



Quarterly PPG Meeting Minutes

2nd June 2026

Meeting #2 - 2026

Present :

Penny Rathbone (Chair)

Martin Preston

David Butler

Stephen Doyle

Chris Allchurch

Suzanne Wright

David Back (Secretary)

Molly Dewar (Asst Practice Mgr.)

Nicola Rice (Practice Mgr)

Dr. Matt Thomas (Practice GP and Partner)

- 1. Introductions:** The Chair welcomed everyone and all participants introduced themselves. Dr Taylor was here to represent the medical side of the Practice – Welcome All !
- 2. Agenda Items and Matters Arriving:** The Agenda was accepted, no major additional items required.
- 3. Minutes of the last Meeting and Action Item List:** The Minutes and Action Item List were reviewed, and updated (see attached), the progress on major items are listed below
- 4. LifeStyle Event Update:** Chris has had very productive discussions with Ponteland Leisure Center and County Council. Nicola with follow up to represent the Practice on a formal basis, there are many possible options to work through. Most likely, an Agenda Item for the next Meeting for scope, timing and location.
- 5. Staffing Update:** Dr Matt – With another GP onboarding in August, the Practice will be fully staffed by September. The summary of overall staffing levels is appended. The next major step forward to increase Practice Service levels will come from Digital Front Door optimisation plus other initiatives.

6. **Clinics:** Suzanne raised the issue of the visibility of current availability of Skin Clinics, and how to book these. Molly pointed out that these currently take place for various conditions and the schedule will be made available via the Practice website. – Added to AI List.
7. **Using System Connect to request renewal of regular medications.** There was a general concern that the SystemConnect pathway for reordering medications (with associated medical assessments) is not clear, generating patient concern for something that is routine (and a popular) route. Molly will provide a step by step guide and add to website.
8. **Operational Continuity Contingency Plan:** Molly/Nicola explained that should there be a dramatic reduction in the local physical or IT/phone infrastructure, there are plans/capabilities in place to redirect IT capabilities to alternative Servers and to relocate staff to alternative locations. In the unforeseen absence of key Practice personnel, backfilling from other NPC Practices is also part of NPC practices.
9. **VMI Feedback – Improving Patient Experience Initiative:** This is a new initiative currently being rolled out across NPC Practices. This is a proven methodology originated by Virginia Mason Institute and began with an NHS partnership launched in 2015. After the initial roll out with five NHS Trusts, the approach is being adopted more broadly. VMI, as a training institute, focusses on creating patient centered management systems and imbedding a culture of continuous improvement. This initiative is being led by Abi Callendar (NPC Group Manager – Head of Operations). Abi is keen to present this approach to the PPG however we need to identify a forum that does not impact the normal PPG activities. The group agreed to schedule a specific event in the Practice before our next PPG meeting in August. David will contact Abi to arrange details.
10. **NPC Chairs Meeting Feedback –** Notes and Presentation material were attached to the Meeting Invitation for this meeting; this discussion is rolled over to our next meeting due to time limitations.
11. **Carers Communication –** Extensive information was provided at the NPC Chairs Meeting, (see above) a little low on dates etc, but a very big step forward.
12. **Learning Disabilities Engagement Group –** This topic also rolled over to next meeting due to time constraints.
13. **Waiting Room Communication:** -TV installation to be completed and Practice video(s) to be installed plus other relevant information. The physical notice board is also now available and needs to be installed. This will include Posters with QR codes plus associated information as signposts for sources of more information or alternatively to direct patients to printed material at the Reception Desk.

14. Meeting feedback: David Butler remarked that that he was impressed with the progress being made by the Practice and the positivity of the PPG meeting interactions, this was acknowledged by the broader group.

15. Next Meeting:

- **Currently scheduled for 11th Aug 2026**
- To facilitate the meeting process, should anyone have any new topics, could they please provide a 5 – 10 line summary to me by ~ July 28th and I will distribute the package a week before the Meeting.
- The meeting duration will be extended to one and half hours to cover outstanding issues.

Thanks to all for their contribution and enthusiasm !

David Back

Email – davidjback1@gmail.com

Appendix 1:

Practice Staffing Plan as of June 2026

- GP's - 12 (All part time)
- Paramedic - 1 (part time)
- Practice nurses - 4 (2 full time, 2 part time)
- HCA's - (2 Full time)
- Phlebotomist - 1 (works one day per week)
- Receptionists - 10 (mixture full /part time)

PPG Action Tracker

Updated 02 June 2026

updates in bold

Action Number	Action	Actionee	Date Raised	Due Date	Status
2026/01	Penny Rathbone to send Chris Allchurch the details for the Council Program so that Chris can make contact and report back at the next meeting whether this is a potential route to support an engagement event with Lifestyle	Penny Rathbone	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	DONE
2026/02	Nicola Rice to request that Dr Brown makes contact with Jo Walters to follow this up. Jo to contact Nicola if there has been no further contact by	Nicola Rice	31/03/2026	30/04/2026	DONE
2026/03	All PPG members to encourage other practice patients to join in the specific groups where the PPG has gaps: Penny to sent out post on Facebook - Ponteland Parents Group	All PPG	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	CONTINUING
2026/04.1	Nicola/Molly to add the next date when agreed to the notice board in the surgery and social media platform. Digital TV Board install to be completed and video content to be installed.	Nicola Rice/Molly Dewar	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	OPEN - almost complete
2026/04.2	Physical notice Board to be installed in Waiting Room complete with appropriate QR codes and/or direction to paper materials at Reception Desk	Nicola Rice/Molly Dewar	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	
2026/4.3	The minutes after agreement will be shared on the practice website and be made available via a link from the social media pages, need date from Chris McG	Nicola Rice	02/06/2026	16/03/2026	OPEN
2026/05	Nicola Rice to contact Chris McGee in Comms about how best to advertise and disseminate information from the PPG	Nicola Rice	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	Linked to above
2026/06	Nicola Rice to contact the Digital Group to understand if there is an underlying problem and use the anonymised examples here as evidence Update from Dr M - Plan is to transition to NHS APP, rather than an interim SystemConnect modification, need timing from Digital Team	Nicola Rice	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	OPEN

2026/07	Nicola Rice to investigate with the Digital Group the ability to add a confirmation process into appointment offers.	Nicola Rice	31/03/2026	23/06/2026	Linked to above
2026/08	B12: Stephen Doyle to share the issue with Nicola Rice to raise with the practice and disseminate amongst patient facing staff so that the right message and injection frequency is carried out.	Stephen Doyle	31/03/2026	30/04/2026	DONE
2026/09	PPG Chair to raise the lack of feedback and communication at the next NPC PPG chairs meeting.	Penny Rathbone	31/03/2026	23/06/2025	DONE 7th May 2026
2026/10	Nicola to let Chair know when the next meeting is as this is as yet unknown	Nicola Rice	31/03/2026	Meeting 07/05/2026	DONE
2026/11	From Chris A - Ponteland Leisure Center and NCC are both very interested in LifeStyle Event, proposed that Nicola reach out to finalise details/dates with them to keep this on a formal basis.	Molly Dewar	02/06/2026	30/06/2026	
2026/12	Schedule for specific condition Clinics to be added to Ponteland website to enable booking process	Nicola/Chris M	02/06/2026	30/06/2026	
2026/13	Details of the navigation pathway to be used on System Connect for renewal of prescriptions to be prepared and distributed.	Molly Dewar	02/06/2026	23/06/2026	
2026/14	Choice of dedicated event for Improving Patient Experience Continuous Improvement presentation to be communicated to Abi, proposed date /time to follow.	David Back	02/06/2026	09/06/2026	