



MESSAGE FROM THE Patient PARTICIPATION GROUP

The Patient Voice

Based at Abbey Medical Group, Blidworth

Hello Patients and Carers, as we are all aware COVID 19 has impacted on everyone. The PPG has been busy running a befriending/support telephone support service, as well as delivering prescriptions. Very much like our Patient & Public Actions Desks (PPAD) we did run monthly at the surgeries, hopefully we will start them again later in the year.

Great news in, that now the PPG team are inextricably linked with 'Blidworth on the Move'. A Charity that has grown from a very specific need during the pandemic to get the most vulnerable and isolated people in our local communities to much needed GP surgery appointment and treatment appointments at the hospital.

When we had the idea of starting 'Blidworth on the Move'. It evolved from a wonderful group of volunteers taking this idea in early April and by mid-May the scheme was live. We started, with the support of the local Sherwood Community Church and the family business of Rainworth Fencing who made it possible by providing the vehicle that enabled us to provide voluntary transport to get the most isolated/vulnerable to the doctors or hospital. These services via the NHS were either currently closed or not available now to so many people with long-term conditions due to changes in services at the NHS.

Now we have found the voluntary transport scheme has brought around 40 new clients and carers for us to work with who need support, guidance as to how to obtain information about their specific condition and a regular listening ear. Particularly with our

links with the NHS both in the community and hospitals as well as other charities and organisation that support people, it seems as a PPG we are unique. The knowledge and skills the team has built up as meant we have a voice when speaking for patients/carers in respect of their needs across GP Practices and the hospitals. The skills and knowledge within our volunteer team is excellent, even though many have retired from the NHS or other statutory services, their expertise has been used to the full during the pandemic. We have built the PPG over 12 years' experience focusing our work on keeping people informed about health and well-being and often supporting patients and carers to understand the effects of long-term conditions such as dementia, cancer, diabetes, ophthalmic conditions and ways to manage pain, which cuts across all conditions, as well as end of life support. Even though statutory agencies and charities begin to open up, our work continues to grow with each passenger we transport.

Everyone without exception were digitally immobile, and did not know about us until the surgery sort transport for them or they saw our articles in the local free paper. This we hope to change by promoting the project and by adapting the use of the vehicle to support the vulnerable and isolated to get out and about again. So, we are not cutting back on our health and social-care support or transport. We will grow as the need grows in our communities, to get people from A to B and back. In fact, over the next six months we will with the assistance of the NHS and Newark & Sherwood District Council as well as local organisations and support groups we see a widening of our services and networking growing.

Our key focus from August will be linking up with mental health resources such as 'Mind', to ensure the critical get counselling support asap, in the community. Why? Almost everyone has been affected by the lockdown and older people particularly as well as the disabled and those with various long-term conditions, fear coming out. Who better to support them than local people they know and trust, as well as professionals? Some people like to go to a group, others need one to one support. We propose to set up a range of groups such as craft work, easy exercise, lunch clubs and games sessions. Beetle Drives were in the past particularly popular

at St Andrews along with 'Talk and Tea', which I hope will open again soon. Having, a clear support network for people to tap into, will bring our communities together. Blidworth particularly lacks a village hall as a focal point so we will make use of suitable venues within the village. Until now resources across the three villages of Blidworth, Rainworth and Ravenshead has not been mapped out and provided to all residents. Over Hopefully over time the range of activities will grow. For locally particularly in our three villages these resources are extremely limited and not accessible currently to so many. Resources are needed for this work along with volunteers. What is evident from how the coped in lockdown is that within our communities we do have people who can give their time and skills, and now as a community we will bring what we need into the villages and help us recover and grow. It is what so many say they need, and now they have been listened too and actions are being taken.

We thank all those volunteers and NHS staff particularly who support our work as we move forward. In the near future we will be holding our first 'Zoom' PPG meeting. Let's see how that goes.

Keep Safe

Gilly Hagen

Co-Chair – Chair 'Blidworth on the Move'

NHS Patient Leader

Contact number 07816933429