

What is a Patient Participation Group (PPG)?



A Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group of people usually made up of patients and GP practice staff, who work together to **improve the experience** of all people registered at their practice.

Every patient at your practice **can be a member** of the Patient Participation Group. There is usually also a team of volunteer patients who organise regular meetings, **listen to patients' views** and meet with practice staff.

What a PPG is:

- **Co-operative** - PPG members working with the practice to improve the service.
- **Representative** - a voice for all patients.
- **Two-way** – a conduit for practices to keep patients informed and to hear directly from patients about what is working and how things could be improved.
- **Communicative** - a way to let the practice know what patients are thinking and to suggest positive ideas and voice concerns.
- **Challenging** - as a critical friend, the PPG must be prepared to constructively challenge the practice and the service it provides.
- **Assuring** - a place to discuss changes and be a sounding board for the practice.
- **Responsive** - a place to develop projects and ideas based on the needs of the area and its patients.
- **Collaborative** - a group that works with other PPGs and local health and care organisations.
- **Practical** - some PPGs put together practice newsletters or run support groups such as wellbeing activities or groups, for example, walking groups, 'green gym' allotments, illness management support sessions or helping at vaccination clinics.
- **Supportive** - a way to support the wider Sussex Health and Care Partnership with campaigns and opportunities for patients to have their say.

What a PPG is not:

- **A place for personal complaints** - the practice and NHS have other ways for people to make individual complaints.
- **A talking shop or a doctor's fan club** - although a chance to socialise, the group should be productive and a place for meaningful dialogue, not a tick box exercise.
- **A place to work on a personal campaign / issue** - PPGs need to work on projects that would benefit the wider patient community.
- **An all-access pass** - PPGs are not entitled to access all areas of the practice (such as behind reception or staff offices) or to know information that is not relevant to their role (such as the practice finances).
- **A governing body** - PPGs do not have a strategic input into the running of the practice and have no executive authority or powers over any aspect of Practice administration.

You can **get involved** with your PPG by e-mail at sxicb-esx.smcpatientservice@nhs.net or at reception in the Practice.