

## **Patient Participation Group (PPG) network meeting notes**

**Monday 22nd February, 6:30pm**

We received 49 registrations for this event on Eventbrite and 35 people attended.

The 49 event registrations came from patients registered at 16 Haringey Practices. 38 registrations for the event were from Haringey patients and 30 of those were PPG members. The remaining 11 registrations were mostly Haringey practice staff, NCL CCG staff and Healthwatch Haringey.

### **Introduction**

Raks Patel welcomed everyone to the first ever Haringey PPG network meeting, bringing together PPG members, PPG Chairs, and practice staff from GP practices across Haringey. This was something we had wanted to do for a while.

The purpose of the Haringey PPG network meeting was to bring people together, from GP practices across Haringey, to share information, talk about good practice and what has been achieved, and to discuss common concerns and challenges. The idea was GP practices could learn from one another, and work together to overcome common challenges, such as Covid, lockdown and the necessity of moving primarily to telephone consultations. These Haringey PPG network meetings would be held quarterly.

This network meeting was part of our wider PPG development project, where we were working to increase the numbers of PPG members, and to diversify the membership of PPGs, so a range of people, from different walks of life, and with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, could get involved in improving GP services.

Tanya showed attendees the Healthwatch Haringey website which now has a separate PPG section giving a lot of information and resources on what PPGs were, how to join, etc. She also highlighted she would be running training sessions to support new and existing PPG members so they were more confident in their role. Leaflets and posters had also

been produced, and hard copies would be distributed, encouraging people to get involved and join their local PPG.

For this meeting, there were two speakers and two presentations - one on the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccine and one on the e-consult system. Raks Patel encouraged participants to drop any questions into the chat function whilst the speakers were talking, as that way we could ensure any burning questions, or questions which a lot of people wanted to ask, were answered in the discussion session after each presentation. When she called on people to ask their questions, Raks Patel also encouraged people to be as short and succinct as possible, so we could ensure more questions could be asked and more people could contribute.

### **1. Covid-19 vaccine rollout with Dr Peter Christian, Haringey GP and Haringey Clinical Lead at North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (NCL CCG) - including Q and A**

Dr Peter Christian spoke about the Covid-19 vaccine rollout in Haringey and progress to date. The vaccine rollout was now well under way, with people being called for their vaccine, primarily on the basis of their age. People who were clinically vulnerable, including those who had been shielding, would also be called early for their vaccine. He emphasised the importance of having the vaccine when you are called, to keep yourself and your household and your wider family safe.

Dr Christian also emphasised the need to carry on being safe, even after the vaccination. So to keep on maintaining social distance, wearing a mask, washing your hands etc It was important to keep on with all of these safety measures even after you had been vaccinated.

Dr Christian stressed the importance of encouraging everyone to have the vaccine - to keep themselves safe, to keep their families safe, and to support and protect the NHS. He talked about some people and some communities being more vaccine hesitant, contrasting his own experience in the West of the borough where his patients were waiting for the practice to call them to be vaccinated, to the experience of his colleagues in the East of the borough, who had to do a lot more work to convince people to have the vaccine, as they had a lot more concerns and anxieties about the vaccine. There were concerns locally that people within BAME communities were more hesitant about the Covid-19 vaccine and were more reluctant to have the vaccine.

Dr Christian stressed the need to use trusted and reliable sources of information about the vaccine e.g. NHS websites, rather than relying on more informal channels like WhatsApp, Facebook, and social media, where there was a chance of fake news and inaccurate and incorrect information.

The target was for all adults to be offered a vaccine by the end of July, and the take-up of the vaccine across the borough was being measured and monitored, as was the number of people being vaccinated.

There were a number of events coming up where people could attend and ask any questions they had about the vaccine - the purpose of the events was to give out accurate information and answer people's worries and concerns. Tanya shared the information about these events in the chat.

In addition to these vaccine Q&A events, a lot of information about Covid-19 and the vaccine was currently being translated into a range of popular community languages, and these would be distributed through community networks as soon as they were available. Having this information in community languages was very important to those whose first language was not English.

A question was asked about why there had been a delay to the second jab - originally people were told the second dose would be at 21 days, and now that had been extended to 12 weeks. Dr Christian explained this decision to enable as many people to have the first dose of the vaccine as possible. The majority of the protection would be derived from having the first dose, but Dr Christian also stressed the importance of having your second dose when called.

A question was asked about the new variants that were now emerging and whether the vaccine would work against them too. Dr Christian explained research on this was ongoing, and the vaccines were being improved all the time. It was likely that the Covid-19 vaccine would be something you would have to take annually, as you do with the flu vaccine, as the vaccine could be developed and improved every year to protect against emerging new variants.

A question was asked about the new vaccine being developed by Johnson and Johnson which was just one shot. Dr Christian said research was ongoing, but he encouraged people to have the vaccine

now rather than wait for newer vaccines to come on stream. If you had the vaccine now, you would be significantly increasing your chances of being protected from Covid-19, and not getting seriously ill or dying from Covid-19.

A question was asked about the different vaccines and what would happen if someone was offered a different vaccine for their second jab? Dr Christian reassured people that this would not happen, and whatever vaccine you had for your first jab is what you would get for your second.

## **2. How is E-Consult working for you? with Esther Meyerson, PPG Chair Staunton Group Practice - including group discussion**

Esther explained how E-Consult was introduced at the Staunton Group Practice and she showed us some of the functions of the E-Consult form. She was fairly satisfied with how her surgery had introduced E-Consult, receiving prompt responses from GPs, but she believed that the form could be simplified. The Staunton Group PPG is still talking to the practice about feeding back suggestions to E-Consult, and Esther thought it would be useful for other PPGs to co-ordinate a Haringey patient response to E-Consult.

There followed a lively discussion with verbal contributions and messages in the chat. Patients had varying experiences of E-Consult. Hugh, a PPG member on Barnet said that his PPG had ensured that E-Consult was tested by PPG members first, before being rolled out to the patient population.

Patients expressed concern that GPs were pushing people to go online. People were worried that signs and symptoms could be missed with an online or telephone appointment.

“If you want to book an online appointment, you have to sign up, get a login and all that sort of stuff. It's too long-winded...”

“What about people with the onset of dementia?”

“Phone numbers need to be correct too. I needed to book at blood test. I was given a sheet of paper with two numbers. Both were wrong. When I got in touch with the GP about this... response was ‘go online...’”

Mike Wilson, Director of Healthwatch Haringey commented “Post Covid the GPs will continue to triage all calls / communications. NHS England has made it clear that face-to-face appointments must be available at all GP Surgeries.”

Raks Patel assured attendees that Healthwatch supported retaining face-to-face appointments.

An attendee shared the recent report [The Doctor Will Zoom You Now](#), a research study designed to understand the patient experience of remote and virtual consultations.

### **3. Any other business**

#### **Involvement of AT Medics, Centene, Operose and Octopus in GP contracts**

Two PPG members expressed concern about the involvement of private companies, particularly the US corporation Centene in the delivery of GP services in Haringey and other Boroughs covered by NCL CCG, and the way that the Centene contract had been awarded. They expressed support for more information to be made available to PPGs and patients through the PPG Network.

#### **Haringey Estate Consultation**

Faye Oliver from Whittington Health shared proposals about the development of an East Haringey adults’ community health service hub at Lordship Lane Health Centre and the development of a specialist children and young people’s services hub at Tynemouth Road Health Centre. The [consultation on these proposals](#) ends on 17<sup>th</sup> March.

#### **Training for PPG Members**

Tanya from Healthwatch Haringey encouraged people to sign up for the training opportunities for PPG members and those who would like to get involved in a PPG, particularly these sessions:

Attending a Zoom Meeting 1, Monday 15th March 2021 at 6.30pm

Attending a Zoom Meeting 2, Thursday 8th April 2021 at 2pm

<https://www.healthwatchharingey.org.uk/patient-participation-group-ppg-training>

## Future meetings

Raks Patel said that everyone who had booked to attend this meeting would be invited to the next meeting, which was likely to be in May.

Raks and Tanya were very keen to hear what topics people would like to discuss at future meetings, that people would find of benefit, so they encouraged people to get in touch with Tanya to let her know topics for future meetings. And to also get in touch if they had good practice to share more widely - things that had worked well, improvements that had been made etc

Finally, this was the first meeting and so it had been run as one big meeting, with two speakers - very much a presentation and then Q&A format. For the next meeting, to enable and encourage more people to participate, and to also meet each other and learn from each other, there may be a more workshop style format, with people meeting in small groups in breakout rooms.

Finally, to close, Raks Patel thanked everyone for attending the meeting, said we would be in touch with notes of the meeting and the date of the next meeting, and encouraged people to get in touch with topics for future meetings.