

## **Report of Committee to Patients, North Petherton PPG 2013/14.**

### **Background**

Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is one of three new health commissioning organisations in the SouthWest. Somerset CCG is responsible for commissioning health services for Somerset's 540,000 residents. It has an annual budget of over £650 million. The Somerset CCG, is a GP-led body and took over its responsibilities in April 2013.

Bridgwater and surrounding area GP surgeries have grouped together to form the Bridgwater Bay Health Federation (BBHF). The BBHF has a patient group, which is trying to increase patient participation across the federation.

Many GP surgeries have a Patient Participation Group (PPG) which can take positive action to help the practice and the local population by promoting good health, giving patients a voice in designing and delivering healthcare services. Additionally they provide a focus for patients to pass on ideas and suggestions as well as collecting and giving out information to and from the wider practice population. (PPG's are NOT a route for individual patient complaints.

We have our own North Petherton Patient Participation Group (North Petherton PPG) which was established in April 2012. The membership of our group is, at present, quite small and we are actively seeking new members to widen participation and broaden our influence and input to the practice. We are also encouraging patients to enrol in our NEW on-line group to enable their involvement and participation without the need to attend meetings!

### **Our Aims**

***'To promote by any appropriate means, the good health and wellbeing of patients of the North Petherton Surgery (the Practice).'***

***'To represent the collective interests of Practice patient's to other bodies inside and outside the NHS'.***

### **Actions and Activities**

We have participated fully in meetings of the Somerset PPG Chairs Group as well as attending meetings of the Bridgwater Bay Health Federation PPG.

A Carer's Champion has been appointed for the Surgery and packs of information, including the details of contacts offering carers support, have been compiled and distributed via the Surgery. Subsequently, in May 2013, we invited a guest speaker to talk to our PPG Members about the role of a carer and her personal experiences over many years.

The committee members supported the publicity and promotion of a Cancer Awareness Day, organised by our Practice Manager and Staff at the Surgery. This event was organised on behalf of the Bridgwater Bay Health Federation and held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 at Bridgwater Town Hall. Several of our members also attended the event on the day.

We have received regular updates on the progress of the new Bridgwater Community Hospital and have also had the opportunity, through our members, to offer our input into the services to be made available when the new facilities open during the week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014. A public Open Day will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2014.

Responses were collated, from several members of our group, in order to offer a range of views on the proposals for improving Stroke Services in Somerset.

A response has been made to the published findings of the Francis Report on the Mid Staffs NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry and the patient care issues raised and highlighted by this report. Alongside, and in partnership with, all the Somerset PPG's. A formal response has been tabled and changes and actions for the future have been suggested as a direct result of this consultation.

The Chair participated in a Patient and Public Involvement Pilot working with a CCG Project Group to generate new ideas for commissioning services and support. The theme of this work has been improving services for people with diabetes through involving patients in commissioning.

The Group hopes to put forward a range of new proposals towards the end of March 2014 with a view to ultimately seeking funding to commission appropriate activity.

Our most recent 'work' has provided an opportunity to consider the Somerset CCG 5-Year Commissioning Strategy and the emerging vision for Somerset. This follows a meeting and presentation in January 2014 and represents work in progress.

### **Virtual Group / On-line Group**

Towards the end of the year we launched a 'Virtual Group', probably better titled an on-line or e-mail group, to broaden the reach and influence of our PPG. Further details regarding joining this group can be obtained by contacting our Practice Manager at the Surgery.

### **Questionnaire**

A further questionnaire has been undertaken as a follow up to a similar questionnaire distributed last year.

The questionnaire was again distributed to a random number of patients in order to obtain as wide a cross section of views as possible from a broad range of patients. It is hoped to change and develop this form of consultation, as we learn from the experience, to enable appropriate actions to be taken where and when the need for improvements or actions is identified.

### **Equality and Diversity**

An environmental audit was undertaken with the co-operation of the practice to measure us against a range of questions aimed at making the GP surgery environment more inclusive. This covered, amongst many other things, access, signage and the support available for a variety of patient impairments. Our Surgery performed exceptionally well against the majority of the criteria. Any minor improvements that are necessary will be undertaken over time.

## **Isolation / Befriending**

Two members of our PPG have met with the Revd. Jane Haslam with a view to working with partners to encourage a register of volunteers to be established in order to undertake visits to lonely and isolated patients of our practice, particularly those living alone.

It is hoped that, in due course if this initiative can be developed, by offering friendship and contact we can make a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of these patients.

## **National Association of Patient Participation**

During the year our PPG affiliated to NAPP and participated in the National PPG Awareness Week, held in early June, by hosting an Awareness Event in the Community Centre on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

We were ably supported by Musgrove Park Hospital, Compass Carers and Carers UK, Taunton and South Somerset. A range of displays and information was available and tea, coffee and cakes were also provided. Despite significant publicity, and the gift of a lovely bright Summers day, it has to be said that the event was poorly attended.

The Chair also attended the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of NAPP held in June at the M Shed, Bristol. The theme for the conference was ***'Primary Care in the Digital Age' – 'What does this mean for patients, quality and continuity of care?'***

The conference offered a combination of seminars, speakers and presentations on topics such as; Telehealth, Safe guarding patient information, Patient online records, Patient feedback and surveys to name but a few.

The opportunity was also provided to delegates to have a brief slot to raise a subject 'close to their hearts' and of relevance to the conference audience.

## **Conclusion**

One of our main roles is to influence the services available from our local practice and the wider NHS and to provide feedback from patients of the practice. In addition we are always seeking to support the practice staff, in any way that we can, to provide and maintain a high quality level of service and care in a time of challenging changes and funding issues.

Whilst we have tried to build on what was achieved last year we are still in a developmental phase and learning as we progress. Despite frequent changes to both the time and venue of our meetings over the past twelve months the attendance and participation has been, to say the least, disappointing!

We do need the support and involvement of as many patients as possible in order to provide as broad a range of experience and views as possible. We would also like to be more representative of all the age groups and interests of the patients.

*If you do not have time to attend and participate in meetings and activities please consider joining our virtual / on-line group and providing us with your views and opinions by e-mail. (Further details are available from the Practice Manager via the Surgery).*

Whilst 2013/14 has been a busy and active year for the PPG we are aware of the need to concentrate on more local issues affecting our practice whilst still maintaining an awareness and interest in the broader picture across the whole of Somerset and nationally. With this in mind we are constantly seeking to find ways of working more closely with the staff at the Practice.

### **The Future**

A range of possible interest areas and activities are being considered for the future including -

- Befriending and Isolation Initiative - health impacts
- Carers Tea Party,
- Pro-active health events including Healthy Eating/Lifestyle – ‘Battle of the Bulge’
- Walking Group – local short walks for the ‘elderly’
- Fund Raising Event – PPG funds and equipment for the surgery
- North Petherton PPG Newsletter
- Strengthening our On-line Group
- Question and Answer event

This list is not exhaustive and any ideas are most welcome!!

Malcolm Turner  
Chair, North Petherton PPG.

February 2014.