

# Building better participation

A guide to help Patient Participation Groups and their GP practice work well



## Helping PPGs work well



Registered Charity 292157 [www.napp.org.uk](http://www.napp.org.uk)  
The national voice for patient participation in primary care

# Helping PPGs work well

*Building better participation* is a resource developed by the National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P.), with support from NHS England. It aims to help patient participation groups (PPGs) and their GP practice reflect on what they do.



*Building better participation* is a guide consisting of four interlinking Areas:

- Getting PPGs in place
- Helping PPGs work well
- Knowing and working with patients
- Influencing beyond the GP practice

It is not mandatory for PPGs or practices to use *Building better participation*, but we hope parts of it will help you and your practice reflect on what you are doing, and what you would like to do. This will depend on many things, such as the size of your PPG, how long you have been active, and whether you feel you have the resources to do more than you already do.

If you wish to comment or suggest improvements to this guide, please email [BBPfeedback@napp.org.uk](mailto:BBPfeedback@napp.org.uk). Your feedback is valued and will be used to shape future guides.

## Area 2: Helping PPGs work well

The Area contains seven Goals:

1. The PPG is founded on core principles for effective working, agreed and shared by the practice
2. The PPG has clear ways of working as a group (ground rules)
3. The PPG uses various methods to communicate with and involve all patients
4. The leadership of the PPG is effective and supports all members in being effective in their roles
5. The PPG has a planned programme of activities it can afford
6. The practice actively supports the PPG
7. The PPG has plans to sustain itself into the future.

The Area summarises:

- What your PPG hopes to achieve
- Some examples of documents or activities that could show how you are doing what you intend to do.

It also lists some resources that may help you as you look at this Area.



We recommend you:

- Agree on what you hope to achieve regarding this Area (remembering this will depend on the size of your PPG, priorities in your GP practice, the local community, etc)
- Identify what you already do that shows you are achieving what you hope to
- Identify what you would intend to do more of in the year ahead.



## Goal 1: The PPG is founded on core principles for effective working, agreed with and shared by the practice

### Aims

Successful PPGs have core principles that are clear and frame how they work with members, the practice and patients. These principles include:

- Understanding and accepting members' different needs, experiences and perspectives
- Openness and transparency
- Commitment to helping all members take part
- Commitment to confidentiality
- Working constructively with the practice
- How new members are recruited
- Succession plans for any formal positions within the PPG, such as the chair or the secretary.

The principles should also include commitments to communication and record-keeping (eg of minutes of PPG meetings).

### Ways to show what we are doing

- The PPG's ways of working or ground rules
- A clear statement to say any patients are welcome as members, regardless of physical or mental ill-health
- Members' welcome includes information on how we work as a PPG



- Minutes of meetings show how different points of view are considered and debated
- The confidentiality commitment includes individual patient experience information
- Equality and diversity are included in a statement of commitment
- Statement of commitment includes effective working from the practice.



## Goal 2: The PPG has clear ways of working as a group (ground rules)

### Aims

Successful PPGs have developed and agreed clear ways of working to clarify how members are expected to behave. These ground rules show how PPG members should meet their commitment to their core principles, and how the PPG can recognise and make best use of its membership.

### Ways to show what we are doing

- New members' information clearly states what is expected of them
- Statement of commitment to equality and diversity
- Statement of commitment to confidentiality
- Specific discussions or training to help all members understand the best ways to work together
- A quick and effective process to deal with members who don't stick to the ground rules, including ways for others to raise concerns about behaviour
- Commitment to review the ground rules annually.

## Goal 3: The PPG uses various methods to communicate with and involve all patients

### Aims

Successful PPGs recognise that everyone prefers to be communicated with differently and will want to take part in different ways. They will consider patients' and members' preferred ways of communicating, making sure that different tools are used to reach as many people as possible. Communication could be face-to-face, interpersonal and electronic. They will also consider how to communicate with the wider local community.

### Ways to show what we are doing

- Minutes of PPG meetings and events
- Meetings of special interest groups, such as those focused on health conditions, and children and young people
- Posters
- Newsletters
- Use of email, websites and social media
- Meetings with local community and voluntary groups, schools, faith organisations
- Meetings in different local venues
- Work as a virtual PPG, either wholly or partly, using electronic communications tools
- Notices in publications, local newsletters (eg local health and social care community groups, charities, Healthwatch) and the local press
- A communications policy that might include limits on how social media is used and how press statements and other communications are authorised.





## Goal 4: The leadership of the PPG is effective and supports all members in being effective in their roles

### Aims

Successful PPGs clearly define the roles within their structure and support those carrying them out. There will be a clear process for appointing people to roles such as the chair, secretary, treasurer, or communications person, and to explain what is expected of them. Other members and the practice will support those taking on roles, and they will be able to access support and training from the practice and elsewhere.



### Ways to show what we are doing

- An organisational structure with clear descriptions for specific roles
- An appointment process, including expectations of role holders, and the maximum length of term for role holders
- Clear expectations that all PPG members will support those in specific roles
- Training opportunities offered by the PPG, the practice, and other organisations
- Guidance for members on representing the PPG formally
- Expenses policy explaining how monies spent carrying out roles (eg travel, office costs) will be authorised and reimbursed.



## Goal 5: The PPG has a planned programme of activities it can afford

### Aims

Successful PPGs will carry out some activities during a given year. These will be equal to its resources (including the size of its membership, the time commitment members can give, and its budget). Activities will be well planned in association with the practice, and will be evaluated and reviewed to show how well they have worked. Activities will present the PPG and practice constructively, even if being critical of the practice.



### Ways to show what we are doing

- A work plan that's reviewed regularly and continues to develop
- Minutes of meetings between the PPG and the practice identifying how activities are chosen, developed, implemented, and evaluated
- Joint activities with other organisations, eg Healthwatch, local community groups, schools, youth groups, faith organisations
- Press coverage of successful events
- Feedback from those taking part in activities.



## Goal 6: The practice actively supports the PPG

### Aims

Successful PPGs are well supported by their practice, without the practice seeking to direct or control their activities. The practice will explicitly budget for its PPG support and will identify a practice lead and a clinical lead to work with the PPG. Members of the practice will attend PPG meetings and will be active in publicising the PPG to patients. The practice will agree the types of practical support it will give the PPG, and review these regularly. There will be a clear process to deal quickly and effectively with any difficulties between the PPG and the practice.



### Ways to show what we are doing

- Attendance records of PPG meetings include the practice lead and clinical lead
- The practice meets agreed practical requests, eg providing a meeting space; help with printing or photocopying; publicising the PPG by word of mouth, email or on its website; showing PPG-related posters; space for a PPG activity stall
- The practice gives financial support to meet the costs of a PPG newsletter, badges, posters etc
- The practice pays for PPG representatives to attend conferences and other training and development (as appropriate)





## Goal 7: The PPG has plans to sustain itself into the future

### Aims

Successful PPGs recognise all kinds of changes in membership, GP practices (eg their staff, local priorities), and the NHS context within which they work. They understand the importance of being flexible and responsive to change, even when it brings challenges. They have effective plans to minimise the negative impact of change. They look beyond the current year and plan for predictable change, such as in those members holding specific roles within the PPG, and for annual budget reviews within the practice. They know it's important to keep developing members to take on future roles for the PPG.

### Ways to show what we are doing

- Minutes of review and planning sessions for the year ahead
- Deputies to key roles (eg chair, treasurer, secretary) are supported and developed as part of a PPG succession plan
- Potential challenging changes, such as in practice staffing, finances, or key members of the PPG stepping down, are identified in advance and plans to minimise their impact are in place
- The PPG actively engages with wider support organisations and appropriate local support or infrastructure organisations, to access their resources and activities.

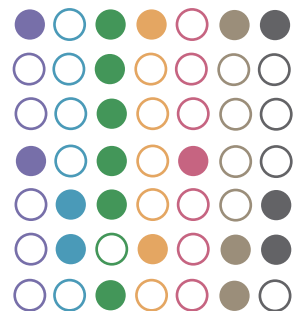
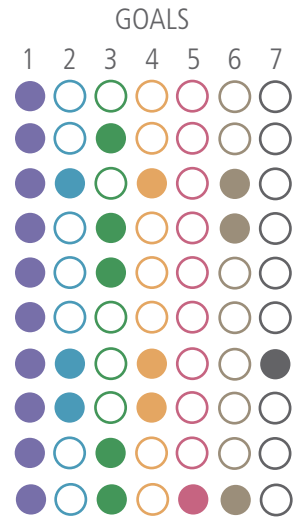


## Resources that may help with this Area

- N.A.P.P. Example ground rules <http://bit.ly/1SjgMEK>
- Healthwatch Swindon PPGs: Improving the Experiences of Patients and Carers <http://bit.ly/1VlShnx>
- Patients' Association: PPG resource pack – apply by email to [abdullah@patients-association.com](mailto:abdullah@patients-association.com)
- N.A.P.P. video: Best Practice for PPGs <http://bit.ly/21IEzjX>
- N.A.P.P. Virtual PPGs <http://bit.ly/1L577C0>
- NHS England: Bitesize Guide No. 3 Planning for Participation <http://bit.ly/22HPUmG>
- Community Matters: Setting up a community organisation <http://bit.ly/1UJqqUI>
- Medical Protection: How to... set up a Patient Participation Group <http://bit.ly/1XPC9iz>
- Brighter Futures Together Toolkit <http://bit.ly/1S8ynNc>
- Scottish Health Council: Patient Participation Groups <http://bit.ly/1UOIGMn>

### Added value N.A.P.P. resources (for N.A.P.P. members only)

- Members' resource pack
- N.A.P.P. website
- N.A.P.P. e-bulletins
- Communications Toolkit
- Growing patient participation: 21 ways to help your practice thrive
- Starting and sustaining successful PPGs: A step-by-step guide to PPGs
- Ten Minute Guides: newsletters, health promotion, funding, insurance and other topics



### KEY

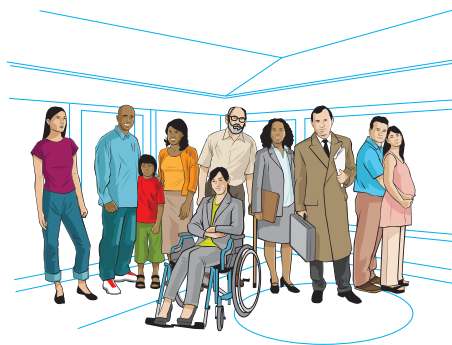
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