

Waterfront Patients Participation Group Meeting

Thursday 15th January, 2026: 11.00 a.m. – 12.15 pm

Attendees:

- Louise Bunce, Practice Manager
- Chris Beddall
- Clive Spicer
- Chris Swaithe
- Jane Spicer
- Sylvia Swaithe

Apologies

- Joan Allen, Treasurer
- Dawn Fellows

Matters Arising

Jim of juststraighttalk.org

Sylvia reported that she had had a very useful IT lesson with Jim. Louise said that she was hoping to invite Jim back to the Waterfront Practice in March/April to support anyone who wished for guidance and advice. Louise also informed the PPG about digital training that was available for over-18s. The Digital Skills training is intended to boost people's online confidence with sessions held in the Ladies Walk Centre in Sedgley, Dudley. Individuals need to be referred by a professional. She will put details of the service in the surgery and on the website.

Triage Assessment

Louise confirmed that the triage assessment is progressing well. She has been asked to provide evidence as to how patients are accessing services, which is difficult given 'walk-ins' although this may be possible using Footfall. Data analysed for two six-month periods – 01/01/2025 – 30/06/2025 and 01/07/2025 – 31/12/2026 shows that the number of phone calls has declined, and on-line requests increased. Perhaps not surprisingly phone calls over the Christmas and New Year period showed a significantly increase over previous months.

Patient Personal Information

The importance of all patients keeping personal information up to date such as phone numbers, email addresses etc. was discussed and agreed by the PPG.

Did Not Attend (DNA) Review

Louise reported that there had been a slight increase in DNAs for GPs in November rising from 39 to 44 for December.

Waterfront Website + NHS App

See Triage Assessment above.

Treasurer's Report

There was no update in the absence of Joan, the Treasurer.

Waterfront Surgery Staffing Updates

Louise confirmed that Dr Firdous was continuing to settle in well at the practice.

Any Other Business

NHS England Improvement of Online Communications for Patients.

There were no updates for this item.

Inspection Visits

There were no updates for this item.

Friends and Family Test

There were no updates for this item.

Autumn Campaign - Flu and Covid Vaccinations

Flu vaccinations will be available until March 2026 although most eligible patients have been vaccinated. Louise confirmed that the Waterfront will not be delivering COVID vaccinations in the next seasonal programme.

GP Practices Quarterly Assessments

Louise updated the PPG on the email that had been received from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) stating that the practice does not have enough 'on the day' appointments available. Unfortunately, the practice is unable to access the data used by the ICB showing where the issue may be and NHS England will not share data since the country data is not practice-specific. In addition, an email has been sent detailing the pressures on A and E at Russells Hall Hospital and requesting that patients are not sent there unless absolutely necessary. The meeting then discussed several key issues involving A and E and Urgent Care at Russell's Hall and the pressures on Primary Care providers such as the Waterfront.

Future PPG meetings

Louise asked the meeting if there was anybody that they would like to invite to PPG meetings or could go into the waiting room to meet patients since she intends to get re-start live activities in the Spring.

At the meeting with the Primary Care Network (PCN) it was confirmed that there will be an increase in the levels of activity of the Health and Wellbeing Coaches in the practice. Louise is hoping that this service will be set up for February 2026 in a side room and coaches will be able to chat with patients and take blood pressures etc.

NHS Patient Survey and PPG Patient Survey 2026

Louise informed the meeting that this year's NHS GP Patient Survey 2026 was being distributed in January. After a discussion about the previous PPG Patient Survey timings and organisation it was agreed that the PPG survey would be conducted in its established format in April and May 2026.

Patient Participation Groups

Chris S asked if having a PPG was mandatory for a GP Practice. Louise said that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) recognises the difficulty in recruiting members to be involved in a PPG and addresses this by obtaining feedback from other services.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 11.00 a.m. on Thursday 5th March, 2026.