

PPG Network – Discussion Round Up

Monday 7 July 2026 | 1.00pm – 2.30pm

Item 1: Launch of the PPG Network Resource Hub (Hannah Morton)

Hannah introduced the new PPG Network page on the Joined Up Care Derbyshire engagement platform. The page has been developed in response to previous discussions about how PPGs can stay connected between Network meetings and share useful resources with one another.

Key points discussed:

- The page is publicly accessible and can be accessed via a direct link or through the Joined Up Care Derbyshire website.
- Some resources currently available include:
 - Information about PPGs and their role.
 - Guidance on recruiting and capturing the wider patient voice.
 - Information on roles, recruitment and managing conduct concerns.
 - The Healthwatch Derbyshire PPG Guide.
 - Example Terms of Reference shared by Network members (with practice-identifiable information removed).
 - Templates and resources including posters, feedback forms, meeting agendas and sample questionnaires.
- Meeting agendas, round-up summaries and future meeting dates will also be available through the page.
- A comment and conversation board has been created to enable discussions between meetings.
- Registration is only required for members wishing to use the comment and conversation board; all other resources can be accessed without registering.

Next steps:

- The link to the page will be shared as part of the meeting round-up.
- Members are encouraged to provide feedback and suggest additional resources that could be added.
- Please note: Members wishing to use the new PPG Network page's discussion board to ensure notifications are switched on so that responses are not missed (Hannah to edit the guide to include this).

Item 2: Use of Facebook and Social Media by PPGs (All)

Following a request from members, the Network held a discussion about whether PPGs use Facebook and other social media platforms, and what benefits and challenges are associated with them.

Key points discussed:

- Members shared a range of approaches:
 - Some PPGs use their practice's existing Facebook page.
 - Some have dedicated PPG Facebook pages.
 - Others have chosen not to use Facebook and instead rely on email and websites.
- Concerns were raised about:
 - Online security and privacy.

- Moderating comments and inappropriate content.
- The resources required to manage pages effectively.
- Whether social media channels successfully reach target audiences.
- Members reflected that Facebook may be useful as a promotional tool to:
 - Raise awareness of the PPG.
 - Encourage recruitment.
 - Signpost patients to information.
- However, several members felt Facebook was less suitable for conducting PPG business or detailed discussions.
- It was noted that different age groups use different platforms and that relying on a single social media platform may exclude some audiences.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of understanding local populations and choosing communication channels that best meet their needs.

Examples shared:

- Some practices actively moderate posts and comments before publication.
- Inspire Health PPG reported greater success using large email distribution lists and directing interested patients toward these via websites and social media rather than relying on Facebook itself.
- Members noted that email communications remain popular because they are easier to manage, more targeted and offer greater control.

Key reflection:

- No single communication method works for every PPG. Members recognised the importance of using a combination of approaches and understanding the preferences of their local patient population.

Dronfield Sixth Form PPG

Dronfield PPG are developing plans to establish a Sixth Form PPG across practices in the Dronfield area.

Key points discussed:

- The initiative aims to engage younger people in discussions about primary care and health services.
- Work is underway with local practices and schools.
- The group is expected to launch shortly, subject to final communications being issued.

Next steps:

- Tim has offered to provide an update to the Network as the initiative develops.

Item 4: Mental Health Initiative at PCN Level (Ian Anderson)

Ian shared details of a developing mental health initiative involving PPGs across the Primary Care Network.

Key points discussed:

- The project seeks to bring PPGs together to work collaboratively at PCN level.
- Members recognised that many PPGs face similar challenges around capacity and volunteer resource.

- Working together may allow groups to share expertise, resources and workload.
- Mental health was chosen as the focus following discussions with local practices and PPG representatives.
- Significant patient-focused resources have already been developed and could potentially be adapted and used by other PPGs.
- Members discussed the importance of:
 - Improving awareness of local mental health support.
 - Strengthening links with voluntary and community sector organisations.
 - Helping patients navigate available support services.
- Ian explained that one of the project's aims is to achieve measurable outcomes rather than simply delivering an awareness campaign.

Key points discussed:

- Mental health and hospice-related campaigns have generated strong levels of patient interest and participation.
- Flu clinics have proved particularly successful opportunities for engaging with patients and recruiting new members.
- Experience suggests patients are more likely to engage with information that can be taken away and read later rather than relying on displays within surgeries alone.

Key reflection:

- Members recognised the potential benefits of collaborating across practices and sharing resources to avoid duplication and increase impact.

Item 5: Community Information and Links with the Voluntary Sector (John Tresadern)

John shared reflections on the importance of strengthening links between PPGs and local community, voluntary and third-sector organisations.

Key points discussed:

- Community groups often hold valuable information, expertise and experience that may benefit patients.
- Many support opportunities exist locally, but awareness can be limited.
- Members discussed the challenge of identifying information that is relevant and timely enough to share with patients.
- There was recognition that patients' wellbeing is influenced by a wide range of community services and support networks beyond healthcare itself.
- As services continue to move closer to communities, strong links between primary care, patients and the voluntary sector will become increasingly important.

Key reflection:

- Members agreed that PPGs can play an important role in helping patients access support and opportunities that may otherwise go unnoticed.

Item 6: Digital Access, Phlebotomy Booking and Patient Systems (All)

Members discussed recent changes to online blood test booking arrangements and wider patient-facing digital systems.

Key points discussed:

- It was noted that phlebotomy appointments now require use of an NHS login when booking through SwiftQueue.
- Concerns were raised that communications about the change had not been sufficiently prominent and could create difficulties for some patients.
- Members highlighted the potential impact on people who:
 - Are digitally excluded.
 - Have limited digital confidence.
 - Require support from carers.
- Val explained that some practices may be able to assist patients with booking appointments where required.
- Information about the changes and associated communications will be shared with the Network (Hannah to action).

Wider discussion:

- Members also reflected on experiences of using Patient Knows Best and other digital systems.
- The discussion highlighted wider concerns about accessibility, communication and patient support as more services move online.

Item 7: National GP Patient Survey Results (Terry Roberts)

Terry reminded members that the results of the National GP Patient Survey will be published on **Thursday 9 July 2026**.

GP Patient Survey

Item 8: Primary Care Support England (PCSE) Patient List Validation (Tim Peacock)

Tim raised concerns that had been discussed nationally regarding patient list validation exercises undertaken by Primary Care Support England (PCSE).

Key points discussed:

- Reports have suggested some patients may not be responding to verification communications because they do not recognise the organisation contacting them.
- Concerns were raised about the potential impact on vulnerable patients if communications are missed or misunderstood.
- Members discussed whether similar issues have been identified locally.
- Ian noted that patient list validation exercises have been discussed nationally, particularly in relation to maintaining accurate GP practice lists.

Next steps:

- Hannah will seek further information and share any updates with the Network.

Helpful reminders from members

- Val invited PPG members to join the UHDB Patient Experience Group and offered to share contact details and further information with the Network (Hannah will share once received).