Introduction

The Audley patient panel was set up in June 2009 and was formed in line with NHS policy to ensure that patients are at the centre of delivery of care and have a say at every level of service delivery. This policy has been endorsed and expanded by the coalition government in the White Paper: *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS (2010)*. This aims to put patients at the heart of the NHS, through an ‘information revolution’ and greater choice and control. It is hoped that shared decision making will become the norm: *no decision about me without me*. Every practice will be required to set up a Patient Participation Group or Patient Reference Group (PRG) to enable this policy to be put into practice.

The panel works closely with the practice to achieve the following goals.

The aims of the panel are to:

1. Provide feedback for all involved in the practice to discuss topics of mutual interest;
2. Provide communication between the practice and its patients, and to involve them;
3. Assist with health promotion initiatives wherever possible;
4. Provide feedback on patients’ needs, concerns and interests;
5. Give patients a voice in the organisation of their care;
6. Assist the practice and its patients in a voluntary capacity;
7. Liaise with other Patient Panels in the area.

The group is affiliated to the National Association of Patient Participation (NAPP) which is a charity set up to advise, support and facilitate networking amongst patient panels nationally. The Practice pays for our membership, which is very helpful. There is an annual conference held in June. This year, as the conference was held in Manchester 2 panel members (Pat Williams and Val Pearson) attended. The Practice also paid for the conference fees. The NAPP newsletters are now directed to David Hardy, the Secretary who distributes the monthly E-Bulletin amongst the Panel. The E-Bulletin (entitled Patients Matter) is extremely useful for keeping local panels in touch with the wider national issues and for raising awareness of government policy and how it is being implemented. Of interest in the last
issue are the following:

- Care Quality Commission (CQC) compulsory registration of GPs by 1st April 2013
- Lay Commissioning Champions a DH funded pilot mentoring project to help build knowledge and skills on the new commissioning regulations
- Information on a project which is aiming to promote patient self-care by supporting practices in communicating self care messages to patients This is being championed by the Minister for Care, Paul Burstow and local workshops are being held to assist PPGs to develop campaigns on this issue. The website is www.selfcareforum.org and for further information the contact is Stephanie@varah.plus.com.

One of my goals for the next year is to be more outward focused and link in with the projects which are being advocated by NAPP. It is worth noting that the NAPP Newsletters are published online, making communication very easy; I strongly recommend that the panel should read the NAPP newsletter to understand the bigger picture. In our newsletter it may be useful to have a section on NAPP. Finally, I noted in last year’s annual report that Audley Patient Panel had yet to be mentioned in the Newsletter. However, I provided the Editor with a report about our work and achievements and it was published in the autumn issue.

**Meetings and Membership**

The panel meets once a month at the practice with a set agenda to discuss practice matters, report on progress of ongoing issues and invite speakers to talk on a variety of topics. There are 13 panel members (11 patients and two from the practice: a clinical and an administrative representative). The nominated officers for this year:

**Chairman:** Pat Williams (from January 2010)

**Vice Chairman:** Ian Tommason (from May 2011)

**Treasurer:** Beverley Woodward (from May 2011)

**Secretary:** David Hardy (from January 2010)

**Members:** Monica Booth (resigned May 2012), Roberta Clark, Alan Durnall, Sue Edwards, Eileen McGuire, Val Pearson, Joan Polles, Julie Stokes (Practice Manager) Ian Wilkes, Tom Wilkes, a Clinical representative who is normally a doctor from the practice. Both Julie Stokes and Dr. Sutton have been regular and supportive members in the last twelve months.

After resignations over the last year, we have been joined by Roberta Clark, Sue Edwards, Joan Polles, and Tom Wilkes. Already they have made an excellent contribution and we
welcome them to the Panel. We are considering increasing the membership of the Panel, although this year we have made use of the Virtual Panel. There are 41 members, all registered at Audley. We used them to help us to help us formulate the questions for the next DES survey. There were only 7 responses but their contribution was welcomed.

Invited speakers/visitors have included:

October 2011 Lesley Goodburn Head of Community Relations, Staffordshire Commissioning Support Services

April 2012 Nicky Critchlow Virtual Panel

April 2012 Bob Copeland and Colin Oakley, New Butt Lane Patient Panel (observers)

Achievements 2011/12 (where we have achieved a goal from last year, this will be indicated)

1. Public awareness raising about the purpose and formation of the Patient Panel and its aims:
   
   - Maintain and update the leaflet and poster campaign for wide distribution in the community 2010/11 goal
   
   - Improvement and Development of our website (www.audleypatientpanel.btik.com) 2010/11 goal
   
   - Development and publication of our newsletter, 2 issues so far 2010/11 goal
   
   - Attendance at the Parish Council meeting to explain and discuss our role 2010/11 goal
   
   - Publication in the NAPP newsletter of an article about the Audley Panel 2010/2011 goal

2. Other Activities
   
   - Securing the use of a 24 hour BP machine in the waiting room (Practice Manager)

   - Suggestions for improvement in the telephone system. This has been partially achieved by the purchase of software to enable a queuing system. The new system is still being tested.

   - Assistance with the flu clinics
• Assistance with CSA training of student doctors

• Invitation of guest speakers/liaison with other patient panels

• Publication of the DES survey “you said, we will” in September 2011. Development of the 2nd DES survey in partnership with Dr Sutton (thanks to Alan Durnall for his expertise). Using the Virtual Panel to help with developing the questions for the DES survey. Implementing the survey will take place in September 2012.

• Dialogue with Newcastle Borough Council on the car parking problem on behalf of the Panel. It is recognised that the current financial constraints on the Council will make any changes impossible for the foreseeable future.

• Attendance at NAPP annual Conference in Manchester

  All of the above were achieved in the 2010/11 goal “Contribute to the continuous improvement of services”

• Setting up of a bank account and securing some funding this was a very pleasing achievement and efforts by the Panel are appreciated. First, the practice agreed to give us annual funding of £250; Second, we secured a grant of £500 from Councillor Dylis Cornes. This will assist in publishing the newsletter and also with assorted expenses. 2010/11 goal

Summary

Over the last year the Panel has focused on building on the foundation which we achieved last year. We have established an enthusiastic and active Panel which is keen to be involved and work in partnership with the practice to improve services to patients. We have received excellent support from the practice who have responded to our concerns and kept us up to date with developments. We look forward to continue working in partnership with the Health Centre in the future. To support the goal of being more engaged in the national context, a new focus for the Panel this year will be to communicate with Staffordshire Commissioning Support Services and with NAPP. We have initiated this activity in several ways. First, we have used virtual panel; second, 2 members attending the NAPP conference, and finally a panel member has been appointed to the Individual Funding Review (IFR) which is a policy review group formed to mediate on treatment not usually available on the NHS

A number of suggestions are currently being discussed regarding future goals for the panel:

• Maintain & update the leaflet and poster campaign

• Continue to develop the website
• Continue to publish and develop the newsletter

• Work with the practice to develop and implement the Patient Participation DES survey

• To become more active nationally and locally, for example by working with NAPP on the patient self-care campaign

• Produce a directory of self care support groups

• Fundraising

• Contribute to the continuous improvement of services

In the next twelve months it is hoped to achieve several of these objectives in participation with the practice.

Pat Williams June 2012