

Attend your GP practice PPG to influence your local NHS commissioners

MK Commissioning, the clinical commissioning group for Milton Keynes, is encouraging patients to join their GP practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) to help influence healthcare decisions.

Patient Participation Groups are established in the majority of the practices in Milton Keynes with the aim to bring patients together to discuss what could improve their practice, as well as health issues that affect them.

Each Patient Participation Group is currently in the process of electing a representative who will sit on the MK Commissioning Patient Congress. The Patient Congress will work closely with the MK Commissioning board and other groups to ensure patients are at the heart of local NHS decision making.

Clinical Commissioning Groups are the GP led groups which are taking over the purchasing of health services under government reforms. By April 2013 MK Commissioning aim to become fully authorised and take over responsibility from NHS Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust.

Kim Foy-Olowu, Practice Manager at MK Village Practice and MK Commissioning Board member, explains: "We believe this is a fantastic opportunity for patients to sit at the centre of the local NHS. The patient representatives will be responsible for feeding back information from the Patient Congress to their practices PPG and the wider practice, ensuring more people than ever before get the opportunity to comment on any proposals for the local NHS."

MK Commissioning is aiming to ensure it hears from a fair and representative proportion of the population of Milton Keynes. As well as the work it is doing through the Patient Congress and PPGs, MK Commissioning is also in the process of establishing a website, developing an electronic membership and working with partner organisations.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of their GP practice's Patient Participation Group is encouraged to contact the practice manager at their surgery for more information.

If you are not registered with a GP please visit www.nhs.uk to see which practice you can register with.