

# **Romney House Patient Participation Group**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday 30 April 2015**

**Romney House Surgery, Long Street, Tetbury, 6.30p.m.**

### **Chairman's Report for 2014 / 2015**

**This** Patient Participation Group (PPG) began in October 2011. I say, 'this', as there was one sometime before ours which ran for several years but which sadly came to an end. However, I am sure that this will not be the case with the current PPG which, although looking for new blood on the committee, is still very much alive and kicking with 114 members. The committee, and its sub-groups, set up as and when the need arises, meet regularly at the surgery. News letters are sent out quarterly to all members and reports on activities appear monthly in The Tetbury Advertiser. Additionally, as a result of focussing on different aspects of patients' expressed needs, two self-help groups, one for those wishing to take on a Healthier Lifestyle and one for Carers have set up during this year.

At committee meetings we have covered all manner of items ranging from the length of time to get an appointment to booking on line, from patient records, and reporting the results of blood and other tests, to new nursing arrangements and of course the old chestnut of lack of car parking facilities leading on to new surgery provision plus a whole host of other issues. The minutes of our meetings are available in the surgery on our notice board and on line via the practice website [www.romneyhousesurgery.co.uk](http://www.romneyhousesurgery.co.uk)

The PPG has had assurances from the surgery over the reporting of test results to patients that a new system has now been implemented. This was one of the issues that patients frequently raised with the PPG and it featured prominently in last year's survey. We are therefore very thankful that this has been improved. The PPG did not carry out a patient survey this year since the Government launched a national Family and Friend survey in which the practice took part. Also, since the doctors undertake surveys themselves with patients, the PPG thought that it was inappropriate to overload patients with yet another survey. But we will be carrying out another one early in 2016.

The PPG got nowhere with its correspondence with the Highways Department either over designating some parking spaces on the road near the surgery for patients or extending the parking time restrictions near the surgery. The new house building programme for Tetbury will result, we understand, on completion, in an estimated 1800 -2000 additional patients. At this stage it will be necessary to take on another doctor or nurse practitioner. This will put added pressure on car parking and on space within the surgery. The practice has put in a bid for government funding for new premises with car parking and is waiting to hear whether or not the bid has been successful. However, even if this bid is successful, I cannot stress enough, that it will take years to come to fruition and it would be extremely helpful if all patients who can walk to the surgery do so in order to leave the limited parking available for those in real need. It would also be helpful if patients, who are able to do so, renew their prescriptions and book their appointments on line as this puts less pressure on staff and on car parking.

There have been more changes in the surgery over the year with Dr Swanborough taking maternity leave and her place been taken temporarily by Drs Cardew and Jones. Dr Cardew is scheduled to leave on 24 April and Dr Swanborough returns on 29 April. Also, the retirement of Alison Plumb, one of our longstanding practice nurses and the resignation of another, Debbie Cunningham, more or less at the same time, has left the nursing team rather bereft. We wish them both well in the future whatever that may hold and we also wish their successors Ruth Parkinson, Anne Green and Wendy Hadfield a long and happy time at Romney House Surgery.

This year the Diabetic Group has continued but it has now been decided to close it as its objectives have been met and numerous health professionals have given diabetic members the benefit of their advice and experience. It may well start again in the future with a new group of diabetic patients should there be interest in doing so. I must take this opportunity to thank Sally and Linda Woolley who have given up their time for over two years to lead this group.

Jean Corcoran was instrumental in organising the initial meetings of The Healthier Lifestyles Group. After having received invaluable input on two occasions from a nutritionist, and help from Tesco staff in choosing healthy options in store, the group decided that they wished to embrace healthier living by attending weekly the Cirencester Pool for therapeutic water exercises. This aspect is organised by Pat Hodges, and is enjoyed by all who attend. Our thanks is extended to both Jean and Pat.

Since the setting up of the NHS, mental health has always been the Cinderella of the service. The PPG is planning to have this topic as our next focus group since mental health issues has the next highest number of requests from both members and from last year's patient survey.

Near the beginning of the year we made a presentation at the Practice Open Evening and towards the end of this year we have produced a social prescribing list, partly as a result of a need identified at that occasion. This list runs to some 50 pages and gives under headings such as, abuse, bereavement, self-harm and social integration etc., contact details of national and local groups that may be able to help patients with information, support and advice. The list will be available to GPs on their computers and relevant information can be printed out for patients where a need is identified. It will also be in the on the practice website, as detailed above, and in the library. We hope this will be of help to patients and would appreciate feedback. Keeping it up to date will be a challenge but we are working on it. Much of the initial checking of the information has been carried out by a fourteen year old boy to whom we are very grateful.

My term of office draws to a close at the AGM. It has been a privilege to serve as your chairman and I could not have done so without the support, hard work and dedication of the committee and to them I extend my sincere thanks. We are in need now of some new blood on the committee and ask members to put themselves forward for this interesting and rewarding work.

The PPG cannot exist without the support and co-operation of the practice and to them also we say a big thank you. We appreciate all they do for patients and we are all dependent on them to a greater or lesser extent at various times. It is becoming increasingly difficult for GPs at the present time with patients living longer and their expectations and demands on practice services ever growing whereas the pool of GPs is not growing at the same rate. Your PPG is there to work with the practice, to put forward patient views and to aid better communications between the two. It is not there to take up individual complaints but we do take forward patient concerns especially where we receive three or more on the same issue. This we have continued to do throughout the year and will continue to do so even if those issues are difficult ones such as car parking and premises. We look forward to the exciting times ahead.

Alison Hesketh

Chairman PPG - April 2015