

PPG & Practice Engagement Meeting

Date: Wednesday 10 June 2026

Time: 4:00pm

Venue: Leatside Health Centre

Chair: Bob (PPG Chair)

Facilitator: Caroline Pugh (Practice Manager)

Source: Meeting transcript provided by the practice.

Meeting Purpose

This meeting was arranged to bring together members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG), practice staff and PCN colleagues to explore how the PPG can become more actively involved in supporting patients, promoting services, improving communication, and helping the practice better understand community needs.

Caroline explained that the PPG wishes to move beyond traditional fundraising activities and become more visible within the community by helping patients understand how modern general practice works, how services are accessed, and how patients can make the best use of available resources.

Attendees

Practice Representatives

- Caroline Pugh – Practice Manager
- Dr Ash Stone, Dr Anna Wilson, Dr Tamsin Craze, Dr Debbie Bugg
- Lead Nurse Deanna, HCA Sher,
- Practice Administrative Team Representatives

PCN Representatives

- Tessa Goodchild
- Vicky Murphy (Proactive Care Team Lead)
- Jackie Ellis

External representatives

- Ruth Gunn (Bethel Community Lada)

Patient Participation Group Representatives

- Bob (Chair)
 - Angela, Maggie, Angelina, Ian, Len
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Key Discussion Themes

1. The Role of the PPG

The PPG outlined its ambition to become more active within the community by:

- Promoting understanding of practice services.
- Explaining changes in access arrangements and appointment systems.
- Supporting patient education.
- Gathering patient feedback from different community groups.
- Helping reduce misinformation about access to GP services.
- Supporting patients to make greater use of digital services.

The group discussed moving away from being solely a fundraising body and becoming a stronger community engagement resource.

2. DNA (Did Not Attend) Appointments

Bob highlighted the significant impact of missed appointments.

Key Points

- Approximately **196 hours of appointment time were lost in the previous month** due to DNAs.
- Phlebotomy appointments remain a significant area of concern.
- Long-term condition reviews also experience high levels of non-attendance.

Discussion

The group considered:

- Understanding barriers to attendance.
- Community engagement to identify why patients fail to attend.
- Outreach approaches to engage vulnerable patients.
- Supporting patients with anxiety, health literacy issues and practical barriers.

3. Presentation – Bethel Community Lada

Speaker:

Ruth Gunn – Project Manager

Ruth provided an overview of the work undertaken by the Bethel Community Lada.

Highlights

The project:

- Supports approximately 120 people each week.
- Operates with 36 volunteers.
- Combats food waste and supports families during the cost-of-living crisis.
- Provides food without requiring referrals or vouchers.
- Offers pastoral support and crisis intervention.

Additional support available includes:

- Benefits advice.
- Housing support.
- Mental health support.
- Social care signposting.
- Fuel poverty advice.
- Homelessness support.
- Digital inclusion support.
- Ear syringing clinics.
- Oral health initiatives.
- Police drop-in sessions.

Success Story

Ruth shared the story of a local resident whose severe anxiety initially prevented her entering the building. Two years later she is now an active volunteer within the project.

Opportunities Identified

Potential collaboration between the practice and Community Lada including:

- Referral pathways.
 - Promotion of services.
 - Food donation collection points.
 - Volunteer opportunities.
 - Information sharing.
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4. Digital Inclusion & NHS App Support

Tessa discussed opportunities to improve patient access through digital support.

Proposal

Train PPG volunteers as **Digital Champions**.

Potential activities include:

- Helping patients access the NHS App.
- Supporting use of Klinik.
- Assisting patients with online forms.
- Improving digital confidence.
- Supporting access to online records and correspondence.

Benefits

For patients:

- Easier access to results.
- Easier access to letters.
- Greater independence.

For the practice:

- Reduced administrative workload.
- Fewer telephone enquiries.
- Reduced requests for copies of documents.

Cornwall Council training opportunities for Digital Champions were highlighted.

5. COPD Support Group

Tessa and clinical colleagues discussed establishing a local COPD support group.

Potential aims:

- Peer support.
- Education.
- Self-management advice.
- Breathing techniques.
- Winter planning.
- Medication awareness.

The concept was positively received by both staff and PPG members.

6. Community Outreach Programme

Tessa outlined plans for a new outreach initiative beginning in July 2026.

Purpose

To engage with patients who:

- Have not attended long-term condition reviews.
- Have not responded to invitations.
- Have become disengaged from healthcare services.

Partners

- Age UK
- Community Gateway
- Voluntary sector organisations

The role will seek to identify barriers to attendance and encourage re-engagement.

7. Feedback on Klinik

PPG members provided feedback regarding the Klinik access system.

Positive Feedback

- Helpful for some patients.
- Allows access without telephone queues.

- Supports triage and patient safety.

Challenges Identified

Some patients find:

- The process lengthy.
- Navigation difficult.
- Multiple questions overwhelming.
- Mental health pathways particularly challenging.

Agreed Opportunity

The group discussed:

- Gathering structured patient feedback.
 - Creating a small working group.
 - Identifying areas for improvement.
 - Sharing feedback with Klinik providers.
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8. Proactive Care Team Update

Speaker:

Vicky – Proactive Care Team Lead

Vicky explained the work of the Proactive Care Team.

Services include:

- Comprehensive Geriatric Assessments.
- Personalised Care Planning.
- Structured Medication Reviews.
- Occupational Therapy input.
- Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings.

The team supports patients at risk of hospital admission or with significant frailty and complexity.

The PPG was invited to consider how volunteers could support patients attending clinics and events.

9. Dementia Support Development

Dr Ash Stone outlined current work across the PCN to:

- Improve dementia identification.
 - Support earlier diagnosis.
 - Improve support for carers and families.
 - Enhance local dementia pathways.
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10. Patient Education & Support Groups

Dr Tamsin Craze discussed previous successful patient education groups and suggested opportunities to reintroduce similar initiatives.

Examples included:

- Diabetes education groups.
- COPD support groups.
- Heart failure support sessions.

Potential benefits include:

- Peer support.
 - Education.
 - Improved self-management.
 - Stronger patient-practice relationships.
 - Valuable patient feedback.
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11. Community-Based Patient Engagement

The group discussed taking the PPG into community settings including:

- Community Lada.
- Memory Café.
- Parent and toddler groups.
- Community centres.
- Carer groups.

This would allow the PPG to:

- Reach different patient groups.
- Gather feedback.
- Promote services.
- Recruit additional patient representatives.

12. Video Information Project

Dr Ash Stone discussed developing short informational videos covering:

- How to access appointments.
- What happens during visits.
- How clinics work.
- Children's visits to the practice.
- Understanding practice processes.

The PPG was invited to support development and patient testing of these resources.

13. Young Carers

A discussion took place regarding support available for young carers.

Tessa advised:

- Carer services are currently being recommissioned.
- Further information will be shared once the new provider is confirmed.

Agreed Actions

Action	Lead	Target Date
Explore Digital Champion training opportunities for PPG members	Tessa / PPG	Summer 2026
Investigate feasibility of a COPD Support Group	PCN Clinical Team	Autumn 2026
Establish patient feedback work regarding Klinik usability	Practice & PPG	Ongoing

Action	Lead	Target Date
Consider community outreach attendance by PPG representatives	PPG Committee	Ongoing
Explore support for educational patient groups (COPD, Diabetes, Heart Failure)	Practice & PCN Teams	Autumn/Winter 2026
Share outcome of carers service recommissioning process	Tessa	When available
Develop patient information/access videos with PPG involvement	Dr Ash Stone & Practice Team	Ongoing
Consider establishing a Community Lada donation point at the practice	Practice & Community Lada	To be discussed

Closing Remarks

The meeting was considered highly productive and highlighted numerous opportunities for collaboration between the Practice, PCN, PPG and wider community organisations.

There was strong support for developing practical projects that improve patient understanding, increase community engagement, reduce health inequalities, and strengthen patient access to services.

The PPG reaffirmed its commitment to becoming a more visible and active voice within the community while continuing to support the practice and its patients.

Meeting Closed: Approximately 5:00pm.