

Pass it on...

Please forward this ebulletin to your friends, family and colleagues.

Healthwatch Harrow is the health and social care champion for local residents.

[Join now](#) and get involved!



Picture: Perivale Meadow Wetlands

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... plus more!

➔ Your Voice Matters!

Healthwatch Harrow Manager, Yaa Asamany writes “We need to hear about your experiences with health and social care services.

Residents of Harrow have a role to play in helping providers make changes to services they provide. We want to encourage and remind you to use our channels to communicate with us. We do not share your personal details and all the data collected feeds into our reports - which are shared with commissioners and providers to shape change.

You can be a Healthwatch champion for your networks, social groups, school, mosque, church, care home etc.



Sharing your experience can make a difference

The important ask is that you share what you are hearing so we can include in our data and have a true picture of local trends”.

➔ Our Annual Report 2022-23

Our latest Annual Report is now available, detailing our activity during a busy 2022-23. A total of 5,300 local people engaged with us, through outreach, meetings, community festivals, events, social media and on our website.

We have used their collective feedback, to pinpoint what works well, and what does not, and working with service commissioners and managers, have aimed to drive improvements over the year. [➤ More](#)

“The midwife was right there for us.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Recent Trends - Telephone Access?

In the last three months (April - June 2023) we have received the feedback of 647 local people, about their experience of health and care services.

Comments suggest that around three quarters of people (72%) are satisfied with services overall, this increases to 79% for feeling involved, supported and informed, and rises further to 82% for feeling well looked after by staff.



Feedback outlines problems with phone access

This tells us that services are staffed by dedicated and hard working professionals.

However, satisfaction on service access is just 36% positive overall and there is no sign of improvement, either in the short or longer term.

The largest issue, according to feedback received is on telephone access, with 40 people during the three months experiencing difficulty.

One hospital patient says “Several telephone calls just to speak to someone, and when I did, they transferred me to a colleague’s voice mail. Nobody has replied”.

And a GP patient comments “I call at 8.15am on the dot (when their system opens). 30 minutes in a phone queue, before being told to book an appointment on their online system, which was at capacity anyway. In other words, no way to make an appointment”.

What is your experience, in being able to get through, book an appointment, or have a message returned? We’re interested in all experiences - good and bad. What has worked well for you, and what has not?

Talk to us, in confidence!

☎ 020 3432 2889

✉ info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

➤ The 'We Are General Practice' Campaign

The local NHS writes "Doctors surgeries are busier than ever. It's important for us to give you the right care at the right time and make sure that our doctors see patients who need their advice.

To do this, general practice is working as a team of medical experts and support staff, led and supervised by the GP. There are new members of staff & systems in place to support GPs to look after your needs.



A GP practice is a team of professionals

To get you to the right person receptionists are trained to ask you for a bit of information about what is wrong so they know which medical expert you need to see. They want to help as many people as possible to get appointments from the right medical experts each day. Some GPs see up to 75 patients a day when they used to see an average of about 25.

It might be that you will get an appointment with a trained expert more suited to your needs, such as a nurse, pharmacist or physiotherapist. You may also see a new expert like a physician or social prescriber. Different practices have different types of staff. It is worth checking your practice website for information or asking practice staff.

GP practices now work together in local networks. This lets them share expertise and provide more services for their patients. It means you may sometimes be offered an appointment at a neighbouring practice, for example, if that practice is providing the out-of-hours service". Find out more about general practice on the website. [➤ More](#)

“ I need to be recognised as a carer. ”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Introducing 'Preventing Diabetes'

Online personal support is now available for people who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, thanks to the new 'Preventing Diabetes' website.

The NHS in North West London has launched the website to help the 200,000 people who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the area.

GP and diabetes lead Dr Tony Willis explains "We know that patients may feel overwhelmed when they are told they are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. They are often given a blood glucose reading or a high blood pressure reading from their GP and advised to make some lifestyle changes. For many they leave this conversation not really knowing what to do next and how to make real changes to improve their health. This is where the new website can help."



Helping you to make 'real changes'

Across North West London patients who have had a recent blood test result that shows they could be at risk of developing type 2 diabetes (called non-diabetic hyperglycaemia) will be directed to the new website. Anyone who would like support or is worried about developing type 2 diabetes is also welcome to go directly to the website and join.

After registering, patients will be able to see a personalised healthcare dashboard, displaying their latest blood results, including blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood glucose.

The dashboard will offer advice about what is good, improving or getting worse in terms of health and prevention of type 2 diabetes.

Support is then available on the site including educational courses, meal plans and day-to-day advice to help patients understand how to go about making positive long-term changes. [➤ More](#)

➔ Drop in Urgent & Emergency Care Satisfaction

Findings from a survey of more than 36,000 people who used NHS urgent and emergency care services in September 2022 show that many people had a worse experience than in previous years, especially those treated in an A&E type department.



Satisfaction has noticeably declined

Published by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the survey reveals the responses from patients who attended either a major consultant-led A&E department (Type 1) or an urgent treatment centre or minor injury unit (Type 3) run directly by one of 122 hospital trusts in England in September 2022.

Although people surveyed remained broadly positive about their interactions with staff, this year's results show a decline in positivity for every question asked where a historical comparison exists.

Most people (80%) surveyed who had visited a Type 3 department said they 'definitely' had enough time to discuss their condition with the professionals treating them (down from 85% in 2020).

For respondents who attended a Type 1 department in 2022, 73% felt that doctors and nurses 'definitely' listened to them, compared with 79% in 2020. And over two thirds (71%) said they 'definitely' had confidence and trust in staff - which is still high, but a lot lower than the 77% who said this in 2020. Other topics such as waiting times, availability of staff, pain management and discharge information showed an even more marked decline. ➔ [More](#)

“Booking online is much more convenient.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ The 'Hidden Wait' for Cancer Care

Healthwatch England writes “One in two people will develop cancer during their lifetime in the UK. And for most cancers care can only begin with a referral from GP to hospital teams for tests and treatment.

Our research on GP referrals highlights the frustration patients experience due to long waits and a lack of support.

We conducted a poll with over 2,000 adults in England between September & October last year to understand people's experiences of getting a GP practice referral. We also received a further 1,825 responses to the survey via our local Healthwatch network. This analysis focuses on 385 adults who were referred or expected to be referred for suspected cancer.



We hear about 'long waits and a lack of support'

“Good communication on the ward is vital.”

Join us today and have your say!

Almost half, 45%, of respondents are not referred for suspected cancer at their first appointment. Over one in four, 28%, wait up to a month after their first appointment to be told they are being referred.

And almost one in six, 16%, wait over a month after their first appointment. Around one in seven, 14%, are still waiting for referrals to be confirmed over a month after the decision to refer.

And one in 10 cancer referrals don't directly progress to a hospital appointment, with some referrals either rejected, lost, or otherwise not booked". Find out more in the full article. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Northwick Park Hospital to Build New Unit

A new 32-bed unit will be built on top of the existing A&E department at Northwick Park providing the hospital with much needed additional bed space.

The hospital trust successfully bid for a national pot of money from NHS England to increase general and acute bed capacity.

Its benefits include reducing the amount of time patients wait in A&E for a bed, improving patient safety, reducing ambulance waits and better managing seasonal demand, especially in winter.



Providing 'much needed additional bed space'

Pippa Nightingale, Chief Executive of London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) said "We have one of the biggest and busiest A&Es in the country so this is a welcome and much needed addition to our capacity."

“Lots of activities here for residents.”

Join us today and have your say!

It's crucial to maintain flow through the hospital so we have enough beds. An enormous amount of work goes on behind-the-scenes every day to ensure this happens. The new unit will help us better manage this."

At present, the hospital often has to put patients in ward corridors during the day, its resuscitation unit runs at full capacity and it holds up to ten mental health patients a day taking up much needed clinical capacity. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Orthopaedic Centre to Cut Waiting Lists

A surgical centre that will be able to perform thousands of orthopaedic procedures a year will open in November.

The £9.4m Elective Orthopaedic Centre (EOC) in Central Middlesex Hospital will help reduce a waiting list of more than 16,000 patients that has built up across hospital sites in North West London.



Helping to 'cut waiting times' for surgery

The EOC will focus on 'high volume, low complexity' bone and joint procedures, such as knee and hip replacements leaving counterparts to focus on more complex procedures whose patients need more care.

Matt Bartlett, Medical Director of the EOC and an orthopaedic surgeon, said "A similar model in South London has proved very successful and it is all about providing a faster, more effective service. We're working hard to reduce waiting lists but orthopaedic procedures involving bones and joints make up more than a quarter of all NHS operations."

The works will include two new operating theatres, a larger recovery unit and remodelling part of the existing hospital site. Patients pre and post-operative care will remain in their local hospitals with their surgeons travelling to the EOC to undertake their procedures.

The building works coincide with other building projects at LNWH including a 32-bed unit at Northwick Park and a £30m Clinical Diagnostic Centre at Ealing Hospital. ➔ [More](#)

“The phone is engaged constantly!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ TfL Promotes Step-Free Access

The Transport for London (TfL) app makes it easier to find step-free travel information in London.

Open the app and turn-on the accessibility features by activating the step-free button on the top left of the screen. The new 'carousel' explains how to make the most of the step-free features in the app.



Helping you to plan accessible journeys

You can now tap on a station in the map to discover more about all stations' accessibility information, and if you use voice-over or talk-back, you can access station step-free information by searching for a station name. To plan accessible journeys, find platform access information, live lift status and toilet information download TfL Go. [➔ More](#)

➔ Supporting Men's Mental Health in Harrow

Man On is a mental health service - fully funded, so free for those that use it, offering men support through conversations and sport.

It runs every Thursday for 90 minutes and has already proven to increase mental and psychical health as well as build on an individual's support network. Sessions start with a demand free game of football proceeded by an indoor wellbeing conversation around positive mental wellbeing.

Man On takes place at Cedars Community Centre (HA3 6QH) from 6pm - 7.30pm. [➔ More](#)

“It's difficult to register for NHS dentistry.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Work Starts on New Diagnostic Centre

Work has begun on a third community diagnostic centre (CDC) in North West London.

The £30m project, which will be co-located on the Ealing Hospital site, will allow thousands of patients to quickly receive diagnostic tests including CT, MRI and ultrasound scans.

The centres are part of a national network funded by the government to address the backlog of patients that built up during the pandemic.



'Quicker access' to diagnostic tests

Ealing CDC will focus on four 'priority pathways' checking on symptoms including breathlessness, asthma, back and chest pain. Pippa Nightingale, Chief Executive of London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) said "The earlier you detect a condition like cancer the better, so these diagnostic centres are an important addition to our healthcare services.

“Popping to the chemist did the trick!”

Join us today and have your say!

They also help ease pressure on existing hospital services by allowing GPs to make direct referrals. This is a great investment on our hospital site and reflects our long-term commitment”.

The new facility is due to open early in 2024 and will largely utilise existing hospital space along with its own entrance. A CDC is already operating in Willesden with another opening in Wembley at the end of the year. [➔ More](#)

➤ Careline - Personal Alarm Service

Harrow Council writes "The personal alarm service is available to offer you and your loved ones the support they need to live independently.

Our fully trained Careline operators provide a service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to give peace of mind and security in your own home.

We also offer a short term version of the service to provide cover for when your carers are away on holiday.

Careline is governed by the Telecare Services Association Standards (TSA). The TSA has once again awarded us their accreditation for the period 2023-26 for the consistently high standards we deliver.



Supporting independence

How does it work? You will receive an alarm unit and a pendant. In an emergency, press either the button on your pendant or the alarm unit to connect to our control centre, and an experienced Careline operator will speak with you via the speaker system within the alarm unit to establish the reason for your call and arrange assistance if required.

What do you need? A plug socket, and at least one local contact who can be contacted in an emergency, such as a friend, relative or neighbour".

To find out more, including how to get in touch, visit the website. ➤ [More](#)

“Fast service today at radiography!”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Introducing Aspire Leisure Centre

Aspire is a national charity that works with people with spinal cord injuries to help them achieve more choice and independence.

The Aspire leisure centre is a fully inclusive leisure facility for both disabled and able bodied people.



A 'fully inclusive leisure facility'

Around a third of their members are disabled, which compares with a national average of 2 - 3% in other sports centres.

The centre proactively encourages disabled people to join and take part in all activities by subsidising their membership and activity costs and offer fully inclusive fitness initiatives.

Find out more on the website. ➤ [More](#)

“I want to be involved in decisions about me.”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Need Help or Advice? Give Us a 'Shout'!

Shout is the UK's first and only free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

They've had more than 1.7 million conversations with people who are anxious, stressed, depressed, suicidal or overwhelmed, and need in-the-moment support.

Text 'Shout' to 85258 to get personal advice and support. You can also visit their website, which features a wide range of information. ➤ [More](#)

➔ Dementia - Living Well After Diagnosis

Have you recently been diagnosed with dementia?

Get your copy of the latest version of the dementia guide.

Compiled by the Alzheimer's Society, it has lots of tips and advice to help you live well with dementia and keep you doing the activities that you enjoy.

It will help you to understand more about dementia and the treatments, support and services that are available.



A useful guide by the Alzheimer's Society

Find out more on the website. ➔ [More](#)

Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Rethink Support Group - Newsletter, July 2023 ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Carers - Newsletter, September/October 2023 ➔ [More](#)

Send us a link to your latest newsletter!

News Summary

- ➔ The latest news from London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest news from Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest from NHS North West London ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Thousands of sickle cell patients to benefit from quicker access to expert NHS care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS announces nominations of health service heroes ahead of 75th birthday ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Retired specialists set to help with tackling Covid backlog ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 40% of unpaid carers face financial difficulties, new research found ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Weekly visits to NHS website's hay fever advice reach 122,000 as pollen levels rise ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on supporting carers in the community ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on how benefits checks can change lives ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Patients to benefit from faster care, under major new GP access recovery plan ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of patients receiving lifesaving NHS cancer checks has doubled in a decade ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Labour-commissioned report sets out plans for National Care Service ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS plan to improve workforce experience ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of repeat prescriptions ordered via NHS App up by 92% in the last year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on 'retirement on the road' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harnessing technology to tackle the challenges of assessing pain in people with dementia ➔ [More](#)
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- ➔ Our unsung heroes: Recognising carers in home care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Sara Hurley, the Chief Dental Officer for England, to stand down ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK on developing 'crucial connections' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Lifesaving campaign to help people spot a heart attack ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS to roll out flu vaccines for children from September ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Significant A&E demand continues for NHS ➔ [More](#)

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS NEEDED

Voluntary
Action
Harrow
Co-op

In partnership with

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

We need volunteers to raise awareness of Macmillan services to under-represented communities in Harrow. Be the bridge of connecting people with local services.

