

Hill Surgery Action Group (HSAG)

The Group shall be called The Hill Surgery Action Group (HSAG). It will be affiliated with other organisations, such as the HSAG or groups with similar patient objectives.

Aims of the HSAG

- To facilitate good relations between the Hill Surgery GP practice (referred to as the 'practice' throughout this document) and patients, communicate patient experience, interests, and concerns and provide feedback to the practice on current procedures and proposed new developments, either independently or via the practice HSAG.
- To work collaboratively and positively with the practice to improve services and facilities for patients and to act as a sounding board for practice staff on issues affecting patients.
- To build communication and cooperation between the practice and patients, other individuals and organisations in healthcare, and the broader community for the mutual benefit of all.
- To act as a patient representative group, supporting the practice and influencing local provision of health and social care, collaborating with the PPG at all times.

HSAG Structure and Membership

Membership in the HSAG is free and open to all registered patients of Hill Surgery. Membership will reflect the patient profile and be widely representative and inclusive of genders, ethnicities, ages, and abilities, as required in the GP contract.

The HSAG will be non-political and non-sectarian, will always respect diversity, and will exemplify its commitment to the principles of the Equality Act.

The carer of a patient registered with the practice can be a member of the HSAG even if they are not a patient.

Membership of the HSAG does not prioritise Hill Surgery patients over other Hill Surgery patients for treatment, appointments, or preferential treatment of any kind. This group is strictly a patient forum, and members have no rights other than those of registered patients of The

Hill Surgery. Failure to recognise this condition of membership may result in HSAG deregistering members.

HSAG's default position is that all members, committee members, and practice staff should always be treated courteously and respectfully for their work. They should not be subject to abusive behaviour in any form, which includes:

- Rude, disrespectful, and offensive behaviour, including derogatory remarks and disruptive acts amounting to verbal and emotional abuse.
- Sexually inappropriate comments and behaviour
- Racist and discriminatory abuse
- Threats of physical violence
- Aggressive and violent behaviour.

HSAG and HSAG Committee

The HSAG shall elect officers from among the members of the HSAG, who will be known as the HSAG committee. These will include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and, if needed, a Treasurer. The Annual General Meeting may create other posts on a proposal from the HSAG.

The HSAG and the HSAG committee shall both hold regular meetings. To maintain an active HSAG, any HSAG member who fails to attend three consecutive HSAG meetings may be deemed to have resigned.

The HSAG may co-opt individual members between the Annual General Meetings if necessary to ensure it fully represents the patient community.

The HSAG will regularly contact the members to get their views on specific matters. Notwithstanding the above, patients may send opinions and suggestions directly to the HSAG.

Members of the HSAG will follow the same Code of Conduct as those in the HSAG. HSAG committee members will also sign and abide by the Confidentiality Agreement.

Management of the Face-to-Face HSAG and the Virtual HSAG

- The HSAG shall meet face-to-face no fewer than four times a year. If required, the HSAG committee may meet regularly for planning purposes and occasionally be in liaison with the PPG.
- In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, present committee members shall elect a Chair on an interim basis.
- Meetings are subject to a quorum of five members of the HSAG.
- Apologies for absence should be sent to the Secretary or Chair before the meeting. In the absence of any apologies or available explanation, any member recorded as not attending three consecutive meetings will be deemed to have resigned from the Face-to-Face HSAG. The resulting vacancy can be offered to another registered patient.
- The HSAG may invite relevant professionals or patients to specific meetings. Such persons must respect the confidentiality of the HSAG.
- Decisions shall be reached usually by consensus among those present. However, if a vote is required, decisions shall be made by the majority of those present and voting. In the event of a tied outcome, the Chair may exercise a casting vote in addition to their deliberative vote. Consideration of the views of members of the HSAG will be taken into account;
- The Secretary shall produce minutes of meetings to be considered and approved at the following meeting of the HSAG and subsequently be sent to members of HSAG and made available to all via email or on the HSAG website.

Annual General Meeting

The Chair of the HSAG will convene an Annual General Meeting open to all registered patients and carers before the end of the selected month each year. The date, venue and time shall be published at least one month before the meeting using a notice in the local media, social media and the HSAG website.

Any specific “officer” posts of the HSAG Committee will become vacant annually with the option of self /other nomination for the positions and a voting process by other members of the wider Face-to-Face HSAG and Virtual HSAG.

Officers of the HSAG and members will notify the Chair at least one month before the convened Annual General Meeting date if they intend to step down from their positions. Membership and the appointment of specific roles will be agreed upon at the Annual General Meeting.

Any member of the HSAG who wishes to nominate themselves for an “officer” position on the committee or working group, such as Chair, secretary, or any other

official role, should advise the incumbent Chair of their proposed intentions at least two weeks before any Annual General Meeting. This should be done by submitting a completed Nomination Form endorsed by two existing HSAG members.

Confidentiality

All members of the HSAG (including the Face-to-Face and Virtual Groups) must be made aware of the need to maintain absolute patient confidentiality at all times.

Code of Conduct

All HSAG members must abide by the Code of Conduct shown in Appendix 1.

Activities of the HSAG

- Obtain the views of patients who have attended the practice about the services delivered by the practice and obtain feedback from its registered patients about those services.
- Review any feedback received about the services delivered by the practice with practice staff and relevant members of the PPG to agree on the improvements (if any) to be made to those services.
- Act as a sounding board to provide feedback on patient's needs, concerns, and interests, challenge the practice constructively whenever necessary, and help patients understand the practice viewpoint.
- Communicate information which may promote or assist with health or social care.
- Explore overarching ideas and issues identified in patient surveys.
- Act as a forum for ideas on health promotion and self-care and support activities within the practice to promote healthy lifestyle choices.
- Raise patient awareness of the range of services available at the surgery and help patients access and use such services more effectively.

Appendix 1

HSAG Code of Conduct

The HSAG Membership is not based on the opinions or characteristics of individuals and shall be non-political and non-sectarian. It shall always respect diversity and exemplify its commitment to the principles contained within the Equality Act.

All Members of the HSAG (including the Virtual HSAG) make this commitment:

- To respect practice and patient confidentiality at all times.
- Treat each other with mutual respect and act and contribute in a manner that is in the best interests of all patients.
- We must be open and flexible and listen to and support each other.
- To abide by the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.
- Please do not use the HSAG as a forum for personal agendas or complaints. These should be taken forward through other appropriate channels.
- To accept that the ruling of the Chair or other presiding officer is final on matters relating to orderly conduct.