

# Patient Participation Group Newsletter - Spring 2024

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter for 2024. Perhaps the first thing to explain is what exactly is the purpose of the PPG!

Who is involved?

- The Chairperson who is a patient at the practice
- The Practice Manager
- A GP representative
- A group of patients who have an interest in the practice and assisting with ideas to improve the service



The PPG is open to any interested person who is registered as a patient at the surgery. Currently there are around 12-15 regular members but we are keen to expand the group with particular emphasis on recruiting patients in the younger age range. Currently the meetings occur around once in every two months usually lasting about an hour.

The role of a PPG is to enable members to understand and, if possible, contribute to the quality of care provided by the practice. Topics of conversation over the last few months have included issues such as :-

*On behalf of Bartley Green Medical Practice PPG*



- Non-attendance at appointments
- The results of the satisfaction survey
- The process of electronic dispensing of prescriptions.
- Communication between patients and the practice
- Information screens in the surgery waiting areas
- A new telephone system.

It is important to stress that the PPG is not a forum for individual issues or complaints but one which discusses the service the practice provides

## 57

The number of  
**GP**  
appointments that  
were missed in April  
2024

## 62

The number of  
**Nurse**  
appointments that  
were missed in April  
2024

## *The issue of DNAs! (Did not attend)*

One of the topics discussed by the PPG recently was the concern the practice has about DNAs.

Nothing to do with the DNA of TV thrillers or Ancestry sites, in this case DNA stands for **DID NOT ATTEND** and is a reference to appointments with both doctors and nursing staff which are missed with no notice or cancellation.

It comes as no surprise that one of the main concerns that patients have, not only in Bartley Green but nationally, is the shortage of appointments with GPs and yet there were just over **600** minutes of doctor's time lost in April 2024 due to non-attendance.

While both our GPs and nursing staff will

make sure that the time is not wasted, the bottom line is that:-

**57 GP and 62 nurse appointments could have been made available to patients in need if they had just been cancelled.**

The practice is trying to understand why this is the case and to consider whether there are processes which can be improved to avoid non-attendance without cancellation.

There will always be unavoidable circumstances preventing attendance but why patients feel it is acceptable to simply miss an appointment with no notice is a subject of bewilderment in the PPG meetings.



Several questions were raised concerning DNAs and possible answers were discussed.

Q - Is it easy to cancel an appointment?	A - You can cancel your appointment by replying to your text reminder the word CANCEL, you can cancel it online by using the app or you can call the practice.
Q - Are appointments booked on-line more likely to result in a DNA?	A - Further investigation is required to answer this question.
Q - Are there patients who have a record of regular non attendance? If so, should sanctions be applied to patients with regular DNAs	A - Further analysis of the DNA data is taking place and staff are looking at possibly following up on appointment non-attendance with messages or phone calls.  If sanctions are needed these could include the withdrawal of access to on-line booking and in extreme cases removal from the practice.

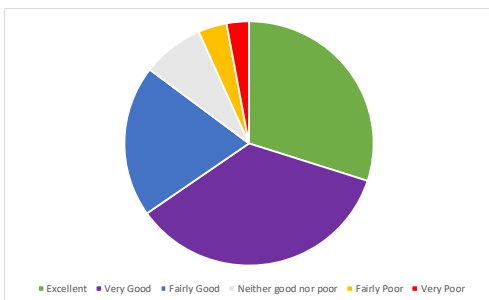
**It is important therefore to emphasise that the responsibility of ensuring that appointments are kept and not wasted falls with patients. If you have a suggestion that might improve the ease of which appointments can be cancelled please contact the surgery via email.**



### *Patient Questionnaire - How is the Practice performing?*

The practice instigated a recent survey of patients with a number of specific questions about all aspects of the practice. From just under 6000 patients there was a return of close to 500 replies. This sample is sufficient to gain a general impression of the opinions of our patients.

It was pleasing to see that the majority of responses were positive and compared more than favorably with other practices. Here are a few details of the survey results and the overall summary:-



- The largest number of survey returns were from the higher age groups 45 to 65+
- 92% of patients were happy with GP consultations
- The majority of patients said they were able to speak to the doctor of their choice or were happy with no preference
- There was an even split between patients who used email/texts and those who don't.
- Receptionists were considered to be very helpful and efficient. *Positive feedback in this area is always welcome and can help staff feel appreciated in their jobs! Feedback of this nature is always passed on to staff.*
- Roughly 50% of patients said they used the practice website
- A very small number of patients that answered Strongly Disagree to every question. Further information about why these patients returned this response would be helpful to resolve the issues.
- Patients indicated that it wasn't always easy to get through to reception at critical appointment booking times. A new telephone system is to be introduced soon which may be more efficient but is unlikely to alleviate this bottleneck. *Note - the practice does have pre-bookable appointments which can be booked on line.*

Final Thoughts - If you wish to join the PPG there is an on-line form on the practice web site. <https://bgmp.digipractice.org/ppg> Should you wish to contact the practice about any topic or with suggestions for further discussion please email at [m85117.bartleygreenmedicalpractice@nhs.net](mailto:m85117.bartleygreenmedicalpractice@nhs.net)

The practice also has a new Facebook Page. Scan the QR code to access the page.

