

Planning your Health Event

helpful tips



One effective way your Patient Participation Group (PPG) can really make a contribution to the work of your GP Surgery is to help in the planning and delivery of a health event. So whether you're planning on putting on a 'flu' clinic, raising awareness on diabetes, show-casing support for carers, or focusing on wellbeing and mental health issues, your PPG can help.

When planning a health and wellbeing event you need to think about the following:

- **What are you hoping to achieve from your event?** Although this might seem an obvious question, you need to give real consideration about what you want to achieve on the day as this will influence what you choose to do. Maybe you want to raise awareness about support services, or promote self-care? Map out what you want to achieve so that the activities you put on will best match your desired outcomes.
- **Is the event geared towards a particular patient group?** What steps can you take to make it easier for patients to attend and how many people are you expecting?
- **Where are you planning on holding the event?** If it is in the GP Surgery, what space will be available for the event and how will you use it? If your Surgery is very small are there any other possible locations to hold the event nearby?
- **The pros and cons of when you decide to hold your event** - if you hold your event during normal surgery hours you will potentially reach a larger audience as you will attract 'passing traffic'. However, if your Surgery is small, this may not be a realistic option. Holding the event out of surgery hours will give you more space, but is likely to impact on the number of people who will attend. Consider things like school holidays which may have an impact on the numbers attending. Think about linking in to national initiatives. If you want to hold an event on diabetes, holding your event in diabetes week will give you access to good quality, free promotional material and will give you the perfect opportunity to raise the profile of your event.



- **Who will you invite to participate?** If you are planning on having a marketplace of organisations and support groups make sure that you give them plenty of notice for your proposed event.
- **How will you encourage patients to attend?** What type of activities are you planning for your event? Think of what will bring people through the door. If you are planning an event around healthy eating, you could put on a session aimed at families and children where they could have a go at making simple healthy meals, or you could run a smoothie making class. Be creative, if it appeals to you it should hopefully appeal to your target audience. Approach a local supermarket and ask them to donate a fruit basket. Provide free refreshments - as simple as it sounds this will definitely bring people through the door.

- **How will you publicise the event?** Start publicising the event at least four weeks in advance and KEEP ON GOING with regular information to promote the event. Consider sending SMS messages, putting posters and flyers in the surgery, local library, schools, community centres, local businesses, on the surgery website, use social media to promote the event. Try as many different ways as possible to get the message out there.



- **Planning is key** - ideally you will need at least 3-4 months to plan an event.
- **Getting started** - when you start organising your event, you'll need to think about who will help, as you will need other people to help you to organise it.
- **Set up a committee** - give each committee member specific responsibilities and choose one person to be the event manager. Keep in touch, share planning information so that everyone is informed and meet regularly, especially on the run-up to the event.
- **Health and Safety** - as with all events Health & Safety needs to be considered, but if you need help with any aspect of your event please contact Sarah Taylor at Ashfield Voluntary Action ☎ 01623 555 551, or Lesley Watkins at Mansfield CVS ☎ 01623 651 177 for their support.
- **Have a back-up plan just in case of emergencies!**

