

Officers' report of PPG activities during the year 2020

During 2019, we recognised a need to raise the profile of the PPG at Dukinfield Medical Practice. It had become reliant on a core group that didn't reflect the diversity of the patient population and it was recognised that the patient viewpoint was not being fully presented. This acknowledgement prompted us to improve the structure, direction, and membership etc of the Group by reaching out for advice and to patients generally. Subsequently, a Constitution was developed, officers elected at an AGM in January and attendance and participation definitely improved at the meetings in December 2019 and early 2020. Optimism was rising..... and then came Covid and lockdown!

Inevitably everyone's focus changed. The Practice had to adapt and develop different ways of delivering services to patients. However, with time, we have become more resourceful and the officers of the PPG continued to stay in contact. The Practice offered to make Zoom available to the PPG. I had some rapid tuition and passed this on to others and so we were able to offer a "virtual" meeting of the group with very satisfactory participation in October and November 2020.

In October I arranged for the Chairperson (Gemma Jackson) of one of the most successful PPGs in the country to join us. She is clearly passionate about the role and purpose and has much advice to offer. She made several suggestions about how to gather opinions and "listen to the patient voice", including the establishment of a "listening table". Obviously, at the moment, talking to patients face to face is not possible but we continue to look at the options that will be available to us when we are. Gemma has offered her help into the future and I'm sure we'll call on her again as we progress.

We recognised that there was a gap in communication. There is a tradition of producing newsletters and there was a clear need for this to continue, especially at this time. We are proud of the hard work that went into producing and distributing it. The newsletter will be further discussed in the regular meeting.

Finally, we built on the successful Christmas events in 2019. We were unable to offer the gatherings for those patients who are alone or vulnerable. However, again, with the combined efforts of the PPG, Health Champions and DMP staff, over 50 impressive hampers were produced for distribution to this group of patients. The delight was obvious

when Father Christmas and others knocked on the doors to deliver them. This will also be an item for discussion in the regular meeting.

Despite the difficulties that we have all known this year, I take heart from what we have achieved. It has been a challenge to maintain enthusiasm but we have pushed on, continuing to pursue the aims that we identified at the end of 2019 albeit in a limited way. Covid will inevitably have affected and changed lives and will continue to do so for some time to come but I hope that we will be able to adapt and move forward to working effectively with DMP partners and staff with the aim of improving the service offered to its patients - us!

Presented at the the AGM by the Secretary, Geoff Hill