



N.A.P.P.

Charity Number 292157

Patients Matter

**A report of the 33rd Annual Conference of the
National Association for Patient Participation**

11th June 2011

emis

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Acknowledgements

The National Association for Patient Participation would like to thank everyone who attended our 33rd Annual Conference which attracted the largest ever attendance of 125 delegates. Edith Todd is to be congratulated for her meticulous planning and tireless efforts in organising a most professional and successful event.

Special thanks are also due to:

- Sir Denis Pereira Gray OBE, N.A.P.P Patron and Conference Chairman
- Dr Clare Gerada MBE FRCP FRCGP MRCPsych Chair of Council, Royal College of General Practitioners
- Dr Patricia Wilkie, N.A.P.P President
- Sandy Gower, Chair, Practice Management Network and N.A.P.P Trustee
- Kevan Larkin, Grosvenor and Gresty Brook PPG and Cheshire South GP Commissioning Consortium PPG Federation lead
- Dr Michael Taylor MB ChB, MRCGP, MICGP, Senior Partner, York House Surgery, Heywood Lancashire, National Executive, the Family Doctor Association
- Martine Large, Strategic Health Authority Interim Engagement Manager, NHS South East Coast

Introduction:

The 33rd Annual Conference of the National Association for Patient Participation took place on Saturday 11th June in Bracknell. The keynote address was delivered by Dr Clare Gerada (Chair of Council, Royal College of General Practitioners). The afternoon session included a presentation on the new Patient Participation Directed Enhanced Service requirement within the GP contract given by Stephanie Varah, N.A.P.P Chief Executive, attending her first annual conference since joining N.A.P.P last September. N.A.P.P Patron Sir Denis Pereira Gray rounded off the day with a thoughtful and comprehensive overview of academic evidence reinforcing the case for putting patients at the centre of healthcare decision making.

The underpinning theme of the conference was quality. The four interactive conference workshops looked at the characteristics of a good PPG, the importance of high quality information in supporting greater choice and control for patients, achieving high quality effective engagement in commissioning and how PPGs help general practice provide good quality patient care.

Keynote address: Dr Clare Gerada

Dr Clare Gerada, Chair of Council, Royal College of General Practitioners opened the conference with a powerful keynote address entitled '**We are all patients**'. Due to a recent accident prohibiting Dr Gerada to travel, her address was transmitted live from her home to the conference by video-link using Skype technology – a pioneering experience for N.A.P.P, Dr Gerada and the conference venue which proved most successful.

Dr Gerada began by stating that, despite evidence that currently shows satisfaction levels with the NHS are at their highest and the NHS is performing most effectively, major reforms are still being proposed - this latest reform being the forty first in sixty one years. Themes around choice and competition were central to the proposed reforms. Dr Gerada stated that in terms of choice it was important that patients had appropriate information to help them navigate the system. She also added that choice comes with a cost.

In terms of competition, Dr Gerada was clear that, in her opinion, any competition must add value to the NHS, not detract from it; neither must it be allowed to disturb the system. She emphasised competition should be for the market not in the market.

Dr Gerada emphasised that practices should engage patients at every level particularly in relation to choice and commissioning. She said that patients are vital in the new commissioning agenda and could assist commissioners with 'thorny' issues. Dr Gerada stressed that GPs must engage with patients in the consulting room, involve them in the practice (in Patient Participation Groups) and in commissioning, thus putting patients at the centre of healthcare decisions.

Dr Gerada encouraged patients to push their practice to have a PPG and local consortia to have a lay chair.

In summary, Dr Gerada called for GP's to start delivering what patients want:

- good access
- good continuity of care
- improving the care the practice provides
- maintaining a focus on patients away from commissioning

Throughout her address Dr Gerada stressed the benefit of continuity of care and the importance of the need for a consistent high quality health service across the country, with equality of care that is free at the point of need.

Dr Gerada's feisty speech was followed up by a wonderful interactive question and answer session with the audience over Skype, setting the scene for the rest of the day which was devoted to workshop sessions for the participants to look at national issues and to share their experiences about Patient Participation Groups.

Workshop A: The PPG M.O.T. How healthy is your PPG?

This workshop, facilitated by Dr Patricia Wilkie and Sandy Gower, explored

- The characteristics of a good PPG
- Reaching the wider patient community with virtual PPGs
- Staying healthy – what support does your PPG need from N.A.P.P?

Workshop participants agreed that healthy PPGs are well informed and keep up-to-date. They emphasised that they are involved at practice, local, regional and national level (be this at statutory or voluntary). There was a plea to stop the continuous re-organisation of the NHS and start encouraging greater recognition and celebration of the passionate patient involvement, engagement and participation as seen during the conference.

Delegates wanted to encourage greater recognition by Practices and respect from other organisations of the value that PPGs can bring to the quality of care, also respect for the work undertaken by PPGs, at both Practice and local level.

NB: The Kings Fund 2011 Report on Quality of General Practice emphasises the need for practices to “strike a ‘new deal’ with patients, in which patients are active participants in decisions about their care & the service they receive”. This is important as effective engagement with patients is intrinsic to quality improvement.”

Healthy PPGs sustain effective patient participation in a blended way, be this virtual (in some way) and with face to face communication, to be more representative of those served in the local community.

Key points for NAPP were:

- area/regional support and discussion by PPGs as well as annual conference
- continuing the regular up-dates & newsletters
- enhancing the 10 minute guides
- encouraging joint learning for PPGs and Practice team members, and the sharing of good practice eg a common agenda for some output from PPGs would be more effective
- develop Protocol for LINK/Healthwatch/Health & Wellbeing Boards/ PPG liaison like the N.A.P.P sample constitution
- get involved in setting and monitoring standards of PPGs, especially if PRGs meet intended aims

Key points at a national level were:

- involvement of PPGs with GP consortia
- a lay guide to what's happening by health secretary's office as/if PPGs are important
- patients taking responsibility for own health and understanding how to change

Key points for PPGs were:

- understanding and reaching all areas of the practice population
- undertake a self assessment of your group – a health check
- setting objectives & reviewing them regularly

Workshop B: The Patient Revolution – greater choice and control, the importance of high quality information

This workshop was facilitated by Martine Large, Strategic Health Authority Interim Engagement Manager, NHS South East Coast. Following a presentation on patient choice, convenience and control and the information needed to enable this to happen, delegates discussed the concept of 'no decision about me, without me' (an individuals perspective) and 'no decision about us, without us'(a collective perspective). Delegates debated the following:

- How can patients be involved in 'no decision about me, without me'?
- How can citizens be involved in 'no decision about us, without us'?
- What information do they need to exercise choice, convenience and control? In what format?
- What's the role of the PPG in making all of this happen?

Key points in relation to individuals:

- Information was needed on providers and the specialist care offered for each condition
- Being able to access reliable information and finding sources where this was available
- Information was needed on the choice of medication and care options
- Patient advocates were needed to support those who are confused or inarticulate and addressing issues of confidentiality if another acts for them
- join or affiliate to PPGs who can provide support
- use GPs and PPGs as information hubs
- have a structured PPG with a volunteer with appropriate skills

Key points in relation to a collective perspective:

- Need for two-way communications and things like virtual PPGs.
- Need for resourcing and training of groups.
- Locally PPGs see benefits in reaching out to other patient groups
- The need for ongoing communication and informing, not specifically involving, eg via newsletter
- Continually seeking feedback, eg via virtual PPGs.

Workshop C: Putting patients first – PPGs as partners in responsive commissioning

This workshop was facilitated by Stephanie Varah NAPP, N.A.P.P. Chief Executive, and Kevan Larkin, from Grosvenor and Gresty Brook PPG and Cheshire South GP Commissioning Consortium PPG Federation lead. The workshop took an overview of:

- The arrangements and mechanics of commissioning and looked at how Patients and PPGs could get involved
- Good quality and effective patient and public engagement in commissioning
- Relationships between PPGs and Healthwatch

Key points for NAPP were:

- The need to develop effective relationships and protocols between PPGs and Local Healthwatch
- The need to share learning and models of good practice where PPGs were involved in commissioning
- The need to influence commissioning consortia to engage with PPGs
- The need to look at social care related issues

Key points at a national level were:

- PPGs should be recognised as a statutory voice
- A directive should be given to consortia to involve PPGs in commissioning
- Regional meetings were needed for PPGs to network, receive national updates and support

Key points for PPGs were:

- PPGs need to reach out and make ongoing contact with the whole practice population community
- PPGs should 'bite the bullet' and get involved in commissioning working in partnership with other community and user-led groups.

Workshop D: Good quality care in general practice: Meeting the new GP contract patient participation requirement

This workshop was facilitated by Dr Michael Taylor and explored how PPGs can assist practices in improving the quality of their services, what patients should look for in good quality general practice and how PPGs 'add value' to general practice.

Following a presentation, participants identified the following key issues from their discussion:

- For the Department of Health to emphasise the importance of PPGs and formally write the requirement for a PPG into GP contracts
- For NAPP to offer training to PPGs to build their capacity
- For NAPP to help PRG's form networks and encourage them to work collaboratively with Healthwatch
- PPGs needed to look at the issue of representation e.g a 'Critical Friend' group where selecting people on the basis of thoughtfulness, availability, opinions which can be respected, appropriate relationship with the practice, etc., was thought to be one possible answer.
- PPGs need to look at the sustainability of their groups as the DES may move on in two years time.

Closing remarks:

N.A.P.P Patron Sir Denis Pereira Gray rounded off the day with a thoughtful and comprehensive overview of academic evidence reinforcing the case for putting patients at the centre of healthcare decision making.

Conclusions and feedback:

Thank you to all 140 patients and stakeholders involved with Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), from general practices ranging from Northumberland to Cornwall, who gave up their Saturday to attend this most inspirational and informative event.

Patient Participation Groups are entering an exciting new era and forming new and enduring relationships with GP's and practice staff within the practice environment and at a wider level in commissioning.

"Well done and congratulations on such an excellent conference on Saturday - it was extremely useful, informative, well planned and well organised. Very impressed - I have been to many "big NHS" conferences which have not been as well organised and thought out as yours was! I am really glad I was able to attend" (Practice Manager)

"Informative, thought provoking and enjoyable day. Thank you".

"An excellent conference our PPG has just started there is much to learn but it is truly inspiring to experience the enthusiasm and volunteer spirit freely given to help practices care for their patients thank you"

"Excellent organisation, content superb and very relevant to my role and that of Kings Corner PPG. Sharing ideas and experiences (and challenges) with others at the conference was invaluable very impressed thank you"

"It is the first conference I have attended and as a relatively new member I found it extremely informative. I have learnt so much and it had inspired me to learn more and get involved"