

Nuffield Practice Patient Participation Group

Spotlight

The Nuffield Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) works with the practice to ensure that through excellent communication, practice decision-making is informed by the best possible understanding of patients' needs and concerns

June 2025

A Message from our Chair: Welcome to our summer edition of *Spotlight*, with thanks as always to our contributors. Besides containing helpful updates about the activities of our gardening and walking groups, together with our cycling ambassador's regular digest, this edition also provides fascinating information about the role of Rachel Simmonds, the Nuffield's Practice Manager. We discover in Rachel's article the sheer breadth of skills and depth of knowledge required in her role. We take our hats off to you Rachel, and welcome this information.

Our patient group continues to pilot its new model of alternating between regular Zoom meetings and 'face to face' gatherings. These meetings, known informally, as F2F, are centred around a pre-planned group discussion on topics of mutual interest at the Practice, and attendees seem to be appreciating the opportunity of meeting in person as well as the flexibility of online meetings. If you haven't yet joined us, we encourage you to come along on the publicised dates and times. We are keen to welcome new members to represent our community as widely as possible. Please let us know if you would like more information, by leaving a message at Reception. We look forward to seeing you.—*Heather Pike, Chair NPPG*

Life of a Practice Manager: For this issue, *Spotlight* caught up with our busy Practice Manager, Rachel Simmonds, to learn a little more of just what that role entails. And it turned out to be more than comprehensive!

Responsibility for staff is a key area. Daily duties include checking in with staff: are there any urgent matters to discuss? And are we correctly staffed with appropriate skills so that patients get the best care from the team? Staff welfare is an important component of the work, as is recruitment—from drafting an advertisement to ensuring that a new appointee has the right introduction to their role. As well as managing her team, she is also responsible for the building. Is it in good order, clean, meeting Health and Safety Standards, and pleasant for patients to visit and staff to work in? And is it compliant with current legislation in regard to Fire Safety, Public Liability, and everything else required of a business?

Finance is another key area, where the Practice Manager must submit claims and send invoices, pay invoices, check remittance notifications, budgeting, communication with accountants, and keeping a close eye on income and expenditure. Payroll administration involves completing a spreadsheet, checking the payroll system, approving, and setting payments. More generally, the Practice Manager must attend scheduled meetings, action numerous emails, answer queries from patients and staff, and ensure that she keeps up to date with legislation on key areas.

These are far from all the requirements of the post, and it's worth remembering too that it is all carried out against the background of a busy medical practice where in the nature of things each day is likely to bring its own urgent needs out of left field. Thank you, Rachel, for all you do.

The Garden: Summer Up until recently, pruning and tidying has been a bit of a problem in the



Practice garden - we had difficulty dealing with the trimmings and old growth produced as a result of our gardening. With nowhere else to put them, we had been placing the trimmings at the base of the beautiful birch tree. We were advised that leaving material rotting there could cause serious damage to the tree. To solve this problem we now have two compost bins sited next to the fence, behind the junction box. We can put all our trimmings and garden waste in the bins, where the material will compost down, to be used next year on the beds. Careful consideration went into the choice of composters, and we plumped for 2 large, recycled plastic bins. These have the advantage of keeping the compost covered and warm. To disguise the bins, we will be planting some evergreen shrubs around them. Watch this space for news of the screening plants.

Elsewhere across the garden, lush growth is emerging, and we are hoping for another year of glorious colour - as well as attracting plenty of pollinators. The recent lack of rain has been a concern, but hopefully there will be enough showers to keep the plants adequately watered. Keep your eyes on changes as early Spring flowers fade, and are replaced with late Spring and early Summer blooms. We are delighted to report we have some robust purple loosestrife plants—these are already at home in the border near the mental health department—*The Gardening Group*.

Cycling: 'Bike Week for Novice Cyclists'. Our Cycling Champion David Eaton writes: In June each year Cycling UK promotes Bike Week with the aim of getting more people to enjoy the benefits of cycling. This year is the 100th Bike Week and is on 9 to 15 June and this year's theme is workplace cycling – Cycling UK want to encourage as many as employers as possible to encourage their staff to ride to work in the week 5 to 11 June. It is known 35.4% of employees have journey of fewer than 10km and most live within 5km of their work place. The following link gives 21 reasons why employees should cycle to work [21 reasons to cycle to work | Cycling UK](#). The Windrush Bike Project is supporting Bike Week and they are running their Rusty Riders project on 13 and 27 June for people who want to try or get back into cycling and to give them confidence to cycle in traffic. For more details click on [Rusty riders - Windrush Bike Project](#). They are also planning to do their annual Potter to Aston Pottery on 8 June which is a round trip of around 10 miles, a good introduction to a cycle ride. And, a final tip for summer: it is important whether you are cycling or doing any form exercise, to stay well hydrated and to protect your skin with sun cream.

Walking Take advantage of Summer weather by joining one of the Judith le Good's weekly walks round Witney. Contact Judith for more information at judithlegood@btinternet.com, tel. **01993 702219**, or just turn up at **2 pm** on **Tuesday** afternoons outside the Surgery. You will find a warm welcome as well as an enjoyable hour in the fresh air.

And, finally...Face2Face gathering, Part and Parcel, 6.30-9 pm, Tuesday 3 June We hope to see you!

To contact the Patient Participation Group, and find out more about its activities, consult the [website](#) or email the practice at nuffield.practice@nhs.net