

Patient Participation Group Overview – August to October 2025

How would you describe the current relationship between the PPG and GP practice?

It's very good. They are always helpful, they always listen to us, they consider us when they're planning meetings and talking about various things that are coming up. It's a good relationship.

It's very poor. The partners (2xGPs) don't turn up to the meetings. There's always excuses, the two partners don't care and the management team are only doing it because they were forced into it last year when it was set up by the CQC. You can tell they're not really interested. Even though the GP is performing poorly, they're not really interested.

Are there any barriers to having influence on decisions?

I don't know that we've ever tried to be involved in a decision, we normally give our opinions.

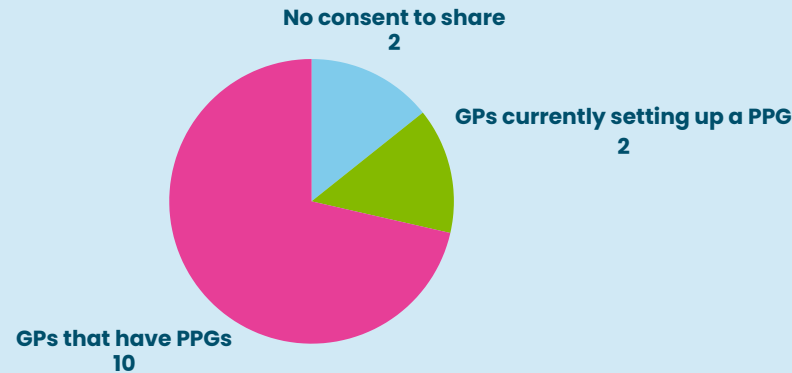
The partners not turning up to meetings. They don't work full time at the practice anyway, they are involved in other things. They have plenty of notice but they don't turn up. We asked for the meetings to be later in the day to accommodate but we are still waiting to hear if that can be arranged.

Do you feel the practice values and acts on the input of the PPG?

Yes I do. I can't quote any massive changes we've brought about, but we have initiated a slightly more explanatory attitude to us and to patients. The practice have learnt through the PPG that explanation is important for patients. The PPG has influenced the GP's communication skills with patients.

No.

GP surgeries spoken to



Healthwatch Medway spoke to 14 out of the 44 GP practices in Medway to review how PPGs are working across Medway. Out of the 14 we spoke to, 10 GP surgeries did have PPGs, two are setting up PPGs and two completed our form but did not give us consent to share their feedback. Out of the two GP surgeries that are setting up PPGs, one surgery answered requested support to set up a PPG. Healthwatch Medway is following this up with the GP surgery.

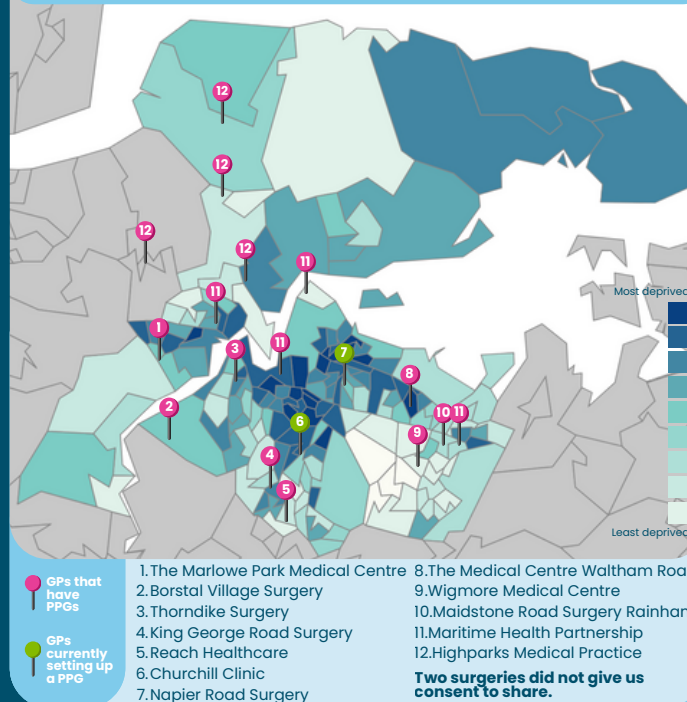
What is the GP practice involving the PPG in?

We've been talking about various systems and practices in the NHS. One that we've been talking about is the NHS app. Staff were really helpful telling us about it and how it works.

The GP surgery help the group to understand processes. The group bring issues to the PPG and staff explain them. They ask how we feel about the way they do vaccines etc. They ask if we're happy with how they're rolling things out, they don't ask us how we would change things. But our views are considered.

The group have had lots of good ideas about what we can improve on, the practice just want us to produce a newsletter but we don't have the knowledge. We worked with the surgery on standardising phrasing for documentation, but there's no enthusiasm to do anything, which is frustrating. We are not consulted on changes to services. We ask lots of questions but feel that they are not answered.

Participating GP surgeries by Deprivation Index



What would help improve the role of the PPG?

We're all older people, we would benefit from more diversity within the PPG.

We have enough meetings, we don't want any more. We have about 3 or 4 a year. If we have an issue we have a forum we can use.

The PPG needs to have more knowledge to know what's going on. Training courses for PPGs would be helpful, and networking between PPGs to understand what's going on elsewhere.

Members of the PPG should be ex-NHS, ex-GPs, that would be helpful to create knowledge within the PPG. There is only one man at the PPG. The PPG is diverse in terms of ethnicity and disability, but we could do with more diversity.

Under the GP contract, surgeries are required to have a Patient Participation Group. Healthwatch Medway wants to work with PPGs because listening to the voices of those with experience of accessing healthcare services is essential to understanding and addressing health inequalities. PPGs are a forum for people to share their experiences, understand the barriers to access and help co-design solutions.