

## **Berkshire West CCG Governing Body Meeting: 11 December 2018**

At the recent Berkshire West Engagement event on December 4th we heard from Dorset ICS that they regarded well-functioning Patient Participation Groups as a foundation of their wider patient and public engagement. To that end for a population of around 750,000 they employ 3 PPG coordinators whose role is to encourage and assist PPGs. In my locality of South Reading there are only 3 out of 16 practices who show PPG minutes on their web sites, as far as I know. Many practices appear to have no interactive group, one PPG recently met for the first time in about 3 years. I have witnessed the failure of protracted efforts by a group of patients to start a PPG in one of our surgeries. I believe that it is too much to ask of overburdened practice managers that they be skilled in managing and encouraging a PPG. I believe that a skilled facilitator could assist in the development of a strong dialogue between patients and practice.

Future healthcare can be expected to have a large element of prevention and amelioration. Changes in behaviour will be important, whether in exercise, accessing some care functions online or managing a condition. Strong PPGs can play a major role in communicating desirable behaviours and influencing health outcomes. It is, of course, the decision of each practice as to how it creates or develops a PPG but as I believe the maintenance of a PPG is a standard contractual commitment.

**Q1** Could the CCG consider at least a pilot for facilitation in creating and developing PPGs? While I understand that money is tight, we are not talking about full-time employees and I would urge the CCG and practices to be imaginative and flexible. It is possible that we already have the necessary skills close to hand.

**A1** It is up to the individual practices and their PPG how they organise/facilitate the PPG meetings. A number of PPGs organise the minute taking and others choose to have practice support to do this usually through practice managers. The CCG doesn't currently receive any allocation to support this function and has just committed to a 12 month contract for a joint ICS/healthwatch engagement post who, depending on capacity, maybe able to support on an ad hoc basis where there is the absence of a strong PPG chair.