

E-Bulletin from the National Association for Patient Participation: Issue 29: May 2009

201. Membership survey results

The full report on our online survey of members will be written up and circulated during the next month. In the meantime, we wanted to thank everyone who took the time to reply and to share with you some of the headline findings. These are based on 135 responses.

PPG Nuts and Bolts: 32% of PPG respondents meet monthly, 37% meet every two months and 24% meet quarterly. Practice Managers attend meetings at 83% of the PPGs, while the figure for GPs is 80%. The PPG chairs the meeting and sets the agenda in 83% of cases. The annual income of the PPG is under £1000 for 81% of PPGs who took part in the survey.

PPG Activities: The top ten areas of PPG activity are:

- Representing the patient perspective to the practice (94%)
- Commenting on the annual patient survey (86%)
- Recruiting members to the PPG (76%)
- Health promotion events (61%)
- Producing a regular newsletter (50%)
- Advising the practice on the development of new services (48%)
- Practice or PPG website (43%)
- Improvements to premises (41%)
- Fundraising (33%)
- Carrying out research into the views of the wider population (22%)

PCT Support: 25% of PPGs reported getting help from their local Primary Care Organisation.

Influence: 48% of PPGs considered themselves to be very (8%) or quite (40%) influential with respect to their practices.

Optimism: 84% of PPGs were very (38%) or quite (46%) optimistic about the future for their PPG.

Messages for N.A.P.P.: PPGs would value most highly "more sharing of good practice about PPGs" (68% of respondents thought that this would be "very useful"). N.A.P.P. is strongly perceived as an authority on PPGs but needs to organise more local events/networking, to market itself more effectively and to redouble its efforts to promote PPGs nationally.

202. The future of 084 numbers in the NHS in England

The Department of Health's [consultation](#) on the use of 084 numbers has now closed. The Department has delayed announcing its decision, originally promised by the end of April, on the basis that they the issue has generated more interest than was anticipated. Health Minister Ben Bradshaw commented:

"It is important to ensure that in reaching an outcome, we fully take into account the breadth of responses received. We are currently analysing those responses as quickly as possible in order to identify the most appropriate course of action, and the outcome of this will be communicated as early as possible."

203. Kings Fund launch major inquiry into the future of primary care

The Kings Fund has launched an 18-month [inquiry](#) into the quality of general practice. Although their focus is on England, their findings are sure to have international importance and relevance. The associated website is worth reviewing as it includes valuable information on the current strengths and weaknesses of primary care. PPGs who wish to contribute to the survey are invited to email gpinquiry@kingsfund.org.uk.

204. Guidance on the GP Contract

Most practices are bound by the General Medical Services (GMS) contract. Definitive guidance on what is expected of practices can be found [here](#). PPGs may be particularly interested in the patient experience section which no longer includes incentives to practices for having a Patient Participation Group. Instead, the contract incentivises (quite heavily) patients' ability to see a GP within 48 hours and to make advanced bookings of appointments (see page 149 and following pages).

205. Government response to the failings at Mid Staffordshire NHS FT

The Department of Health has now responded [formally](#) following two inquiries that examined the failings of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust. In future, NHS organisations will be required "to publish a new annual statement of involvement to demonstrate how they are implementing the legal duty to involve patients and the public that came into law in November last year. We would expect the statement to include a commentary by the relevant local organisations that represent patients and the public, including the LINK and the Local Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee."



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206. Attend

At our recent mini conference, some members expressed an interest in liability insurance. PPGs may be interested in the package that has been put together by [Attend](#) who have a long experience in this field.

207. And finally...

There are still about a dozen spaces left at our 31st Annual Conference and AGM in Coventry. Please contact audrey@napp.org.uk or call 0114 287 4035 if you would like more information

Kind regards

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