

Patient Participation Group (WMC-PPG)

Web: www.watlingmedicalcentre.co.uk

email: wmc.ppg@nhs.net

PPG report 2017-2018

Your PPG continues to support the practice in various ways, with the partners, the other doctors and the staff appreciating input from the patients about how the services provided can be managed in the best interests of all parties..

The committee, elected at the AGM, meets formally 3 times during the year and I maintain frequent contact with the Practice Manager and liaise with members between meetings. The meeting that follows immediately after the AGM, this year on Thursday 8 March, is open to all patients and an opportunity to make your voice heard. If you cannot attend but would like to take part in our activities, please send me an email.

Health Champions, recruited from patients, continue to play an important role as part of the Wellbeing services. They focus on social aspects that affect individuals and signpost them to organisations and services which can assist them. Health Champions are not medically trained, but are given specific training and support within the practice under the leadership of Nurse Practitioner Paula McLaren. That enables them to support the work of the GPs, Nurses and other practice staff by offering patients the opportunity of help with non-medical problems that might otherwise impact on their health. Our Health Champions work in association with those from three other practices local to Burnt Oak, Oak Lodge, Parkview and Everglades. The success of the scheme means more volunteers are needed so, if you would like to know more about becoming a Health Champion, and have some time to spare, please call the surgery or email to wmc.ppg@nhs.net

The number of patients at our surgery has gone up 25% in the last five years – currently counting 16,000 patients. Patients on average expect to see a clinician 7-10 times a year. You will thus not be surprised that our practice is struggling to keep up with a demand and escalating workload. This is the reason that in October 2017 the practice had to change its appointment system increasing the variety of appointments on offer. In addition to its pre-bookable, book on day, home visits and telephone advice appointments the practice has introduced duty doctor system. The doctor will return your phone call and make a decision whether you need to be seen face-to-face.

The NHS needs a lot of support. It is patient focussed but it needs feedback from those patients on the services provided, hence the importance of PPGs to provide the relevant 'patient voice' and dialogue in the primary care sector. Your PPG has taken the lead in the growth of a network of PPGs across Barnet. What started as an exchange of information and some mutual assistance among a few local practices that already were working together with some clinical initiatives, has now developed into a vibrant forum for patient representatives and practice managers from all corners of the borough. I was invited to address the Annual (Public) Meeting of the CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) last September on the subject and a good rapport has also been struck with the Federation of GPs. Network meetings include representatives of Healthwatch and together we aim to help practices having difficulties in developing their PPGs (a surprising number) as well as acting in unison on specific health initiatives and awareness campaigns.

We are looking to assist the practice to update and generally improve the WMC website www.watlingmedicalcentre.co.uk which is a mine of useful information and considerable practical suggestions, including self help advice. If you haven't already done so, you can register to book appointments and order prescriptions online and can also view part of your medical record. Appointment bookings on line are 'real time', so patients can see and accept the same vacancies as receptionists and call operators. Please take time to visit and give us your feedback; if you have website experience and are prepared to volunteer to help, we would be delighted to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hugh Ogus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hugh Ogus
PPG Chairman
March 2018