

**Forge Close Surgery PPG
Meeting Minutes
Forge Close Surgery
4 February 2025, 7pm**

Attendees:

Orla Penruddocke (Chair), Dr Ketan Patel, Tricia Bacca, Deirdre Bainbridge, Debbie Barrett, Stanley Bradshaw, Joy Halligan (Secretary) and Gail Hilder.

1 Apologies for absence

Apologies have been received from Don Lockyer, Nicola Mushet, Andrew Ramsay, Harry Shannon, Denise Spencer, Wen Wong and David Piercy, Operations Manager for the Surgery.

In addition, Claire Smith has decided to resign from the Group. Joy has been in touch with Claire to thank her for her contribution to the work of the Group and to wish her well for the future.

As there have been a considerable number of apologies for this meeting, Joy queried whether it was because the date was set in advance, as requested at the last meeting. It was agreed that she would ascertain from members that they can make the next suggested date of Tuesday 6 May 2025. Last-minute cancellations are unavoidable.

2 Minutes of previous meeting and Action Points

The minutes of the previous meeting on 3 December 2024 were agreed.

Under Action Points from the last meeting, Orla reported that she had spoken to Howard Borley, the Chair of Station Road PPG, about the reluctance of this PPG to become involved in 'political' issues. He understood completely.

Orla will speak to David Piercy about the possibility of using Hayes Life on Facebook as a means of publicising information about the introduction of the new Patient Triage system.

Joy said that she had carried out the three tasks she had agreed to do.

3 Dr Patel's Surgery Update

Orla reported that she'd received an update from David Piercy that there is now a noticeboard in the reception area for use by the PPG and there are also two new leaflet holders. She asked if any members would let her know if they would be happy take a lead on arranging for items to be displayed on the board. David has offered to laminate any posters. Gail offered to help and Orla and Joy will decide what literature would work best on the noticeboard.

There are two new Practice Nurses in post – Selma and Chelsea. They will cover Monday & Wednesday 8am – 6.30pm and Thursday & Friday 8am – 2pm. Dr Patel added that as they are both trained Prescribers they are able to take some of the work previously carried out by GPs.

A new Receptionist has been recruited to work on Mondays & Fridays, meaning the Admin and Reception team are now fully staffed. In addition, the possibility of recruiting an Assistant Manager is being considered.

4. Patient Triage System

Orla asked Dr Patel if there had been any changes since the last meeting. He said the surgery has discussed the idea of a trial for one day per week, possibly starting in March, working with messages to the surgery via Triage only but the logistics need to be worked through. It's unlikely the surgery will be ready to switch to the new system by 1 April.

Dr Patel said the reception staff need training as Care Navigators to handle requests and all AccuRx forms will be assessed by a clinician. The aim is to send a reply to the patient on the same day, apart from messages which require an emergency response. Orla offered help & support by the PPG members.

Orla said that Lisa Sutherland from Hayes Wick PCN is taking the lead on putting on a series of Health Awareness events for members of the public to attend to learn about the NHS App and also Social Prescribing. There was an afternoon on 21 January at Hayes Library which was well attended and there will be more events, every two weeks.

Stanley asked Dr Patel about the risk factors of the new Patient Triage system. Dr Patel said it is early days and views tend to differ between older and younger GPs.

Deirdre asked about completing an AccuRx form for a child and it was confirmed that some patients, e.g. children, will be prioritised.

Tricia asked what was the feedback from those surgeries who had started using the new system. Orla said it was mixed as not all patients were aware of the changes.

It was agreed that this would be a good item to display on the noticeboard in the waiting area and Orla said that Hayes Wick PCN has produced a poster which we could use. Also there's a possibility of producing a newsletter, of which Orla has some examples. Maybe this is something the new Assistant Practice Manager, if recruited, could help with.

Dr Patel reminded the group that there will still be a telephone line available and patients can telephone in an emergency.

5. Patient Survey

The Patient Survey was sent out on 20 January with a final date for completion at the end of February. David will update the PPG on the results.

6. Confidentiality Policy for Volunteers

Orla reported that David had confirmed that in the unlikely event of confidentiality being breached by a PPG member, the appeals process would be via him and his GP colleagues within the surgery.

Joy will circulate the most up-to-date copy of the policy and members will be asked to bring their signed copy to the next meeting.

7. Patient Questions

Joy raised a question on behalf of Harry Shannon who is on holiday. He has recently experienced difficulties in arranging a GP appointment and has found that attempts to use the AccuRx via the website met with the message "We have paused access to online queries as we have reached capacity for the day". Dr Patel said he was sorry to hear this but until the Patient Triage system is up and running properly, they only have limited capacity to handle requests.

Harry also queried why there are times when the waiting room at the surgery is empty and he has talked to patients who do not understand why the service has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Dr Patel said that there are times when there are four clinicians (a GP, Mental Health Nurse, Practice Nurse, Physio) seeing patients face-to-face and at other times it is quiet as the GP is having telephone appointments with patients.

It was agreed that consideration of the following items would be deferred for the time being as the PPG's efforts will concentrate on the introduction of the Patient Triage system:

8. Communications

9. Forge Close Talks

10. Development of the PPG – Goals for the coming year

11. Any Other Business

Stanley commented on three-week delays in arranging a blood test via the GP Alliance. Members commented that new appointments are often released so to keep trying. Alternatively, blood tests can be arranged at the surgery.

12. Date of the next meeting

Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 7pm at the surgery.

General Action Points from the meeting:

- Orla to discuss with David Piercy the possibility of using Hayes Life to promote relevant information about the PPG and the practice
- Members of the Group to let Orla know if they would be willing to take a lead or to work with others to arrange items for display on the new noticeboard
- Joy will:
 - forward to members a copy of the Confidentiality Policy for Volunteers for them to print off, sign & bring to the next meeting.
 - Clarify that the proposed date of the next meeting is suitable for the majority of members at this stage.