

FARINGDON'S PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

for the

WHITE HORSE MEDICAL PRACTICE



The friendly local link between you and your doctors

What is Faringdon's Patient Participation Group?

The Patient Participation Group for Faringdon, or more easily known as the PPG, was set up in 2012 on the initiative of the Faringdon Area Project. The main purpose of the PPG is to provide a two-way communication channel between the Surgery in Faringdon and its 14,000 or so patients.

This leaflet sets out to introduce the PPG to you, our fellow patients, to say how we might be able to help you with any care issues and, very importantly, to see if there is a role you can play in helping our Surgery provide the best possible service for our town and nearby villages.

Who are the PPG's members?

There are currently eight Faringdon and area residents actively involved in the PPG – you'll find us all listed here.

The Clinical and Administration Managers at the Surgery represent the doctors, nurses and other health professionals. We patients are represented by a diverse group of people who all have an interest in making our already excellent GP Practice as effective as possible.

As you read through this leaflet you'll see how we do this and how we need people like you to do it even better! And please do check out our website.

How the PPG can help other patients

In the busy three years since our group started we've been able to help some individual patients though the main part of our work is in providing information and resources more generally. For example:

- We've run patient surveys to help the Surgery provide the most appropriate treatments and services.
- We've publicised major public health issues like flu jabs or meningitis protection.
- We produce, on behalf of the Surgery, regular newsletters with articles on topical health issues, the promotion of new or improved services and background stories on some of the unseen work the Surgery does for its community.
- There is also our own PPG website www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk with news, information, resources and a contact form for feeding back concerns or suggestions to the Surgery.

How the PPG helps the White Horse Medical Practice

PPGs have been likened to 'critical friends' who can give informed advice to their GP Practice on ways in which they can improve their surgeries or make life that bit less trying for people who are suffering. Above all, the PPG can give the customer's view to their Surgery to balance the instructions being handed down by the NHS.

Here are some of the ways we've helped Faringdon's Surgery:

- We advise on the Surgery's website and provide content for it.
- The regular newsletters we produce give the doctors the opportunity to keep their patients up to date on developments in the Practice.
- Those newsletters also highlight vaccination and

inoculation programmes like the winter flu jab – all of which helps to keep us well and needing fewer doctor's appointments.

- Recently the PPG has produced special Bulletins and news articles to help patients over the merger of the town's two Practices.
- Our PPG liaises with similar groups in the area and is able to pass on suggestions for techniques and innovations that are benefitting patients elsewhere in the county.

Our Structure and Organisation

The Patient Participation Group for the White Horse Medical Practice is a voluntary organisation. Our minimal expenses are paid for by the Practice and we have two staff members on our committee, but we are an independent group setting our own agendas, following our own initiatives and saying what we believe needs to be said. (However our relationship with the Surgery is very positive and never confrontational.)

The PPG is not a clearing house for complaints, though we can advise on how complaints should be handled and will certainly keep an eye on how satisfactorily any issues are resolved. In the words of the NHS, "The main aim of the PPG is to ensure that patients are involved in decisions about the range and quality of services provided and, over time, commissioned by the Practice."

Our PPG is affiliated to a national body which provides valuable advice, practical help and an excellent bulletin. We also send a member to their annual conference. All of this helps to widen our view of the issues that concern patients around the country and also what improvements we should be discussing with our own Surgery.

Oxfordshire has a network of regional PPG panels and we are fortunate to belong to a particularly active and effective one.

So who are the PPG members?

Volunteer Members

David Burn, Faringdon. Joined in 2014. Produces the Newsletters, Bulletins and promotional materials.

Kaye Byers. Faringdon. Joined in 2014. Retired NHS Clinical Nurse.

Douglas Dalrymple, Great Coxwell. Recent recruit, via education, head-mastering, the Magistracy, currently Rotarian in Faringdon.

Graham Hall, Hinton Waldrist. Our most recent member. Special interest in dermatology. Also interested in Cognition in Ageing having participated in the OU/JR study on the subject: FMRIB.

Marcus Laphorn, Faringdon. One of our founder members and has served as Chairman of the Churchill Hospital Cancer Patient & Carer panel. Is currently a Member of the OCCG Ophthalmology Patient Group. Authored our recent PPG study into Maternity Services.

John Mattingley, Faringdon. Joined PPG at outset in 2012. Retired from industrial management roles. Uses skills gained to focus PPG activities to effective conclusions.

Emily Norton, Hatford. Trained in nursing for the elderly, now an advocate for them on dementia and carer issues.

Gene Webb, Faringdon. One of our founder members, takes special interest in health funding and local government issues. Manages the PPG's own website.

Surgery Members

Caroline Beaney. Practice Manager

Jo Morgan. Business and Finance Manager.

How does the PPG work?

We meet at least quarterly with an agenda covering local and national patient issues, whether health, finances, GP services, treatment or even transport. Once a year, we invite one of the Practice's senior doctors to talk about issues that concern them where we, with our patients' voice, might be able to make a difference. Our agendas and minutes are circulated around the Practice because, the better informed the PPG is as a group, the more likely we are to be able to make a practical and effective contribution.

Between meetings we will work on our individual areas of special interest, read the national health news bulletins and keep up with progress on our group's initiatives.

Some members have been working on long term, nationally important projects involving Royal Colleges, University Departments and central funding bodies. Each of us probably gives a couple of hours a week, on average, to the Group.

How can your PPG help you?

It's easy. The PPG can speak on your behalf to your Medical Practice. But that conversation is most effective when we're able to speak on behalf of a body of people. One person asking for longer Dispensary hours or an extra Physio isn't going to make much impression. But if 100 patients with diabetes think that blood testing procedures could be improved then we'll be able to talk with a much louder voice.

So please get in touch when something occurs to you, or you hear about a friend or neighbour who is having a difficult time. Typically we can speak most effectively on:

- Surgery services
- Public Health issues
- Prevention rather than cure
- Long-term illnesses
- Parking at the Health Centre

Surgery hours

Making appointments

Liaison with hospitals

Our contact details are below or please speak to one of our members. And do look out for the Newsletters in the Surgery or on both our and the Surgery's websites.

How can you help your PPG?

Besides knowing what our fellow patients would like to see being improved we do need people to help make it happen. The most valuable thing you could do would be to give us some of your time to help with our research, information gathering or networking, for example. If you have knowledge of the Health Service then that would be fantastic.

But we also need people who are frequent users of the Surgery to give us their expert advice on what could be improved. Do you need frequent treatment because of a long-term condition? Are you a mother with a new baby? Are you a carer? Do you have a disability? If so, we're really keen to set up panels of these special types of patient so, when an issue comes up, we can get in touch with that panel and check out ideas or gather factual information. Drop us a line via the website or leave a note at the surgery Reception and we'll be in touch.

Websites:

Faringdon Patient Participation Group
www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk

White Horse Medical Practice
www.whmp.co.uk

To leave a phone message, please call the Surgery Reception on 01367 242 388 and ask for Jo Morgan or Caroline Beaney.

To leave a letter for the PPG please address it to: PPG, White Horse Medical Practice and hand it in at Reception.