

# VICTORIA MEDICAL CENTRE Patient Participation Group



TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MODUS OPERANDI

## **Terms of Reference and Modus Operandi**

### **Aim**

The aim of the Victoria Patient Participation Group (VPPG) is to maintain a positive and constructive relationship between patients, the Victoria Medical Centre staff (referred to as the 'Practice' throughout this document) and the community they serve, helping the Practice to remain accountable and responsive to all patients' needs. It is effective from

### **1. Membership**

1.1 All registered patients of the Practice over the age of 16 are eligible to be members of the VPPG.

1.2 Application forms can be obtained from Reception and on-line. The Chair of the VPPG, together with one other member, will arrange a meeting with candidates to discuss suitability for membership and the possible commitment required.

1.3 Membership of the VPPG will aim to reflect the patient profile and be widely representative and inclusive of different genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities as required in the GP contract. All members are unpaid volunteers and are not afforded any privileges beyond those already available to all Practice patients.

1.4 The VPPG will be non-political and non-sectarian, and will respect diversity and exemplify its commitment to the principles contained within the Equality Act.

1.5 The VPPG will make reasonable efforts during each financial year to review its membership in order to ensure that it is in line with paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 above.

1.6. The VPPG shall elect officers from among the members of the VPPG. These will include the Chair and a Secretary. Other posts may be created through the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

1.7 Membership of the VPPG should be for no more than five years and elected at the AGM. Members can then re-apply for a further term. The same time limits shall apply to the terms of office of the officers. Members may step down at any time without notice.

1.8 The VPPG shall normally not exceed twenty members.

1.9 In addition, other eligible patients may be appointed as 'Supporters', who offer to assist in various tasks but who don't wish to be formal members of the VPPG.

### **2. Management of the VPPG**

2.1 The VPPG shall meet no fewer than ten times a year for planning purposes and liaison with Practice staff if required. These may be in traditional groups or remotely

as appropriate using available technology; these will be resourced by the Practice management team.

2.2 In the absence of the Chair, those members who are present shall elect a Chair from among the attendees.

2.3 Meetings are subject to a quorum of five members of the VPPG.

2.4 Apologies for absence should be sent to the Secretary or Chair prior to the meeting. In the absence of any apologies or available explanation, any member recorded as not attending three consecutive meetings will be deemed to have resigned.

2.5 A member of the VPPG will chair any additional working groups set up to address specific issues within the Practice.

2.6 Decisions shall be reached normally by consensus among those present. However, if a vote is required, decisions shall be made by simple majority of those VPPG members present and voting. In the event of a tied outcome, the Chair may exercise a casting vote in addition to his/her deliberative vote. Consideration of the views of members of the wider patient population will be taken into account.

2.7 The Secretary shall produce minutes of meetings to be considered and approved at the following meeting of the VPPG and subsequently be made available to all via the website.

2.8 A representative Partner GP and a member of the Practice management team are normally invited to be in attendance at meetings. In addition the VPPG will extend an open invitation to Practice staff to attend its meetings and may invite relevant professionals or patients to specific meetings. All such persons must respect the confidentiality of the VPPG.

2.9 The VPPG meetings are not a forum for individual complaints or personal issues, nor does the VPPG speak on behalf of the Practice or represent it.

2.10 The VPPG will hold and maintain a budget and bank account, with three members as signatories. Its assets will be reported regularly at VPPG meetings.

### **3. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

3.1 The Chair of the VPPG will convene an AGM before the end of the selected month each year. The date, venue and time shall be published at least one month prior to the meeting.

3.2 Specific "officer" posts of the VPPG become vacant on an annual basis with the option of self/other nomination for the positions and a process of voting by other members of the VPPG. This is formalised through the AGM.

3.3 Any member of the VPPG who wishes to nominate him/herself for an "officer" position, on the VPPG itself or on a working group, such as Chair or Secretary or any other official role, should advise the incumbent Chair of their proposed intentions at least two weeks prior to any AGM.

3.4 Officers of the VPPG and members of any Working Group will notify the Chair at least one month prior to the date of a convened AGM if they intend to step down from their position. Membership and the appointment of specific roles will be agreed at the AGM by a show of hands of those present.

#### **4. Commitments**

##### **4.1 For *patients* the VPPG will:**

- a) Raise awareness of the range of services available at the Practice and help patients to access/use such services more effectively.
- b) Obtain patient views and feedback about the services delivered by the Practice, advising on the patient experience, with the aim of optimising the ambience and efficiency of the Practice environment. Design and analyse a regular feedback questionnaire.
- c) Maintain a VPPG area in the waiting room. This will include up-to-date information on current activities, and opportunities for patients to comment. It will include a display disseminating information on the role, function and work of the VPPG and listing members' names.
- d) With the assistance of the Supporters, regularly meet and greet and engage with patients in the waiting area. In particular, provide physical assistance as requested by the Practice for tasks such as 'marshalling' patient queues on immunisation programmes.
- e) Act as a forum for ideas on health promotion and self-care, and support activities within the Practice to promote healthy lifestyle choices.
- f) Communicate Practice news and Healthcare information which may promote or assist with health or social care, including compiling and producing a quarterly Newsletter, subject to available material and any timing constraints.
- g) Fully utilise all modalities of communication to hit the maximum audience with the maximum age range in the most economical way. Contribute ideas to the clinic staff on accurate, up-to-date, relevant rolling content for the waiting room electronic TV displays.
- h) Raise funds to assist in the purchase of additional equipment and services for the patients' benefit.

##### **4.2 For *The Practice* the VPPG will:**

- a) Work collaboratively and positively with the Practice to improve services and facilities for patients.
- b) Act as a sounding board for Practice staff on issues affecting patients.
- c) Explore overarching ideas and issues identified in patient surveys.
- d) Communicate patient experience, interests, concerns and feedback on current procedures and proposed new developments.

- e) Review with Practice staff and relevant members of the VPPG any patient feedback received about the services delivered, with a view to agreeing what improvements (if any) are to be made to those services.
- f) Hold meetings two monthly, or as otherwise agreed.
- g) Facilitate external links with individuals, voluntary groups and other healthcare services within the community, to the mutual benefit of all.
- h) Advise on Practice decision-making, where there is a relevant patient perspective, and consult on service development and provision where appropriate, expressing patient opinions to the Practice. The final decisions on service delivery rest with the Practice.
- i) Act as a representative group to support the Practice and influence local provision of health and social care.

## **5. Confidentiality and Code of Conduct**

5.1 VPPG members are to maintain patient confidentiality at all times. All members are to sign and return a copy of the Practice's Confidentiality Agreement (issued separately) before undertaking any such activity.

5.2 VPPG members are to abide by the Code of Conduct (issued separately).

## **6. Commitment**

6.1 The Practice management team and clinicians as required will be available to support all key meetings whenever possible.

6.2 The Practice management team will also commit to taking forward service opportunities issues and recommendations from the VPPG, supplying responses of action taken as a result and will be party to decisions taken by the VPPG.

6.3 The Practice management team will keep the VPPG informed of service developments, and these will be brought for discussion at VPPG meetings, which will include exploring how the wider practice population can get involved in these discussions.

## **7. Amendments**

The Terms of Reference and Modus Operandi will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose. They may be modified at any meeting by majority decision of the VPPG and representatives of the Practice if modifications are submitted as an agenda item in advance of the meeting.

## **8. Dissolution**

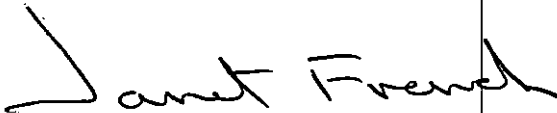
The VPPG may be dissolved by self-determination if this was felt to be necessary by the group and by a majority vote at a special meeting or AGM. It

may also be dissolved on closure of the Practice or merger of further practices. In such an event, any resources belonging to the VPPG will be used to benefit patients. The Practice management team will do its best to notify all patients of the Practice of the intent to dissolve the group and provide a clear reason for the decision. The VPPG may be dissolved (or required to evolve) if technological advancements offer the Practice legitimate opportunities to strengthen the proposition.

**4. Signed agreement**



**Mark Gaffney**  
Chair  
Victoria Medical Centre



**Janet French**  
Chair  
Victoria Patient Participation Group

Date: 2/12/20