

**Annual General Meeting of Woodstock Patient Participation Group (PPG)
St Nicholas Church Hall, Lanark
Friday 15th November 2024 at 19:30**

Present:

PPG Members: Eleanor McLean - Chair, Hazel Kay - Vice Chair, Neil Campbell, John Taylor, Ruth McCallum, Liz Forbes, Colin Angus, Fiona Thompson, Elaine Young, Leonard Gray, Elizabeth Hunter, Alister McInnes

ALBA representatives: Linda Butters - Senior Manager, Gillian Walker – (newly appointed) Practice Manager, Jennifer Boyd – Nurse Consultant, Jennifer Crawford – Senior ANP

Others in attendance: Dr James Torrens (Locality Lead GP of Clydesdale), sixty members of the public

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming all present and reiterated that this meeting was not a public meeting about the Practice or the NHS, but it is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Woodstock Patient Participation Group. She then went on to introduce the members of the PPG as well as the other speakers in attendance. (see attendees above).

Having made the introductions, the Chair gave a brief overview of how the meeting would flow:

- A talk from Dr Torrens
- Eleanor McLean annual report from PPG Chairperson
- Colin Angus to provide an update on PPG communication boxes
- Linda Butters and other members of the Alba Group to provide reports on behalf of the Woodstock Practice
- Question and Answer session, by a show of hands

Dr. Torrens

Dr Torrens expressed his thanks at being invited to present at this meeting and started by mentioning that he had attended the Health Fayre organised by the PPG in September and confirmed that it had been a very worthwhile exercise and had provided positive feedback to all who participated.

He went on to give an overview on what patients in Lanarkshire, and specifically Clydesdale could expect from health providers, see below:

- CLIC is part of a CLS (Community Lead Support) initiative and stands for Clydesdale in Conversation and offers 1-1 advice about a range of health and social care topics
- Outreach initiatives where people with certain conditions, such as COPD, can be treated in their own homes

Dr. Torrens (cont'd)

- Introduction of pain clinics (pilot scheme in place at the moment)

- Community OT initiatives with a view to reenabling mobilisation
- Hospital at home team, increased care package
- New Pharmacy Hub with increased pharmacy technicians
- Urgent in hours visits where advanced nurse practitioners (ANPs) see patients in their own homes

Dr. Torrens then went on to confirm that he was more than aware of the issues in primary care and mentioned a few as well as an initiative to try and address the problem:

- Overall lack of General Practitioners (GPs) in Scotland as the number of GPs not rising in line with increases in population, but Lanarkshire, and specifically Clydesdale are outliers
- Rates of pay need to be amenable as at the moment the Central Belt is where the money is
- GP Practices are small businesses and like other small businesses practices are struggling
- Scottish Government are keen to retain as many GPs as possible
- High rate of GPs remain in Clydesdale
- Organise road shows and events to encourage new GPs and ANPs
- Confirmed that the Woodstock Practice was working well with NHS Lanarkshire

PPG Annual Report from Eleanor McLean, Chairperson

There are 53 PPGs in Scotland.... 2 in Lanarkshire... both in Clydesdale, one in Biggar and one in Lanark. A PPG is a patient led group linked to the local General Practice, made up of a group of patients that reflect the diversity of the Practice catchment area.

A PPG can help to:-

- Build a 2-way communication between practice & patients
- Gain a patient perception on local health care
- Encourage patients to take responsibility for their own health
- Create an efficient service tailored to patient needs

However

- A PPG is unable to deal with individual complaints or health care enquiries.
- All complaints must go through the correct procedure.
- And the Group cannot mediate between patients and practice

Initially, the Practice invited Royal Burgh of Lanark Community Council to help identify individuals who would form the initial Group. The first meeting took place in September 2021, though still under Covid restrictions, it went online through Zoom, with 9 members, although the aim was to have 12.

PPG Annual Report from Eleanor McLean, Chairperson (cont'd)

The first task was to produce a Terms of Reference document using the guide issued by Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and which had to be agreed by both Woodstock Medical Centre and PPG members, this will now be referred to as the ToR.

The PPG meet with the Practice every 2 months, but PPG members also hold meetings, usually 1 to 2 weeks beforehand, to submit comments/issues/questions or suggestions to the Practice before the full meeting. In April 2023, numbers had reduced to 6 members, through different circumstances, so it was decided to start again. The ToR was reviewed and the group sought to recruit 6 new members, to fill the vacant positions. Great response with 12 excellent applications, so it was a difficult decision to choose 6.

The PPG is made up of 12 very enthusiastic patients as follows: -

The Age breakdown

- 1 x between 45 to 54
- 3 x between 55 to 64
- 5 x between 65 to 74
- 3 x between 75 to 84

With

- 7 Females
- 5 Males

All are patients of Woodstock Practice ... with 3 living outside the town of Lank.

Since the first meeting with the new PPG Group and Woodstock Practice these are a few topics/issues the group have taken forward....

- Phone system/waiting time for answer
- Queues outside the door particularly during harsh weather
- Appointment system
- Staffing resources
- CDM/LTC which is Chronic Disease Management & Long-term Conditions
- PAP which is Physical Activity Prescription
- Result system
- Private Medical Care issues
- Prescription timescales
- Copy of results or full medical record
- Incorrect information on Website which has been amended recently

But, within the same time, the following have been introduced...

- PPG Notice Board in the Practice
- Communication boxes in following venues, Cargill Clubrooms, Tesco, Morrisons Boots, Lanark Pharmacy, Rx Pharmacy Carstairs and the Practice
- Practice newsletter and dashboard

PPG Annual Report from Eleanor McLean, Chairperson (cont'd)

- Copies of the PPG/Practice minutes on Woodstock website and hard copies in various venues
- AskmyGP introduced
- Alba Woodstock Facebook Page
- PPG Health & Wellbeing Fayre was held in September 2024 with over 20 organisations under one roof.... It was highly successful with great feedback from both the organisations and the attending public.
- PPG are currently setting up an email address for online users to communicate with the Group

However, the group, are aware, that there are still ongoing issues which hopefully will be resolved. There is an awareness of the situation within NHS and GP practices throughout the country. The following are some up-to-date facts & figures here about NHS Lanarkshire and Woodstock Practice.

- 100 GP Practices in October 2020 within NHS Lanarkshire and now, in October 2024 there are 93, a loss of 7
- Woodstock is one of 23 practices who have more than 10,000 patients
- There are 12,239 patients in Woodstock Practice With the highest numbers between the age of 45 to 64

There is more information on a Data information sheet here on the desk for anyone to have a look at, at the end of the meeting, if you wish. A data information sheet was made available for reference at the end of the meeting.

The PPG members are all volunteers with the same aim... to build a good working relationship with both the Patient Community and Woodstock Medical Practice to allow delivery of the best care possible

PPG Communication Report

Colin Angus (CA) confirmed that from the beginning the PPG wanted to engage as many patients, as possible, (from within the Practice), which would enable the group to present issues raised at the regular meetings with the Practice. The PPG were also clear from the start that it would not and could not deal with individual clinical issues or complaints, and it has been indicated earlier how these should be dealt with.

With this in mind it was agreed to design a communication box and make them available in various locations to enable patients and or carers to post comments on issues they wished raised at the meetings with the Practice.

Initially, it was decided that the following venues would be used:

- Woodstock Practice
- Lanark Lifestyles
- Lanark Pharmacy
- Rx Pharmacy Carstairs

PPG Communication Report (cont'd)

- Cargill Clubrooms
- The venues would be reviewed and others added where necessary.

The PPG were conscious that younger patient population within the Practice had been left out, so Universal Connections and Lanark Grammar School were added to the list of venues. Dialogue was also initiated with Lanark Grammar, in order to develop a two-way link so that the voices of our young people could be part of our PPG.

After some initial teething problems with the forms, as some patients were using them for individual clinical/complaints they were reworded. To date we have received 25 forms, mainly from Lanark Pharmacy and Woodstock Practice communication boxes. All forms were copied to the Practice and discussed at the full PPG meetings. The issues were broken into the following categories:

- 7 - Difficulties getting advanced appointments
- 5 - Prescription issues
- 4 - No on the day appointments
- 4 - Individual clinical issues
- 3 - Communication difficulties
- 2 - Access arrangements
- 2 - IT and phone issues
- 2 - Lack of Doctors
- 2 - askmyGP
- 2 - Compliments

CA reiterated that the PPG are keen to relaunch this method of gathering feedback on what people want taken to meetings and although the numbers are relatively low, it was felt that this is one way that more voices, can be involved, particularly for patients who are not confident to use an online method.

The PPG are keen to provide other ways of communicating with patients and carers and hope to develop an online facility that will reach out to more of the public

The PPG held a Health and Wellbeing Fayre in September of this year and although it was the first, it was hailed a success by both stallholders and attendees alike. Although not all attendees completed evaluation forms, those that did said it was very good.

Attendees providing feedback said:

- 5 - Very Informative, good information
- 5 - Excellent etc event
- 4 - Better advertising
- 1 - Practice receptionists more time to explain

PPG Communication Report (cont'd)

- 1 - Useful for carers and people needing support

- 1 - More on mental health – drop-in centres
- 1 - Improvement – help around the house/garden
- 1 - Disappointed Care and Repair didn't attend
- 1 - Like to see another next year – interesting stands

CA finished by thanking everyone for listening and pointed out that there was a communication box and forms available if anyone wanted to complete a form and post it in the box.

Woodstock Practice Report

Linda Butters (LB) then introduced herself and her role in the organisation, which she joined in May 2024 and confirmed that she had already attended the PPG/Practice meeting held on 30th October. At this meeting Linda made the PPG members aware that the practice was looking to change the provider of the current telephone system. The new provider (Daisy Communications) carried out a site survey on the 31st October and LB confirmed that the site survey was successful, and the new system was due to be installed between the 16th to 18th December, with all admin staff being fully trained on the system during this time. The Daisy Communications system is in use in England and the TrustPilot reviews are high, and LB encouraged all present to check out these reviews.

LB then provided an update on a few of the features of the new system which should prove beneficial to the practice and patients alike:

- No longer would anyone have to sit in a queue for any length of time as there will be an option to select a button (to be determined) that once selected will allow you to hangup, with your place in the queue being held and when you reach #1 in the queue the system will call you back.
- Allows the Practice to assign a code to vulnerable patients, for example those undergoing palliative care, so that when they call the new system, they will automatically jump to the top of the queue
- There will be a large screen situated in the admin office showing the following information
 - How many calls waiting
 - Duration of each call
 - How long an individual has waited

This information will allow the Practice to track information and address any issues promptly and will also make this information available through the normal channels. LB also confirmed that there were ample staff available to man the phones and askmyGP.

The new Practice Manager, Gillian Walker, was introduced, she officially joins the Practice in two weeks' time and Margaret White was thanked for stepping in as acting Practice Manager when the previous manager had left, she has agreed to take on the role of Deputy Practice Manager.

Woodstock Practice Report (cont'd)

Gillian Walker, (GW) thanked the PPG for inviting her to come along to the AGM and confirmed that she had previously worked for Boots and a Practice in West Lothian which was once the lowest performing Practice in the area.

She informed us that this was no longer the case, and she hoped by applying the same principles and hard work, noted below, at Woodstock the same improvements would be seen:

- GW and Margaret White (MW) are working on creating a training matrix for admin staff
- Will work closely with each individual to identify their training needs
- Identifying skill gaps are being worked upon
- Assess patient complaints and put practices in place to eradicate these
- It was confirmed that there would, of course, be a transition period but that patients should start to see improvements by start of 2025

Jennifer Boyd (JB) then introduced herself confirming that she had worked positively with the partners of Woodstock for six years. She also informed the meeting that she has worked closely with the PPG over the last year, attending all meetings, only missing the last meeting in October. It was also confirmed by JB that GPs do not deal with askmyGP requests they all go to herself and the other ANPs working at Woodstock Practice to review and determine how best to help each patient, and that this may not necessary be an appt with a doctor but another healthcare professional. As part of her talk Jennifer confirmed that everyone at the Practice take pride in their work and strive to provide all patients with an excellent service.

Question and Answer Session

Eleanor McLean (EMcL) then opened up the meeting for people to raise concerns, complaints, and feedback. Due to the fact that many people asked comparable questions on a particular process or issue they have been collated into their specific area as recorded below, and include questions asked during the reports etc:

- **askmyGP**
 - **Why does it get closed during a weekday**
 - **Why is it not available 24/7**
 - It was confirmed that the reason it was deemed necessary to close askmyGP was to allow current requests to be dealt with. It is also closed when the Practice is closed, at this time NHS 111 should be contacted. Also prevents requests completed at the weekend from being missed once the Practice reopens.
 - **When a request is made is it answered by a robot or a person**
 - Every request is reviewed by a person, usually a nurse consultant or an ANP.

Question and Answer Session (cont'd)

- **askmyGP (cont'd)**

- **Why when I make a request is it closed down without a response**
 - This should not happen but if it does, please go back into askmyGP and provide feedback on this.
- **Why if I make my request urgent is it changed to routine**
 - This usually happens once it has been reviewed by a clinician and they determine it not to be urgent based on the information provided.
- **I do not have a smartphone or computer**
 - Patients may phone the Practice, and a care navigator will complete your request for you.
- **Why do I get referred to a different healthcare professional when I have requested an appointment with a GP**
 - Your request will be reviewed by a clinician and based on your symptoms they may determine that another healthcare provider may be better suited to help the individual.

GP/ANP appointments

- **Had an appointment with a doctor and need to get back in touch**
- **Why can't a GP book you in for an advanced appointment**
 - GPs and ANPs can book patients in for a follow up appointment as well as advanced appointments. AskmyGP can also be used to request these.
- **Calendar not open to allow advanced appointments**
 - Calendars can be released for GPs if required, also the % breakdown for appointments is now 70% Pre bookable and 30% on the day appointments.

PPG

- **Why are PPG minutes not freely available**
 - Minutes are available on the Woodstock for those online, and paper copies are also distributed to the following venues, Cargill Clubrooms, Tesco, Morrisons, Tollbooth, Lanark Pharmacy and Boots. However, PPG would welcome suggestions for other venues.

PPG (cont'd)

- **Health Fayre and AGM not advertised enough**
 - Both were advertised on the Practice website and flyers were posted throughout the town, Gazette also included the information. However,

members of the PPG would welcome any suggestions on other areas where to advertise these events.

- **Why did PPG only introduce communication boxes after the Action Group introduced theirs and boxes being confused**
 - PPG do not believe that this was the case as the planning for the boxes had been ongoing. It was agreed that CA would liaise with Mary Hughes from the action group regarding positioning of each group's boxes.
- **What happens to the information received by PPG**
 - As confirmed by CA earlier he collects the forms, and they are provided to the Practice and discussed at PPG meetings with the Practice.
- **Practice**
 - **Why weren't the partners attending the AGM**
 - LB confirmed that the partners had wanted to attend the meeting but that they were in fact interviewing potential GPs for the Practice.
 - **How many GP FTEs are there**
 - It was confirmed that there were 4.5 FTEs., these GPs would not only be seeing patients but also dealing with prescriptions and other admin.
 - **How many patients seen each day by a GP**
 - As per the regulatory body each GP can see 25 patients per day.
 - **How many GPs work full time**
 - It was confirmed that no GPs works full time, nowadays.
 - **Why don't the Practice carry out their own surveys as the action group regularly has > 800 complaints/feedback**
 - This is something that the PPG can discuss with the Practice at the next meeting. Feedback from the action group can be considered alongside findings from PPG communicating boxes and we can consider the feedback from the surveys carried out by the action group as well as findings from PPG communication boxes.

Eleanor then closed the meeting, thanking everyone for attending and their input and wished everyone a safe journey home.