deputising for the Chairperson in periods of absence

- Ensuring committee members are aware of their roles and responsibilities

6.3 The Secretary is responsible for:

- Producing the agenda at least one week prior to the monthly meetings
- Taking and issuing the minutes of the monthly meetings
- Retaining a record of all decisions made at meetings
- Retaining all PPG meeting administration effectively and securely

7. Signatures

Signed on behalf of the Acorn Surgery

Signature	
Print full name	
Date	

Signed by the PPG Chairperson

Signature	
Print full name	
Date	

Annex C – PPG Confidential Information and Declaration Agreement

The Acorn Surgery Patient Participation Group

Confidentiality

All staff and patient information held at the Acorn Surgery is deemed confidential and this includes, spoken, written, hard copy and electronic formats. PPG members have no direct access to confidential information held by the Acorn Surgery, particularly patient identifiable information.

Access to patient information can only be provided with the patient's specific written authority.

Confidential information obtained as an active PPG member by whatever means must be immediately reported to the Practice Manager and not be disclosed to any other person or parties.

Definitions

- Confidential information must be protected from people or organisations not specifically authorised to receive such information. The person initially receiving the information is responsible for determining its confidential status. Adherence to the receipt and passing of confidential information is managed through specific confidentiality agreements and policies.
- Safeguarding means protecting a citizen's health, wellbeing and human rights enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

Induction of PPG members

All aspiring members of the PPG will be provided with an induction by the Acorn Surgery Practice Manager or Representative. The induction will include this confidentiality policy and will reiterate its importance to both patients and staff.

The proposed PPG member will also be briefed on the PPG confidentiality policy which outlines the key responsibilities of the group. The Acorn Surgery Practice Manager or Representative will ensure that the PPG member is committed to agreeing to this policy and understands the confidentiality guidelines, and has signed to acknowledge their responsibilities, before being enrolled as a full Acorn Surgery PPG Member.

The PPG member will be briefed on the consequences of breaking this policy and be made aware of the legal implications of breaking the [Data Protection Act 2018](#).

Confidential Information Requirements for PPG Members Responsibilities

Any Confidential information breaches or Safeguarding issues are to be reported immediately to the Acorn Practice Manager.

All personal information relating to the Acorn Surgery staff and patients is to be considered confidential. This includes verbal, written, documented and electronically stored information and data.

Any unauthorised disclosure will be considered to be a breach of confidential information. This will result in disqualification from the PPG and may involve law enforcement if deemed appropriate.

Confidential Information Guidelines for PPG Members

Activities in relation to your work in the PPG should be discussed only with authorised staff. This should be on a 'need to know' basis. Such discussions will be held with utmost discretion and in a private setting. Confidential information should never be discussed in public. This includes public meetings.

Requesting information from a patient in the waiting room should be discreet and, if in doubt, speak to the Practice/Organisation Manager about obtaining a private room.

Patients should be given privacy to complete questionnaires to ensure that their answers are held under a Confidential criterion. Questionnaires should be in the custody of and accountable to the PPG member once complete.

When using electronic devices, care should be taken to ensure that other conversations within the organisation cannot be accidentally transmitted at the same time.

Ensure that passwords and logins for authorised computer systems are protected at all times. Do not use private computer devices to store organisation, patient or staff data and ensure that confidential waste is disposed of in securely.

If in any doubt, the Practice Manager should be consulted for guidance.

PPG members will not:

- Behave contrary to the guidelines/best practice stated above
- Disclose confidential information to any unauthorised persons
- Copy confidential information for any unauthorised use or reason
- Remove confidential information from the organisation premises
- Take custody of confidential information when not authorised to do so

Summary

This policy applies to all members of the PPG at the Acorn Surgery. PPG members are considered to be individuals who are not employed by the organisation and have no contractual responsibilities.

Signatures

I confirm that I have briefed the Acorn Surgery PPG member, as signed below, and in accordance with the Confidential Information Policy and Declaration Agreement for the Acorn Surgery PPG members.

Signed on behalf of the Acorn Surgery:

Signature	
Print full name	
Date	

I, the undersigned, agree to adhere to the PPG Confidential Information and Declaration Agreement.

Signed by the PPG member:

Signature	
Print full name	
Date	