

Invitation to Participate in Research

Study Title	To what extent do PPG members and practice decision-makers share common perceptions of factors affecting effective PPG participation in service decisions within General Practice?
Version	Version 2 — PPG Members 26.03.26
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1. Invitation to Take Part

You are being invited to take part in a research study conducted by undergraduate students at Imperial College London as part of an independent group project. We are studying how Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) influence decisions about GP services, and your experience as a PPG member is exactly the kind of perspective we need to hear.

Please take your time to read through this information sheet carefully before deciding whether to take part. Feel free to discuss it with friends or family, and please do contact us if anything is unclear or if you have any questions. You are under no obligation to participate, and we are grateful for your time in considering this invitation.

2. What is the Study About?

All GP practices in England are required by law to have an active Patient Participation Group (PPG) — a group of registered patients who meet with practice staff to share their views on services and how they could be improved. However, there is very little research on whether and how PPG recommendations actually lead to changes in practice, or what makes PPG involvement more or less effective.

This study asks: to what extent do PPG members and GP practice decision-makers (GPs and practice managers) share the same views about what enables or limits effective PPG involvement in service decisions? By comparing these two perspectives, we hope to produce practical recommendations that could help PPGs work more effectively within NHS general practice.

3. Why Have I Been Invited?

You have been invited because you are a member of a Patient Participation Group at a GP practice in England. Your experience and views as a PPG member are a vital part of this study. We are aiming to speak with a small number of PPG members across different practices.

4. Do I Have to Take Part?

No. Taking part is entirely your choice. Declining will have no effect on your care at your GP practice or your standing within your PPG. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time before data analysis begins, without giving a reason and without any consequence. If you withdraw, any information you have provided will be deleted.

5. What Will Happen if I Take Part?

Interview (April 2026)

If you agree to take part, you will be invited to a one-to-one interview lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. The interview will be conversational in style and will explore your experience of being a PPG member — for example, what you feel works well, what gets in the way, and whether you feel your group's views make a difference to how your practice is run. There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your honest experience and perspective.

Interviews can take place in person at a location convenient to you, or online via Microsoft Teams. We will arrange a time that suits you. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded so that we can transcribe it accurately. The recording will be stored securely and deleted once transcription has been checked. You will not be asked about your personal medical history or the details of any individual clinicians or staff.

Optional follow-up: Group session (May 2026)

After the interviews, we are hoping to hold a small group session in May using a method called the Nominal Group Technique (NGT). This is a structured activity where participants share and rank their views on a question together — it is widely used in health services research and is designed to make sure everyone's voice is heard equally. We would love for you to be involved in this session if you are available and willing.

Full details of what this session would involve — including the format, timing, and how long it would take — will be sent to you separately before May. Taking part in the group session is completely optional and separate from the interview.

In summary:

- Interview: approximately 45–60 minutes (April 2026)
- Group session (optional): approximately 90 minutes (May 2026 — further information to follow)

6. Are There Any Risks or Disadvantages to Taking Part?

This study is low risk. You will not be asked about your personal health, your medical records, or any details about individual members of practice staff. All questions relate to your general experience as a PPG member.

The interview is one-to-one, so you will not be in a group setting for this part of the study. You are never required to answer any question you are not comfortable with, and you may end the interview at any time. There are no disadvantages to taking part beyond the time commitment involved.

7. What Are the Possible Benefits of Taking Part?

There are no direct personal benefits to you from taking part. However, your contribution could help improve how PPGs work across NHS general practice, making patient participation more meaningful and effective. People who have taken part in similar studies have often found the experience of reflecting on their involvement to be a valuable one in itself.

Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any payment or reimbursement for your time.

8. How Will My Information Be Kept Confidential?

- Everything you share will be kept strictly confidential. You will be assigned a participant code, and your name, practice name, and any identifying details will not appear in any dataset, transcript, or report.
- No individual or practice will be identifiable in any findings or publications from this research.
- Audio recordings will be stored on password-protected devices, accessible only to the research team, and deleted once transcription has been verified.
- All data will be stored securely in line with Imperial College London's data management policy and UK GDPR.

Under UK GDPR, you have the right to access any data held about you, request that inaccurate data is corrected, and ask for your data to be deleted before analysis begins. Please contact us at the address above to exercise any of these rights.

9. How Will We Use Information About You?

Data Controller: Imperial College London is the sponsor for this study and acts as the Data Controller — this means they are responsible for keeping your information safe and using it appropriately.

Legal basis: Our legal basis for processing your personal data under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 is the performance of a task carried out in the public interest, or the legitimate interests of Imperial College London to conduct research that delivers societal benefit.

Data retention: Your data will only be kept for as long as is needed to complete this research project and any associated reporting. It will not be shared with any third parties outside the research team, and will not be used for commercial purposes.

Our reports and findings will be written in a way that does not identify you. You can withdraw from the study at any time; in some cases we may need to retain already-collected anonymised data to maintain the integrity of the research — if this applies, we will let you know.

10. What If Something Goes Wrong?

If you feel you have been harmed as a result of negligence during this study, you may have grounds for legal action. If you have any concerns about how you have been treated, please contact the research team in the first instance (see contact details below). If you are not satisfied with our response, you can contact the Imperial College Research Governance and Integrity Team at researchgovernance@imperial.ac.uk.

If you wish to raise a concern about how your personal data has been handled, please contact the research team first. If you remain unsatisfied, you may contact Imperial College London's Data Protection Officer: dpo@imperial.ac.uk | 020 7594 3502 | Imperial College London, Faculty Building Level 4, London SW7 2AZ. You may also contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at www.ico.org.uk.

11. What Will Happen to the Results?

The findings from this study will be written up as a group research report submitted as part of our undergraduate degree at Imperial College London. The report may also be presented at academic events or submitted for publication in a journal. All findings will be fully anonymised — you will not be identifiable in anything we write or present.

If you would like to receive a summary of the results once the study is complete, please let us know when you get in touch.

12. Who is Organising This Research?

This study is organised and conducted by students from the Medicine (MBBS) with Management programme at Imperial College London, under academic supervision from the Imperial Business School. It is an independent student research project and is not funded by any external organisation.

13. Has This Study Been Ethically Approved?

Yes. This study has received ethical approval at the departmental level from the Imperial College London Research Ethics Committee. It is conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and Imperial College London's research governance framework.

14. What Should I Do Next?

If you would like to take part, or have any questions before making a decision, please contact us at anab.aideed22@imperial.ac.uk by Friday, 4th April 2026. We will then arrange a convenient time for your interview and send you a consent form to complete beforehand.

We are very grateful for your time and for considering this invitation. Your experience and perspective matter, and we hope you will consider sharing them with us.

Contact Information

Research Team: anab.aideed22@imperial.ac.uk

Supervisor: Laure de Preux — l.depreux@imperial.ac.uk | Imperial Business School, Imperial College London

Research Governance: researchgovernance@imperial.ac.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.