

From the GPG Chair

THE GRANTA Patient Group (GPG) committee represents your voice as a patient of Granta Medical Practices (GMP). In June, committee members held a meeting with CEO Tim Harrison and Head of Communications and Business Development, Vicki Collier to discuss a future programme of activities coordinated by the GPG but with the cooperation and support of GMP. The first of these is for the GPG committee to identify key issues of the Long Term Condition assessments that take place annually for several thousand patients that we believe could be improved from the patient experience point of view. We shall then discuss these in a meeting with Dr Ian Head, who oversees the assessment programme, from which we hope to identify potential specific improvements to the LTC process and communication of results.

The GPG working group assigned to this project will start work in September and thus be underway when you receive this newsletter

A second project concerns ways to improve communication of the GPG activities to the patient population at large, and that includes methods for distribution of the patient group newsletter.

With over 58,000 registered patients in Granta Medical Practices, we are fully aware that a significant number who are not regular users of surgeries may still be interested in being kept up to speed with what is happening within the practice.

Hence we need to distribute this newsletter

and other communications through a variety of channels. These could be via village magazines and news sheets, distributing hard copies in local cafés, Libraries and Community Centres as well as posting on line via social media and on the Granta Medical Practices website.

We have also discussed with GMP management, the possibility of organising a patient survey, likely to be undertaken in 2027, with the aim of identifying what matters to you regarding services offered by Granta Medical Practices, your experiences in accessing these and your levels of satisfaction with the outcomes.

Please put a date in your diary for the next GPG open meeting on Wednesday 14 October at 5pm at Sawston Medical Centre. At this meeting we shall focus on the issue of patient access to appointments, hearing from CEO Tim Harrison and GMP clinical representative Dr Reem Al Shaikh.

Unfortunately, our Vice Chair, Steve Fisher has, due to other commitments decided to step down from the Patient Group Committee. I'd like to thank Steve for his dedication and enthusiasm for his time and energy particularly for reworking our Constitution and Terms of Reference, and for championing our Patient Participation Group name change to Granta Patient Group and our new logo.

Please consider joining our committee as we endeavour to represent you the patients as we engage with the Granta Medical Practices team. **Dave Arnold GPG Chair**

Did you know...?



... that Granta Medical Practice implemented on-line appointments well ahead of the October 2025 Government deadline?

Granta update

I AM delighted to share an update on our recent work with the Granta Patients Group and the new members who have joined. Over the past few months, the GPG has welcomed several new members whose enthusiasm, lived experience and fresh perspectives have already brought real energy to our discussions.

Our aim is simple: to strengthen the partnership between patients and the practice so we can continue improving care, communication and the overall patient experience for everyone who uses our services.. We have lots of things going on in the background that we look forward to sharing with you in coming months.

We want to work together on enhancing patient communications: working to make our messages clearer, more accessible and more responsive to what patients tell us they need. Shaping future engagement activities is also important: exploring new ways to involve patients in conversations about services, priorities and changes. Developing practical improvements: by identifying small but

meaningful changes that can make a big difference to patient experience.

First up is looking at the Long Term Condition process from the patient perspective which will help us to review our internal processes. The list of diagnoses that are on the Long Term Conditions register continues to expand constantly and with a third of our practice population on the register it currently requires roughly 22,000 appointments a year just to manage these reviews. That is on top of the day to day and urgent medical care we provide. We know there are frustrations in the process on both sides and we are keen to work to improve this.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our GPG members – new, longstanding and previous – for their time, insight and commitment. The months ahead offer a real opportunity to build on what is already a strong partnership and I am very much looking forward to what we can achieve as a team. **Vicki Collier (Head of Communications and Business Development)**

Permissions and consent

Part 2: When someone else is caring for a child

MODERN FAMILY life is varied. A child might come to the surgery with a grandparent, aunt or uncle, family friend, nanny, or au pair, rather than with a parent. We are happy to see children in these situations, but there is some preparation needed so that we can examine and treat them properly.

If your child is going to be brought to us by someone who does not hold parental responsibility, we need written consent from a person (or persons) who does. Parental responsibility is a legal term, and it usually sits with the child's parents, but not always. Step-parents, foster carers, and others may or may not have it depending on the circumstances. If you are unsure whether you hold it, please ask us and we can talk it through.

Written consent should make clear who is bringing the child, the period it covers, and that you agree to the child being seen, examined, and treated in your absence. A short signed letter is enough, and we will keep a copy on the child's record. For routine, low-risk care this is usually all that is needed.

Sometimes, especially for a new problem or anything more involved, we may ask the caregiver to phone the parent while we are in the room so we can speak directly to them. This lets us answer questions, share findings, and confirm consent for a specific treatment. It is a simple step that protects everyone, including the caregiver, who should not be put

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in the position of making a medical decision they do not have the authority to make.

If you have a regular childminder or nanny, it is worth getting this sorted in advance. Please drop a signed consent letter into

reception, or ask us for a template. In an emergency we will of course always act in the child's best interests, but for everything else, a little planning makes the visit smoother and safer for your child. **Dr Reem Al-Shaikh**

Singing for health: Parkinsing

HEALTH AND wellbeing can be so much in our own hands, whatever life throws at us.

It was interesting and energising to meet with Linda and David Bance to hear about their singing group: Parkinsing. Linda is a retired music teacher who leads the singing group for all those affected by Parkinson's: i.e. those living with Parkinson's, their families, carers or friends.



The group sounds like an enjoyable, positive experience. It combines singing and movement exercises, laughter and cake! A group member says that the singing group is wonderful, that it feels like being in another world and has helped boost their confidence. They all like the group ethos of being in the moment: not harping on the past but focusing on what is possible in the future.

There is now quite a body of research pointing to the benefits of group singing. These include physical benefits on breath

control, voice production, vocal articulation, breathing, lung capacity, posture, immune function – and even cardiovascular effects as good as going for a walk.

Just as important are the psychological benefits which come from social support, socialising, laughing together and confidence building. Singing also activates the vagus nerve which releases endorphins (the feel good hormones) as well as stimulating neurones in the brain thereby aiding cognitive activity.

Linda set up Parkinsing in Royston three years ago in conjunction with Parkinson's UK, as the Thursday Stay Active Group. At that time there were 150 people living with Parkinson's registered with Granta.

Linda has undertaken specialist Parkinson's singing training through Canterbury University.

The group runs in Royston (Heritage Hall, Town Hall, SG8 7DA) on the second Thursday morning of the month. It is available for Royston district but open to anyone within the Granta

catchment area (not just Royston), if you are willing and able to travel. Contact Linda: 0775 636 443 or musicwithmum21@btopenworld.com. She will welcome you!

We would like to hear more about what others in our Granta patient group, are doing to promote our own health and sense of wellbeing, alongside medical services provided by the practice. Please let us know of any patient-led groups or initiatives that you may be involved in which you think others may wish to join. **Carol Lindsay**

Did you know...?

... that microsuction of earwax is no longer available at Granta?

Why? Due to changes in core contract services this service is no longer available.

If you need microsuction:

1. Ask your local pharmacist.
2. Opticians and hearing aid providers often provide a wax microsuction service. You may have to pay for this.
3. Some patients fit the criteria for free wax microsuction on the NHS, please speak to your GP to request a referral via Community Services.

Open Granta Patient Group meetings

Come and meet senior Granta Practices staff

Dr Tim Harrison (CEO), Vicki Collier (Head of Communications and Business Development), Dr Reem Al-Shaikh (GP) and Patient Group committee members.

Venue: Sawston Medical Centre. Video link also available, upon request.

Time: 5pm to 6.30pm

Date: Wednesday 14 October

This is your chance to have your say.

To attend: email Victoria Collier: victoria.collier1@nhs.net.

Patient Group committee members

Linton Surgery

Dave Arnold (Chair of the Patient group)
Suan Rowland

davidjsarnold@gmail.com
suanrowland@gmail.com

Royston Health Centre

Katherine Dawes.

kdawes14@hotmail.com

Barley Surgery

Julie Draper (Newsletter)

juliedraper@dumbflea.co.uk

Shelford Surgery

Sophi Berridge

Market Hill Surgery

Michael Harrison

michael.e.harrison@gmail.com

We would welcome a patient committee member from Sawston surgery

*The Granta Patient Group Newsletter is created, edited and produced
by the Granta Patient Group for Granta Medical Practices' patients*