

## Minutes of the PPG Core Group Meeting - Thursday 3rd September 2026

|                   |                   |                           |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Attendees:</b> | Dr Sarah Scott    | GP Partner                |
|                   | Debra Matthews    | Operations Manager        |
|                   | Penny Turner      | Data & Managers Assistant |
|                   | Jules Burns       | PPG Chair                 |
|                   | Steven Bobash     | Deputy PPG Chair          |
|                   | Cheryl Burns      | PPG Member                |
|                   | Susan Harvey      | PPG Member                |
|                   | Anthony Isaacs    | PPG Member                |
|                   | Agatha Kalisperas | PPG Member                |
|                   | John Levite       | PPG Member                |
|                   | Stephen Warshaw   | PPG Member                |

### 1. Minutes & Matters Arising

#### 1.1 The minutes from the meeting held on 2nd July 2026 were approved.

#### 1.2 The Terms of Reference

- The Terms of Reference have been amended to introduce a three-year term of office for new Core Group members, with any extension to be agreed by the group. The change will apply to new members and will not affect existing Core Group members. A revised copy was circulated, with amendments highlighted, and members were invited to send any further comments to the Chair.

#### 1.3 Core Group Representation

- Four or five wider PPG members have been identified from those who have previously expressed an interest in joining the Core Group. The Chair will arrange informal meetings with the prospective members during the autumn and will circulate the dates to existing Core Group members in case anyone is available to join him.

#### 1.4 Surgery Reception Area

- The updated staff photographs are now in place, and the organisational chart is being incorporated into the display. The remaining work includes adding names and colour-coding the photographs to correspond with the organisational structure.
- A suggestion was made to include a photograph of the GP Partners together.

#### 1.5 Hampstead Summer Festival 2027

- The Practice agreed that having a presence at the 2027 Hampstead Summer Festival would be a useful opportunity to promote the Practice and encourage new patient registrations. The Practice and PPG will consider what form the stall or activity should take and how best to attract interest.

## **1.6 Core Group Confidentiality Agreement**

- Following further review, it was agreed that only the Chair and Deputy Chair need to sign the Core Group confidentiality agreement because of the additional information they may access.

## **2. Practice Reports**

### **2.1 Emma – Virtual AI Receptionist**

- Emma went live on 1st September 2026. Members who used the service were generally impressed and felt it was a useful additional way for patients to contact the Practice. Some early feedback indicated that calls could feel long-winded and there may be a short delay while Emma processes a response. However, the information and summaries received by the Practice have been of a high quality.
- Emma creates an electronic request for the Practice where action is required and can also signpost patients where appropriate, for example to information available through the NHS App. The system is adaptive and is expected to improve as it learns from the Practice population, including different accents, languages and common requests.
- Weekly audits have started to monitor call length, waiting times, missed calls and other performance measures. It is expected to take approximately three months before there is sufficient data to assess the wider impact on patient access and Practice workload.

### **2.2 Triage Hub**

- The Practice has reorganised its working arrangements to create a Triage Hub, bringing together a GP, a Pharmacist, a member of the Administration Team and a member of the Patient Services Team in the same area. The Hub reviews incoming requests twice daily, including eConsults, Emma requests, telephone contacts and relevant requests received at Reception.  
Working together in the same room allows the teams to communicate directly, prioritise urgent requests and match patients to the most appropriate appointment or service more efficiently.  
The new arrangement is in its early stages but is reported to be working well.
- Members felt patients would benefit from a clearer explanation of how the triage process works. Once the system is fully established, information could be shared through the Practice newsletter, website, reception television screens and/or a simple patient journey diagram or video.

### **2.3 Autumn/Winter Vaccinations**

- The main Practice flu clinic is planned for Saturday 3rd October 2026, following the start of the national programme on 1st October. Eligible patients who cannot attend the main clinic will still be able to book a flu vaccination at the Practice on other available dates.
- COVID-19 booster vaccinations will not be provided at the Practice, and eligible patients will need to access these through participating pharmacies or other commissioned services.

- The winter communications will also include relevant information on the children's flu vaccination, RSV, pneumococcal vaccination and other seasonal vaccination eligibility.

#### **2.4 Practice Newsletter**

- A new Practice newsletter will be prepared to cover the autumn/winter period. Suggested content includes winter vaccinations, Emma, an explanation of the new triage process and reminders for patients to keep their contact details up to date. The aim is to have information available around the time of the main flu clinic.

#### **2.5 GP Patient Survey**

- Members were shown the latest GP Patient Survey results. Of 505 surveys issued to sampled patients, 123 were returned, representing a response rate of approximately 24%. The Practice results compared favourably with both North West London and national results, including very positive feedback regarding patients' confidence and trust in healthcare professionals. Members welcomed the results, while noting the relatively small sample size.

#### **2.6 Patient List Validation and Practice Growth**

- The Practice continues to monitor the national patient-list validation/cleansing exercise, which may identify patients for removal where correspondence or screening invitations have not received a response. The administration team is reviewing cases to reduce the risk of vulnerable or otherwise appropriate patients being incorrectly removed from the Practice list.
- Patients will be reminded via the newsletter to keep their address, telephone number and email details up to date.
- The Practice remains keen to increase patient registrations and is considering further promotion through local estate agents, pharmacies, new residents and staff/students associated with the Royal Free. The Practice is also reviewing its boundary and approach to appropriate out-of-area registrations, while ensuring that any growth can be safely supported by available clinical and administrative capacity.

#### **2.7 Practice Recruitment and Staff Updates**

- The Practice has the usual rotation of GP trainees, with two new trainees and one returning trainee currently working at the Practice.
- Dr Jessica Engler has returned to the Practice as a permanent salaried GP.
- Dr Caroline Meehan has left the Practice and Dr Amber Saleem is due to leave following relocation.
- Reception staffing remains reduced. One agency member is due to leave, with replacement cover expected shortly afterwards.
- The Practice is recruiting a Patient Services Supervisor to work alongside the existing supervisor and provide additional support to the Reception/Patient Services Team.

### 3. Any Other Business

#### 3.1 Repeat Prescribing

- Members raised examples of repeat medication requests where items appeared to be missing or unavailable through the usual ordering process. The Practice advised that the NHS App is generally the most reliable route for requesting repeat medication, as requests are transferred directly into the clinical system. There can be legitimate reasons why an item is unavailable for repeat ordering, including medication reviews or medicines that have not been issued for a significant period. The Practice's prescribing pharmacists are actively involved in medication reviews and prescribing support, particularly for patients taking multiple medicines. The Practice will remain alert to any recurring issues with repeat prescribing and investigate individual examples where necessary.

### 4. Actions Summary

| Action                                                                                        | Lead               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Circulate/finalise revised Terms of Reference following any further comments                  | Chair              |
| Arrange meetings with prospective Core Group members and circulate dates                      | Chair              |
| Complete staff photograph labels/colour coding and organisational display                     | Penny/Practice     |
| Consider Partner photograph for the reception display                                         | Practice           |
| Plan Practice/PPG presence at Hampstead Summer Festival 2027                                  | Practice/PPG       |
| Chair and Deputy Chair to sign revised confidentiality agreement                              | Chair/Deputy Chair |
| Continue weekly monitoring of Emma performance and patient feedback                           | Practice           |
| Develop patient-facing information explaining the Triage Hub/patient journey once established | Practice/PPG       |
| Prepare autumn/winter newsletter and vaccination communications                               | Practice/Penny     |
| Include reminder for patients to keep contact details up to date                              | Practice           |
| Continue monitoring patient-list validation and potential removals                            | Practice           |
| Continue recruitment activity, including Patient Services Supervisor                          | Practice           |

### 5. Date of Next Meeting

- Thursday 3rd December 2026, 4:00pm at the Practice.
- Meeting dates for 2027 will be agreed at the December meeting.