

Minutes for Withnell Health Centre Patient Participation Group

Wednesday 25th February 2026

Patient Participants:

Jeff Cottam (Chair)	Janet Melling
Margaret France	Amy Miller
Janet Horton	Tracie O’Gara
Lynne Lynch	Audrey Perry
Bernard Melling (Minutes)	Janice Scanlon

Attendees from Withnell Health Centre:

Dr Ann Robinson
Nicola Phillipson

1. Apologies

Received from: Gillian Ainsworth, Ron Ainsworth, Karen Bretherton, Ann Christopher, Kirsty Craney, Hazel Hebson, Alan Martin (Vice Chair), Mike Matulewicz and David Wood.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (3rd December 2025)

The group accepted the minutes, circulated by email, from the meeting of 3 December 2025 as a true record.

3. Matters Arising/Action Table

Jeff referred to the action table and the group reported on actions carried out since the last meeting.

- The recycling scheme for disability aids is working well, although some items are still being taken without using the correct signing out procedure. Wheelchairs were described as equivalent to ‘gold dust’. The scheme and procedures are under constant review. **(LL and TO)**
- An official request (NP) has been made for the installation of the water butt and Nicola is still awaiting a reply. She agreed to chase this. Agreed that shortage of water is not a problem at the moment! **Action NP**
- The Art Display is being progressed by Mike. Request update at next meeting. **Action MM**
- The ICB “Good Health Starts” information has been circulated to PPG members via email.

Other Matters Arising:

Jeff updated the meeting on the further progress made by the Communications Group since the last meeting. The group had met again to receive training from Ron on how to create posts on the PPG Facebook page and other associated local sites. The group also learned how to schedule such postings for future dates. Relevant postings were agreed and posted using the annual diary of events Nicola had shared. Posts were also created to request feedback from patients. It was agreed that the group needed to come up with a plan for future postings throughout the year. Jeff agreed to liaise with the Comms Group. **Action JC.**

4. Feedback from Patients/Surveys

Nicola circulated the January statistics for the practice highlighting the amount of work carried out by the staff. The trend in all areas was similar to previous months with the exception of a significant drop in DNAs (Did Not Attend) with only 19 being recorded for January. It was agreed that the spreadsheet we now have showing this data month by month will be kept up to date and circulated prior to each meeting so that shifting trends could be considered.

The “Friends and Family” Feedback data for January was reported and considered. 266 replies were received in total and of those 247 were very good (93%), 14 were good (6%) and only 3 were recorded as poor (just over 1%). These were discussed by the group. One referred to a patient who had a blood collection appointment scheduled for 7:50 but could not get into the building until 08:00. Another referred to difficulty collecting blood. It was agreed that this is not an uncommon occurrence when a patient has “difficult” veins. Nicola confirmed all staff collecting blood are fully trained and competent in the role. The last one “poor” return was not completed.

Jeff referred to the written slip feedbacks received. Since the last meeting one had been posted in the box in reception and two had been comments received via Facebook Messenger linked to our PPG FB site. All were very positive and complementary. Each one was read out and considered. All agreed the comments were excellent, demonstrating how well the practice is performing. It was agreed that we should respond directly to all such comments. Nicola pointed out that she would be sharing this feedback with all staff. Jeff agreed to update the word document he had created collating feedback comments and forward to Nicola. **Action JC**

It was suggested that the **HC website** needs an update; this is managed by the NHS. It was questioned whether the PPG could support this update?

5. Surgery News & Practice Update

Nicola provided the update report. Dr Ressel is expecting her second baby in June, and maternity leave has been covered internally. Dr Moitra is going to Syria in the near future for 8 weeks. A new receptionist, Lorna, starts next Monday. The surgery is stopping the free ear syringing service, in line with NHS policy. Nicola informed the meeting that the

funding for this service actually ceased approximately 4 years ago but the practice has delayed the decision to withdraw the service until now. It was also noted that the equipment in use at the practice is no longer suitable. There was some discussion regarding this and it was questioned as to whether it could be done privately within the surgery premises. It was noted that if you already have hearing aids a free service is available at Specsavers in Chorley.

Jeff referred to the recent withdrawal of the centrally funded phlebotomy service questioning how this was now being covered. Nicola confirmed that the service continues as before, supported by the practice team.

6. Pharmacy Update

Jeff reported that he had recently sought an update from the pharmacy re progress with the repeat prescriptions development. The Pharmacy Team were happy that all was now progressing well. A growing list of suitable patients for repeat dispensing was being developed.

The lead Pharmacist had also suggested that it would be helpful if the practice could inform patients that the dispensing of medications may not be immediate when a patient attends promptly after seeing the doctor. If patients could be made aware of a potential delay this would prevent some frustration. It was considered that it was not practical to ask patients to wait before visiting the pharmacy. The advice is, if at all possible, to order repeat prescriptions via the NHS App.

It was noted that there still seemed to be some issues with the availability of medicine stock with some reports being received of patients having to go to other pharmacies to access their required medications.

It was mentioned that a lot of patients are still not using the NHS app fully and it was proposed that the PPG could be involved in an App Training session. It was suggested that there could be a drop in session arranged for Saturday 28th March between 10am and 12 noon, when the surgery is open. Amy suggested that this could be communicated via the PPG Facebook page. It was also agreed that it would be useful to post information about the NHS app capabilities on the page. Amy agreed to arrange this. **Action AM**

Jeff reported that he had again extended an invite for Pharmacy to attend our next meeting.

7. Notification of Patient Waiting Times

A concern had been raised re patients and the occasional waiting time issue. Dr Robinson explained that an occasional delay was unavoidable due to the unanticipated requirements of some patient appointments. Any time delays are monitored by the reception staff and patients, if necessary, are verbally informed and reassured. The use of the TV screen and Booking in screen was ruled out as a possible means of notification. It was noted that most

patients accept that at times the Doctor might have to deal with very complex time consuming medical issues and that any 'delays' are therefore unavoidable.

8. Suggestions for Future PPG Projects

The group considered potential future projects that the PPG could develop or support. Lynne and Tracie commented that when they had delivered the equipment recycling sessions some patients had benefited from simply being able to talk with someone. This had led them to consider a Bereavement Support Group on the lines of a coffee and a chat (not counselling) which could best be provided after the equipment recycling session. Tracie suggested that it would be best delivered just by themselves initially to see how it progressed. Extra PPG support could be brought in later as needed. **Action LL & TO.** It was agreed that the availability of these sessions should be advertised on the PPG FB page. Next date 28th March. Amy agreed to arrange this. **Action AM**

There was an issue discussed regarding vaccination take up, now affected since midwives and health visitors no longer have a presence at the HC to promote this. It was questioned whether additional publicity would be helpful?

The issue of the Wellbeing Garden maintenance was raised now that spring is approaching. Jeff suggested that Gillian, as lead, would no doubt be in touch with the group shortly. It was suggested that some bird boxes would be useful. The group were reminded that there are some excellent posters, produced by the children of St Joseph's School, displayed in the Waiting Room promoting the Wellbeing Garden.

Jeff asked about the feasibility of providing "PPG Listening Table" sessions which he had learned are delivered by another PPG group (not locally). After some discussion it was agreed that we should not support this at the present time since we make ourselves available at other events such as the vaccination day/coffee mornings when the PPG members can interface with the community.

9. Any Other Business

There were a number of issues raised:

- It was noted that the HC, in a recent report, was placed amongst the top 10 in Lancashire and not far from Number one.
- The Suggestion Box is now more visible and accessible.
- The Learning Disabilities agenda item had been deferred to the next meeting.
- A board displaying photos, names and roles of staff would be useful, and could be displayed in the Waiting Room.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 6pm on Wednesday 3rd June 2026.

Action Sheet Matrix
Withnell Health Centre Patient Participation Group
25 February 2026

Agenda Item No.	ACTION	BY	DATE
3	Chase NHS support Team regarding work required to allow for the installation of the water butt for garden area.	NP	Next Meeting
3	Mike to update the group on progress made regarding the display of art work.	MM	Next Meeting
3	Jeff to liaise with the Communication Group to establish a plan for future information posting on the PPG FB page.	JC	Next Meeting
4	Jeff to update the document of feedback comments and forward to Nicola.	JC	Next Meeting
6	Communicate on PPG FB site information regarding NHS App drop in training session at next Sat am clinic opening on 28 March. Post information on the site about the capabilities of the NHS app.	AM AM	Next Meeting
8	Develop the Bereavement Support Group following on from the equipment recycling sessions.	LL&TO	Next Meeting
8	Promote the availability of the Bereavement Support Group chat sessions on the PPG FB Group page.	AM	Next Meeting