

**PATIENT PARTNERS – INFORMATION SHEET**

1. **Purpose.** Patient Partners (PPs) are highly valued individuals who meet with small groups of medical students in an informal setting in order to enhance the quality of medical training. The volunteers, living with a condition, are the expert; they know what the symptoms feel like and how that condition affects their lives. Sharing this personal experience with medical students gives the students an insight that they could not hope to gain from textbooks or lectures.
2. **Background.** PPs have a condition from which the medical students can learn. No specialist knowledge is required by the patients as the students will be facilitated by clinical members of staff.
3. **Conduct of the Sessions.** Sessions take place at the School of Medicine, North Haugh St Andrews and at NHS Fife community hospitals in St Andrews, Glenrothes, Stratheden (Cupar), Adamson (Cupar), Cameron (Windygates) and Buckhaven (Randolph Wemyss). PPs may wish to participate at the venue that is closest to home or may be willing to travel to whichever site where PPs are most needed (travel expenses will be reimbursed).
  - a. Patients who are attending one of the Community Hospitals will be met by a representative of the medical school (a doctor, nurse or student ambassador) who will introduce them to a group of 5-6 medical students. The doctor or nurse will explain how the session will run and answer any questions. The session will take place in a quiet and private teaching area. Most of the discussion will involve the PPs' medical history; symptoms, treatments, side-effects etc. The students will also explore their PPs' perspective about your condition and the impact it has.
  - b. PPs who come to the School of Medicine will be met by the PP Coordinator or student ambassador and taken to the teaching area where the tutors will introduce the students. The students will take a medical history in the presence of the tutor. The PP is expected to respond to students' questions rather than to lead the conversation. Students will be learning how to take full medical histories and to draw out the information that will help them understand the condition better.
4. **Commitment:**
  - a. **Number of Sessions.** There is no obligation to take part in a certain number of sessions. It is expected that the minimum number of sessions will be two per year. The PP Coordinator will ask PPs to indicate the session dates for which they are available, and invite PPs to sessions according to availability, type of condition and preferred site.
  - b. **Duration of sessions.** Sessions at the community hospitals are approximately 2½ hours with a break midway. The sessions at the School of Medicine are approximately 2 hours long. Midway through the session there will be a comfort break and the session will resume with another small group of students.
5. **Support.** The tutors will give guidance and supervise at the sessions. Patients at the Community Hospitals will be met by an experienced facilitator from the medical school (either a doctor or a nurse) who will introduce them to groups of medical students. The PP Coordinator is available by email or phone to answer any questions and take feedback, should PPs wish to comment on their session.
6. **Confidentiality.** All sessions take place in a private area. Students are specifically told never to record any identifiable patient details and are discouraged from taking notes during sessions. All students sign up to and adhere to a professional code of conduct which guarantees the same standards of courtesy and confidentiality expected from any medical professional.
7. **Data Protection.** All PPs will be asked to sign the [data consent form](#) that describes how their personal data will be used.

8. **Physical Examination.** The main emphasis of these sessions will be taking medical history and discussing the condition. On occasion, and only with agreement, it may be appropriate for students to practise simple techniques such as recording pulse or blood pressure, or doing an abdominal examination. However, this is not a requirement of being a PP, and PPs should not feel any obligation whatsoever to have a physical examination if they prefer not to.
9. **Medical advice.** Although sessions are facilitated by medical staff, there will not be any medical advice or treatment offered. PPs should contact their own GP if they have any new symptoms or questions.
10. **Preparation.** Volunteers do not need to prepare anything specifically but it is helpful to bring along a list of medications or a repeat prescription printout. It is perfectly understandable if you are unsure about some aspects of your condition or treatment. If, for example, you use a medical device that might be of interest to students, feel free to bring that along with you.
11. **Communication.** The PP Coordinator will be the main point of contact. They will communicate with the PP by their preferred method i.e., post, email or telephone. The PP Coordinator will supervise the invitation to PPs according to their availability and preference of location. The PP Coordinator will let the patient know the dates, times and location of the sessions that have been invited to them and confirm again with the patient a couple of days prior to the dates.
12. **Process.** Once the PP Coordinator has received the completed Registration form, we shall be in touch with all PPs to inform you when and where sessions will be held that semester (semester 1 runs from September to December; semester 2 from February to May).
13. **Travel Expenses.** PPs are free to make travel arrangements at their own convenience. Mileage is paid at the standard staff rate via BACS Transfer, or actual parking charges / bus fare can be claimed with an original receipt. A taxi can be arranged if required and parking advice / directions will be provided for each session.
14. **Staff Volunteers.** University staff members can now be PPs in work time, to a maximum of 2 sessions per semester, with line manager approval for sessions held at the School of Medicine.