

Minutes for Withnell Health Centre Patient Participation Group

Thursday 22nd May 2025

Patient Participants:

Jeff Cottam (Chair)	Hazel Hebson
Alan Martin (Vice-Chair)	Janet Horton
Bernard Melling (Minutes)	Margaret France
Amy Miller	Gillian Ainsworth
Janice Scanlon	Ron Ainsworth
Ann Christopher	Mike Matulewicz

Attendees from Withnell Health Centre:

Dr Ann Robinson
Nicola Phillipson

1. Apologies

Received from: Sonia Sandland, Lynne Lynch, Audrey Perry, Gill Tasker, Janet Melling

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (13th March 2025)

The group accepted the minutes, circulated by email, from the meeting on 13 March 2025 as a true record.

3. Matters Arising/Action Table

Jeff referred to the action table and the group reported on actions carried out since the last meeting.

All matters had been actioned apart from the following which will be carried forward.

- a) Speak to PCN Managers re Friend & Family figures – Nicola
- b) Drop off box/letter box for Pathology samples – Nicola

4. Feedback from Patients/Surveys

A table re feedback from the patient surveys in February, March and April was circulated by Nicola. There were over 300 responses each month and the large majority were **very positive** with only 16 out of over 900 responses in the poor or very poor categories. Discussion took place around the issues raised with a unanimous acceptance that this represented excellent feedback. Where appropriate issues raised were dealt with.

5. Surgery News & Practice Update

Nicola provided the following update:

- With regard to receptionist vacancies, after interviews, 2 appointments were made. Unfortunately 1 candidate only lasted one week. A new offer has been made for this vacancy.
- Dr Ressel has now returned to work and Dr Khan is now working Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.
- Elizabeth, Practice Nurse, has handed in her notice and there is a closing date for the vacancy advertised on NHS Jobs.
- New uniforms for the Reception and Administrative Staff have been provided.
- Lorraine (Admin Team) has taken some responsibility for the new garden area.
- Dr Robinson attended a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 20th May in recognition of her work in supporting the local community, fighting to save the Withnell Health Centre.
- Dr Moitra has now returned from her work in Gaza and the meeting recorded their appreciation of her humanitarian efforts.
- Dr Robinson reported on the Prescribing Feedback which was very good in all areas except for over prescribing of over the counter drugs eg paracetamol. Some discussion took place regarding this issue. It was felt that the actions taken by the Medical Team were highly appropriate for the local population since it is difficult for an older and disabled population to access cheaper alternatives in the catchment area. It was agreed that the present practice should continue.

6. Feedback & Discussion Following Booking-in Screen Support

Members of the PPG have been providing support to patients in the use of the self check-in screen on a rota basis on Tuesday and Thursday mornings when there is a higher turnover of patients because of the Blood Clinics.

In general the new updated machine works well when the correct information is inputted. The 1st tap can be relatively slow to respond which many patients find frustrating, causing them to repeat press which then causes further delay. Some people refuse to use the machine despite encouragement and prefer to go directly to reception, although this is a very small minority.

It was agreed providing this support has been a useful exercise. As a result of the PPG volunteer input some proposed modifications were identified and changes implemented such as clearer on screen messaging including providing direction to the correct waiting area. The benefits of freeing up reception staff to concentrate on their very many other responsibilities was recognised.

Dr Robinson suggested the rota should be paused over the summer months and resumed again in October. The positives of using the machine will be highlighted in the next newsletter. **Action Amy.**

7. Suggestion for Waiting Areas

Mike described this as a 'dour, desolate' area. A discussion took place as to whether this could be made more welcoming. The decision focused on there being a separate 'Community Wellness Room'. A number of suggestions were made including Art Displays by local school children, a Local History Display and perhaps some talks on relevant topics. Two suggestions were, 'The role of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner' and, 'What happens to your samples when they leave the surgery?' This will need further work to develop the room.

8. Garden Space Development

Two of the planters have now been filled and the space is being used by staff. It also has potential therapeutic value to patients which has already been realised. Security lighting will be fitted and perhaps there is a need for a water butt. It was suggested that a rota to weed the garden area and to keep the general area tidy might be helpful. Jeff agreed to produce a rota of volunteers from amongst the group to cover the summer months. **Action JC**

There was also a suggestion for an outside coffee morning to promote the garden opening, on a Saturday. Date to be fixed. Members of the PPG could be present to discuss issues and promote the PPG etc. Jeff & Alan agreed to arrange this. With regard to publicity the Facebook Page has approximately 930 followers and could be used as a source to promote the new garden area. **Action JC & AM**

9. Patient Feedback Received via Email & Suggestion Box

Jeff reported that no feedback from patients had been received via the suggestion box or by the email address which was set up specifically for this purpose. He felt this was disappointing since he believed it was key to developing changes through patient involvement. Jeff felt that the box needed to be much bigger and made more visible since in its current location it is being overlooked. It was noted that the newsletter will be raising this issue in the next edition to try and encourage patients to get in touch. The outside box is checked twice daily by staff. There was a discussion re ordering prescriptions and using the NHS App. Perhaps this could be a topic for a 'talk'.

10. Citizens Health Reference Group Update

Mike reported that this was a sounding board to engage the general public in NHS planning and services. Future initiatives include 'Hospitals at Home' and Burnley was held up as good practice in this regard. There are no regular meetings but Mike will feedback any relevant issues as and when they arise. NHS staffing levels are being reduced and in the light of

Government policy the ICB has an uncertain future, with various committees being disbanded.
Action MM

11. PCN Participation Group Network

Jeff reported that he had been trying to establish a forum of PPG Chairs from across our PCN (Whittle Surgery, GAB Healthcare/Station Surgery, Dr Jacobs, Chorley Health Centre, and Dr Dawoud's practice) to facilitate the sharing of ideas and to discuss what each PPG group is currently working on in their own areas. He had discussed this suggestion with Jeremy Scholey from the ICB who put him in touch with the PCN Business Manager, Claire Hounslea. She provided a list of Practice Managers and email addresses for each practice in our PCN group. Jeff commented that he had made contact with them via email but has only received one reply which was from Dr Dawoud's Practice Manager who explained that they only had a virtual PPG which worked well for them. It was suggested that perhaps ours is the most pro active group. Jeff asked if Nicola could raise this with her PCN colleagues. Dr Robinson is attending a PCN away day on the 10th June and she agreed to raise this issue. **Action NP & AR.**

12. Any other business

Jeff requested that future agenda items members wished to be considered for inclusion at the next meeting be emailed to him well in advance of the meeting.

Audrey Perry had requested that the weekend opening hours of the surgery be reported more widely as she felt it was not widely known. It was stated that the surgery opens every 5th week on a Saturday with a rota across the PCN. Our surgery is also open every Wednesday evening from 1830 to 2000. This information will be included in the next newsletter.

The feedback from the patient survey statistics will be included in the next newsletter, which will be circulated to the PPG in draft form. Thanks were extended to Amy for her work on this.

Margaret made a number of suggestions as to the use of a Wellness Room, including information from Age UK, Dementia Awareness, NCT, Young Carers etc. There is a useful umbrella group 'Chorley Together' with details of relevant groups and contacts etc. It would be possible to draw up a calendar of events although further work is needed on this.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be 6pm on Wednesday 3rd September 2025.

The meeting concluded at 1930.

Action Sheet Matrix
Withnell Health Centre Patient Participation Group
22 May 2025

Agenda Item No.	ACTION	BY	DATE
Actions carried over from previous meeting (13 March 2025)			
4	Speak to PCN Managers to ask for Friends and Family figures to compare number and type of responses	Nicola	Next Meeting
7	Drop off box/letter box for pathology samples instead of waiting at desk. Enquire with NHS Properties	Nicola	Next Meeting
Actions from current meeting			
6	Inclusion of Booking-in Screen support feedback & benefits in next newsletter.	Amy	Next Issue
8	Produce rota for maintaining garden area	Jeff	By end May
5	Arrange an outdoor coffee morning to promote the garden area to the local community.	Jeff & Alan	By end May
10	Mike to feed back relevant information from the Citizens Health Reference Group as and when available.	Mike	
11	Nicola to raise issue of PPG Chair forum with PCN Practice Managers	Nicola	Next Meeting
11	Dr Robinson to raise issue of PPG Chair forum at PCN away day on the 10 th June.	Dr Robinson	June