

Peartree Group Practice – Patient Participation Group – Constitution

Introduction

Since April 2015, it has been a contractual requirement in the General Medical Services contract for all GP practices to establish and support a Patient Participation Group (PPG) and to make reasonable efforts for this to be representative of the practice population.

Name

The name of the group for the Peartree Group Practice in Welwyn Garden City shall be Peartree Patient Voices, hereinafter called PatientVoices, referred to as PV, and is the PPG for this practice.

Purpose

PV is a group of registered patients of the practice, who meet regularly with GP practice staff to discuss practice issues and patient experience in order to help improve the service.

Aims & Objectives

The group will provide a communication channel between the patients and the practice.

The group will influence the development of policies in the practice by representing patient views. This will help to ensure patients make the best use of the facilities available and provide a channel for patients to communicate non-clinical issues with the practice.

In consultation with the practice, the group will highlight any areas that need attention and make suggestions and help implement improvements to the service. They may also undertake community health related projects in partnership with the practice.

The group will assist the practice in monitoring quality through patient surveys and other means and will publish and communicate relevant information to members from various sources.

The group may also work with our Primary Care Network (PCN) and other PPGs as and when necessary.

Membership

Membership of Patient Voices is open to any registered patients and carers of Peartree Group Practice over the age of 16. Application is on request via the online application form on the practice website at <https://www.peartreegp.co.uk/patientvoices/> or by email to peartree.pv@gmail.com. Provision will be made for non-digital applications. Practice staff are not eligible for membership of PV.

Membership of PV shall cease in the event that a patient is no longer a registered patient of Peartree Group Practice. Membership may also be terminated if deemed by the committee there has been unacceptable behaviour by any member.

Committee

PV activities will be co-ordinated by a committee of elected volunteers and invited members.

The committee will consist of no more than twelve (12) and no less than five (5) elected members and will include the officer positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, IT Support/Comms. The officer positions will be known as the Executive. Should the committee fall below 5 members, it will continue to operate, but must make every effort to fill the vacancies.

The Chair will be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for an initial period of three years and two yearly after that. The remaining officer positions will be elected at the AGM for an initial period of two years and may stand again for further two year terms.

Remaining committee members will be elected/re-elected every two years at the AGM. Committee members can also be co-opted during the year at the discretion of the existing committee, with a two thirds majority vote and must seek formal election at the next AGM. Committee member tenure is staggered to ensure continuity of expertise and experience.

Candidates for election must be nominated by one other member.

Role of the Executive

The role of the Executive will be:-

Chairman – To chair the meetings and manage the affairs of the Group.

Vice-Chair – To support the Chair and act as stand-in if and when required.

Secretary - To take minutes, keep and maintain the members list and distribute agendas, minutes and any other information required on behalf of the group with prior approval of the Chairman.

Assistant Secretary – To support the Secretary and act as stand-in if and when required.

IT Support/Communications – To provide IT support for PV including, but not limited to practice website and also to provide regular relevant information for communication to the membership.

Meetings

The PV committee shall endeavour to meet not less than six times a year including the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and four committee members plus Chair or Vice-Chair will constitute a quorum.

Should a committee member fail to attend three consecutive meetings in person without a reasonable excuse, as deemed by the Executive, they will cease to be a committee member and will revert to being an ordinary member of PV.

Meetings will be held in person or using remote technology (e.g. Zoom) or a combination of both. All members are permitted to attend the meeting subject to space limitations and technology.

There should also be representation from the practice either via the Managing Partner or their delegated member of staff. A GP from the practice may also attend the meetings, either for an agreed regular slot on the agenda, or as and when requested by the PV committee.

Any policy change or significant decision required will be by a simple majority vote and can only be taken by the committee. The Chair shall be entitled to vote and in the event of a tie, the Chair shall have an additional casting vote.

The agenda and minutes will be sent to all members by email before and after each meeting. These documents will also be made available to any non-digital members on request. Non-PV members can attend one meeting as an observer but must give prior notice of attendance.

Annual General Meeting

An AGM will be held annually and is open to all members. Notice of the day, time and place will be sent to all members at least 28 days beforehand by email and will also be shown on the practice website and surgery noticeboards.

Any item for the agenda must be sent to the Secretary no later than 14 days prior to the AGM. Four committee members plus Chair or Vice-Chair will constitute a quorum. The Chair shall present a report of the activities of PV during the previous year. Elections will take place at the AGM. Voting can be submitted remotely prior to the meeting.

Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting (SGM) shall be held if not less than two thirds of the membership request it in writing, stating the reasons, to the Chair or Secretary. Twenty-eight days' notice of the time, date and place of the meeting shall be advertised no later than ten days following receipt of the written request. Motions at an SGM will be passed on a vote in favour of at least two thirds of those members present. Voting can be submitted remotely prior to the meeting.

Code of Conduct

All members must abide by the Code of Conduct shown at Appendix 1. -

Confidentiality

PV will comply with all current UK legislation relating to data protection and confidentiality. Any member who wishes to receive PPG information or other relevant information (excluding any such information sent direct from the practice), must register their email address with the Secretary and agree in writing that it can be used to facilitate communication from the PPG to that member. Committee Members' email addresses may be shared with other PV members and the practice.

All meeting minutes include the names of all attendees and these documents may be made public via various channels e.g. practice website and social media.

General

PV will be affiliated to the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) or any other relevant organisation. There are no membership fees and PV does not raise or hold funds. Reasonable and prior approved out of pocket expenses on behalf of PV can be claimed from the practice. Annual associate membership to NAPP or similar shall be paid for by the practice.

The constitution will be available on the practice website or by email request. Hard copies will be available on request made to the Chair or Secretary. The constitution will be reviewed annually at the AGM and any proposed changes should be made in writing, received by the Chair and/or Secretary at least 14 days in advance of the meeting and voted for at the meeting by two thirds or more of those present.

PV will have no access to patient data and will not discuss individual members' personal medical issues or personal complaints These should be addressed to the practice directly.

Signed agreement

These Terms of Reference were adopted by Patient Voices at the PV meeting held at Peartree on 13th June 2024 and will be reviewed annually.

Signed:*Leighton Colegrave*..... PV Chair Dated ...25/06/2024...

Signed:*James Brookman*..... Peartree GP Dated ...25/06/2024...

Managing Partner

Appendix 1

PatientVoices Code of Conduct

The PatientVoices membership is not based on opinions or characteristics of individuals and shall be non-political and non-sectarian, at all times respecting diversity and exemplifying its commitment to the principles contained within the Equality Act.

All Members of PatientVoices make this commitment:

- A. To respect practice and patient confidentiality at all times.
- B. To treat each other with mutual respect and act and contribute in a manner that is in the best interests of all patients.
- C. To be open and flexible and to listen and support each other.
- D. To abide by the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
- E. Not to use PatientVoices as a forum for personal agendas or complaints. These should be taken forward through other appropriate channels.
- F. To accept that the ruling of the Chair or other presiding officer is final on matters relating to orderly conduct.
- G. Otherwise to abide by principles of good meeting practice, for example:
 - 1. Reading papers in advance
 - 2. Arriving on time
 - 3. Switching mobile phones to silent
 - 4. Allowing others to speak and be heard/respected