Haughton Thornley Medical Centres
Minutes of PPG meeting
27th July 2026

Present: Cathy Dobson, Christine Greenough, Christine Marshall, Paul Welsh, Gerald England, Olive Harper, Bill Burgoine, Amir Hannan, Dominic Sexton

Apologies: Eric Bynon

1. Minutes – matters arising.
   a) Last meeting discussion re shortages of medication (Ramipril) – there are also shortages of other drugs e.g. Venlafaxine.
   b) This discussion resumed after the practice update. There is a lack of communication between pharmacies and practices. Patients can leave pharmacies without their meds, but the practice doesn't know about it. Patients are the ones who have to chase around different pharmacies to find what they need. Where there's an electronic prescription it has to be printed so that the patient can take it elsewhere.
   c) Advice is to call 111.
   d) **ACTION:** the practice will state how they're dealing with patients who can't get hold of their prescribed medication.

2. Practice update
   a) Rachel resigned suddenly but left on good terms with the practice.
   b) QOF – Quality Outcome Framework. Practices are paid based on patient outcomes. This is supposed to reduce problems being uncovered in e.g. A& E when they should have been found by the GP practice. It has led to better outcomes e.g. reduced numbers of heart attacks because patients are treated for high blood pressure, cholesterol etc, Now that demand has increased due to the requirement to deal with patients immediately outcomes have become worse. More trivial issues are addressed while important ones might be delayed. This practice is worse than others. There is a financial incentive to get good QOF results, as well as it being a point of pride.
   c) To address the issues above the practice brought in Shabana to undertake a mock CQC inspection. She found that the practice had problems needing a whole business review.
   d) Improvements have been made e.g. less clutter now visible to patients. Bigger changes have been made behind the scenes. There has been investment in new systems and processes, more staff training. Everything needs to be addressed, from infection control to complaints and staffing.
   e) Dr H explained that the doctors rely on others to run the business but that they should also know and understand what's going on.
   f) Shabana has stayed on as cover for Rachel while a replacement practice manager is recruited. She will be working here 4 days a week and is addressing issues that will be a problem if there's a CQC inspection. The practice is still not ready for an inspection.
   g) New practice manager needs to be able to hit the ground running.
   h) Staff issues – not all are delivering excellent service. There are possibly too many staff. There are plenty of administrative staff but not necessarily in the right places at the right times.
   i) Dr H is writing a case study to describe what has happened and why and how it's being put right. For example, everyone is expected to take responsibility for the workplace, keeping it tidy and safe.

3. PPG
    a) Dr H mentioned that the PPG has £890 which could be used by the PPG.
    b) Paul talked about how we have no contact with other PPGs. Dr H suggested that Shabana could put us in touch with others.
    c) Our NAPPG membership lapsed some time ago. Might it be worth considering re-joining?

4. GM Care app.
    a) Might be linked to NHS app.
    b) There is the potential for AI to be used to help patients to get diagnoses from their symptoms. The future of this use of AI is currently unsure.

5. Bone Health
    a) Dom introduced the subject. Bone strength can reduce with age.
    b) The best advice to maintain healthy bones is to keep moving. NHS recommends 150 minutes of exercise per week but any exercise is better than none. Aim to try and increase what you're currently doing. Try walking up stairs, lifting things, sitting to standing.
    c) Diet – aim for calcium vitamin D and protein. Healthy muscles are needed for the exercise that keeps bones healthy.
    d) If you have mobility issues see the doctor.
    e) More information is available here: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/bone-health/keep-your-bones-strong-over-65/

6. Next meeting 22nd September 2026.