

## **ALREFORD SURGERY – PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

### **Annual Report – March 2012**

The Alresford Surgery Patient Participation Group (also known as Alresford Surgery Patient Forum) was set up to continue and develop patient involvement in the shaping of services provided by the Alresford Surgery. Initial membership of the PPG was drawn from pre-existing groups such as The Eddie Pay Fund and the Giles Group. The group has met on the following days:

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009  
9<sup>th</sup> February 2010  
23<sup>rd</sup> March 2010  
7<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2011  
10<sup>th</sup> May 2011  
11<sup>th</sup> October 2011  
17<sup>th</sup> January 2012

After the first meeting efforts were made to make the group as representative as possible. This included approaches to local schools, Alresford Voluntary Care Group, Upper Itchen Voluntary Care Group, Sunbeams Children's Centre, Alresford Rotary and Chamber of Trade.

Further discussion about representation took place on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and we continued to seek to broaden the membership of the group. Development of the membership of the group will continue and we are seeking representation from the residents of the outlying rural villages and in particular, a youth representative.

Having formed our patient representative group we conducted a small questionnaire within the practice. Patients were asked for their views on which areas of the surgery's services they felt should be reviewed or improved. This questionnaire was carried out during September and October 2011 and was discussed at the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011. This led to a survey in greater depth on the subject of appointments and access to services.

The appointments survey was carried out by means of a paper survey available in the surgery and an online tool accessed via our website. The survey was publicised via our monthly newsletter which is published in a local magazine delivered free to households in the area as well as local parish magazines. Posters were displayed around the surgery and the survey was highlighted on our website (the website took over 16,000 hits in both November and December 2011).

The numbers responding to the survey were discussed at the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and were felt to be representative of our patient population. The survey results highlighted the fact that one of the major issues impacting our patients currently is the availability of phlebotomy appointments. The shortage of available blood test appointments is managed by patients presenting themselves to the pathology department at RHCH, Winchester. This causes inconvenience in terms of time and travel distances and is a particular problem for patients relying on public transport. It was therefore agreed that the practice and PPG would make representations to the local PCT and phlebotomy provider regarding the provision of more blood test appointments.

Formal representation was duly made to the PCT in mid March 2012 and a response is awaited.

Other points of note arising from the survey included:

- Online appointment booking - the installation of the new clinical computer system should allow for this and will be looked into further together with SMS text message reminders.
- Doctor availability - It was apparent from the survey responses that patients are not always aware which days their preferred doctor works. This information has now been included in our monthly newsletter and is available on our website.
- Opening hours – this information is regularly published in our newsletter and is available on our website and in our practice brochure (copies of which are available from reception).
- Out of Hours Care – provided from 6.30pm – 8am weekdays, weekends and bank holidays. The service is provided by Solent NHS Trust. The telephone number is advertised in our practice brochure, website and is clearly displayed outside the practice property.

Since the inception of the group a number of other issues and questions have been addressed as part of the 'Any Other Business' part of the agenda. Topics covered have included:

- Local impact of the NHS reforms
- The surgery waiting room children's corner. In association with Sunbeams Children's Centre the children's corner was updated with new artwork, a new bookcase, books and toys.
- Availability of community physiotherapy for patients post-surgery
- The implication of budget constraints in prescribing decisions by GPs
- Hospital transport
- Merger of Winchester and Basingstoke hospital trusts
- The availability of sources of reliable health information
- Hospital appointments and the Choose and Book system

We are immensely grateful to the patients who have attended these meetings, offered their views, asked questions and canvassed opinion and for their understanding of the issues facing primary care and the NHS.