

Leatside Patient Group (LPG) – Annual General Meeting

Minutes	Tuesday 15 April 2025	18:00 hrs	Old School Hall, The Mansion, Fore Street, Totnes TQ9 5RP

Type of Meeting	Annual General Meeting <i>Any amendments to the Minutes to be raised at the next General Meeting in November 2025</i>
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Attendees	<p>LPG: Mike Mintrum (MM, Chair) Katie Porkess (KP, Vice Chair), Janice Balch (JB, Secretary), Sue Barry-Campbell (SB-C), Sally Lougher (SL), Cliff Morley (CM), Julie Spinks (JS)</p> <p>Leatside Surgery: Martin Randall (MR, Practice Manager), Dr Rosanna Berryman (DrRB)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Dr Richard Scheffer (DrRS)</p> <p>Patients: nine on the signature list which was circulated at the meeting. 13 attended.</p>
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Apologies for Absence	Fiona Green (FG), Jill Lawrence (JL)
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Minutes of General Meeting held 05 November 2024	Accepted
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Matters arising – not otherwise an Agenda item	None
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Chair's Report and Terms of Reference	<p>MM welcomed our speaker Dr Richard Scheffer (DrRS). He also welcomed those patients present, Dr Rosanna Berryman (DrRB) and Martin Randall (MR, Practice Manager).</p> <p>MM thanked Martin Randall and all staff at Leatside for their support through the year and members of the Leatside Patient Group for their work throughout the year. He congratulated Julie Spinks on her recent election as a Governor of the Torbay & South Devon NHS Foundation Trust.</p> <p>MM outlined what Leatside Patient Group (LPG) had undertaken over the past year:</p> <p>One of the first innovations was the publication of a patient newsletter, named 'The Leat'. Five editions have been published although distribution has been a challenge. MM hoped that patients had enjoyed reading the newsletter and had appreciated the information provided. He added that comments and contributions from patients are welcomed.</p> <p>The LPG contacted the 'Totnes Pulse' which has agreed to carry LPG news items.</p> <p>The current LPG Management Committee has met five times and has discussed issues affecting patients and the working of the surgery.</p> <p>Volunteers from the patient group helped at Vaccination and Flu clinics where we distributed a patient survey. The survey received a good response. Results were analysed and shared with the practice.</p> <p>This year saw the retirement of Doctors Gelder and Watkins and the appointment of Doctors Gillard and Graeme.</p>
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	<p>The LPG regularly monitors the availability of appointments. It discusses management issues with the practice, which contribute to the pressures the surgery is working under. The LPG is very aware of the effect, on Leatside, of the recent Government Budget changes and the new GP contract.</p> <p>The recent decision, by NHS Resolution on the Leatside Pharmacy will be reported later in this meeting by the Practice Manager.</p> <p>Regarding the LPG Terms of Reference, approval from this meeting is sought for the following changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In addition to the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, the LPG will, at the AGM, elect seven members to serve on the committee. 2. Nominations for elections of the three officers and seven committee members must be received by the Secretary no later than 14 days prior to the AGM. If an election is necessary, this will be held by ballot at the AGM. 3. The LPG will allow Observers at its meeting. Normally, no more than two Observers may attend a committee meeting at any time. Observers may attend only one meeting in one year. A request to attend must be made to the Secretary at least a week in advance of the meeting. <p>These changes to the Terms of Reference were accepted and approved by the meeting.</p>
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Secretary's Report	<p>The Secretary reported that the LPG acts as a liaison between patients and the Practice. Over the past year the LPG has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sourced the correct telephone number for the Community Occupational Therapy Team that provides an assessment of what extra equipment is needed in the home to make independent living easier. For Totnes, the team falls under the auspices of Devon County Council, not Torbay. - Helped a patient wishing to email a GP health report from abroad to a particular Leatside GP. - Passed on a question to the Practice Manager, about help to change PICC lines. - Stewarded at Vaccination Clinics where we carried out a Patient Survey of those attending. The survey was analysed and presented to the practice.
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Practice Manager's Report	<p>MR, Leatside's Practice Manager for 11 years, reported:</p> <p>6,000 RSV, Covid and Flu vaccinations were carried out in the last vaccination round. This is in addition to the 1,000 normal appointments that are carried out at the surgery every week. Volume appointments of this size can pose a logistical challenge. The LPG helped steward a smooth flow of patients through the clinics.</p> <p>The survey report, prepared by KP, has helped the practice in determining what is important to patients. Clarity of communication, convenient access for appointments, continuity of care and digital improvement were high on the list.</p> <p>A new GP contract came into place this month. This increased the payment to NHS GP surgeries to £121/patient/annum. Additional funding is paid for specific pieces of work e.g. vaccinations and enhanced services.</p>
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	<p>An electric scalpel has been bought which allows the surgery to carry out minor ops at a fraction of the cost of carrying them out in hospital.</p> <p>The surgery is looking at how to identify the top tier of patients who need extra care and how to deliver enhanced access and continuity of care on a tighter budget.</p> <p>There are 64 staff at Leatside. The increase in National Insurance Tax represents a rise of £1,200/member of staff. The increases on tax, and annual wages, effectively wipes out the annual increase in patient funding.</p> <p>It is estimated that 20% of patient appointments do not need to be seen by a doctor; other healthcare professionals could provide treatment more effectively. The challenge is to get the patient to see the most appropriate healthcare professional – be it healthcare assistant, nurse, pharmacist, junior doctor or GP, while maintaining continuity of care for the patient. The surgery is considering a triage system for patient appointments. A triage plan will be prepared over the next six weeks.</p> <p>Appointment and retention of staff at Leatside is particularly good. It has always been able to recruit GPs and has recently appointed a new Practice Nurse. Half of the current GPs trained at the surgery. The average age of the GPs is in their forties, and the practice is now in a stable position with a young GP team.</p> <p>The recent Darzi Report investigating the state of the NHS has highlighted the pressures on the healthcare system. Devon's NHS is over budget and in deficit. Devon has four hospitals, and it is likely that there will be a period of rationalisation on how, and where, services are delivered and how patients will access these services.</p> <p>MR is Practice Manager for a group of South Devon GP Practices. This wider work shows that local NHS services are increasingly important. Leatside is following this trend by expanding its team of Junior Doctors in training from three to five, to provide more surgery appointments.</p> <p>MR outlined the current position on the Leatside Pharmacy. There were two applications for the pharmacy licence when it became available after Boots left. The contract was awarded by the relevant statutory body, to PharmaDerma. There was an appeal against this decision by the regional management team of Well Pharmacy (not the Well pharmacy in Totnes) and this appeal was recently allowed. This means that the surgery pharmacy will not re-open unless this appeal decision is reversed.</p> <p>The decision has service and financial implications for Leatside and its patients. MR outlined how an in-house pharmacy could provide 30 x 'Pharmacy First' appointments for minor ailments thus releasing more available appointments in the surgery. The loss of the pharmacy rent also presents a financial challenge to Leatside.</p> <p>MR asked Leatside Patient Group for their help in organizing a petition to get this decision reversed thus allowing the pharmacy to re-open. Failing this, Leatside will be looking for funding from NHS England, to expand into the Pharmacy space.</p>
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<p>Questions from the floor</p>	<p>What is the average size of a surgery in Devon?</p> <p>MR answer – 10,000 patients. Leatside has 15,000 patients and of these a large number are 45-65 years old. Leatside has far fewer patients under 40 years old than the norm because the cost of buying a house in Totnes is expensive and the younger generation is priced out of the housing market.</p>
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	<p>DrRB commented that there are 44,000 people over 85 years of age in Devon. This number is estimated to rise to 80,000 over the next 20 years. MR pointed out that this constitutes an explosive timebomb for medical services.</p> <p>Since COVID there has been a 20% increase in demand for medical services at Leatside but only a 10% increase in funding. Pre COVID the wait time to see a GP was four days. It is now around 21 days. The challenge is to keep on top of wait times and to match the patient to the right healthcare professional.</p> <p>DrRB comment - The surgery receptionists have had a lot of training over the past year to help the surgery navigate the increase in demand. Leatside is reviewing many systems including online triaging. Much of the demand for 'On-the-day' care relates to mental health issues but there is no more Government investment in public services to deal with these cases.</p> <p>How much does it cost to see a doctor?</p> <p>This will vary but it is much less costly to be treated by a GP than to be treated in hospital.</p> <p>What is the age profile of Leatside Surgery?</p> <p>MM answer - the first edition of 'The Leat' provided the age profile of the surgery.</p> <p>Will Elon Musk be able to buy the NHS?</p> <p>MR answer – This is unlikely. The Government does not have the money to buy out GP partnerships before a group sale to another provider could take place.</p> <p>DrRB answer – there is no sign of a big push by Musk into the NHS.</p>
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<p>Guest Speaker: Dr Richard Scheffer</p>	<p>KP introduced Dr Scheffer and gave a brief resume of his medical background; latterly, his work was in palliative care.</p> <p>DrRS firstly cautioned that talking about death can bring painful memories. He suggested that people leave the room if at any stage of his talk they felt uncomfortable.</p> <p>A summary of Dr Scheffer's talk is enclosed as <u>Appendix A</u> to these Minutes.</p>
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<p>Questions from the floor to DrRS</p>	<p>What is the difference between the charities Dignity in Dying and Compassion in Dying?</p> <p>DrRS said that the charity Dignity in Dying, campaigns for assisted dying. The charity Compassion in Dying aims to help people know what they can do when they are dying. For example, it helps people through the process of thinking 'What treatment can I refuse'?</p> <p>On a Lasting Power of Attorney there is a place where you can say what <u>level</u> of care you want.</p> <p>Is the Liverpool Pathway still used?</p> <p>It has fallen out of use. Its success or otherwise depended on how people were trained to use it.</p> <p>Dying in hospital tends to result in prolonging life as that is what doctors are trained to do. As a result, overtreatment can become an issue unless someone flags this up. The Liverpool Pathway treatment did change the questions that are asked to, for example, 'Is this person dying?' and 'What is the most appropriate treatment in the circumstances?' (See Appendix A for more information).</p>
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Elections to LPG and any other business	<p>The Chair reported that Jill Lawrence and Cliff Morley were stepping down from the Management Committee. The remaining four members wish to continue in post. There are therefore three spaces now available on the Committee.</p> <p>MM stated that we did not have enough candidates to fill the three vacant positions on the LPG and asked if anyone in the audience would like to put their name forward. Two people gave their name to the Secretary and their application will be considered at the next LPG Committee Meeting.</p> <p>Finally, MM urged people to read 'The Leat'.</p>
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Date of next meeting	<p>LPG Committee Meeting – Tuesday 10th June 2025 at 18.00hrs at Leatside Surgery</p> <p>LPG Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 4th November 2025 – venue to be confirmed.</p>
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Meeting closed at 19:54 hrs.