

My personal experience of PBSGL

Jane Rodgers (Pharmacist)



My name is Jane Rodgers and I am a Practice Pharmacist from Aberdeenshire, working in a GP practice and additionally for the Health & Social Care Partnership. I am a member of an inter-professional PBSGL group: i.e. a group of GPs and me! The GPs are from six different practices ranging from very rural to city-centre practices, so a good cross-section.

I was invited to join them four years ago because they were keen to participate in an inter-professional pilot study organised by NES, in which they were required to “recruit” a pharmacy member. I was already known to the facilitator so this helped me become their pharmacy member. I think they were one of the first GP PBSGL groups so they were quite well established by the time I joined however they made me very welcome.

At my first meeting we studied a module on high risk medicines, so I was able to contribute quite a bit and subsequently was invited back. Since then I try to attend all that I can; although the level of my participation varies according to the module topic.

We meet about 10 times a year on Wednesday nights in the health centre in the village where I live – I can walk there which is great! We have a very social group, with cake (home-baked) at every meeting and a pot-luck supper at Christmas – we do discuss the module too!

My observation would be that GPs learn differently to pharmacists. They discuss a topic, share ideas and experiences, and often dispute the information section and case study 'answers'. Following the meetings, one of the GPs will often contact a consultant to get a local point of view and/or guidance. Whereas pharmacists tend to be more black and white: it's good to be able to mix the factual resource with real experience.

I like the small group discussion format. It's relaxed and easier to contribute and so is my preference over a traditional lecture and workshop. I find my group meetings help me in my role as an independent prescriber to see things from a prescribing perspective. Also, the cup of tea, cake and chat at the start of the meeting is good for networking and discussing current / local issues.

I still like to go to pharmacy CPD events as they are more tailored to my profession, so they have their own purpose for my development. I live and work quite far from these so I'm usually late and miss the networking time. Therefore, I would be interested in joining a local pharmacy PBSGL group but would still like to remain a member of my GP group – to have my cake and eat it!