

# Chapter 1. Introduction

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Thank you for volunteering to be a member of your Patient Participation Group (PPG).

A PPG is a group of patients from a GP practice, working in partnership with the practice. PPGs act as a bridge between patients and the GP practice to ensure that the patient voice is heard about issues that matter most to them. PPGs can help to ensure that services are improved from the patients' perspective, that there are good communications and relationships between the practice and its patients and that efforts are made to promote patients' health and wellbeing. All GP practices are now required to consult their patients about the services they provide and PPGs are the most effective way of doing that.

Each PPG is unique and PPG members, along with practice staff, determine their PPG's exact objectives. In general, PPGs seek patient feedback on the practice and improvements that can be made, hold health awareness and information events on particular health issues, signpost individual patients to supporting services, conduct patient research and support the practice in building relationships with its patients and other local bodies.

It is important to understand where PPGs fit into the UK's health and social care system. This part of the Toolkit explains what a PPG is and provides background to help you understand the NHS and how it is organised at local level in Lambeth. It is not intended to be a detailed guide to the UK health and social care system. Do let us know if you would like further information.

## 1.1 The role of a PPG

### What is a Patient Participation Group (PPG)?

A PPG is a group of registered patients from a GP practice, working in partnership with the practice to improve services from the patient perspective and to promote patients' health and wellbeing.

PPGs act as a bridge between patients and the GP practice to ensure that patients' voices are heard, regarding issues that matter most to them. PPGs do not get involved with individual clinical cases. They can, however, signpost patients about how to get support to resolve individual clinical matters. To improve services from the patients' perspective, PPGs will collect and share patients' experiences within the practice.

### The role of PPGs

From 1 April 2015 each GP practice is contractually required to consult its patients about the services it provides. PPGs are patient-driven groups and meet with patients, GPs, the practice manager, and other practice staff to identify service improvements that can be made. As GP practices have to take on a more pro-active role on prevention and health promotion, PPGs can have a key role to work with the practices in health awareness and information events. They also provide support to the practice in its dealing with other bodies and conduct patient research.

### PPGs in Lambeth

Long before PPGs became a contractual requirement on 1 April 2015, patients across Lambeth had been coming together and working with their GP practices to ensure patient views are heard. Why? There is a strong desire to improve local primary care services to best meet the needs of local populations.

These early initiatives grew organically, thanks to much effort from volunteers, and each group became unique in its form, function and format.

There isn't one template of how a PPG should be run, although there is much good practice locally, and nationally, from which we can learn. The Lambeth PPG Network has worked with its members to produce guidance on what an effective PPG looks like (this is contained in section 1.2). This toolkit provides checklists and templates to provide help and support where required.

#### LOCAL CASE STUDY

*The Clapham Park Group Practice runs a range of PPG initiatives such as 'Mindapples' for mental health and wellbeing awareness events, Warm and Well in Winter, Carers Week event, diabetes presentation, Teach in Healthcare, outreach at a Children's Centre and quarterly Healthy Walks.*

## Who are PPGs good for?

The National Association of Patient Participation, which promotes and supports patient participation in primary care, published the following key messages in 2014. Further guidance and support is available through their website (<http://www.napp.org.uk/>).

### PPGs are good for patients because:

- Patients will be more responsible for and take an active interest in their own health
- Patients will have a better understanding and knowledge of the practice and its staff
- All sections of the community will be enabled to get involved through virtual PPGs which use email networks and online surveys
- Patients will be actively involved in developing arrangements for their primary healthcare before decisions are made
- They benefit from improved communication and relationships with staff
- Patients will have a forum for positive ideas and voicing concerns
- PPGs can offer some peer support to patients in managing their conditions, making healthy choices and accessing information.

### PPGs are good for GPs and practice staff because:

- They assist GPs and the practice team to develop an equal partnership with their patients and an increased understanding of patients' priorities, needs, wishes and perspectives
- They help GPs and their staff to communicate accurately and honestly with individual patients ensuring there is regular two-way dialogue and feedback between the practice and its patients
- Through virtual PPGs, GPs and staff can connect with the wide diversity of the practice population particularly those from minority communities and people who seldom have their voices heard
- PPGs are an additional resource for the practice raising awareness of and signposting wider services, promoting health and well-being choices, providing practical help in administering specific campaigns
- PPGs can encourage more self-care for minor ailments empowering patients and the public to use services more effectively and appropriately
- GPs and their staff will be able to plan services jointly with patients in order to increase their effectiveness and target resources more effectively
- PPGs can take pressure off the practice by helping patients with nonmedical and social care issues
- The practice will be able to get help from patients in meeting national targets and objectives such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Essential Standards, patient involvement in Revalidation of Doctors and the implementation of national programmes such as Patient Online

- The practice will have a forum to voice concerns, ideas and suggestions to patients
- PPGs help ensure decision-making is shared with patients and with the wider community about key health matters, reflecting patient needs locally
- Practices will get closer to the community for whom they care

**PPGs are good for the community** because:

- Patients will have an organisation through which they can identify their own needs and priorities
- Patients will be able to get an idea of what is needed to improve healthcare, and make sure that the patient view is always represented
- Patients will maintain an open two-way dialogue with GPs and other healthcare professionals
- Patients will be able to have a say in shaping local services through local PPG networks feeding into commissioning arrangements
- Patients will have an opportunity to become involved in other community initiatives focussed on local health care provision such as their Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Local Healthwatch

*(Source: National Association of Patient Participation, 2014)*

## 1.2 What an effective PPG looks like

The Lambeth PPG Gold Standards for an effective PPG have been developed jointly by the Network and its members.

A Lambeth PPG operating at a 'gold standard' level would:

1. Be patient-led, with active GP practice engagement
2. Be representative of the registered patients within the GP practice
3. Communicate openly and consistently with patients and GP practice staff
4. Be an active Lambeth PPG Network member
5. Support registered patients within the GP practice to actively self-manage their health and wellbeing.

This toolkit provides a series of checklists and templates for PPGs to use to check their processes against each of the PPG gold standards.

In addition, the Lambeth PPG Network will support PPGs and practices to conduct self-assessments to review and celebrate progress over the past year and to identify potential areas for future development, in order to move towards the PPG operating at a 'gold standard' level.

Further details about the Lambeth PPG Network are contained in section 1.6.

A detailed PPG Gold Standard can be obtained from the Lambeth PPG Network on request or download from their website.

## 1.3 PPG contractual requirements and expectations

There is a series of requirements and expectations for the establishment and monitoring of PPGs across England. First, the NHS Constitution states that “the NHS will actively encourage feedback from the public, patients and staff, welcome it and use it to improve services”.

### General Medical Service contract

The General Medical Services (GMS) contract is the contract between general practices and NHS England for delivering primary care services to local communities. The GMS contract says that the contractor must establish and maintain a group known as a “Patient Participation Group” to:

- Obtain patient views and feedback about the practice’s services, at frequent intervals and in an appropriate and accessible manner which is designed to encourage patient participation
- Make reasonable efforts to ensure that those consulted (for example the membership of the PPG) are representative of its registered patients
- Review any feedback received from patients with the PPG and consider what improvements (if any) should be made

### How are PPGs supported financially?

Individual practices are expected to financially support their PPG, if they have one. The support will normally cover administrative and other support costs, including contacting patients when necessary.

As a volunteer group without a legal status, PPGs cannot receive and hold money, so they need to work with the relevant GP practice to ensure financial support for their activities and to meet expenses.

### How will progress be reported?

There are no specific requirements for how to run a PPG; GP practices will be required to confirm through an ‘e-declaration’ process that they have met requirements and report these to NHS England. As part of the new CQC assessment process of primary care, the CQC may also seek the PPG’s views on patient involvement within the practice (see section 3.3 on Care Quality Commission).

At a local level, feedback on individual PPG's progress can also be shared with the Lambeth PPG Network. If issues or concerns arise that are common to several practices, the Lambeth PPG Network may represent these, on behalf of the PPGs concerned, through the feedback process to and from the Lambeth CCG (see section 3.3).

## 1.4 PPGs in Lambeth

There are 47 GP practices across the three localities of Lambeth: the North locality, South East locality and South West locality. The localities have been created to improve the alignment of resources across Lambeth; further details can be found in section 1.5 (*Understanding the NHS*). As each GP practice is required to have a PPG, the aim is to have 47 fully functioning PPGs across Lambeth. The Lambeth PPG Network will support the development of PPGs; further details can be found in section 1.6.

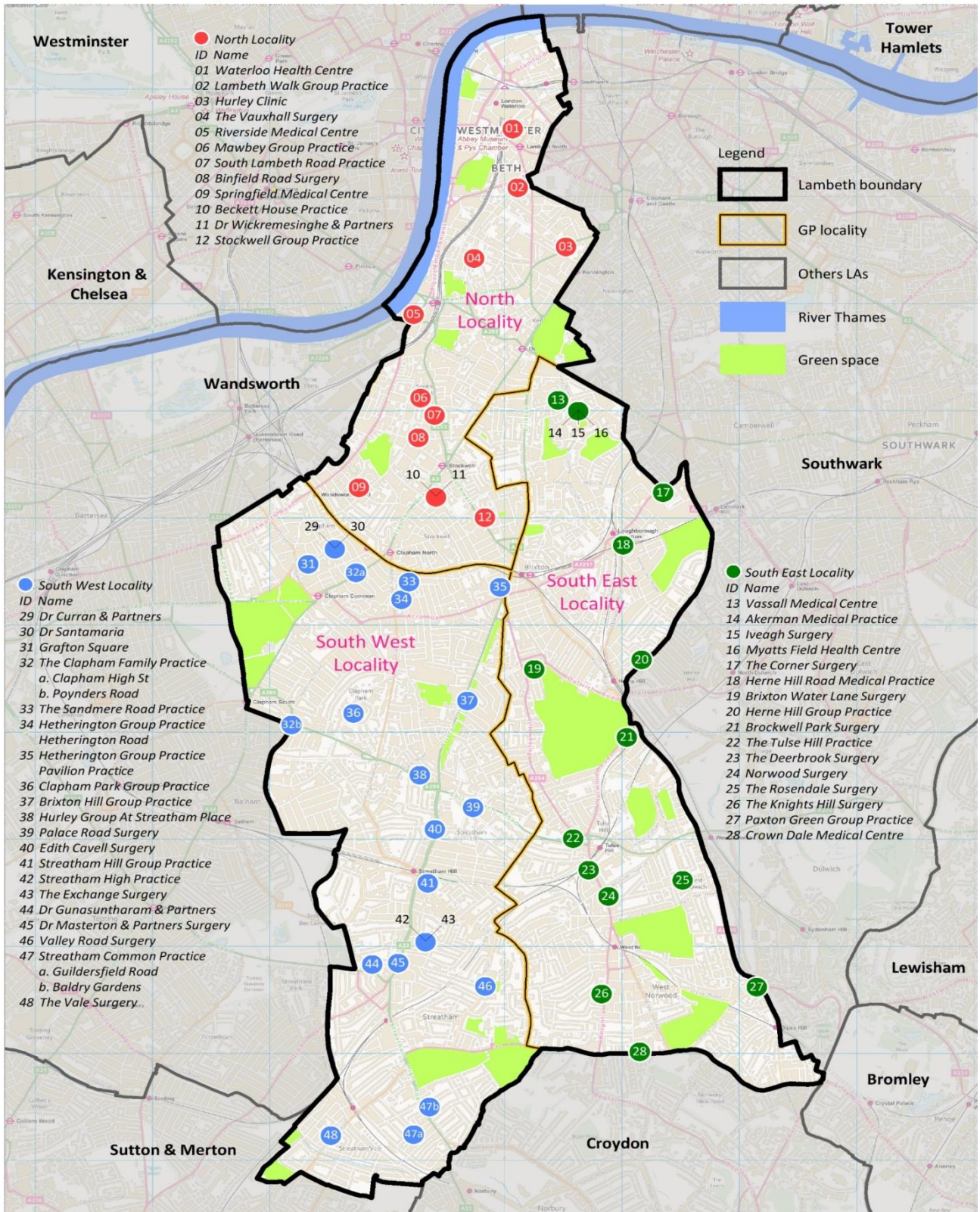
The map on the following page shows the location of GP practices across Lambeth.

This guide is intended for all PPGs across Lambeth. It may help to remind the more established PPGs of their responsibilities and be useful when new members join an existing PPG. The guide can also be used by newly established groups, to learn from good practices from other PPGs across Lambeth.

# Lambeth GP practices

● North Locality (12)   
 ● South East Locality (16)   
 ● South West Locality (20)

Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group



31st October 2013

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**Note:** (15) Iveagh Surgery and (16) Myatt Field merged to become Minet Green Health Practice

● North 95,816   
 ● South East 113,701   
 ● South West 157,054





A summary of key NHS terms is below, along with a brief overview of the national and local organisations that are relevant to PPGs. This is current as at December 2015.

### Key NHS terms

- **Acute trusts** ensure hospitals provide high-quality healthcare and check that they spend their money efficiently. They also decide how a hospital will develop, so that services improve. Acute trusts employ a large part of the NHS workforce; including nurses, doctors, pharmacists, midwives and health visitors. They also employ people doing jobs related to medicine, such as physiotherapists, radiographers, podiatrists, speech and language therapists, counsellors, occupational therapists, psychologists and healthcare scientists
- A **health care provider** is an organisation acting as a direct provider of health care services under an NHS service agreement. Examples include GP practices, NHS trusts, local authorities with social care responsibilities and other agencies.
- **Commissioners** are responsible for planning, agreeing, paying and monitoring local primary care and other health services
- **Co-commissioning** from 2015, NHS England’s primary care commissioning power has been delegated to local **Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)**. The overall aim of primary care co-commissioning is to harness the energy of CCGs to create a joined up, clinically led commissioning system which delivers seamless, integrated out-of-hospital services based around the needs of local populations
- The **Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)** is a GP membership organisation responsible for commissioning or “buying” healthcare services for people in their respective borough. From 2016, CCG will be commissioning both primary care and hospital services (**see co-commissioning**).
- **Mental health trusts** provide health and social care services for people with mental health problems
- **Other primary care providers** include local pharmacies, dental practices and high street optometrists. Apart from dispensing drugs, pharmacies have an increased role in primary care provisions and many provide extra services, including the minor ailment scheme and the healthy living pharmacy initiative
- **Primary care** is a term used to describe a collection of services people may access for their health and wellbeing, which include: GP practices, dental practices, community pharmacy, high street optometry and other services.
- **Transforming Primary Care** is a priority area of work hosted by NHS England which aims to support GP practices to work without borders and in partnership with wider health and care systems to offer more proactive care (prevention and health promotion), accessible care (personalised, responsive, timely and accessible service) and coordinated care (patient centred and coordinated care, particularly for patients with complex health needs). This programme is central to the CCG’s role to monitor the quality of GP services and to provide local enhanced services in primary care.

## Key national organisations

- The **Care Quality Commission** is an independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England. By law, all GP practices in England must register with the CQC. The CQC carries out inspections of GP practices and patient and PPG views are sought during the inspection. The CQC also inspects hospitals and all care homes
- The **General Medical Council** is the independent regulator of individual doctors and also deals with complaints about doctors. The revalidation process of doctors involves asking for patient feedback
- The **National Association for Patient Participation** was established in 1978 and is a UK umbrella organisation for patient-led groups in general practice. It provides essential support to GPs and CCGs through a comprehensive range of evidence-based information resources.
- **NHS England** oversees the budget, planning, delivery and day-to-day operation of the commissioning side of the NHS across England. NHS England oversees Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and holds the contracts for GPs and NHS dentists (**see co-commissioning**)
- **VoiceAbility** is a provider of the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service. The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is a free and independent service that can help you make a complaint about a National Health Service (NHS). Helpline: 0300 330 5454

## The local landscape

This is a simplified version of the local landscape and does not attempt to capture the complete landscape, as the King's Fund animation diagram does. Short descriptions of the key organisations are also included.

- **Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group** is the local CCG. It has 5 priority areas of work, each with its own programme board to oversee workplan and progress. All the work relevant to primary care services is under the Primary Care Development Programme Board.
- **GP Federations** are provider groups, covering GP practices in North, South East and South West Lambeth. Each individual practice will still hold their own contracts to provide core GP service. The three Federations will bid for contracts for “enhanced services”, to be provided across localities. Their focus is on “population health”.
- The three **Local Care Networks** (North, South East and South West) are part of the primary care transformation initiative. It brings together the local authority, hospitals, community representatives (including PPG members), voluntary sector, community pharmacists and public health to improve joint working based on health and social care needs of local communities/population. Each LCN is piloting priority work area, testing models in joint working.

- Three **Locality Care Networks** have been established in Lambeth. They bring GP practices together with the CCG to discuss business, share information and progress within practices. Meetings are minuted and chaired by a GP.
- **Healthwatch Lambeth** aims to ensure people's voices count when it comes to shaping and improving local health and care services.
- **Lambeth Council** is responsible for the delivery of social care services.
- **My Health London** is an NHS website showing how GP practices are performing against national standards and how they compare with other London GP practices, helping people find the best GP for them
- Lambeth CCG hosts the **Primary Care Development Board**, which is responsible for transforming primary care services in Lambeth and providing training and support to GP practices and incentive schemes, for example: financial incentive scheme for patient participation. A nominated representative of the Lambeth PPG Network is invited to sit on this Board
- **South East London** is a newly formed group of six CCGs across South East London which work together to commission services across the wider geographical area. Lambeth CCG is part of this group
- There is a large number of voluntary groups active within Lambeth including (but not limited to): Age UK Lambeth, Lambeth Mencap, Mosaic Club House, Disabilities Advice Service Lambeth, Lambeth and Southwark Mind, St Michael Fellowships and SE London Vision....

### Local programmes

- **Improving Access in Lambeth** is a 2015/16 programme that resulted from a £3.5m award from the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund to improve access to GP services. The LCCG has also match £1.5m to this project. Four GP practices (one in North, one in South East and two in South West) have been selected to provide services from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week to all patients in Lambeth.

### Further resources

If you want to know more about the structure of the NHS in England, along with details of how it is run and monitored, a comprehensive guide to 'Understanding the New NHS' is available here:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/simple-nhs-guide.pdf>

## 1.6 The Lambeth PPG Network

Before PPGs became a contractual requirement, some groups in Lambeth were coming together to share their experiences and learn from each other. The first Lambeth PPG Network meeting held in December 2011 was initiated by PPGs from Dr Masterton GP Practice and Herne Hill Road GP practice.

The formation of the Network in 2011 was well ahead of its time. It reflected the vision and leadership of patients and practice staff across Lambeth who believed that patients in general practices should have a voice and wanted to share their experiences.

Since then, the Network has grown into an independent group to support PPGs throughout Lambeth. The Network's vision is for a unified and representative patient voice that helps to shape the development of Lambeth primary care. The focus of the Network is on supporting its members, the 47 PPGs, so that they can in turn support their local populations - the 370 000 primary care patients currently living in Lambeth.

The Network exists to bring together PPGs in Lambeth and to champion and represent the interests of GPs' patients in the key decision making forums that are responsible for the development and provision of Lambeth's primary care.

### **The Network supports PPGs by:**

- Hosting regular Network wide meetings to support the sharing of good practice and understand issues that local PPGs face in representing the patient view in primary care
- Circulating regular newsletters to share invitations to forums and events, local developments in primary care and good practice
- Collating and raising common issues and concerns from PPGs through the locality networks, up to the Lambeth CCG (details are included in section 3.3).