

Over the last year the PPG has published 3 newsletters and organised 3 events. **In June** Dr Glyn Towlerton from Chelsea & Westminster Hospital gave a talk on Opioid painkillers and their alternatives.

In October Mr Michael Stafford from Chelsea & Westminster Hospital gave a talk on Bladder and Bowel Problems.

And in January Dr Matthew Banks led an event on Heartburn and Indigestion that had been proposed by a patient, Jill Clark, who is secretary of a charity, Action Against Heartburn, which raises awareness about Cancer of the Oesophagus. This was a really good example of patient participation. All these events were well attended and well received.

We continued to investigate the problems surrounding hospital discharge papers because of the confusion it causes among patients and the whole VMC team, and our local hospitals even sent representatives to a PPG committee meeting to try to sort it out. I have to report with only partial success. We published the protocols in the PPG newsletter, but the confusion continues.

In connection with our probing of the mystery of hospital discharge papers we contacted Healthwatch, Central West London, the independent charity that works with the NHS as a consumer champion. They were enormously helpful and we co-opted their representative, Jill Prawer, on to our PPG committee. She is a great asset and I am delighted that she can join the panel this evening.

We protested to the Central London Commissioning Group in the light of their decision to withdraw funding to Open Age, the charity that offers hundreds of activities to the over 50s in our area. This is the letter we wrote:

VMC is now hosting some of Open Age's activities due to be shut down. In addition, the PPG has been active in enabling the Alzheimer's Society's popular 'Singing for the Brain' sessions to be held at VMC and the practice hopes to announce them soon.

On behalf of the PPG committee I must express a BIG 'thank you' to Dr Rankine, Dr Alexander, Aziz Pandor and everyone behind the scenes at VMC who gives the PPG such exceptional help and encouragement in spite of being permanently overworked.

FUTURE EVENTS Proposals for future events in 2020 include: Viruses, Bacteria and Antibiotics, Managing Arthritis, End of Life Care and the Trinity Hospice,

Loneliness and Living Alone, and Dementia Support. We'd like to know how many of you would be interested in any of these topics. If you have a favourite topic to propose for a PPC event please let us know later.

COMPLAINTS should be addressed to VMC's practice manager: Aziz Pandor. And that's my review of the past year. If you are not on the PPG mailing list please give us your name and e-mail address before you leave. Emails are such an effective way of keeping in touch.

ELECTION Now the election of the PPG Committee. The following committee members have indicated their willingness to stand again. Could you please make yourself known: Harry Bourne, Rosamund Durnford-Slater, Mary Luisa Hartley, Gloria Leone, myself Mary Orr, Mark Platt, and Rosemary Washington.

Two new committee members have also been proposed and seconded: Michael Goldman (a long-term volunteer at St Thomas's Hospital) and Tessa Jelen, chairman of Breathe Easy, Westminster. Could we please elect them en bloc by a show of hands. Those in favour: Against.

The following officers have offered themselves for re-election. Just for the record, could we please have proposers and seconders:

Chairman and Editor PPG Newsletters: Mary Orr

Vice-Chairman: Rosamund Durnford-Slater

Our utterly indispensable IT guru and mailing list manager: Mark Platt

Treasurer: (no budget so no treasurer needed)

Thank you.

And that completes the formal business of the AGM.

We can now move quickly forward to our talk: SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY led by Judith Centofanti, VMC's Community Matron, who was profiled in the last PPG Newsletter. Judith will discuss health and social care services and needs in South Westminster. Supported by our panel: