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Welcome!

We have some exciting news for you in this edition of your PPG newsletter - your very own PPG page on the CCG's website. You can read more about this in the article below.

We recently held a PPG event and I would like to thank those members who attended – it was a successful morning and I hope you all found the event informative and engaging. I so enjoy these meetings as it provides me with a wonderful opportunity to meet you face to face and hear about your work – your commitment and support within your practice goes a long way and I know it is appreciated immensely by practice staff.



Christine Reid, OBE
Lay member, patient and public involvement

In this edition, we are promoting some of the national campaigns that are currently running to help prevent the spread of the germs – there are still high numbers of instances of flu and norovirus. You can also read the report from the latest PPG event which has some fantastic feedback and ideas from attendees on helping identify and support carers in practices.

Finally, we want this to be your newsletter so would be delighted if any of you would like to put fingers to keyboard and become a guest writer. It would be a great opportunity for you to share information on what happens in your practice.

Best wishes, Christine

New PPG page on our website!



We appreciate that some PPG members are unable to attend our events in person, but are keen to know more about what is happening at other PPGs in Wiltshire and also what support is available to help guide them to running a successful PPG.

We want to help make this happen and so we have launched a dedicated [PPG page](#) on our CCG website. We want this to be your page, and have the information on it that will help support you in your PPG role.

Please share your views, ideas and suggestions on what you would like to see on this page, this could include templates, toolkits or case studies.

Send your feedback to Tracy Torr and let's make this page the go to source for PPG members when you want information and updates.

Patient Participation Group event review

We were really pleased to have over 30 members representing 13 different practices across Wiltshire attend the PPG event held on the morning of Tuesday 16 January 2018. The event timing has changed, to reflect feedback from the last event and the new timings seem to work better for most members.

Christine Reid, Lay Member for patient and public involvement at Wiltshire CCG welcomed members to the event at the Corn Exchange in Devizes. Chris was followed by Sarah MacLennan, Associate Director, Communications and Engagement for Wiltshire CCG who gave an update on local health services in Wiltshire.



Sarah spoke about the winter pressures that we are currently seeing across the county and told members about a new initiative to help ease these pressures - a Wiltshire Integrated Control Centre, based at Chippenham Community Hospital.

Wiltshire CCG, working with Medvivo and Wiltshire Health and Care, operates the centre along with support from Wiltshire Council. They work together looking at all available capacity to support patient discharges from the Acute Hospitals, Community Hospitals and Intermediate Care beds.

Winter pressures are also affecting hospitals, and to help understand the operational pressures they face, each acute has an internal Operational Pressures Escalation Levels (OPEL) system. OPEL has four different levels.

OPEL 1	meeting anticipated demand within available resources
OPEL 2	starting to show signs of pressures
OPEL 3	experiencing major pressures
OPEL 4	pressure continue to escalate

The Prescription Ordering Direct (POD) service was discussed and this service offers patients the option of ordering their repeat prescription from the comfort of their own home, and overall the scheme has been running well.

During December 2017 it was agreed with those practices offering the POD service, patients could be prescribed two months' worth of their medication in order to cover them over the festive period. This meant that calls with patients took slightly longer and callers to the POD had to wait longer than usual for their call to be answered resulting in a backlog, which was difficult to manage.

The service is running better now as more call handlers have been taken on. We will be presenting about the POD at our next event (date to be confirmed), in the meanwhile if you want to know more about the POD service have a look on our [website](#).



Sarah finished her presentation by sharing information about upcoming campaigns that we are promoting which include; ACT F.A.S.T., Catch it. Bin it. Kill it and Norvirus. Read more about our current campaigns further down the newsletter.



Emma Higgins, Quality Lead at Wiltshire CCG presented next and spoke to members about identify and supporting carers in your practice.

Emma highlighted that many people who provide essential caring support to a relative or friend don't recognise themselves as a carer. To them, caring is simply an extension of their role as husband, wife, child or sibling.

Carers provide a valuable service to the people they look after and society in general, but tend to neglect their own health as a result of their caring responsibilities and up to 40% of carers suffer from psychological distress or depression.

We are lucky in Wiltshire as many of our surgeries already recognise the value of carers through the Wiltshire Carers Accreditation scheme. We want to work with you to help practices identify those patients with caring responsibilities at an early stage, so that they are recognised as a carer.

Emma then asked what could PPGs do to help support practices in recognising and informing carers.

You all gave some fantastic feedback from your table discussions about how PPGs could identify and support carers in your practice and on carers in general.

Here are some of your comments:

- When supporting events for carers – the event should be holistic and include representation from other organisations, such as Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Carers Support Wiltshire was highly praised
- Most agreed the biggest challenge was how to reach all of the carers in a community.

It was agreed that 'are you looking after someone? Or 'if you look after people' were better terms to use than asking someone if they are a carer

- Coffee mornings are a great idea but not all carers can attend, due to their caring responsibilities.
- There are many different types of carers; children, caring for parents, caring for children, caring for partner – these groups are not always represented.
- Display more information in practices to support carers and use the TV screens in the waiting room to signpost.

3 practices in Chippenham trialled an event for young carers in a local café with help from Carers Support Wiltshire.

It was a big success – some of the young carers became friends.

The PPGs are planning to work with other practices to plan more events for young carers.

- Identifying carers was difficult – not everyone considers themselves a carer and wouldn't want that label.
- An MOT run by surgeries for carers was suggested – to solve issues around carers neglecting their own (physical and mental) health.

- Introducing a sitting service – to support carers so that they can attend appointments and not leave the person they care for alone.

Have a 'one stop shop' event with charities in attendance to advise carers of the support available to them.

Needs to be accessible so that carers could bring the person they support along.

The event ended with a group discussion to give you the opportunity to raise any concerns or ask questions.

One issue you raised was that many of the PPGs are not representative of their population, especially younger members. Some ideas that were suggested were contacting the local school and youth groups, such as Guides to recruit members.

It was flagged that many people are unable to attend PPG meetings held during working hours, due to responsibilities such as work, childcare etc. Alternative methods of engagement were suggested by members, such as online interaction through email, social media or private Facebook page.

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Become a guest writer

Do you have a PPG story you would like to share with other PPGs? We want to invite you to become a guest writer and put fingers to keyboard.



We'd love to hear about your involvement, events and the support you provide within your practice and encourage you to share this with other PPG members.

Perhaps you could write an article or a case study for the newsletter? It would provide a great opportunity for other PPG members to read about what happens in your surgery – sharing ideas, information and inspiration that they could use within their practice.

Become a guest writer today, email: tracy.torr@nhs.net for more information on what to do next.

Our current campaigns

When a stroke strikes, act F.A.S.T.

A stroke is a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention. So recognising the signs of stroke and calling 999 for an ambulance is crucial. The sooner somebody who is having a stroke gets urgent medical attention, the better their chances of a good recovery.

The F.A.S.T. acronym is a simple test to help you identify stroke symptoms:



Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.

People are being urged to wash their hands regularly and throw used tissues away in a bid to limit the spread of winter bugs, including norovirus and flu. Cold and flu germs can live on some surfaces for hours, meaning they can be easily transmitted.

The campaign is reminding people of the simple messages to stop bugs spreading. **Catch it. Bin it. Kill it**

It stresses the importance of using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, throwing the tissues away immediately after use and washing your hands as soon as possible.



CATCH IT – Always carry tissues and use them to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.

BIN IT – Dispose of used tissues as soon as possible.

KILL IT – Clean your hands with soap and water as soon as you can and make sure you wash them frequently.

Following these simple steps makes a huge difference in the fight against common colds, and the more serious flu virus. Catch it, bin it, kill it to help you and your family stay well this winter.

Struck down by Norovirus?

When it comes to sickness and diarrhoea, looking after yourself at home is often the best option.

Norovirus (also known as the winter sickness bug) is a very common viral infection which causes forceful vomiting and diarrhoea, but it's usually a mild illness and more common in the winter months.

There is no cure for norovirus but it usually clears up by itself within a few days. If you have symptoms of norovirus, stay at home and avoid direct contact with other people until at least 48 hours after your symptoms have disappeared.

STAY WELL THIS WINTER **NHS**

Diarrhoea and vomiting?

There's no specific cure for stomach bugs such as norovirus
Going to the GP puts others at risk of infection

- stay hydrated
- take paracetamol
- prevent spread
- stay at home for two days after symptoms clear

The best way to recover is through self-care at home, get plenty of rest, drinks lots of fluids and wash your hands regularly with soap and water.

If you are worried your stomach complaint is something more than a simple bug, speak to your local pharmacist for advice and support, or call NHS 111 where a trained call handler will talk you through the best course of action.

Read more about our campaigns [here](#)

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Showcase your PPG!

This is your newsletter and we want you to find it a valuable and reliable source of information.

We also want you to share the great work you are doing at your surgery so we can promote it here with articles on how your PPG is working in collaboration with its practice to help make a difference to the experience that patients have when they visit your surgery.

Send your good news stories, information and questions to Tracy Torr, Communications and Engagement Officer: tracy.torr@nhs.net and we'll share it in the next newsletter which is due April 2018.

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Contact us



Got a question about the newsletter, or want to submit an article?
Contact: tracy.torr@nhs.net

And finally...

Thank you to everyone who is involved in your PPG. The time you give is much appreciated, by both your Practice and the CCG!

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