

## 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: Regional Day Out (Northala Fields Park)

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... plus more!

## ➔ Your Hospital, Your Health: 4<sup>th</sup> September

The next Healthwatch Harrow Forum is taking place on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

This time, the event is about hospital services and as usual there will be an opportunity to share your views, to speak with professionals (question and answer session) and to view stalls from local groups.



What's your experience of local hospitals?

The event is from 1.30pm - 4.00pm and takes place at Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow, HA1 1BA.

Book online, or contact the office. ➔ [More](#)

## ➔ Adult Social Care - 'Requires Improvement'

In its latest inspection report, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has rated Harrow Social Care as 'requires improvement' overall.

As part of the public response, Cllr Jean Lammiman, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Public Health said "This inspection shows that we are a very small step away from being recognised as 'good'.

While we know our strengths, we also know the areas that we can improve on. The organisation has been through a lot of changes recently, but we have ensured that this has not affected the quality of services we deliver for our residents."

Read more in the full response & report. ➔ [More](#)

**"I need to be recognised as a carer."**

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Children's Urgent Care - Hearing From Parents

Each week, we receive and review the feedback of 70 local people - this amounts to around 3,600 experiences a year.

We often hear from parents, and would like to highlight some of their issues, and the wider trends.

One parent says "My son had a really bad rash - all over his arms, we got an appointment with the practice nurse the same day. She prescribed cream and it worked."

Another parent told us "My three year old had a fever and I was really worried. When calling the GP, they said all appointments were gone for the day, so we went straight to A&E."



Are services working well for you?

While experiences are mixed, the above account illustrates a common and wider trend - that parents are using hospital emergency services, when in cases, treatment or care in the community would be a more suitable option - for patients and services.

**"The new callback system works well."**

Join us today and have your say!

Thus is both a national and local issue and as a result, 'integrated care teams' are being rolled out or enhanced, across North West London (read more on page 5).

We want to hear from you. As a parent, how have you found GP or 'integrated' services? If you visited A&E, how was your experience? Are local services working well, as and when you need them to? Contact the Healthwatch office with your stories.

## ➔ Am I Seeing a Physician Associate or a Doctor?

Healthwatch England writes "In recent years, the NHS has expanded the use of 'medical associate' roles to help tackle staff shortages and improve access to care. One of these roles is the Physician Associate.

What is a physician associate?

Physician associates are healthcare professionals who work under the supervision of a senior doctor and can assess, diagnose, and treat patients within certain limits.

They don't prescribe medication or request X-rays, and they are supposed to supplement - and not substitute - fully qualified doctors.

Physician Associates are not a new role - they have worked in England since the early 2000s, but the number employed in the NHS has grown significantly in recent years.



Associates can help to improve access

The Faculty of Physician Associates found that 2,833 were working in England in October 2022, more than double the number recorded three years earlier.

With plans to employ 10,000 Physician Associates by 2037, we looked at how aware patients are of the role and how NHS staff and medical regulators can improve their understanding and experience."

In polling, around half of respondents (52%) were aware of the role.

Find out more, in the full article. [➔ More](#)

**“Booking online is much more convenient.”**

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Measles - It's Not Just a Rash

The local NHS writes "Measles doesn't just cause your child discomfort, it also puts them at risk of serious health complications if the infection spreads to the brain or lungs, but this is preventable.

It's easy to think that measles is just a rash when in fact it can have serious health consequences. This is why one in four babies and children who catch measles could need to be treated in hospital.



A vaccine will help prevent the spread

In the early stage of infection symptoms include a fever, cough, sore, red or swollen eyes and aches and pains. For many children these symptoms cause discomfort and difficulty sleeping. The rash then develops a few days later.

It's when measles spreads to the brain or lungs that it becomes very serious and even life-threatening. When this happens, it can cause blindness, hearing loss, brain damage and breathing difficulties.

Measles spreads very easily and we are currently seeing a rise in cases in North West London. The best way to prevent the infection and the associated risks is through vaccination.

The MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine has been repeatedly tested and is regularly reviewed to make sure it's completely safe. Detailed information about the vaccine is available on the NHS website.

Having the right information about measles, what the risks are and how they can be prevented is important when considering whether to vaccinate your child.

If you have questions about measles or the MMR vaccination, contact your GP for advice. Alternatively, you can visit one of the NHS pop-up clinics across North West London to talk to a health professional, no appointment needed." [➔ More](#)

## ➔ Community Pharmacies - Supporting You

The local NHS writes “Pharmacies across North West London can now provide treatment for common health conditions, with no GP appointment or prescription needed.

Highly trained pharmacists can assess and treat patients for seven common health conditions: sinusitis; sore throat; earache; infected insect bite; impetigo; shingles; and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.



Pharmacists can treat some common conditions

This major expansion of pharmacy services gives residents more choice when it comes to where and how they access care, while also freeing up millions of GP appointments. 95% of pharmacies will offer these additional services across North West London.

Community pharmacies already play a vital role in keeping local communities healthy, helping with minor health concerns such as coughs, colds and infections, offering blood pressure checks, providing support with medication management and administering certain vaccinations.

Seema Buckley, Chief Pharmacist and Director of Medicines Optimisation and Pharmacy said ‘Expanding these services is a vital step in making health services more accessible for our communities, giving people more choice of when and where they get the help they need. Community pharmacists play a major role in frontline healthcare, and this expansion will alleviate the pressure at your doctor’s surgery and reduce waiting times for patients.’

The expansion of services available via pharmacies is part of the NHS’ primary care access recovery plan, which is committed to making it quicker and easier for millions of people to access healthcare on their high street.” [➔ More](#)

## ➔ Healthwatch England on GP Collective Action

GPs across England will start capping the number of patients they are willing to see after the British Medical Association announced an immediate work-to-rule action in a dispute over funding levels.

Commenting on the news, Louise Ansari, Healthwatch England’s Chief Executive said “Patients tell us they highly value their relationship with their GP, however, they persistently find it difficult to access timely appointments.

Without proactive communications to patients, the work-to-rule action could exacerbate access problems or even deter people from seeking help altogether if they are unsure whether their surgery is still open to patients.



GPs are ‘limiting the number of appointments’

Patient safety must be paramount in any action GPs take. We strongly urge all GP practices to inform their patients, if and when they are taking part in the collective action, whether they are limiting the number of appointments, what type of health needs will be prioritised, and where to go for alternative help.

GP surgeries could share this information on their websites, surgery phone voice messages, notices at reception, or disseminate it via local Healthwatch, other community organisations, and integrated care boards’ communication teams. Ultimately, it’s essential that the BMA and NHS England work with urgency to resolve the GP contract dispute.’”

“When my child reaches 16 the service stops.”

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Improving Children's Health - Integrated Teams

The local NHS writes "Hundreds of families with young children across Harrow, Brent and Ealing are receiving support through a new local approach, after more families were attending A&E with needs that could be helped outside of hospital.

This new case-study highlights how integrated local teams can help support families and address health needs at the earliest point possible.

The project began last year after data showed 4,500 infants under 12 months attended the emergency department from central areas of Harrow, an increasing trend both locally and nationally.



Some hospital visits could be avoided

It builds on our North West London Child Health Hubs, where a multi-disciplinary team links the current services for children across the neighbourhood and discusses cases. This new programme provides supplementary services and support to those in need."

Read more about the project online. ➔ [More](#)

### ➔ August Bank Holiday - Pharmacy Cover

Bank Holidays can affect the opening hours of local pharmacies.

Please check this list, to see which pharmacies will remain open on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August 2024. ➔ [More](#)

**“Getting physiotherapy has been a big help.”**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Mental Health Support Group for Carers

Harrow Carers writes "Do you care for a loved one with a mental health problem?"

Take a break from your caring responsibilities and join us for a warm welcome in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.



Join a relaxed, supportive atmosphere

Support Group members say...

"The Drop In is something to look forward to where I feel understood and not alone."

"Sharing is so important and I leave there feeling better."

"It's tremendously helpful to be amongst others who can relate to the situations of a carer."

Join us in-person at Harrow Carers Centre in North Harrow (376 Pinner Road) every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays of the month from 1.30pm to 3pm". To find out more:

☎ 020 8868 5224 or ✉ [admin@harrowcarers.org](mailto:admin@harrowcarers.org)

### ➔ GP-Patient Survey 2024 - Results Published

Every year, the NHS surveys experiences of GPs and NHS dentistry, and new for this year - community pharmacies.

Nearly 700,000 questionnaires were completed for the last survey year.

Findings suggest that more than seven in ten patients (74%) had a good overall experience of their GP practice and around two thirds (67%) had a good experience of contacting their practice.

The full set of results is available now. ➔ [More](#)

## ➔ New Unit Opens at Northwick Park A&E

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes "A new 32-bed unit built on top of the existing A&E department at Northwick Park has officially opened providing the hospital with much valued bed space.



One of the country's 'busiest A&Es'

The trust successfully bid for a pot of money from NHS England to increase general and acute bed capacity as part of the national Urgent Care Plan.

The benefits of the £20m unit include reducing the amount of time patients wait in A&E, improving patient safety, reducing ambulance waits and better managing seasonal demand.

**“Staff have a great sense of humour.”**

Join us today and have your say!

Pippa Nightingale, Chief Executive 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. It's crucial to maintain flow through the hospital so we have enough beds for people arriving who really need us.

The new unit will help us better manage this and provide high quality care. We also have senior decision-makers on the unit seven days a week which is important.'

The seven day a week consultant-led service is supported by occupational health, physiotherapy and pharmacy teams." ➔ [More](#)

## ➔ New Online Tool Supports Palliative Care

The local NHS writes "We are excited to share HPAL, a unique digital platform designed to support Integrated Palliative and End of Life Care across North West London. HPAL brings together the best resources in palliative care, making them easily accessible for clinicians, patients, and carers.

HPAL features a ready populated clinical triage tool designed to address common clinical challenges in palliative care through a clinically designed search function. It's service directory provides real-time information on available services in each Borough across North West London.



A resource for clinicians, patients and carers

It improves care at the point of contact through saving clinicians time by offering easy access to curated summaries of key symptoms. Its separate portal dedicated for family carers improves self-management for both patients and carers, and a portal for clinicians providing a fantastic resource for primary care, hospital and care home clinicians.

HPAL also provides summaries of national guidance tailored to the Integrated Care System (ICS) and local needs. Users can search for information specific to their boroughs. It helps the ICS meet its obligations and improve equality of access across the ICS.

Since its launch, over 500 users accessed the website within just three days, receiving excellent feedback for its ease of use." ➔ [More](#)

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

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Skin Tone Cards Help Solve Sore Problem

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes "A Northwick Park nurse is believed to be the first in the world to highlight the importance of using a skin tone card to spot the early warning signs of pressure ulcers and other skin damage among black and Asian patients.

Luxmi Dhoonmoon was puzzled why so many of her patients from ethnic minorities were presenting with late-stage ulcers that hadn't previously been diagnosed. Late-stage ulcers can cause permanent muscle damage travelling down to the bone in the most severe cases.



The new cards have been issued to nurses

'Sometimes things are so obvious we overlook them,' said the nurse consultant specialising in tissue viability who realised that the first signs of ulcers - discoloured skin - were being hidden by patients' darker skin tone.

In response, every healthcare assistant and nurse at the hospital trust has been issued with a skin tone card which shows a graduation of skin colours from light to dark helping healthcare professionals see if there is a potential problem.

Luxmi added 'The combination of a lack of awareness and potential sensitivities around clinical staff querying skin tone discolouration means this has gone unnoticed. North West London has a very diverse community so the use of skin tone cards should be common practice.'" [➔ More](#)

**"I wish mum's home was a little closer."**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Perinatal Mental Health - Tackling Stigma

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes " In the past month, our teams organised events in Brent and Harrow to showcase CNWL's perinatal mental health services and discuss ways to improve the perinatal experience for families and communities in these boroughs.



It can be 'difficult to come forward'

The events attracted over 150 attendees and participants shared a wide range of perspectives, highlighting the need for stronger collaboration between the services involved in perinatal care.

One of the most pressing issues raised at the events was the need to de-stigmatise mental health support.

**"The Practice nurse was very caring."**

Join us today and have your say!

Research shows that up to one in five new and expectant mothers experience perinatal mental illness. However, many find it difficult to come forward and ask for the help they need.

Brent and Harrow are some of the most diverse boroughs in London. Almost half of the residents identify as Asian, and 150 languages are used.

Understanding the barriers that prevent people from seeking help is essential. The impact of untreated mental health issues can be profound, affecting families and parent-infant relationships."

Read more in the full article. [➔ More](#)

### ➤ Introducing the Conversation Café for Carers

An opportunity for Harrow residents, unpaid Carers and the people they support to meet face to face with representatives from Adult Social Care, Voluntary Organisations and Charities.



Why not join the conversation?

Find us in the Memorial Hall at Watling Community Centre, 145 Orange Hill Road, Edgware, HA8 0TR.

Every Wednesday, 1.00pm - 4.00pm, starting on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September.

Do drop in! To find out more:

✉ [Conversation.cafe@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Conversation.cafe@harrow.gov.uk)

“NHS 111 were fast and efficient.”

Join us today and have your say!

### ➤ The 'Love Your Liver' Campaign

9 in 10 cases of liver disease could be prevented. Love Your Liver is a national awareness campaign, by the British Liver Trust devoted to liver health.

Around 1 in 10 people receiving a free liver scan on our Love Your Liver roadshow have signs of possible liver damage.

And 1 in 40 could already have advanced levels of liver scarring.

As part of the Love Your Liver campaign, they offer help and information for looking after your liver. The national roadshow and free online screener let you check on your liver health. ➤ [More](#)

### ➤ Clean, Green and Award-Winning Parks

Harrow Council writes “We’ve done it again! 6 of our parks have once again won the prestigious Green Flag Awards.

That’s all thanks to the hard work of volunteers, park user groups and Harrow Council’s parks team. The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by Keep Britain Tidy, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces both nationally and internationally. The accreditation of the Green Flag status was one of the council’s flagship actions last year which were delivered successfully. We have managed to retain these thanks to the efforts taking place behind the scenes.



Our parks are a great local resource

Headstone Manor Recreation Ground, Pinner Memorial Park, Harrow Recreation Ground, Roxeth Recreation Ground, Kenton Recreation Ground and Canons Park will soon hoist their brand-new Green Flags.

Cllr Janet Mote, Cabinet Member for Community and Culture said ‘Like our residents I love visiting our parks. All our parks and open spaces are fantastic places to relax, exercise and meet family and friends. They have so much to offer and help improve health and wellbeing within our communities.’ ➤ [More](#)

### ➤ Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Forum

The VCS Forum is a local forum for voluntary and community organisations. Their next meeting takes place on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024. To book or to find out more, visit the website. ➤ [More](#)

“Parking at the hospital can be difficult.”

Join us today and have your say!



## ➔ What is Pension Credit?

Pension Credit is a means-tested benefit for people over State Pension age who have a low income. It comes in 2 parts - Guarantee Credit and Savings Credit. It's separate from your State Pension.

Guarantee Credit tops up your weekly income to a guaranteed minimum level. Savings Credit is extra money if you've got some savings or if your income is higher than the basic State Pension.

By claiming Pension Credit, you might become eligible for other benefits too, such as help with health and housing costs



Are you eligible for Pension Credit?

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

## Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Carers - Newsletter, Summer 2024 ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital - Articulate Newsletters ➔ [More](#)

## 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](#)
- ➔ Age UK on the cost of caring ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS identifies over half a million more people at risk of type 2 diabetes in a Year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Thousands of NHS patients to access trials of personalised cancer 'vaccines' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS England appoints first medical director for mental health and neurodiversity ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS urges public to come forward for care during GP collective action ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Millions more GP appointments in April than before pandemic ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ First ever life-saving treatment for rare heart condition available on the NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS announces 143 hospitals to roll out 'Martha's Rule' in next step in major initiative ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK: Dr Lucy Pollock on ageing with optimism ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ How prioritisation tool can help councils tackle their DoLS backlogs ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS and NICE plan to adopt innovative tech quicker ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ First targeted treatment made available for hundreds of blood cancer patients on the NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ DHSC to publish every council's waiting times for adult social care assessments and services ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS plan to cut avoidable admissions to further boost efforts to reduce waiting times ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Over half of England's care home residents get NHS spring covid jab in four weeks ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New chief nursing officer for England announced ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS expands 'soup and shake' diets to thousands more patients with type 2 diabetes ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ App messaging saved NHS more than £1 million in last year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS launches Dentist Recruitment Scheme ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ How effective are case reviews in improving safeguarding practice? ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS launches tool to improve bowel cancer screening for people with sight loss ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Assistive technology and dementia: practice tips ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ A&E staff experiencing busiest ever summer ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Assistive technology and dementia: practice tips ➔ [More](#)



LONDON BOROUGH OF  
**HARROW**



# CONVERSATION cafe

**Accessible Information & Advice Services**

This is an opportunity for Harrow residents, unpaid Carers and the people they support to meet face to face with representatives from Adult Social Care, Voluntary Organisations and Charities.

**FOR MORE  
INFO/UPDATES  
VISIT THE QR CODE:**



**FIND US IN THE MEMORIAL HALL AT**

**WATLING COMMUNITY CENTRE  
145 ORANGE HILL ROAD  
EDGWARE, HA8 0TR**

**LAUNCHES: 4TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**1PM-4PM**



**Watling Community Association**



Healthwatch Harrow Forum

# Your hospital Your health



**Wednesday 4 September 2024**  
**1.30pm – 4pm**



**Harrow Baptist Church**  
College Rd, Harrow HA1 1BA

If you have any questions, please  
email us:

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

or call us on 0203 432 2889



Scan me to register

Click here to book your place  
at the forum.



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