

PATIENT NEWS

*The newsletter of Western Road
Patient Participation Group (PPG)
Issue No. 2*



Welcome to the second newsletter of the Western Road PPG and the committee hope that you will find it both interesting and informative. In each issue we intend to include information about how patients can get involved and have a voice in how their care is provided. News and comments from the Practice Team will also be included.

The Patient Participation Group

In the last issue we explained how the Western Road PPG is an independent Group which, following a national model, has been established to enable patients to become involved in their GP practice and also the care that is provided.

We have support from the Practice and the GPs are keen to encourage patient involvement. The virtual Practice Reference Group has been involved in the annual survey for the last three years and is a reflection of patient involvement. Last year there were 611 responses received and we hope that there will be similar numbers again this autumn.

The PPG fits into a structure of patient involvement across the Basildon and Brentwood Boroughs with the objective of influencing the care provided by Basildon & Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group (BBCCG). The BBCCG involves all local GPs in commissioning the services we receive. For those interested, we explain separately the new structure within which the Practice is involved in deciding what services we receive. It also shows how the patients' voice can be heard and where the PPG fit in.

Why get involved?

Involvement and Engagement may be buzz words but could easily help to improve your health or that of someone you care for. Most patients want to manage their conditions as best they can but sometimes are not sure how this can be achieved. Having the opportunity to pose questions and make suggestions with other patients/carers with similar problems can be very beneficial. As a PPG our questions are welcomed by the Practice and we want to develop the Group.

How a PPG can help

One very good example of how a PPG can help is demonstrated by a Brentwood Practice PPG which decided to look at some of the softer issues regarding diabetes. They developed a small pack to be given to every patient who was diagnosed as being diabetic. Previously a newly diagnosed patient invariably left the consultation in shock. They used the auspices of Diabetes UK and major efforts of their chair in establishing this. It was very well received by those patients concerned. They have now developed this involvement with a "buddy" system where a newly diagnosed patient has another patient to whom they can talk.

With our practice currently having nearly 350 patients diagnosed with diabetes it may be appropriate to look at the needs for Western Road patients and those who may be diagnosed in the future. We are pleased to see the re-establishment of a local Diabetes UK section.

Events

Come and see what makes No. 41 tick

We have agreed with the Practice to have a Saturday morning when patients can come into the surgery. You will be able to meet members of the team and find out how the practice works. All are welcome but it could be especially useful for new patients and those who only visit occasionally. PPG members will also be there. This will be held on November 22nd from 11.30 am. To help manage numbers you are asked to book a slot either by phoning the surgery or via our email address western.roadsurgeryppg@nhs.net

Topic Evening

We will hold our first topic specific meeting on Wednesday November 12th October at 7pm. The subject will be diabetes and Dr Pollard & Dr Butler will speak on current services and then answer questions and listen to ideas from patients/carers. This first meeting will be held in the reception area and as such numbers will need to be limited. Do book a place either by contacting the surgery or dropping us an email to western.roadsurgeryppg@nhs.net . We would like to hear from you regarding other topics, so do email us.

News from the Practice

The Annual Flu Vaccination

The practice will be carrying out the annual flu inoculations soon; as last year you will be able to book appointments at special Saturday Clinics. Do keep an eye on the website and noticeboard for information on eligibility and how to book your appointment.

Training Practice

As you are probably aware Western Road is a training practice for doctors wishing to become GPs. A new registrar will be starting in August and we will explain more about that in the next issue.

The Practice Team



The second member of the team we are covering is **Dr. Maria Pollard**.

"I joined the Western Road surgery in 1993 as a new Partner. I am a local girl as I was educated at Billericay Comprehensive School since the age of 11 years. I was always ambitious academically and announced to the world my intention of becoming a Doctor from the age of 8 years old!

Despite adversity and some difficulties I qualified from Charing Cross Medical School in 1986 and although initially thinking I would be a brain surgeon, fell in love with general practice and embarked on my own GP scheme in London.

I was a GP principal in Middlesex for 2 years before being invited by Dr Afifi and Dr Butler to come "home" to Billericay where I have been working ever since. I've been at Western Road Surgery nearly 21 years and thoroughly enjoy my role

I enjoy my role as a GP in Western Road and have a close bond with the staff and patients. I have seen many changes over the years including the advent of fund holding and now the immense difficulty of cut backs in the NHS and the dissolution of the Primary Care Trusts with responsibility for commissioning services being now in GP hands. The whole team hope that we can continue to provide high quality family medicine to our patients."

Where does the money go?

We see in the press comments about GPs lining their pockets. We felt that it may be worth letting you know where the money goes. First let us think of the total sums; the total for the 47 practices in Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford would not quite buy a top striker in the Premier League (£60m) and the annual sums received by the average practice would just about pay for a month's salary of that player. The money at Western Road has to support GPs, Practice nurses, Practice Manager, front and back of house staff, Out of Hours service and Insurance. In addition there are the normal overheads of rates, water, light, heating, communications and maintenance.

The practice does receive some extra money from the NHS to provide specific services and you may have seen in the press talk about an extra £5 per patient to improve care for the over 75s, reducing the number of visits to Hospital. Practices are discussing how to achieve this both individually and with other practices. As patients we should have the opportunity of commenting on proposals and also to monitor outcomes and impact on the patient experience.

Basildon Hospital

We are pleased to see, that following the hard work of the management team and staff at Basildon Hospital to improve standards, it is now out of Special Measures. In order to continue improving services, the hospital is interested to hear about your recent experiences within the hospital. What works well, what is less good and how can be it be improved. Patients are encouraged to raise any concerns during their stay in hospital and are given the opportunity to complete a feedback form when they go home.

You could also participate in their 'Mystery Shopper' scheme – to do so they would like patients to complete a survey form on each in/outpatient visit to the hospital. If you would like to take part or would even be interested in sharing your patient experience with the hospital board, please email Jennie Deeks (Head of Quality & Patient Experience) at Jennie.deeks@btuh.nhs.uk

We would like to hear your views, the PPG has its own email address (see below) or you can drop a note into reception addressed to the PPG. Obviously we cannot deal with personal issues.

western.roadsurgeryppg@nhs.net

Do contact us, as above, if you are interested in joining the PPG.