

Minutes Reading Patient Voice Group Wed 18 Feb 2026, Reading Civic Offices

Physically present: David Cooper (chair) (University), Paul Williams (University), Francis Brown (Baltimore Park), Charles Moran (Western Elms), David Pension, (Emmer Green), Paul G, John ? (Long Barn Lane) and Andrew Pichers.

Present via TEAMS link: Cathy Cousins, Helena Turner, Joan Lloyd (Baltimore Park), Karen Swaffield (Newbury) and Mark Drucker.

Apologies: Tom lake, Jill Lake, Catherine Mustill, Ray Emmett, Geoffrey Million, Sarah Dixon, Simon Collard.

RBH Governors news

The current Chief Executive officer, Steve McManus, is stepping down in July after nearly a decade at the helm. His successor is James Blythe currently Interim CEO of one of the largest NHS groups in the country (St George's, Epsom & St Helier Hospital Group).

News from PPGs

Reading University Medical Practice, K81605, have applied to the BOB Integrated Care Board to temporarily close their list (of registered patients). This means they will not register new patients for a period of up to a year. As at 01 Feb 2026 the number of patients was 32,013. (9 years earlier the number was 27,318 an increase of 17%). It is estimated that about a third of patients are university students. Their catchment area is probably the largest of all the 18 practices in Reading.

At the PPG meeting the availability of an app "getubetter" to assist with musculoskeletal (MSK) injury recovery was promoted.

The following information was gathered after the meeting.

It is a free, NHS-approved tool designed for patients to manage conditions like back, neck, or knee pain at home, offering tailored exercises and local service guidance.

The App is said to be available on mobile phones and PCs.

This app is supported by a limited number of ICBs. The BOB ICB supports it in Reading, Wokingham and Berkshire West. For more information see <https://app.getubetter.com> and <https://staywell-bob.nhs.uk/musculoskeletal> . This is one way of accessing NHS physio support **without** involving your GP.

Emmer Green Surgery switchboard inaccessibility problem was resolved within a few days.

Royal Berkshire Connect – Review draft 1

Francis Brown francis@fbrown.org

Royal Berkshire Connect is also known as:

- PPUK or Patient Portal UK. It is used by 3 or 4 other NHS Trusts in England
- Zesty Patient Portal (zesty.co.uk)

On 29 August 2025, Royal Berkshire Connect replaced the DrDoctor system.

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Royal Berkshire Connect is one of 3 patient portals used by the RBH. The other two are the NHS app and MyCORE. This review compares Royal Berkshire Connect and the NHS App as well as briefly positioning MyCORE.

Once registered with Royal Berkshire Connect, a patient can

- View past hospital appointments and view and confirm future appointments.
- Complete some clinical questionnaires and assessments from some departments, prior to an appointment.

Royal Berkshire Connect and NHS App: equipment requirements compared

An important distinction has to be drawn between **smart mobile phones** which can connect to the Internet versus **basic mobile phones** and **landline phones** which can't.

Type of Phone	RB Connect	NHS App
No phone	X	X
Landline phone (plus a PC or Tablet)	X	P
Basic mobile phone (plus a PC or tablet)	P	P
Smart phone (plus a PC or tablet)	P	P
Smart phone (no other devices)	P	P

Note: Landline users with access to a PC or tablet can access the NHS App but not RB Connect.

Royal Berkshire Connect and NHS App: scope compared

Facility	RB Connect	NHS App
RBH appointments past and future	P	P
RBH waiting list	X	P
GP appointments	X	P
RBH blood test results	P	P
GP Blood test results	X	P
RBH appointments confirmation status	P	X
Parent can access children's details	X	P
Carer can access another patient's details	X	P
Availability	At a few Trusts	Everyone registered with a GP

Royal Berkshire Connect plus points

1. On a smart phone is easier to set up than the NHS App.
2. Optional facility to confirm hospital appointments.
3. Request an appointment reschedule (some departments only).
4. Can switch the hospital appointments paperless option on or off.
5. RBH sites covered include: Bracknell Health Space, RBH, Townlands (Henley), West Berkshire Community Hospital (Thatcham).

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6. Other sites inclusion yet to be verified: Dingley Child Development Centre, Prince Charles Eye Unit and Windsor Dialysis Unit.
7. Some departments may use the system for questionnaires.

N.B. Change of phone number and change of address must be **separately reported to BOTH** your GP and the Royal Berkshire Connect system.

MyCORE Patients Outcomes Portal

Patients of certain RBH departments may be **invited** to respond to questionnaires via the MyCORE system. This is part of an initiative to measure outcomes.

A particular questionnaire will not be available on both MyCORE and Connect.

GP website benchmarking and improvement tool

Highly commended by Francis Brown. Authors are within the NHS and have done an excellent job. To find the file: use any browser and search for **PRN00274**. The full title is *PRN00274 GP website benchmarking and improvement tool MK2*. It is also referred to as a *GP website audit tool*. It is presented as a large spread sheet and needs to be viewed on a large screen. Its scope includes:

- 50 usability criteria
- 34 compliance criteria

Progress report on the measurement of primary care patient experience of the 3 largest Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contractors providing GP Services in England

Francis Brown francis@fbrown.org

Provider names, number of GP practices and list sizes

	England	Modality Partnership	Operose Health	OneMedical Group
No of practices	6245	32	55	12
List size	~64m	~461k	~681k	~110k

The measurement of patient experience is based on the percentile ranking of responses to question 32 of the 2025 annual GP Patient Survey (GPPS) and the January 2025 GP Friends and Family Test Survey and List Size reports.

Within the BOB ICB

- Modality Partnership manage the Wokingham Medical Centre which now includes Burmah Hills list size 29,309. GPPS percentile rank is 6. Thus, is in the bottom 6% when compared with all other GP surgeries in England.

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- Operose Health manage The Practice, Prospect House, Great Missenden and the Tilehurst Surgery Partnership (aka The Potteries)

The GPPS question is “Overall, how would you describe your experience of your GP practice?”

The FFT question is “Overall, how was your experience of our service?”

The reason for converting the published GPPS and FFT result into percentile rankings is the ease in determining for each of the above 3 companies whether the number in the top or bottom 10% of their practices is close to 10%.

Summary of findings so far:

GPPS	England	Modality	Operose	One Medical group, OMG
Bottom 10%	By definition 10%	11 out of 32=34%	22 out of 55=40%	Work in progress
Top 10%	By definition 10%	0 out of 32=0%	1 out of 55= 2%	Work in progress

The proportion of Modality and Operose practices with a percentile rank of 10 or less is **eye-catching**.

Care is needed in interpreting this result. Is it the case that patients' satisfaction with the 2 largest GP APMS contractors is significantly lower than that of patient satisfaction with other GP providers?

Is this a spurious correlation? Is correlation being confused with causation?

There might be another factor. Do these two groups have a higher proportion of deprived patients? This needs to be probed. One method would be to look at the percentile ranking of 2 nearby practices.

The FFT results are work in progress.

AOB

Older Peoples Working Group

The group will now meet quarterly. Next meeting is at 2 pm 10 April 2026 in the Council Chamber.

Health and Wellbeing Board Workshop 12 Feb 2026

Tom Lake was invited to this meeting and will tell us more at our next meeting.

AI incubator day 6 Feb 2026

Francis Brown and Cathrine Mustill were invited to join NHS Digital Staff and AI suppliers and subject to clearance will tell us more at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 6 pm 18 March 2026 at Reading Civic Offices