

PPG UPDATE



NHS
Milton Keynes

LINK
Milton Keynes

health:mk
www.healthmk.org

Quality:MK
Evidence Based • Primary Care Led • Patient Centred

A partnership supporting the establishment of PPGs in the MK area

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUPS (PPGs) IN MILTON KEYNES

We thought you would like to know about the current position of the development of PPGs in Milton Keynes. We are delighted to report that there has been a lot of progress during 2009. Don't worry if you are still in the planning process; we are also here to offer encouragement to those who have not yet joined.

We would also like to hear your ideas and views on how we can further develop and support ongoing activities within the PPG network.

Fifteen GP practices have now had their first PPG meeting or have an established group. Whilst this is encouraging we would like the remaining practices to be aware of the many benefits that a PPG could make to their practice.

This campaign is supported by a partnership of health:mk, quality:mk, NHS Milton Keynes and LINKMK

Hear how one PPG is helping its practice

This is just one example of what one newly established group has achieved to date

'The PPG was established in March 2009 and meet every six weeks. The group is comprised of patients, medical and support staff. From the outset they have worked in partnership with the practice to proactively develop its services to patients and to provide a patient perspective thereby making stronger the relationship between patients and their practice which is critical to the provision of modern high quality general practice.' Chairman's Report

Initiatives undertaken

- **Better understanding.** In order to gain a better understanding of the diversity and complexity of services the practice provides, three of the members of the PPG spent a day with the Practice Manager and her staff. This proved invaluable and is a crucial launching pad for PPGs as it also highlights areas that the PPG can assist the practice and its patients.
- **Practice and Patients working together on the problems.** In conjunction with one of the Practice GPs, two of the PPG team members attended a meeting of the Milton Keynes Council Planning Committee in relation to objections raised to introducing a pharmacy within the practice site. Objections were overcome and planning permission was granted. When complete, the pharmacy will be of great benefit to patients who will be able to have their prescription medication made up on site immediately following their GP consultation.
- **The backing of patients wins over NHS Milton Keynes.** In conjunction with the practice we successfully lobbied NHS Milton Keynes to agree the installation of software to enhance the current telephone system. This is of great benefit to patients particularly when booking appointments and also reduces the stress levels both of staff and patients during peak periods of telephone traffic flow.

- **Help for the practice with their newsletter!** A newsletter has also been produced and widely circulated both within the practice and to outlying pharmacies where patients can pick up a copy when having their prescriptions filled.
- **Help for the practice with its website!** There are a number of other initiatives the PPG is taking on board such as the use of the practice website to promote and heighten awareness of the PPG
- **Working with patients.** Having a notice board erected within the surgery to keep patients updated with PPG activities
- **Working with the practice.** To analyse and find ways of reducing the high number of patients who fail to attend their booked appointments.

Whilst the PPG is still in its infancy it is now a fully established part of the practice working with them in partnership to improve patient services and to provide practical support to help patients to take more responsibility for their own health. They are more than willing to share information with other PPGs and to assist in any way they can to help them to become established. Contact details are below if you would like more information.

There are also examples from other PPG groups who have been established for some time.



How the partnership can assist you:

- **health:mk** will provide a **start up grant of £1,000** to individual practices
- Quality:mk has published a handbook – **Patient Participation Groups – How to get started**. It is available free to every practice
- **health:mk** have **short videos** on their website www.healthmk.org.uk which gives **useful tips and information** on setting up a PPG
- **More information available from LINK:MK** who are manning a stall at the NHS Milton Keynes “The Big Conversation” on 30th September and the ‘LINK 2 Health & Care’ Event this autumn on 20th October to help publicise PPGs to a wider audience
- NHS Milton Keynes has the **display material** that can be used for your practice **notice boards**
- **The partnership is affiliated to the National Association Patient Participation (NAPP)** www.NAPP.org.uk. GP Practices who wish to have an individual membership to NAPP will have to pay an annual fee of £30.
- The partnership can **arrange for a representative** to visit your practice on request if you would like **initial support and guidance**
- LINK:MK will **provide ongoing support and is developing a training programme open to PPG members**.
- LINK:MK will be launching in November a Network of PPGs to enable improved communications, common approaches to health matters and the exchange of ideas, experience and expertise to the benefit of all members.

HELP IS HERE FOR PRACTICES 'SET-UP', 'GETTING STARTED' AND 'KEEP-ON-GOING'!

For further help and advice contact:

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