As Chair of P³ (Patient Partnership in Practice), a sub committee of the Royal College of General Practitioners (Scotland), we are looking at ways of improving the patient voice in Scotland. One of our current projects is to develop a more robust strategy to strengthen this voice by developing a network throughout Scotland.

As a group, we acknowledge the importance of meaningful engagement by patients, the public and other stakeholders.

Within the Royal College of General Practitioners, we are looking to create a network with lay members who are actively involved within the RCGP Faculty Boards in Scotland.

Another part of the project was for me to write to the new Integrated Authorities to ascertain if they had nominated patient representatives on their boards and to gain an indication on the process they used to obtain such individuals. The intention is to try to develop a network with such individuals so that, when common issues arise, P³ would be much better informed and, hopefully, be in a position to influence change to help the health and wellbeing of the population of Scotland, as well as continuing to support RCGP in its vision for the future. This project forms part of a new patient engagement strategy.

My letter was sent to all 31 Integrated Authorities in October 2016 and you will note from the table below that only 14 (45%) responded. However, of these responses, all but one has a patient representative on their Board. It is also worthy of note that 9 representatives have come from the previously established Public Partnership Forums (PPFs), 1 has been sourced from Patient Focus Public Involvement channels, 2 from interview and 1 from an unknown source.

This exercise was carried out in the autumn and therefore the position is likely to have changed.

I am also aware that the Scottish Health Council are anxious to ascertain the position within the new IAs with regards to the makeup of these boards regarding compliance with their duties under the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, in relation to stakeholder engagement.
Chart 1

Responses to request for information

- 31 Requests
- 14 Response

Chart 2

Chart showing, from the 14 responses received the number with patient representatives on Boards

- 1 IAs with
- 13 IAs without
Chart 3

Source of Patient Representatives from 13 positive responses

- PPFs: 9
- PFPI: 1
- Interview: 2
- Unknown: 1