

Dear members,

Many questions are (naturally) coming in to N.A.P.P. about the ever-changing landscape of Primary Care. We include some questions raised recently, and our chairman has provided answers below:

### **What is a PCN?**

PCN's are Primary Care Networks, which were formed when groups of practices were required to come together to coordinate the delivery of services (to be delivered outside hospitals) to populations of (typically) 30 to 50k patients.

### **What are PCN PPGs?**

PCN PPGs exists in name only, the terminology is used to convey patient engagement groups at a PCN level (e.g. <https://www.birchwoodbristol.nhs.uk/2021/02/11/primary-care-network-pcn-patient-participation-group/>), however these entities are not PPGs (for NHS England's purposes) and cannot (under current arrangements) replace individual practice PPGs, as these are a requirement of the GP Contract.

### **Can mention please be made of a PPG's independence, whilst working as a team with its surgery? E.g. collection and ownership of/responsibility for patient email addresses**

Whilst PPGs should champion the needs of patients above other concerns, I'm not sure they can be truly independent. They are linked with practices and need this relationship to be effective. I don't know what data protection arrangements exist for PPGs specifically, but rather than 'collecting and owning' patient's email addresses, it probably makes more sense to ask practices to send out patient communications using the practice's list, on behalf of the PPG.

### **PPG's involvement with PCNs - I realise there's currently no contractual requirement but surely this should be a given?**

Several PCNs appear to have set up patient engagement forums, but these are not PPGs. I can't find any specific reference to having these forums in guidance for PCNs, although it is considered good practice and there is a requirement to engage with patients.

### **PPG ownership: NAPP seems to imply that, due to a contractual requirement for a PPG, a surgery has sole responsibility to establish, maintain, review & recruit to a PPG and therefore has overall responsibility, including ownership? Several years ago, NAPP advised that recruiting and maintaining a PPG should/must be a joint PPG-surgery effort**

The terms of the GP contract suggest that the surgery has a duty to engage and support a PPG, but this doesn't mean that it owns it or can dictate what it does. It should be a forum for patients to provide input and feedback on the services they receive, with support from their practice. PPGs can help the practice by feeding information to and from the wider patient community who seldom attend the practiced. The practice only knows patients

who attend or contact the surgery. The purpose of the support from the practice is to support it (the practice) to improve the services it provides for its patients.

### **Is there a contractual agreement regarding CCG support for/engagement with PPGs and, if so, is this online?**

The GP contract refers to a 'contractor' (GP surgery) in section 5.0 (Patient participation) and that 'contractor' must:

- Establish and maintain a PPG which includes some of its registered patients to enable the surgery to obtain and seek feedback from patients about their services;
- Make reasonable efforts to review the PPG's membership each financial year to ensure that the Group is representative of its registered patients;
- Engage with its PPG at frequent intervals throughout each financial year to enable the GP surgery to obtain feedback from registered patients in an appropriate and accessible manner about the services offered by the GP surgery;
- Any such feedback about services should be reviewed with its PPG with the purpose of agreeing with the Group improvements to the service; the GP Surgery should then make reasonable efforts to implement such improvement. Is there guidance online about a surgery's contractual requirement to inform patients about general health matters and service changes? The driver behind the question is, locally there seems to be great diversity, for example in website communications

### **Will NAPP please advertise to all PPG members that their surgeries receive, as part of the Global Sum, a small sum of money, per patient, for having a PPG. That said, I believe the money isn't ringfenced?**

There was a ringfenced amount in previous iterations of the GP contract, that isn't the case at present. The only case that can be made is that there is a requirement in the contract and provision in the global sum, beyond that I don't think it can be unpicked in terms of how much and for what specific purpose. However, I agree that it is useful to remind GP surgeries of their commitment and that some funding has been made for this specific purpose.

### **Is the N.A.P.P. AGM and Seminar recording still available?**

The link for the recording made on 06 Nov 2021 is still available here:

<https://vimeo.com/643011378/9202d66994>

It has also been added as an article on the Community Platform, for easy retrieval.

### **Does N.A.P.P. operate a pre-agreed schedule of Board Meetings.**

Our standard practice is to hold monthly meetings, with a poll sent out in advance, to determine the availability of the trustees. Where possible we try to agree the date at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting

### **Can we take part in the Social Prescribing Questionnaire?**

N.A.P.P. is working with the National Association of Link Workers (NAL) to find out the extent to which Link Workers and PPGs collaborate. The questionnaire was sent out on 20

Jan and has already provided 80 responses. Thank you to all those who responded. Deadline is March 15th. If you can't locate the email, please email [admin@napp.org.uk](mailto:admin@napp.org.uk) and we will re-send it to you, (please check spam folders first!).