

PATIENT NEWS

*The newsletter of Western Road
Patient Participation Group (PPG)
Issue No. 1*



This is the first bi-monthly newsletter of the Western Road PPG and the committee hope that you will find it both interesting and informative. In each issue we intend to include information about how patients can get involved and have a voice in how their care is provided. News and comments from the Practice Team will also be included.

What is the PPG?

The Western Road PPG is an independent Group which, following a national model, has been established to enable patients to become involved in their GP practice and also the care that is provided. The GPs and practice are keen to encourage patient involvement and this is exemplified by the creation of a Practice Reference Group which has been involved in the annual survey carried out in the Autumn for the last three years. This year there were 611 responses received.

The Practice helped with the setting up of the PPG and used it as its face to face group to help develop the surveys and to ensure that appropriate actions were taken reflecting the survey results.

You may have met a member of the PPG Committee in reception when they helped to encourage patients to take part in the survey and quite a lot of interest was shown in developing the PPG. You can see below how we would like to see the PPG moving forward.

The PPG fits into a structure of patient involvement across the Basildon and Brentwood Districts with the objective of influencing the care provided by Basildon & Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group (BBCCG). The BBCCG involves all local GPs in commissioning the services we receive. In the next issue we will aim to explain this structure and responsibilities of the BBCCG.

Currently the Committee meet bi-monthly at the surgery and Julie Jackson the Practice Manager and Dr. Pollard both attend these meetings

Our Plans

The PPG has Terms of Reference (TOR) which lay down its aims, ground rules and how the PPG will function. The TOR allows for an interim Committee to develop the Group, currently we have twelve on that Committee. The main objective this year is to develop the membership of the Group and to hold our first AGM in the Autumn at which a new Committee will be elected.

In an effort to move the Group forward we plan to hold two or three meetings before the AGM at which we will have a speaker. Initially some of our doctors have agreed to talk on one of their special interests and we hope that these will be both instructive and enable you to get a better understanding of the issues which may affect you as a patient or carer. As you will appreciate the space at Western Rd is limited but we should be able to squeeze twenty in; for this reason we will probably ask people to book a place. If you have any ideas for a talk please let us know.

Another idea is to allow patients to pop into the surgery after Saturday surgery both to meet members of the PPG and to have the opportunity to ask questions of some of the practice team. This may be appreciated by those who rarely visit the surgery or are newly registered.

News from the Practice

The Annual Patient Survey

The practice has completed the report relating to last Autumn's Patient survey and this will be sent to all those in the Patient Reference Group, as well as being made available in the surgery. The PPG felt that the results gave a good reflection on the quality of the service provided by the Practice and are pleased that we received so many responses to the suggestion questions.

The Practice Team

We intend to introduce you to a member of the practice team each issue; our first member is the Practice Manager, **Julie Jackson.**



"I've been at Western Road Surgery nearly 8 years and thoroughly enjoy my role. Previously I have worked with the Family Health Services Authority and, prior to joining Western Road Surgery, I was based with another Practice for 12 years.

I joined this Surgery to take on the role of Practice Manager and my priorities are to ensure that the Practice provides the best possible primary care service to our patient population, within the resources that we have, and to support our team of healthcare professionals to achieve this. Two quite short statements that seem simplistic given the enormity of the role itself!

I enjoy the variety of my job as it enables me to utilise my management skills daily organising the day to day operation of the business, managing both human and financial resources and keeping up to date with the numerous levels of regulation that general practice is required to adhere to. I also have the added benefit of getting to know many of you, our patients. I am a keen advocate of the patient's voice and am lucky enough to lead the Practice with Dr Pollard in working with our Patient Group which is slowly expanding and becoming a focal point of communication for the Practice.

There are many challenges facing General Practice at present and both I and the Practice Team will work hard to achieve what is expected of us. I am lucky to work with Doctors, Nurses and a full complement of personnel who support me to do the best job that I can and I welcome any comments from Patients that will benefit the provision of primary care."

Wiser Prescribing Campaign

A new campaign is being run in an effort to ensure that the prescriptions that we receive are effective in our treatment. As patients we are encouraged to take the following steps:-

Tell your Doctor or pharmacist if:

- you are having problems with your medicines
- you have stopped taking a medicine that has been prescribed for you
- you don't feel your medicines are helping you
- you don't understand what your medicines are for
- Your pharmacist can help you with any difficulties you may be having with your medication.
- If you are taking regular medication and haven't discussed your medicines with your doctor for more than a year, please ask for a medication review.



Questions to ask about your medicines:

- What am I taking this medicine for?
- Does this new prescription mean I should stop taking any other medicines?
- How and when should I take my medicine?
- How long should I take my medicine for?
- When will it start working? How can I tell if it's working?
- Are there any foods, drinks, or other medicines to avoid while I'm taking this medicine?
- What are the potential side-effects? What should I do if I think I have a side-effect?
- What should I do if I miss a dose?
- How do I get more of this medicine if it runs out?
- Who should I talk to if I want any further help when taking this medicine?

Other medication issues raised relate to the use of generic drugs, wastage and repeat prescriptions. The drug budget in England is only second to the staff budget at £10b and wastage or not used drugs is estimated to be in excess of £300m a year or about 3%. The drug budget for the Basildon & Brentwood CCG is £35m. So if we can do our bit to help our GPs and the BBCCG then there could be up to £1m to spend on other services. We would welcome your comments.

We would like to hear your views, the PPG has its own email address (see below) or you can drop a note into reception addressed to the PPG. Obviously we cannot deal with personal issues.

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Do contact us, as above, if you are interested in joining the PPG.