

LYME BAY MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

NOTES OF OPEN MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2025

7.00 P.M. AT UPLYME VILLAGE HALL

The meeting was chaired by Jane Gregory, PPG Co-Chair.

Approximately 140 people attended the annual PPG Open Meeting, which was held in Uplyme this year as last year's meeting was held in Charmouth. The intention is to alternate from one side of the medical practice area to the other. Unfortunately, after careful consideration, no venue in Lyme Regis with good parking could be identified.

1. Pharmacy issues.

Fiona Arnold, NHS Dorset Community Pharmacy Clinical Lead attended the meeting, and **Richard Brown, Chief Officer of Community Pharmacies Dorset** joined the meeting remotely via computer. Patients expressed their serious and worrying difficulties obtaining medicines since the closure of Boots Chemist, and the recent sudden closure of Jhoots at the medical centre, resulting in no pharmacy in Lyme Regis.

Fiona explained that pharmacies are private businesses, with which the NHS has contracts, and the NHS has to work within the law to resolve the problem. Under the law, the Jhoots site at the medical centre is classed as a 'temporary' closure, and there are no short cuts within the legal process to remove the contractor. All the NHS can do is fine Jhoots for breach of contract, and work with them to try and get the service running again. Jhoots have indicated they are planning to open again in Lyme Regis on 1st October - if they do not open, they will continue to be fined, which will add to the case against them. In the meantime, patients will have to continue using pharmacies in Bridport or over the border in Devon (not a realistic option for people without transport), or alternatively order medications electronically on-line and have them delivered direct to their home.

Richard Brown used to be the Area Manager for Lloyds Pharmacies in Dorset, so knows the area well. Whilst he sympathised with the situation, which is a national problem, he said it was important to recognise the pressures on pharmacy businesses, which have been massively underfunded by central government: the additional funding put into the pharmacy sector on 1st April this year only equated exactly to the rise in wages and national insurance.

Jhoots is currently a 'live' contract with the NHS. NHS Dorset will continue to have weekly meetings with Jhoots, working with them to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

Continued.....

2. 'Moving Forward in Changing Times' – presentation by Dr. Forbes Watson

NOTE – all the presentation slides are now on the practice website.

Go to www.lymebaymedicalpractice.co.uk Click on 'Your PPG' at the top, scroll right down to 'Future Patient Participation Group meetings' and click on the picture of Lyme Regis 'Moving Forward in Changing Times' to download.

In summary:

Dr. Watson explained the issues facing G.P. practices in England using the most recent data:-

1. Volume of patients and workload.

Nationally - July 2025 – G.P. Registered population = 63.82 million

50% of the population access their G.P. practice every month ***

G.P. practices provide 80% of all clinical care.

Every day there are an estimated 600 million patient interactions with G.P., community, hospital, mental health and ambulance services = 1.7 million contacts every day.

Locally - July 2025 - just under 10,000 patients registered with Lyme Bay G.P. practice.

During July 2025, there were 5,281 appointments (which equates to *** above), 8,332 medications prescribed and 6,036 bloods reviewed.

2. Issues with workforce.

Whilst each G.P. has 17% more patients, currently there are 1,086 fewer fully qualified full time G.P.s than 10 years ago. Workload and work retention are inherently linked.

More G.P.s are choosing to work part-time to manage the workload.

10% of G.P.s under the age of 40 left the service in the 12 month period prior to March 2023.

3. Additional roles introduced to manage the workload.

The traditional model of only seeing a doctor is unsustainable, so additional roles have been introduced e.g. Advanced Practitioner, Enhanced Practice Nurse, practice Clinical Pharmacist.

4. What is the solution?

More investment in community services. (Note – Dorset Council has the oldest age profile of anywhere else in the country = higher medical needs with a limited workforce to recruit from.)

Investment in prevention i.e. set conditions to maintain good health and wellbeing (e.g. housing, education etc.); prevent early stage of ill health in people at risk (e.g. healthy eating, exercise etc.); early detection and intervention; reduce impact of existing condition.

Improve our well-being. Interesting question: Is it better to be fat and fit? Or thin and unfit?

Answer = fat and fit. REGULAR EXERCISE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR GOOD HEALTH ,
as well as a healthy diet. **TAKE CARE OF YOUR SELF !**

HOW SERVICES OPERATE

Wendy McDermott, Nurse Practitioner, gave an overview of how services operate for chronic diseases such as C.O.P.D. (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, and Asthma. She also outlined the community support available.

Louise Tate, Nurse Practitioner, gave an overview of how to access services, either by phoning the surgery, using the website, or visiting the surgery. She explained the different types of appointments offered to patients – routine/on the day triage requests/E-consult for less urgent triage.

Rosie Barton, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, gave an overview of the vaccination services. She particularly emphasised the need for children to have the MMR vaccination – cases of measles are rising – it is highly contagious and can be fatal.

Other vaccinations available include:

RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) for ages 75-79, or turned 80 after 1st Sept. 2024

Shingles vaccination for ages 70-79

HPV (Human papillomavirus vaccination) for ages 12-13

Flu and Covid vaccinations

More detail on the presentation slides, as stated above.

The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

Several patients from the floor expressed their appreciation of the service provided to patients by the Practice, and thanked the staff for their commitment to patient care.

Notes Joanna Scotton

Secretary, Lyme Bay Medical Practice PPG.

LYME BAY MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2025

8.45 P.M. AT UPLYME VILLAGE HALL

The meeting was chaired by Caroline Aldridge, PPG Co-Chair.

Minutes of the last PPG Steering Group meeting on 22nd July 2025 to be agenda item at next meeting in January 2026.

1. Confirmation of Steering Group members and postholders.

It was agreed that Caroline Aldridge and Jane Gregory will remain as Co-Chairs.

Joanna Scotton has resigned from her role as PPG secretary, and from the Steering Group.

Emma-Jane Loveridge (known as Em) was proposed and seconded to take over the role of secretary, which she accepted.

Other Steering Group members are: Alan Kennard, Penny Duffield, Elaine Taylor, Andy Taylor, Colin Bowditch, Lynnette Ravenscroft, David Hardman, Susan Gale, Shirley Williams.

Our Terms of Reference allow for 15 Steering Group members, so we currently have 3 vacancies - if any patient of the practice would like to join us please email the secretary: lymebayppg@gmail.com

2. Dates of Steering Group meetings for the next year.

Steering Group meetings will continue to be held bi-monthly on the fourth Tuesday afternoon in the month at Lyme Regis surgery, dates as follows:

25th November 2025

27th January 2026

24th March 2026

26th May 2026

28th July 2026

22nd September 2026

3. PPG Red comments boxes in surgery waiting rooms

Caroline reminded patients about the red comments boxes on the PPG notice boards (in the waiting room at Charmouth, and on the left as you enter the Lyme Regis surgery). The boxes are for any general questions or comments you may have (not personal medical issues) and are only opened by a PPG member.

4. Review of PPG Activities November 2024 to September 2025

The PPG Steering Group has been very active on behalf of patients this past year, working closely with the Practice to improve services for patients.

Please see Chair's Report of PPG activities attached.

5. Dr. Forbes Watson gave his thanks to the PPG for their help and support, in particular for helping at vaccination clinics, and tackling parking issues outside the surgery.

6. Joanna Scotton was thanked by the Chairs, surgery staff, and the Steering Group for her 14 years of service to the patient groups at both Charmouth and Lyme Regis practices.

Minutes – Joanna Scotton

Lyme Bay Medical Practice Patient Participation Group - Chairs'

Summary of Activities 2025

The Steering Group

The Steering Group has met every two months during 2025. Co-Chaired by Caroline Aldridge and Jane Gregory. We have welcomed some new members of the Steering Group and three have stepped down, former Chair Vicci Stoqueler, Jane Mansergh and Peter Hodges. Currently we have 12 members of the Group and the maximum number is 15, so we are open to recruiting new members if they wish to put themselves forward.

The aim of our Steering Group is to represent all of the Practice patients and work with the Practice team to improve the patient experience and assist the practice to maximize its resources. We regularly feed in comment to the practice from patients on a variety of topics, through our patient comment boxes, email and verbal requests. We cascade information out through the same sources and our virtual email group which all patients are welcome to sign up to. Similarly the practice informs and consults us at our regular meetings.

Communication

The PPG continues to work on improving communication and will set up a new working group for communications in the New Year, building on the work of our previous group, run by Chris Boothroyd, which did so much to help develop the website and other tools, including the concept of our annual Open Meeting such as we are having today.

During 2025 the notice boards in the two surgeries have been refreshed. The content of the video in the Lyme waiting room has been reviewed and recommendations for improvement will be made shortly. Specific topics have been considered: for example, we discussed ways of encouraging patients to get their travel vaccinations from the right service and in good time, to save stress for them and for the practice. We are having ongoing discussions about how patients can be made aware of which staff are on duty on the day.

At our request the practice has also produced a Practice Information Leaflet, for the first time since COVID, which we welcome.

The red comments boxes in the surgeries are not used as much as we would like and we continue to encourage patients to use them.

Digital skills

We support those wishing to improve their digital access by signposting to Dorset Council's Digital Champions sessions run by Andy Taylor on Monday mornings in Lyme Library and Karen Brook on Monday afternoons in Charmouth Library.

Car parking at Lyme Regis Medical Centre

The new path to the car park at Lyme Regis is welcomed and well used but we still have inconsiderate parking outside the main entrance on either side of the road. This causes safety issues, for patients trying to walk across the road, cars pulling in from the main road and emergency services and others gaining access. It causes a particular problem for those with limited mobility. We have worked with the practice to tackle the various reasons for the problem, contacting Woodroffe school to ask that parents do not use the area for turning and parking; liaising with the business park and talking to delivery drivers and patients to encourage more thoughtful parking. Signage to the car park is being improved and we are grateful to our Dorset Councillor, Belinda Bawden, who has been working with Dorset Highways Department and the Practice on plans for disabled parking bays, signage and enhancement of the double yellow lines outside the practice.

Some specific topics we have been involved with in the last year include

Assisting at Vaccination Clinics .

Where volunteer marshalls from our Group helped the efficiency of the service.

Linking with external organisations

We were pleased to have contributions and a presentation from the Contented Dementia Trust this year and have done some work lobbying the Dorset Integrated Care Board for provision of different approaches to the management of diabetes.

Physiotherapy – referrals and treatment

The PPG has clarified the arrangements for physiotherapy appointments, referrals and treatment, in response to patients' concerns that they were not getting the service they expected. This seems to be working better now, although reports continue of problems with referrals to the musculo-skeletal service.

Blood pressure monitoring

Concerns were passed on to the practice about two aspects of blood pressure monitoring. Firstly, there is only one ambulatory monitor which can mean a long wait for patients to access it. The possibility of acquiring another is being explored as it is an expensive machine. Secondly, concerns were expressed about hygiene at the fixed machines in the waiting rooms, and the practice agreed to provide clinical wipes.

Pharmacy services

We have been liaising with the practice about the lack of any pharmacy services in Lyme since the closure of Jhoots and have offered any assistance we can. We receive regular updates from the practice. We await further developments.

Finally

A very big thank you to our retiring Secretary, Joanna Scotton, who has been such a tremendous support to the PPG in her years working for us and, in particular, in the last two years when she held the Group together in demanding circumstances – we will miss her.

Caroline Aldridge and Jane Gregory

Co-Chairs, Lyme Bay Medical Practice PPG September 2025