healthwatch Haringey

Patient Participation Groups: Good Practice Guidelines

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Why Are Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) Important?

- Contribute to the involvement of patients and carers in decisions impacting the Practice.
- Allows for proactive engagement which results in co-produced improvements at a Practice.
- Foster ongoing communication between Practice and patients
- They can conduct sentiment research with patients at the Practice.
- Acts as a 'critical friend' to the Practice.
- Can be involved in health promotion events.
- Represents the patient perspective and advises on the quality of services.

Being Representative

Where possible, the PPG should comprise individuals who are representative of the practice population. Although it is difficult to form a group which exactly reflects the demographics of the local population, a PPG should exert efforts to ensure patient voice is listened to rather than position itself as *the voice*.

Ways in which representation can be maximised:

- Contact a diverse range of people from the practice population.
- Ensure that the views of seldom-heard communities can be included.
- Hold meetings at flexible times if possible.
- Reach out to groups who are not currently represented on the PPG.
- Consider setting up an Online group (with rules).
- Try to recruit representatives from seldom-heard communities for a short-time or for a particular purpose.
- Be proactive in getting out to the community to gain opinions.

Hearing Other Perspectives

- PPGs becoming very clique-based.
- Not representative of other views.
- Other patients or members feeling intimidated by dominant voices.
- PPGs delving into matters quite outside of their remit.
- PPGs launching personal attacks on Practice staff via social media or on WhatsApp groups.
- Not listening to other views.
- PPGs not reaching out to a broader base of patients.
- PPGs becoming combative entities.

How Can a PPG Encourage Participation?

- Open event for all patients registered at the Practice to attend.
- Open days/evenings for patients with learning or physical needs
- Setting up a stall in the reception area to promote the work of the PPG and encourage new.
- Having material in different languages, depending on the demographics of the Practice.