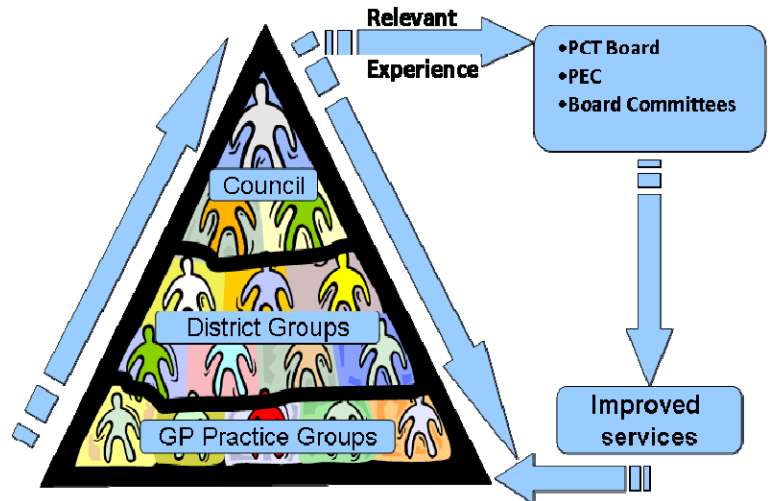


EAST STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT PATIENT ENGAGEMENT GROUP NEWSLETTER Issue 5
Apr—June

East Staffordshire District Patient Engagement Group (ESPEG) is one of 5 District Groups that make up a vital part of the patient engagement structure in South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust.

District Groups are made up of representatives from Practice based Patient Participation Groups and feed into the PCT Patients Council, which in turn feeds into the PCT Board and other committees.

Their purpose is to give patients an opportunity to have a say in the planning and development of health services commissioned by the PCT.



This is achieved via a two-way flow of information between practice based patient participation groups, district groups and the Patients' Council.

How patient engagement works in East Staffordshire

In East Staffordshire there are 19 GP Practices and 17 of them either have a Patient Participation Group (PPG) or are working towards setting one up. Of those 17 GP Practices 10 have representatives on the ESPEG and more are expected as PPGs develop.

The role of representatives is to:

- Discuss plans and projects developing in GP Commissioning.

- Feedback to individual PPGs on issues discussed to seek wider engagement, supported by this newsletter.
- Ensure that issues are fed back to the DPEG.
- Ensure that any issues raised at a PPG which may affect the wider area of East Staffs or the PCT area as a whole are channelled back to the DPEG.

How to feedback

You can feedback your views in the following ways:

- ◆ To your representative on the District Group
- ◆ To Vanessa Day at the PCT:
by telephone: 01889 571805
by email:

Vanessa.Day@southstaffspct.nhs.uk
by post to:

South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust,
Anglesey House, Towers Business Park,
Wheelhouse Road, Rugeley WS15 1UL

Matters for discussion in PPGs

At the East Staffs District Group meeting on the 14.4.11 discussion took place on the following:

Tissue Viability - A nurse is now in post and has commenced her training with local nurses.

Copying letters to patients - What do patients think about getting a copy of any letters between their GP and consultant? The general feeling is that patients should be offered a copy of all letters unless they decided to opt out. What is your preference?

Outpatient appointments

Commissioners are working with Burton Hospital staff to identify where there could be potential cost savings to reduce the number of unnecessary follow-up appointments in outpatient clinics.

GP based in Queens Hospital A & E Department

Dr Chris Gunstone commenced his role as a diagnostic GP in A & E on the 4th April 2011. For the first 2 months he will be 'shadowing' the triage process and building on his knowledge of current activity. The purpose of basing a GP in A & E is to triage those patients who could be seen elsewhere in the health system, i.e. by visiting their GP, by calling NHS Direct, by visiting their pharmacist for advice, etc. thereby freeing up A & E time to deal with more serious cases.

Tele-Health

Tele-health units are used remotely to monitor patients conditions in their own homes. The units are being used on patients who are under the care of community matrons/specialist nurses who are at high risk of admission to hospital. For example, patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) or Heart Failure can be managed for a period of 12 weeks with taking blood pressure and oxygen levels, which are forwarded remotely to a clinician for analysis. There are 2 COPD patients using these units and both patients and matrons are very happy with them. A further 14 COPD patients and 4 heart failure patients are to be offered the use of the units, which are closely monitored by the community matrons/specialist nurses.

Simple Tele-Health

Simple Tele-Health is using mobile phone technology to prompt patients to take their medication or monitor their condition, i.e. for diabetics to take their readings and submit them via mobile phone. If the readings are within the normal range a text is sent to the patient saying no further action is required. If they are not within range they receive a text saying they need to follow the advice of their specialist nurse.

Dermatology

Local GPs are working on setting up a community based dermatology service. An evaluation panel has been set up for mid-May to look at the formal tenders now awaited. Members were aware that there were problems with getting an appointment with a dermatologist at Queens Hospital and welcomed this development.

Prostate Cancer

Local GPs are in the process of setting up a prostate cancer monitoring service in GP Practices. This will improve patient care and reduce the number of Urology follow-ups at Queens Hospital.

Matters for discussion in PPGs

All health services need to hear the voices of their users if they are to improve what they do. Nobody knows better than patients and their carers and relatives about what it feels like to use the service and often where and how it could be better. But this real expertise



is often ignored – and worse, people may not even give feedback about their experiences of care, for fear of being labelled “troublesome” or because they have already given up hope of being heard. A website has been set up to solve these problems. Patient Opinion is free to use and lets patients talk about the health care they have received. It was set up to enable patients to use the power of the web to share their stories with the NHS. Once stories are posted on the site they are reviewed by Patient Opinion’s editors and then forwarded (anonymously) to the NHS Trust it applies to for a response within 7 days. If you have something to say about a recent experiences of health care, go to www.patientopinion.org.uk and share your story online – you’ll be helping to improve the NHS for everyone.



Hester Parsons, Development Worker for the Local Involvement Network (LINKs) outlined the role of LINKs and how people can be part of it.

- LINKs is made up of individuals and groups who work together to improve health and social care to ensure that the needs and preferences of local people are central to the planning and delivery of health and social care services. LINKs obtain the views of people about their experiences of local health services and share these ideas with health care professionals in order to make improvements. LINKs has a right to ‘enter and view’ services to see how they are being provided; looking at for example: if a place is clean, if patients are being treated with dignity and respect, if patients are safe, etc.
- The interim Director of LINKs is Jackie Owen, supported by Sue Baknak and their HQ is in Stafford. The co-ordinating body of LINKs is made up of 11 volunteers. An independent agency recruited the volunteers following an interview process. Members come from a range of backgrounds; some come from health, some come from private business, one member is a retired university lecturer.
- Once the Health Bill is approved LINKs will become local Health-Watch, supported by National Health-Watch. National Health-Watch will sit with the Care Quality Commission, the organisation which monitors all health and social care organisations. Local Health-Watch will be a countywide organisation but not including Stoke on Trent.
- If LINKs has a concern about an issue which is not resolved to their satisfaction, it is able to report to the County Overview and Scrutiny Committee who can request a report from that service provider asking them to explain why the service is not working in the way it should be.
- Anyone can be a member of the LINKs. Members can commit to as much or to as little as they want. Members can attend meetings, complete surveys/questionnaires on line; be trained to do ‘Enter and View’ visits, help with focus groups, take part in mystery shopping trips, etc.

Matters for discussion in PPGs**LINKs continued**

- LINKs current working programme is: substance misuse, mental health, learning disabilities services; Stroke services; patient transport, and undertaking an enter and view visit with West Midlands Ambulance Service.
- Training for members consists of: listening skills, assertiveness skills, telephone interviewing, confidentiality, etc.
- If you or your Patient Group would like to be a member of the LINK, contact Jackie or Sue on 01785 887990, email: enquiries@staffordshirelink.staffs.com or write to LINKs, Unit 30, Staffordshire University Business Village, Dyson Way, Staffordshire Technology Park, Stafford, ST18 0TW.



**National Association for Patient Participation
32nd Annual Conference and AGM**

Patients Matter

*Developing a stronger voice for patients in
raising the quality of healthcare*

Saturday 11th June 2011

The Grange Hotel

Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1DF

Booking form on N.A.P.P. website:

Feedback from the Patients Council**Patient Engagement Conference**

The PCT is holding a Patient Engagement Conference on the 7th July 2011 between 5.30–8.30pm at a venue to be confirmed. The purpose of the conference is to bring together patients and GPs to share what is working well, what could be improved and put together thoughts and ideas on how we can work together in the future. More details out soon.

Monitoring the quality of care in care homes

The PCT is undertaking a piece of work to ensure that care delivered in nursing homes is to a high standard. A Nursing Home Quality Assurance Group has been set up to monitor the nursing home contract, including monitoring patient and carer experience. If you would like to be involved in the group from a patient/carers perspective contact Karen McGowan on 01889 571818 for more details.



13th - 19th June 2011.

Carers Week is a national event which aims to highlight the needs of carers and offer them some much needed support. Drop-ins are being held in Burton, Uttoxeter, Stafford, Rugeley, Cannock, Burntwood, Codsall and Stone. For more information contact Carers Association South Staffordshire on 01785 606676 or email: enquiries@carersinformation.org.uk.