



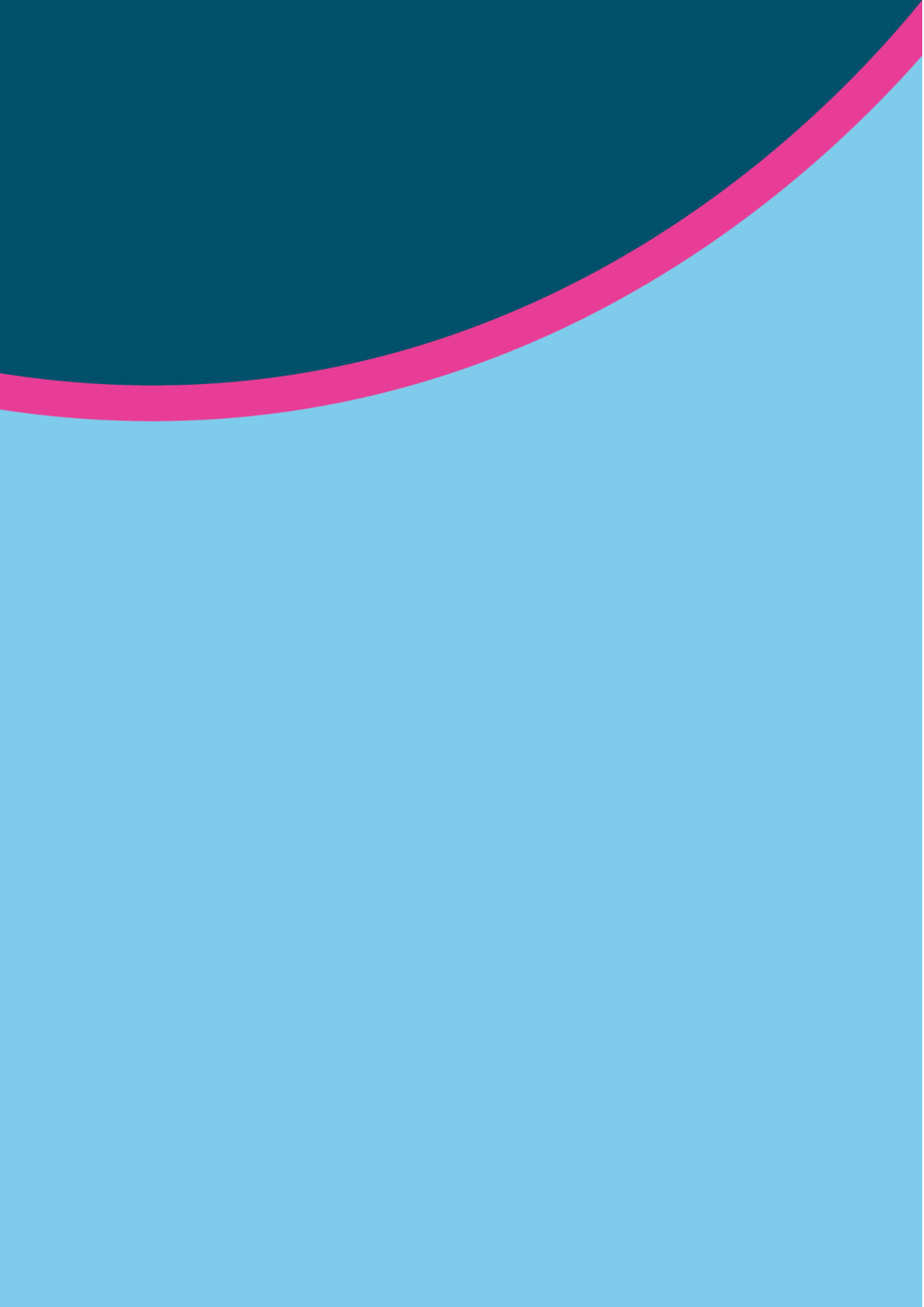
# Your Hospital, Your Health

A Report from Healthwatch Harrow  
September 2024

**healthwatch**  
Harrow

# Contents

Executive Summary	3
Recommendations	5
Presentation from LNWH	5
Comments and questions	6
Presentation from Harrow Carers	7
Presentation from PALS	8
Presentation from Advocacy 1st	8
Group points brought up through discussion	9
Speakers Sessions with Q&A	11
Useful Contacts	14
Acknowledgment	14
Presentations Slides	15



## Executive summary

### Introduction

Healthwatch Harrow is a statutory partner, and our aim is to make sure that your views on health and social care are heard and fed back to people who commission services to ensure that they improve.

We listen, report, feedback and challenge. One of the ways we do this is by holding our Healthwatch Harrow Forums which allow the public and service providers to come together to discuss key areas that are impacting on how the residents receive and access services within Harrow.

### Background

As a result of the feedback, we were hearing from residents about services provided by Northwick Park Hospital (NPH) which is part of London North West University Healthcare (LNWH), our forum in September 2024 focussed on **Your Hospital, Your Health**.

The aim of the forum was to look at people's hospital experiences and some of the solutions already being put in place. Over 70 people who attended our forum.

Yaa Asamany, Manager of Healthwatch Harrow shared with participants what Harrow residents' concerns were regarding the hospital:

- Provision of quality treatment and care
- Funding for treatment
- Outpatient appointment delays
- Admin/communication challenges
- A&E and discharge delays
- Ambulance waiting times.



## Context

The event was chaired by Ash Verma, Chairman for Healthwatch Harrow, who welcomed key representatives from Northwick Park Hospital to share the work that they are currently doing to address concerns. He also welcomed our key speakers, please see below.



**Main speakers:** Paul Joynson-Robbins, Director of Nursing LNWH  
Lisa Knight, Chief Nurse LNWH

**Presenters:** Karen Gilchrist, Adult Services Manager and Simon Joshua, High Intensity User Co-ordinator on Hospital discharge-both from Harrow Carers

Anika Towell, LNWH on Patient Advice Liaison and Patient Involvement

Vrinda Saidiwakar, Advocacy 1<sup>st</sup> on NHS Complaints Advocacy

**Contributors:** Lisa Henschen, Managing Director of Harrow Borough Based Partnership

## Summary of key findings

For full details please see presentations and discussion section of this report below. The key points raised were:

- **Dignity** – people felt that there were areas where respect for patient dignity is not always upheld
- **Communication** – needs to consistent, accurate and timely
- **Accident & Emergency** – there is a need to reduce waiting times in A&E but also to ensure there is greater awareness of where else they can get support rather than attending A&E
- **Complaints**–Greater awareness of how to raise concerns and a quicker turnaround.

## Recommendations

- Encourage people to use their GP, community pharmacist or phone 111 to ease pressure on A&E
- Better communication with patients and their carers about treatment
- Better training for staff
- Hospital to improve awareness of PALS and how to make a formal Complaint
- Healthwatch Harrow to publicise the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service for Harrow residents.

## Presentations and Discussion Summary

### Lisa Knight, Chief Nurse of LNWH

Shared recent achievements:

“The Trust is in a much better place than previously and Northwick Park Hospital is the 5<sup>th</sup> safest hospital in London. It is also in second tier of performance out of four which is a much better place to be.”

- Recognises the hospital has had problems with the maternity unit, staff have worked on patient feedback and made significant investment. Last year Northwick Park was the safest place to have a baby
- If you live in Harrow and have an elective operation you are more likely to have it at Central Middlesex Hospital.



## Paul Joynson-Robbins, Director of Nursing LNWH

Highlighted various site developments at Northwick Park since 2023/24:

- Cerner EPR (Electronic Patient Record) went live from August 2023 – This allows different clinicians to access patient notes
- In June 2024 a new 32 bed modular ward opened. This included 2 rooms to support patients with mental health as well as physical health
- New Urology Centre
- New birth centre in maternity opened
- Wayfinding strategy for the hospital was launched – This involves giving clear and simple directions within the hospital
- PLACE audit in November 2023 was good with 3 areas needing improvement in privacy, dignity and wellbeing, dementia and disability.

The second part of Paul's presentation covered Performance, Quality, Patient experience and workforce:

- Maternity services continue to improve
- Emergency department continues to see unprecedented demand and highest number of ambulance arrivals in London
- Intense management of surgical and cancer pathways with improvement to patient backlog
- Success with the Purple butterfly project associated with End-of-Life care has improved
- National inpatient survey 2023 now published has identified areas of focus
- NHS staff survey showed a positive result and upward trend compared to previous years.



## Comments and questions from participants

- What is pathfinding? -Signage or pathway to get what you need and get to where you need to get to

- Comment about highlighting high quality care and appreciation most staff do their best
- Educate patients on how to communicate with staff
- Levels of violence against hospital staff has significantly escalated
- Disability and dementia are areas for improvement
- Northwick Park has a Dementia nurse who is an excellent member of the team and has significant work to do. There is now a Dementia café at the hospital and a dementia steering group has been set up
- A participant had noticed improvement in dementia care
- Aftercare from maternity unit is still needed as high birth rate in community
- A&E - Took on urgent care unit, as A&E is overwhelmed because people cannot sometimes get GP appointments.



On Maternity Lisa said “We only provide care for maternity up to a certain point, then it is over to the Community maternity midwives which has fallen short of staffing. 40% deficit in staffing levels. In April 2025 we will be fully staffed. National average for high rise in staffing is 45%. At NWP its 55-60%- (challenges for whom English not being the first language and no support network.) Happy to note Patient support groups.”

### Presentation from Karen Gilchrist, Adult Services Manager, Harrow Carers

- Hospital discharge scheme provides ongoing support and information to carers for supporting unpaid carers while in hospital
- Handbook for hospital discharge so carers know what to do - service works in partnership with Age UK and offers bridging care.





## Presentation from Simon Joshua, High Intensity User Co-ordinator, Harrow Carers

- High Intensity Users (HIU) – people coming frequently into A&E, some people attend up to 60 times in 6 months
- Usually related to HIV, Social issues and Sickle cell
- In NWL HIUs have significantly increased
- Some patients go to multiple hospital sites
- Harrow Carers offers Dementia hub, counselling, social prescribers and hospital discharge service.

## Presentation from PALS Annika Towell, LNWH Patient Advice & Liaison & Patient Involvement

The PALS team help patients, relatives and visitors who may need information, advice or wish to make comment.

They are there to help with issues or concerns that can be resolved within 1 to 2 days

- Last year 4,072 PALS contacts were received
- The team recruited two additional PALS officers, now have a team of six to support our patients and families
- The most common area of contact is Appointments (29%) and Communication (19%), followed by Signposting (12%), Clinical Treatment (3.5%) and Admission and Discharge Arrangements (2.5%)
- 70% of contacts raised were resolved internally, with the remaining provided with general advice, referred to other organisations and small portion (13 cases) were registered as formal complaints directly.



## Presentation from Vrinda Saidiwakar - Advocacy 1st (NHS Complaints Advocacy)

Advocacy 1st provide support for every resident of Harrow to make a formal complaint for an NHS funded service. An NHS complaints advocate can help individuals who live in Harrow, if they would like to complain about any NHS funded treatment. This includes care provided by NHS hospitals, GPs,

pharmacies, ambulance services, dentists, district nurses, opticians and mental health services.

The NHS complaints advocate can:

- Help you to understand the complaints process
- Support you to compile the complaints letter
- Help you with any meetings regarding the complaint.



## Group points brought up through discussion

Participants followed on with breakout sessions with each group sharing their experiences

- Fast tracked from III-A&E as III had informed of arrival and was seen within an hour
- Visited pop-up hospital and brought in extra clinician to run an operation
- Sent to NWP A&E, triaged quickly, 6 hours later still sitting there. Had been lost in the system. Was in a lot of pain. 12 hours in the end
- Signage not accessible. Wayfinding will improve using colours, numbers and icons
- Self-check-in should be reflecting GDPR in public areas. There should be more privacy rather than face out into the corridor
- Appointment being changed three or four times in a 3-week period
- Dignity must be a priority area to look at
- Rejection of a referral becomes problematic as patient needs to go back to the GP resulting in delayed treatment
- Accountability of staff
- Management of patient expectations



- Basics – Talk to people; Listen; Resolve issues
- Poor Maternity care especially for women of colour.

## Key issues to be addressed in hospital to make your experience better

---

- Better communication between departments – knowing if you have a Learning disability/autism or are a carer
- Dignity of care.

### **Case 1**

A&E – Carer having to stand for 9 hrs waiting in a corridor; Family member waiting 30 to 40 mins on the phone to get through and the staff not knowing patient's whereabouts. Once admitted received excellent care on Darwin ward.

### **Case 2**

Client with outpatient appointment supported by paid carer informed that appointment was cancelled. Paid carer contacted by phone only to find out that there was no record of cancellation. Clearly there are systems and admin problems, which could have had severe consequences for a patient receiving treatment for a severe condition.

### **Case 3**

Carer who looks after loved one requiring care and support, meds and personal care attended hospital and waited over 4 hours to be seen led to concerns and anxiety having no one at home to support vulnerable person.

## Points flagged up in Q &A



- Appointments were given at short notice. The elderly with Freedom Passes are unable to make appointments before 9.30am, during which time their passes are not accepted on the buses and trains. A new appointment was rejected. The patient made her way to the hospital but was only seen at 10am!
- Another patient had an operation at 3.30pm but was asked to be in the hospital at 7.30am. There were suggestions earlier appointments should be for the younger population and working population, with late appointments for the elderly. This shows lack of sensitivity to patients' needs and looks more like it was a ticking-the-box exercise
- It was highlighted some hospitals like Guys Hospital provide transportation for over 65s
- Some positive experiences were shared when patients were called up earlier for their appointments.
- Some departments at Northwick Park Hospital are more accommodating
- Junior doctors take longer to carry out operations
- Pressures at A&E in Northwick Park are caused by the closure of surrounding hospitals, like Edgware, Ealing, Central Middlesex hospital
- Sometimes, there were long waiting times at A&E and there is no communication to the patients on the causes of the delays. Patients become hungry, thirsty and anxious, with no one to provide information on their appointments
- Patient confidentiality is not adhered to when names are called out in the waiting area. Some names are difficult to pronounce, and the patient may miss their appointment as a result. One has to be alert to hear their names. The digital system where names would appear on a screen was suggested



- Only patients are allowed in the waiting areas at A&E, due to limited space. This leaves the patients with no assistance, should they need any
- The A&E call desk can triage callers to 111, which would give them an emergency number to call on. This will ease the pressure in A&E.



## Speakers Session – Q & A

Lisa Henschen-Managing Director of Harrow Partnership shared the following insights linked to the Q&A points.

Lisa recognises people going to A&E instead of GP as they are struggling with access. She shared:

- A lot of Pharmacies now providing enhanced provision such as eyecare and can now prescribe so will ease the pressure
- Working with trusts to understand who is not registered with a GP and therefore using A&E.

Participant asked about new EPR (Electronic patient Record), but doctor did not have access to previous system to see previous records

- Lisa explained previous system, records were in a different format so doctor could not access old system. But the doctor probably did not do the training to see that all patient docs are scanned and accessible on patient's profile.



- The PALS team response time for formal complaints can be reduced from 40 days to 30 days
- More clarity needed around Harrow Carers services in hospital discharge
- Rates of people discharged-what care package in place rate -longer delays usually due to care home searches by person or family. Other delays are short term e.g. collection of medication and can be resolved very quickly by the PALS team.

## Dignity & pressure sores

Patients who need assurance from medical professionals but are not listened to.

Paul – we have done significant improvement in the last 12 months including new beds and mattresses. Have seen a reduction in hospital acquired bed sores

- Patient safety incident response has been setup which will record any patient skin issue on arrival and throughout stay.
- PURPOSET – new risk assessment tool. Assessing skin tone for pressure damage
- Multi-disciplinary teams have been formed as more people have more than one condition. There is lack of communication. At the moment, it seems to be down to the patient to join the dots and this is not always viable as some people are unable to do that.

Paul responded – We have not got this area right at all. Records should reflect all areas to enable a coordinated approach so doctors and nurses can have access to information.



## Useful Contacts:

Organisation	Telephone	Email
PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison service) (London North West University Healthcare)	020 8967 5653	<a href="mailto:LNWH-tr.PALS@nhs.net">LNWH-tr.PALS@nhs.net</a>
LNWH formal Complaints (London North West University Healthcare)	020 8869 2026	<a href="mailto:LNWH-tr.Complaints@nhs.net">LNWH-tr.Complaints@nhs.net</a>
Advocacy 1st	020 8869 8484	<a href="mailto:advocacy@communityconnex.co.uk">advocacy@communityconnex.co.uk</a>
Harrow Carers Centre	020 8868 5224	<a href="mailto:admin@harrowcarers.org">admin@harrowcarers.org</a>

## Acknowledgement

Healthwatch Harrow would like people to share their experiences so we will know what the trends are in Harrow.

We would also like to thank all the speakers, attendees, staff and volunteers who participated in the event.





London North West  
University Healthcare  
NHS Trust

# Healthwatch Harrow- Forum

Paul Joynson-Robbins, Director of Nursing LNWH  
September 2024



## Hospital update Northwick Park 23/24 -

### Hospital site developments

- Cerner EPR live from August 2023
- New 32 bedded modular ward opened in June 2024 - included will be 2 rooms to support patients with a mental health requirement as well as physical health
- New Urology Centre
- Maternity - new birth centre opened
- Wayfinding strategy for the hospital launched
- PLACE audit in November 2023 was good with 3 areas for improvement in privacy, dignity and wellbeing, dementia and disability



## Hospital update Northwick Park 23/24 -

### Hospital site developments

- Cerner EPR live from August 2023
- New 32 bedded modular ward opened in June 2024 - included will be 2 rooms to support patients with a mental health requirement as well as physical health
- New Urology Centre
- Maternity - new birth centre opened
- Wayfinding strategy for the hospital launched
- PLACE audit in November 2023 was good with 3 areas for improvement in privacy, dignity and wellbeing, dementia and disability

## Harrow Carers



## “UNPAID CARERS”

*A carer is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.*

(NHS Definition)

## WHY ARE CARERS IMPORTANT?

- Over 10 million unpaid carers in the UK
- Contribution valued at £445 million a day
- Estimated £162 billion a year ( similar to NHS budget)
- **TWICE** as likely to suffer poor health
- Support staff with information and care

## ARE CARERS VALUED IN HOSPITAL?

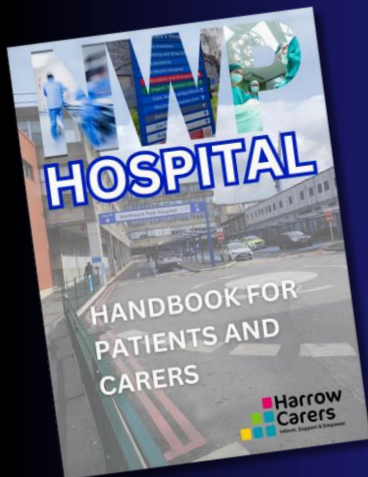
- Putting Patients First (2007) requires the NHS to recognise family members and carers as experts and care partners.
- Meaningful involvement and inclusion of carers can lead to better care
- What are challenges as seen by staff?

## AIMS OF HOSPITAL SUPPORT

- Identify and register unpaid carers
- Raise awareness to staff
- Assess for ongoing support
- Support with information
- Aid communication
- Mental health and well-being support

## OUTCOMES OF HOSPITAL SUPPORT

- Need to document on CERNER, not NOK
- Long term support
- Assist with communication
- Reduce failed discharges and readmissions
- Facilitate discharge process
- Report on carers' experiences in NWP



## DEVELOPING HANDBOOK FOR PATIENTS AND CARERS

- Information pack
- Welcome pack for carers
- Supporting staff, patients and carers

## HIU Programme Outline

- Better support for HIUs across NWL
- Fewer / shorter crises
- Reduce ED and UEC attendances
- London Ambulance Service (LAS) conveyances
- Non-elective (NEL) admissions
- Reduce health inequalities

## North West London Issues

- Scale: >7,000 HIUs
- Very high threshold definition:
  - >6 ED attends in 6 months
- Huge cross-border flows
- Multiple providers
- Actively address inequalities
- Need for system change

## North West London:

- Brent
- Ealing
- Hammersmith and Fulham
- Harrow
- Hillingdon
- Hounslow
- Kensington and Chelsea Westminster

## Key Outcomes

- MDTs to discuss patients
- Understand patient's social needs
- Provide access to community support
- Set up Universal Care Plans
- Reduce calls to LAS
- Reduce conveyance to A&E
- Reduce hospital admissions



**OTHER HARROW CARERS SERVICES**

- **HOSPITAL DISCHARGE SERVICE**
- **DEMENTIA HUBS**
- **SOCIAL PRESCRIBING**
- **COUNSELLING**

**PALS – London North West University Healthcare**

# Patient Experience

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

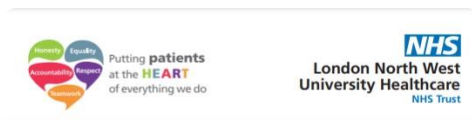
Annika Towell

Head of Patient Experience



# Sources of Patient Feedback


- Friends and Family Test
- National Patient Surveys
- Complaints
- Compliments
- PALS
- Patient Surveys
- You Said, We Did
- Care Opinion
- Healthwatch
- Facebook, Twitter
- User engagement groups
- Topic surveys & questionnaires



Putting patients at the HEART of everything we do

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

“ The Trust welcomes feedback - comments, compliments and complaints - from all users of our services, including patients, visitors, relatives and carers. ”



We are a listening organisation and patient care is at the heart of everything that we do.

## PALS

- The **PALS** team help patients, relatives and visitors who may need information, advice or wish to make a comment.
- They are there to help with issues or concerns that can be resolved within 1 to 2 days



## **PALS activity in 23-24**

- Last year 4, 072 PALS contacts were received
- The team recruited two additional PALS officers, now having a team of six to support our patients and families
- The most common area of contact is Appointments (29%) and Communication (19%), followed by Signposting (12%), Clinical Treatment (3.5%) and Admission and Discharge Arrangements (2.5%)
- 70% of contacts raised were resolved internally, with the remaining provided with general advice, referred to other organisations and small portion (13 cases) were registered as formal complaints directly.

## **Actions following PALS feedback**

- New Improving Patient Access Group was formed to improve telephone responding and appointment letters
- More digital options will be available for patients through NHS App and DrDr appointment platform
- Wayfinding group and strategy to address issues related to finding correct location
- New Customer Care training has been introduced.



## Making a formal complaint

“ The Trust welcomes feedback - complaints, comments or compliments - from all users of our services, including patients, visitors, relatives and carers. ”



We are a listening organisation and patient care is at the heart of everything that we do.

# Formal Complaints

The Complaints team register each complaint received

They are acknowledged within 3 working days

Aim to respond to complaints within 40 working days

Responses can be either written or via a meeting

## Patient experience contact details:

### Patient experience and FFT

- Email: LNWH-tr.PATIENTEXPERIENCE@nhs.net
- Tel: 020 8869 3638

### PALS

- Email: LNWH-tr.PALS@nhs.net
- Tel: 020 8967 5653

### Complaints

- Email: LNWH-tr.Complaints@nhs.net
- Tel: 020 8869 2026

# NHS complaints advocacy

## NHS complaints Advocacy

PALS help resolve concerns or problems when you are using the NHS.

They can also give you information about the NHS complaints procedure, if you want to make a formal complaint about an NHS funded service.

PALS can also give you information on how to get independent support with a complaint.

You can get independent support with a formal complaint from an NHS complaints advocate from Advocacy 1<sup>st</sup>.

## NHS complaints Advocacy

An NHS complaints advocate can help individuals who live in Harrow, if they would like to complain about any NHS funded treatment. This includes care provided by NHS hospitals, GPs, pharmacies, ambulance services, dentists, district nurses, opticians and mental health services.

The NHS complaints advocate can:

- Help you to understand the complaints process
- Support you to compile the complaints letter
- Help you with any meetings regarding the complaint

## Advocacy 1<sup>st</sup> Referral information

**Email:** [advocacy@communityconnex.co.uk](mailto:advocacy@communityconnex.co.uk)

**Website:** [Advocacy 1st - Community Connex](http://Advocacy 1st - Community Connex)

**Telephone:** [0208 869 8484](tel:0208 869 8484)



ADVOCACY 1ST

Community  
CONNEX






# healthwatch

Harrow

Healthwatch Harrow  
3 Jardine House  
Harrovian Business Village  
Bessborough Road  
Harrow HA1 3EX

 [www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

 0203 432 2889

 [info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk)

 [Facebook.com/HWHarrow](https://www.facebook.com/HWHarrow)

 [@HealthwatchHarr](https://twitter.com/HealthwatchHarr)

 [healthwatchharrow](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchharrow)