

# Nairn Healthcare Group Patients Participation Group

## AGM

Held at Nairn Community & Arts Centre on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014

The meeting was attended by c 35 patients of the GP practice, together with members of the outgoing PPG Committee, representatives of Nairn Healthcare Group and members of the press.

Committee: Simon Noble, Chair; David Huggan, Treasurer; Martina Gow;

Apologies Jane Wood, Secretary

Nairn Healthcare Group: Dr Adrian Baker, Clinical Lead Manager;

Barbara Graham, Practice Manager

1) Minutes of the last AGM, held 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013

These were circulated and approved

2) Chairman's report

Simon Noble reported on the end of PPG's second year since its formation following the merger of Ardersier and Nairn practices. For this second year, it had been agreed to change the governance arrangements so that membership of PPG was open to ALL patients of the practice and full, public meetings be held on four occasions. A committee of five was elected at the 2013 AGM with the task of taking forward the aims of the full group and progressing specific working group tasks.

The committee members met monthly with Barbara Graham, Practice Manager, attended monthly Locality Managers' Meetings attended a Highland-wide PPG meeting and the new District Partnership meeting and liaised with other NHS bodies and patient representative/advisory groups. Although PPG's public meetings have been attended by Barbara Graham and Adrian Baker, and on one occasion Dr Jonathan Ball, so far it has not been possible for other practice representatives to attend either these or meetings with the committee.

Morag Cooper resigned from the committee in January as a result of increased work commitments. Jane Wood resigned at the beginning of April 2014.

Last year, the AGM envisaged setting up four working groups: the appointments system, transport, social care and future election of PPG committee members. Although one PPG member was invited to attend a practice working group on the appointment system, these ceased some time towards the end of 2013. The working group on future PPG election was not set up, the business being managed in committee and resulting in the much-publicised process of nomination and election adopted for this AGM.

The transport group was ably led by Martina Gow who held a series of meetings with a range of interested parties including MSP Rhoda Grant and attended a public meeting in Croy with Highland Council and the Dial-a-Bus provider. The group is to be expanded to involve a number of key organisations to provide advice and support in a project to assess the feasibility of a community car scheme, and if suitable to facilitate the setting up of such a scheme. A survey of patients and the general public is to be designed and administered by the group with the practical and financial support of RCOP Highland, and funds are to be sought to employ a consultant to undertake a feasibility study and bid for funds to implement it.

David Huggan convened two meetings of the social care group. He has been able to consult with the local NHS manager, but not her partner Social Work manager and has been found it difficult to obtain their agreement to further consultation. Although the provision of social care is not a responsibility of the GP Practice, it is a matter of clear concern to patients of the

practice. PPG has received numerous reports of patient concern, both about their experience of discharge from hospital and the apparent lack of resources to provide suitable care at home. NHS sources tend to confirm that suitable resourcing and adequate planning for discharge from hospital are typical difficulties of every region in the UK.

Simon summed up a number of the issues that have come to PPGs attention during the year:

- We learned about P.A.S.S. the Patient Advice and Support Service run by CAB to support patients who have concerns about their treatment by the NHS. PASS can act as an intermediary on behalf of individual patients. PPG does not deal with individual patients.
- We learned about the Patients Rights (Scotland) Act which makes clear the importance of patient involvement in the design and development of NHS services, including GP services
- Some patients are worried about raising complaints (or even simple concerns) with the practice because they fear this could affect the service they receive and they do not feel they can go elsewhere for medical help. The committee hopes to develop a better understanding with NHS Highland and the practice about overcoming such fears.
- Some NHS staff are concerned about the reporting of public discussions in PPG and how this may damage the relationship between staff and patients
- A number of miscommunications and misplaced expectations have become evident: some patients believe the surgery will automatically follow-up their care at home after they are discharged from hospital, whereas this has not been done for many years; others assume that the surgery will automatically notify them of test results, whereas this is not the case. PPG will seek to explore ways of ensuring common understanding of current practice.

In concluding, Simon explained that the committee felt the following would be important steps for the new committee to prioritise in the coming year:

- Increase the size of the committee to help manage the volume of business in hand and allocate specific roles for formal liaison, communications etc and reduce the number of formal committee meetings.
- Pay increased attention to communications. Whilst PPG has become much more accountable to patients as a whole, there is a great deal more that can be done to engage and involve a far larger proportion of the 12,000 to 14,000 patients of the practice. Better use is needed of electronic communications such as the website and facebook pages, a twitter account. Particular attention needs to be given to use of the library, poster distribution, noticeboards and potential newsletters
- Develop the use of surveys to elicit patients' views and concerns

### 3) Treasurer's report

David Huggan reported on the small income PPG receives from Nairn Healthcare Group and the outgoings of the year. The most significant regular outgoings are for publicizing meetings and booking venues. PPG also hosted a Coffee morning on behalf of Macmillan Cancer Support generating a £500 donation. Closing balance on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2014 was £460.81.

### 4) Election of committee

The remaining members of the committee (Simon Noble, Martina Gow, and David Huggan) stood down. Simon passed chairmanship of the meeting to Adrian Baker and Barbara Graham to oversee the nomination and election of committee members.

The following were elected unopposed:

Chair: Simon Noble

Transitional treasurer (pending appointment of replacement from within committee):  
David Huggan

Communications: Dave Cawthorn

Liaison: Chris Meacham

Other members: Gill Pullan, Norma McIntyre, Catherine Proctor, Pat Barrett, Frances Shewan, Sue Hood

It was agreed that Gill Pullan would stand as secretary pending the committee's first meeting.

#### 5) Arrangements for future meetings and communications

Bearing in mind the concerns which had been raised, both by NHS staff and some patients about the publicity afforded PPG's public meetings, the meeting was asked to consider the possibility of holding some of its full meetings (ie to which all patients might go) in private. This might encourage some to discuss their concerns, when otherwise they might not.

In general, those present did not feel this as either desirable or achievable. It was agreed that PPG would continue to hold its full meetings in public, but endeavor to manage business to make it easier for patients to raise confidential issues through devices such as a PPG "clinic" held privately at the surgery. It was agreed that the committee would debate the issue at its first meeting in the next few weeks.

Other suggestions for improvements from those present included

- advertising on Moray Firth Radio's community "slot" to increase awareness both of PPG and of specific meetings
- holding weekend meetings
- raising awareness by arranging distribution of leaflets about PPG or specific issues through schools, parent teacher groups, pharmacies when issuing prescriptions, GP's at the conclusion of appointments.

#### 6) AOB

- a) Parking at the surgery: one patient expressed concern at the heavy usage of parking by staff at the surgery that made it difficult for patients to find spaces. It was pointed out that the site is used by patients, service users and staff from a wide range of organisations and not just the surgery. The landlord manages the site, which is neither the surgery nor the NHS. Members of the committee noted other circumstances where solutions to site usage had been difficult to achieve. Adrian Baker agreed to liaise with PPG to enable it to add its voice to surgery requests to changes of site usage (on issues such as parking, changes to building use etc).

#### 7) Next meeting to be held in three months time, date to be announced shortly.