

**Minutes of the VSG PPG Meeting held on
Wednesday 10th September 2025 at 6.30pm on Zoom**

Present: David Williams (Chair), Esther Sadler-Williams (Vice Chair), Janet Foster (Secretary), Trevor Ferrigno, Wendy Bell, Peter Overmeer, Sharon Roe, Ian Waddington.

1. Welcome and Apologies

David welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from: Edward Rigby, Laurel Bank Practice Manager

2. Approval of Minutes of 9th July 2025 and Matters Arising:

The Minutes of 9th July 2025 meeting were approved.

Matters arising: None

3. Updates/News from the Practice – Trevor

VSG Updates:

- Trevor reported there were none.

VSG/Laurel Bank Merger Updates:

- David reported that he had invited Edward Rigby, Laurel Bank Practice Manager/Partner to this meeting but unfortunately, he was unable to make it at short notice. A brief pre-PPG Zoom meeting had taken place, in attendance were Edward, David, Esther and Janet to introduce the VSG PPG. Edward reported that he is keen for the merger to happen as soon as possible, a lot of work is currently going on to progress this. It is hoped that a PPG with representation from both practices will develop moving forward.
- Trevor reported that a joint practice, non-clinical staff meeting had taken place yesterday where Edward provided a comprehensive overview of the merger plans; these seem to have been well received.
- Moving forward it was agreed that communication to VSG patients from the PPG would be helpful and it was agreed that the PPG Newsletter would play an important role in this. If any PPG members are aware of questions patients are currently asking or issues, they require further information about, please forward them to Sharon.
- There was a lengthy discussion about the continued functioning of the VSG PPG over the next 6 months, until the merger was complete, including the VSG AGM and a time line for a merged practice AGM. It was decided that an interim AGM will take place in October to elect officers etc as per the constitution, and the group will continue as usual until the end of March 2026. An AGM will then be required to form a Laurel Bank Surgeries PPG and subsequently produce a new constitution.
- It was agreed that a flexible/hybrid approach would be adopted for future meetings as the merger develops. Edward is hoping to attend the AGM next month and future meetings when possible. He is also going to try to arrange for clinical representation at some PPG meetings depending on availability.
- There was a discussion about Laurel Bank's willingness to support the work of the PPG in the future. They have a very positive attitude towards the PPG and are keen to have an active, engaged PPG for the new merged practices.
- The Malpas surgery has more consulting room space and this enables the COCH and other secondary services to provide outreach clinics there, this will hopefully be expanded to include Tattenhall in the future.

4. Appointment booking – David

- The availability of bookable online appointments was raised; there have been recent experiences where there have been very few available and concern was raised about

this. Increasing the number of appointments available to book online was discussed, it was felt this would be helpful. Trevor reported that 25% of appointments are currently bookable online and he agreed to look at what increased percentages would look like, as well as the impact this would have on available appointments to book on the day. Trevor will produce options for the meeting to consider in October.

5. Newsletter – (David & Sharon)

- The merger plan will involve the VSG adopting the 'Laurel Bank Model of Care, it was felt that understanding this model and any differences would be important to ensure the PPG could share accurate information with patients particularly through the Newsletter. David agreed to ask Edward if he would provide an overview of the model at a future meeting, this could then be featured in a future Newsletter.
- It was highlighted that there are some queries about booking appointments following the merger and it was felt important that these queries are included in the Q&A section, i.e. where will appointments be available? Also there seems to be some confusion about the Malpas model where a patient sees the same GP, queries have been raised about how this will impact on being able to book a same day appointment?
- With regards to the practice not accepting requests for repeat prescriptions over the telephone, David highlighted that there are some instances where this may be necessary and he has prepared a piece about this for the newsletter. Trevor agreed he would look at possible solutions to manage this but highlighted that this is an issue most practices struggle with and there is not an easy solution.

6. Signposting pocket guide – (Esther)

- In light of the forthcoming merger, it was agreed to park the pocket guide production as there will need to be a rebrand and Laurel Bank will need to be consulted. Esther highlighted that the printing may have to be done before the end of this financial year if the current funding offer is to be used. It was agreed that we will revisit this in the new year.

7. PPG Guest Speakers – (David)

- David reported he has a couple of contacts lined up to speak at future meetings. Rachel Maloney, Dementia Nurse for the Rural Alliance has kindly agreed to attend the October meeting to discuss her role.

8. AOB

- Wendy highlighted that she had received an unusual message about her annual review on the NHS App requesting b/p readings. There was no indication where the message had come from, whether it was the practice or generated within the app. Trevor reported that there had been no changes from the practice, Peter and Trevor are to look into this.
- Ian reported that a blister pack meeting was due to take place in Tattenhall, the operating company who recycles the blister packs will be discussing their processes. He hopes to attend.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING (including AGM)
8th October 2025 at 6.30pm, at St Alban's Church, Tattenhall.

VSG PPG ACTION PLAN

Topic	By Whom	Updates
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1. Appointment booking changes: -- Undertake a review of the changes made to the practice appointment system and messages, telephone and text. 2. Review the % of online vs direct contact appointments available every 3 months and adapt if required	ALL	10.7.24 % of online vs direct contact appointments available reviewed in meeting. No change required currently. 9.4.25 David has requested appointment data from Trevor to enable the planned review. 11.6.25 Appointment availability online discussed at meeting, as the usage of appointments seasonally changes, it was decided to review appointment availability in early autumn when demand is expected to increase. 10.9.25 Online bookable appointment availability was discussed, a request to increase the number of available appointments was made. Trevor agreed to look at what a few % increases would look like and the impact this would have on the appts available to book on the day and report back to the next meeting.
3. PPG Newsletter: Change how patients receive the Newsletter. Address issues with the readability on phones. Newsletter drafts to be shared with the Chair and Deputy Chair for final authorisation.	Trevor/ Terri/ David	11.9.24 the practicalities of this and potential additional cost to the practice of numerous changes was discussed. It was suggested that Terri would have editorial responsibility and the Newsletter would be signed off by the PPG chair. To be decided at the next meeting. 13.11.24 option to opt-out of receiving newsletter was discussed, best way to take this forward and understand consequences needs to be discussed with the practice 11.12.24 Difficulties operationalising an op-out and implications to the practice communication with patients was discussed as the number requestion this was so low the meeting decided not to offer this option and monitor request numbers in the future. Achieved
4. Standardising the PPG communication i.e. website, newsletter & noticeboard	David/ Terri	12.1.25 to be reviewed in 6 months July 2025
5. Transfer from Patient Access App to NHS App: support for patients to use an app, development of NHS app to be fit for purpose.		11.12.24 Esther and Trevor are providing an information session to Gifford Lea residents early in the new year. Feb 2025 Esther and Trevor have provided an information session to GL and a further session to focus on the use of the NHS App is planned. 11.6.25 New NHS app developments to be included in the next Newsletter
6. Creating Disabled Parking bays in both surgery car parks:	Any willing members	10.7.24 Farndon practice, work completed on creating disabled bays and line markings. Tattenhall practice line marking provisional date 24.7.24. 13.11.24 Tattenhall line marking completed further work will be undertaken early next year.
7. Promotion of self-referral and value to patients.	Ian, Nikki, David -	10.7.24 David provided a draft graphic and Ian Waddington to continue the development of this

	input from all	work which will be used in Newsletter, Website and on PPG noticeboard. 11.9.24 Ian produced draft Self-Referral & Self Care graphic documents which were discussed. They were considered to be a great addition to the promotion of self-referral and can be used in a variety of ways to inform practice patients. Suggestions for additions and linking the two documents are to be incorporated. 13.11.24 Ian has now produced a self-referral 'Infogram' and Self-Care Guidance. It was decided to post these on PPG noticeboards in practices and work with the practice to add this to the Website once a couple of issues have been ironed out. 11.12.24 David has discussed how the 'infogram' can be adapted to publish on the website and drafts are currently available for comment. Terri will also discuss how this can be included in the next edition of the Newsletter this will be supported by a piece David will produce. Printed versions will also be posted on both practices PPG noticeboard and will have QR codes to simplify links. 9.4.25 Esther is investigating the possibility of producing the 'Infogram' and a wallet size leaflet (z fold leaflet). She has identified an online printer and approx. costs. To be discussed with Trevor and possibly approach the local Councillor for a contribution towards funding this. Ian to provide a PDF of the information.
8. Friends and Family Feedback review	Esther/Terri	12.02.25 Completed a review of the friends and family comments, reviewing negative feedback to identify possible themes. Outcome to be reported back to March PPG meeting. 12.3.25 – Data is now set out to PPG members each month and Esther & Terri are reviewing the last 6 months comments to establish whether there are any themes. 9.4.25 – Review of F&F information is now complete. Esther & Terri to present to the next PPG meeting.
9. Engagement with various patient demographics and increase representation on PPG of all groups withing our rural locality i.e. Welsh patients.	All members	12.2.2025 – Esther and Trevor have arranged to provide an information session for residents of Gifford Lea. David will follow up a patient interested in joining the PPG from Wales. Janet to contact the rural Midwife/Health Visitor teams to identify mother and Baby groups in the Rural area. 14.5.25 Janet presented information from her recent meeting with the practice Health Visitors it

		was agreed that information relevant to families and children should be included in the Newsletter.
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