

LATHOM ROAD MEDICAL CENTRE

PPG Meeting Minutes

Date of meeting	30/04/2026
Time of meeting	12:30
Attendees	Prabha Gopinath, Sravya, Mr Shah and Mr Bhowmik
Apologies	Dr Reena and Dr Khajuria, Ms Grainger and Mr Kordrostami
Staff member taking minutes	Sravya / Amrutha

A patient participation group (PPG) is a group of people who are patients of the surgery and want to help it work as well as it can for patients, doctors and staff.

Agenda Item	Discussion	Actions	Person Responsible	Date to be achieved by
Matters Arising from last meeting (date)				
	<p>During the meeting: It is an important part of the Chairperson's role to make sure meetings run efficiently and fairly. In order to do this the Chairperson should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stick to the meeting's Agenda, so that everything that needs to be discussed at the meeting is covered and all decisions that need to be, are made. Always be aware of the time. Make sure the meeting stays on schedule and does not overrun its planned finishing time. Always aim to be open-minded, fair and impartial, never letting their own views on a subject, organization or person affect how they run the meeting. Liaising on behalf of the PPG with the Practice Manager It is the Chairperson's role to ensure that all PPG members are enabled to undertake joint responsibility in carrying out the group's objectives. 	An email to seek interest in any members in becoming a Deputy Chairperson.	Amrutha	July 2026

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure everyone who wants to, has an opportunity to speak and play an equal part in any decisions made. No one person, in particular the Chairperson, should dominate the discussions. • Keep good order and make sure everyone can hear what other people have to say. • Helping to sort out conflicts and difference of opinion. • Sum up any important points or discussions as they are made. • Make sure people have done things they agree to do at earlier meetings. • Ensure that any action points of the meeting are assigned to members of the group before the meeting ends. • Appoint a Deputy Chairperson, if the Chairperson is unable to attend the meeting. 			
This meeting's agenda items (date)				
Chairperson	<p>SHAH, Mitesh (Mr.) - PPG Chairperson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We would like to kindly invite your support in expanding our PPG. If you know any patients who may be interested in joining, sharing their ideas, or taking part in discussions, please let us know. We have shared the PPG invitation with patients and would be happy to send the sign-up form and further details to anyone who expresses interest. <p>Discussion: Mr Mitesh Shah remains the Chairperson, as no other PPG member has expressed an interest in taking on the role. Mr Shah is willing and happy to continue serving as Chairperson.</p>	<p>An Email will be sent to PPG members</p>	<p>APM/Amrutha</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>PPG Membership Expansion and Promotion</p>	<p>Discussion: We discussed ways to expand the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and encourage greater patient involvement. Mr Mitesh Shah agreed to help promote the PPG and encourage more patients to become members. The practice will also support by informing patients about the PPG during their visits and inviting interested individuals to sign up. Additionally, an email has also been sent inviting any interested patients to join the PPG. It was suggested that PPG registration forms be made readily available at reception, alongside the blood pressure machine, allowing patients to express their interest independently rather than being approached directly. Prabha (PM) suggested displaying information about PPG members within the surgery. She recommended including photographs rather than just names, as this would help patients recognise members more easily and identify who they can contact for further information. The PPG members who attended agreed that using photographs would create a more personal and approachable presence for the PPG. To improve accessibility and ensure inclusivity, it was additionally suggested that printed copies of the most recent PPG meeting minutes be made available in the reception area. This would support patients who do not have online access and may otherwise be unable to view this information digitally. PPG registration forms and meeting minutes could be placed in a designated area within the surgery, allowing patients to access them conveniently at any time. The proposal will be explored further, and arrangements will be made to implement this initiative. Mr Shah agreed to have his photograph displayed as part of the PPG promotion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPG registration forms will be made available at reception • Display of PPG member photographs and information • Practice will explore options for promoting the PPG within the surgery 	<p>PM/APM/Amrutha</p>	<p>May - June</p>
<p>Room extension</p>	<p>The structural modification to expand the current facility has now been completed, with one additional clinical room arranged. This enhancement is enabling the accommodation of more patients and improving the overall efficiency of clinical services.</p>	<p>No further action to take</p>	<p>PM/APM</p>	<p>April - May</p>

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	<p>Discussion: The practice had initially planned to hold the meeting in the new upstairs room to give members an opportunity to view the recently completed extension. However, this was not possible as the lift is currently out of service. The practice is awaiting a date from the technician for repairs, as a replacement motherboard is required and is currently on order.</p> <p>Members were informed that the building extension has provided an additional clinical room, enabling the practice to offer more clinician appointments and increased session availability. This development will help the practice meet the needs of its growing patient population and support the delivery of additional clinical services in the future.</p> <p>Feedback from the PPG members regarding the newly modified reception area: Mr Mitesh Shah commented that the reception area looks “beautiful, airy, vibrant, and clean.” Overall, the feedback regarding the refurbishment was very positive.</p>			
<p>Online Prescription Request</p>	<p>Following discussion at the recent clinical meeting, patients are encouraged to submit medication requests in a timely manner. This update has now been added to the practice website and is displayed on the LED screen within the facility to improve patient awareness and support efficient service delivery.</p> <p>Discussion: It’s been discussed in recent practice clinical meeting re online prescription request that patients can submit prescription requests online, and these are processed in a timely manner.</p> <p>As part of recent NHS England contractual requirements, practices are expected to keep online consultation and request services available throughout their opening hours, from 8:00am to 6:30pm. The practice confirmed that it has always maintained unrestricted access to its online prescription request system and has never imposed limits on the number of requests that can be submitted.</p>	<p>Already displayed on website and LED screen</p>	<p>APM/Prakash</p>	<p>April</p>

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	<p>To improve patient awareness of this service, information is displayed on the practice website and on the LED screen in the reception area.</p> <p>Mr Mitesh Shah shared his experience of using the online prescription request service, stating that he had used it two or three times and found it to be straightforward and easy to use.</p>			
<p>Emma AI</p>	<p>Several surgeries in Newham are currently using Emma AI to support patient access and manage demand. Due to space constraints within our practice, we are exploring the possibility of introducing this system. Please share your views or concerns on this.</p> <p>https://www.askemma.org/</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intelligent Care Planning 2. Workforce Support 3. Regulatory Compliance 4. Predictive Insights 5. Accessibility 6. AI Safety <p>Discussion:</p> <p>PM informed everyone that the practice is currently exploring the possibility of introducing Emma AI, an AI-powered telephone triage and call-handling system. Several practices within Newham have already implemented the system, and a demonstration was recently presented at the Practice Manager's Forum. At this stage, no decision has been made, and the practice is seeking feedback from the PPG before considering any further steps.</p> <p>The proposed system would answer patient calls using AI rather than a member of reception staff. The AI would ask patients a series of questions, gather relevant information, and submit the details as an online consultation for review by the practice team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email will be circulated to all PPG members containing detailed information on Emma AI <p>PPG members will be encouraged to review the information and share their views and feedback to help inform any future decisions.</p>	<p>PM/Amrutha</p>	<p>May-June</p>

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	<p>Several potential benefits were discussed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Calls being answered immediately without patients having to wait in a queue, regardless of call volume.• Access to an instant translation service, allowing patients to communicate in their preferred language.• Accurate collection of patient information and direct submission into the clinical system.• The ability to tailor the system to the practice's requirements. For example, patients reporting minor conditions such as a cough could be directed to community pharmacy services, while urgent or life-threatening symptoms could be redirected to NHS 111 or emergency services as appropriate.• Reduction in waiting times and improved efficiency for both patients and staff.• Automatic recording of patient interactions, helping to minimise the risk of miscommunication. <p>Concerns regarding vulnerable patients and those who may not wish to interact with an AI system were also discussed. It was explained that the system can be configured to recognise specific patients and route their calls directly to reception staff where appropriate, ensuring additional support remains available when needed.</p> <p>It is discussed that a nearby surgery on Barking Road has been using the system for approximately six months and has reported positive feedback. The practice is continuing to explore options to manage increasing patient demand while working within the limitations of available space for additional administrative staff.</p> <p>Mr Mitesh Shah commented that while it is unfortunate to see some aspects of human interaction reducing as technology advances, this reflects the direction in which many sectors are moving. He stated that he had no objection to the practice exploring the use of such technology.</p> <p>PM emphasised that no commitment has been made to implement the system. Further exploration and evaluation will take place before any decision is</p>			
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	<p>reached. The company will be invited to attend a future PPG meeting to provide a demonstration, allowing members to ask questions, raise concerns, and provide feedback from a patient perspective.</p> <p>The practice also confirmed that data protection and information governance requirements would be carefully considered. The practice's Data Protection Officer (DPO) will be consulted to ensure that all necessary policies, security measures, and safeguards are in place before any implementation is considered.</p> <p>A separate email will be shared with all PPG members outlining further information regarding Emma AI and other AI-supported services. This will include supporting materials such as information leaflets and demonstration videos. Please review the information and provide their feedback, views, and any questions they may have. The practice values the opinions of PPG members and will take their feedback and opinions before any decisions are made.</p>			
<p>Discussion on Yoga Sessions</p>	<p>Mr Mitesh Shah raised the suggestion of introducing activities such as yoga sessions, which had previously been discussed within earlier meetings as part of broader patient wellbeing initiatives, including coffee mornings.</p> <p>PM advised that current space constraints remain a significant limitation. The practice operates clinical services across five and a half days per week, including Saturdays, with reception being the largest available communal area. As such, opportunities to utilise space for non-clinical activities are restricted during normal operating hours.</p> <p>It was noted that one possible option could be the use of Saturday afternoons, when clinical activity is reduced, however, this would still require careful consideration of operational requirements. Alternatively, such initiatives may be more feasible in the future should the practice relocate to a larger premises with dedicated meeting or community space.</p> <p>The practice also informed the group that discussions have taken place regarding a potential relocation opportunity at a site on Southend Road, where</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PM to explore future opportunities for patient wellbeing activities like yoga, subject to space availability, and keep the group informed. 	<p>PM</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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	plans are being considered for residential apartments and community facilities. The practice attended a meeting and expressed interest in the possibility of establishing a GP surgery on the site. It was noted that there was positive verbal agreement regarding this proposal at the time of discussion.			
Surgery Relocation	We are actively searching for a new building or additional space to accommodate our growing needs, as our current premises are becoming overcrowded. If anyone comes across a suitable space that could function as a surgery, please let us know so we can reach out to the property owner. Our current lease runs until September 2028 , so we do have some time, but we are seriously looking and open to options now.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any developments regarding the potential Southend Road relocation and associated community facilities will be updated in next meeting 	PM/CM	Ongoing
PCN PPG	An email has been circulated to all PPG members regarding the upcoming Primary Care Network (PCN) level PPG meeting, if anyone interested. The meeting is scheduled to be held on 30/04/26 at the Trinity Centre, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email sent to PPG members 	Amrutha	April
PPG Meeting Schedule	Mr Mitesh Shah suggested that an annual schedule of PPG meeting dates should be made available so that members and patients are aware of upcoming meetings in advance. PM agreed that, moving forward, a set schedule can be arranged. It was explained that the current meeting date was adjusted due to ongoing construction work, however, in normal circumstances, meetings are planned in advance. It was also noted that the Practice Manager and Sravya are occasionally unavailable due to commitments with PCN and community meetings, and therefore future dates will be coordinated accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will schedule PPG meeting dates for 2026 in advance. 	PM/Amrutha	July

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	<p>PPG members were encouraged to inform patients, friends, and family members (where registered with the practice) about the PPG and invite them to join. It was highlighted that the PPG meets quarterly and sessions are approximately 30 minutes in duration.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the next PPG meeting will be scheduled for July. Once the exact date is finalised, all PPG members will be informed in due course.</p>			
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