

PPG Meeting Minutes
12th January 2026 - 12.30pm at Sellindge Surgery.

Subjects covered

Welcome and introductions/Apologies

Apologies – Dr Maitra, Suzie Sparshatt, Carol Hobbs, Cynthia Wanstall and Jenny Hollingsbee.

Present – **Surgery** - Dr George, Emma Lockerby, Melanie Evans (lead for IPC) and Abigail Windwood (lead for E-Consult)

Minutes AGM 6th Oct 2025 and matters arising.

Accepted as published except for the small amend about moving away from a public meeting regarding the Lease renewal.

PAN-PPG CHAIRS UPDATE

The meeting was every 2 to 3 months. Only small progress had been made. The object of the forum was to co-ordinate action and learn from other PPGs. Next meeting was during February 2026 and Tim was not available but would get an update after the meeting. He would advise our PPG as req'd.

Premises update (Lease negotiations - extended to 16.2.2026).

Dr. George said there had really been no progress whatsoever. He felt that the Landlords Assura were hoping that by benign neglect the two partners would be forced into signing a new Lease, which they were not going to do. For instance the lift and the new boiler they had learned were now being left to the surgery to maintain. The ICB will give a supporting letter to Assura but that would not be adequate for the Landlord. Dr George said he was already semi-retired but did not want to retire completely until the Lease situation had been sorted. It was felt that the model for Primary Care would be changing going forward and no Doctor really wanted to sign up to a ten year Lease term making them liable if there was going to be fundamental change in the primary care system down the road. The proposed new Lease would have no break clause and wanted two partner signatories and these two items were the major sticking points. It was assumed that the surgery would carry on by way of intermittent renewals of the present Lease, which really was not satisfactory for anyone, as it did not provide any certainty.

Update from surgery including staffing and dispensary update

Emma confirmed that there were stable staff numbers over the last six months although one dispenser had been away sick for December which had caused a bit of a backlog especially over the Christmas period when demand was at a peak. Otherwise there were no staffing issues. Sue Threadingham raised the issue of patients depositing prescriptions and then being

told there had been no trace of them. The majority of patients were elderly and found it inconvenient to call back and even after a prescription had been copied before being handed in they were again told there was no trace. Also if sometimes one item was missing patients were being told to access it from another pharmacy themselves, which was not convenient as elderly/no transport.

It was agreed that Emma would discuss with pharmacy about these issues and report back at the next meeting. Tim suggested that perhaps a member of the dispensary staff could attend and brief the PPG at the next meeting.

Peter Shearcroft raised the issue about the notes at the end of the prescription simply not being read, particularly when a request was written on the prescription. Again it would be helpful as above.

Update/feedback on E-Consult triage forms/procedure

Abi said that they had very positive feedback since the E-Consult regime had begun in October 2025. Everyone was quite amazed at how quickly all patients and staff had become familiar with the new system. There was much less pressure for urgent appointments and this had a positive effect on the 8am telephone calls for appointments and repeat offenders. Emma said that the volume of calls had decreased by over 1100 in the last 30 days when compared to the same period 12 months ago.

Abi confirmed that the triage staff (and all reception team had been trained to be able to provide triage over the telephone if required) were working extremely well and she confirmed that the initial triage was carried out by non-clinical staff and they were really well ahead regarding being able to provide appointments within a week of request in relation to non-urgent E-Consult requests. Also this had a positive effect for urgent appointments especially later in the afternoon/early evening. The team were also on a learning curve because the forms actually ask for much more detailed information than a patient would be asked to provide while on the phone or visiting the surgery. The surgery was very proud that they were able to offer flexibility in relation to the E-Consult system when compared with other surgeries who were just insisting on the E-Consult form without much support/input from the surgery.

Tim on behalf of the PPG thanked everyone for the smooth transition within really one month.

IPC inspection (Infection prevention control)

Mel was the surgery clinical lead on this aspect and she took it extremely seriously in order to keep all patients and surgery staff safe from infection, which could be very easily spread through the building. The recent inspection had been very rigorous and had given the surgery a good rating of 90% and could not be graded any higher. The inspection included a careful examination of the ongoing logs and therefore there was no way that the surgery could write up in arrears the logs even though they had a few days notice of an inspection. Regular hand hygiene audits were carried out by Mel who believes in preventing problems

before they start and always to be inspection ready.

Mel was congratulated by everybody for being so committed and thorough.

Campaigns/initiatives for 2026 – discussion

Tim felt it better to defer this to the April meeting but he wanted this topic to be the main talking point because he felt that the PPG meetings had become mainly administrative and he was very keen that the PPG should be able to get behind a cause or a campaign in order to make a difference. He hoped that everyone, including the surgery staff, would have an input and he wanted Emma to ensure that the surgery staff were made aware of this initiative for our next meeting.

Volunteer for Secretary

This was now becoming more urgent and this position really had to be filled by or at the next meeting in April. **See below-time of next April meeting.**

AOB

Tim raised the issue of the PPG minutes being published on the website and Emma confirmed that a number of people found the website difficult to navigate and she would ask Ray to take a lead in this respect and Tim also wanted the dates of next meetings to be publicised.

Tim asked if the recently published changes to the GP contract (e.g. the merging of the 2 ARRS "pots" and relaxation of some spend criteria) had had any impacts on the Surgery. Dr George confirmed that to date they had not.

There had been no feedback as yet following the Hospice presentation at the AGM in October 2025 (Sue Sharp-Director of Income Generation)

The transition of the ENT clinics in mid-September 2025 to Northgate medical practice had been very smooth apart from a few teething problems and other than using the surgery building and reception checking in patients the ENT clinic was totally separate from Sellindge surgery.

Sue Threadingham shared some information about the dementia awareness initiative in Ashford and the stickers designed for safe places, and she thought that something similar had been undertaken in Waitrose, Hythe. Mel confirmed that she also had a Grade 2 qualification for dementia care and Sue would discuss with Emma/Mel for perhaps a sticker for the surgery.

Tim wanted a note of thanks recorded for all Doctors/surgery staff who attended PPG meetings, which were of great benefit, and he knew from the PAN PPG meetings that other surgeries were not so lucky.

The meeting concluded at 1.30pm. **NOTE: 13th April meeting is at 18.30pm**