



E-Bulletin from

National Association for Patient Participation

Issue Number 143 September 2019

1. CCG scores for patient engagement

CCGs are obliged to report on their performance against a patient and community engagement indicator as part of the improvement and assessment framework (IAF). The scores for engagement have now been reviewed by NHS England and Improvement, which has written to CCG accountable officers with the results. A full list is available [here](#)

2. Putting patients first: Please write to me: Outpatient clinic letters to patients

Following hospital outpatient appointments, consultants write to patients' GPs to inform them of the investigations, procedures, results, medication, plans for surgery where necessary etc. It has been common practice for these letters to be copied to patients. Some of these letters can be couched in language which is not patient-friendly.

The Academy of Royal Colleges, the coordinating body for the UK and Ireland's 24 Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties, which represent consultants, has issued [new guidance about best practice in communicating with patients](#). These welcome recommendations acknowledge the need to communicate directly and separately with patients, using less technical language. The guidance is based on comments for patients and provides examples of letters to GPs and to their patients.

3. More harm than good

This is the title of a report from Age UK, subtitled "Why more isn't always better with older people's medicine". It calls for a more considered approach to prescribing medicines for the older population. The [report](#) also provides evidence showing that prescribing more drugs isn't always the best option.

4. How much do you know about the role of the clinical pharmacist?

Clinical pharmacists have been working in general practice for years, but hundreds more are joining practice teams as part of a big NHS England national programme, and now with funding available under the primary care network contract, the numbers are growing. In addition to reviewing medicines, many now see patients, specialise in particular conditions, such as diabetes, and can ease GP workload by taking over time-consuming discharge reviews. More information [here](#)

5. Social Prescribing

Social prescribing link-workers were among the first of the funded additional roles practices have been encouraged to employ under the network contract, so clearly policymakers think they could make a difference. [Social prescribing: what's in it for practices and their patients?](#)

6. Active Practice Charter

The Royal College of GPs and Sport England have teamed up to launch the "active practice charter" to encourage GP practices to increase activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in their patients and staff. The [initiative](#) aims to raise awareness of simple changes that can be made to improve physical and mental wellbeing, such as signposting to local exercise classes or partnering with a nearby activity provider.

7. New guidance emphasises the importance of building strength and balance

Falls are the main reason older people are taken to A&E, and could be avoided through daily activities such as brisk walking, carrying heavy shopping, climbing stairs, swimming and gardening. This **guidance issued by the UK chief medical officers emphasises the importance of building strength and balance for adults, as well as focusing on cardiovascular exercise.** [More....](#)

There is also strong evidence that physical activity protects against a range of chronic conditions. Meeting these guidelines can reduce the risk of:

- type 2 diabetes by 40%
- coronary heart disease by 35%
- depression by 30%

9. Smoking rates falling faster than ever

The latest data from a [national smoking study](#) shows that adult smoking rates fell 2.2% from January to July 2019 - equivalent to 200 fewer smokers every hour.

10. Doctors' vision for change in the NHS

The British Medical Association has published [a report](#) on the its members believe are needed to ensure patient care is safe, to make the NHS a great place to work and to transform services for the better

11. What is commissioning and how is it changing?

Commissioning is the process by which health and care services are planned, purchased and monitored. The King's Fund has updated [an article](#) that explains the changing role of commissioning, which first appeared in 2017.

12. Does your PPG have its member pages' login? They contain **key resources available only to affiliated PPGs. If not, visit the website, click on Members and use screen instructions.** We recommend each PPG to have a generic group email address as the username for the login.

10. Reminder: *Please email this bulletin to fellow members promptly. All previous bulletins can be found at <http://www.napp.org.uk/ebulletins.html>*

Edith Todd.

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