

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: Headstone Manor Barn

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➡ Healthwatch Harrow Forum, 9th October

The next Healthwatch Harrow Forum is taking place on Thursday 9th October 2025. This time, the event is about healthcare services and support in the community - with a focus on eyes, ears and teeth.

As usual, there will be an opportunity to share your views, to speak with professionals and to view stalls from local groups and services.

The event is from 1.30pm - 4.00pm, at Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow, HA1 1BA. Book online, or contact the office. ➡ [More](#)



What's your experience of community health?

Community Health Survey

Please take a moment to complete our survey on community health, It's available now online, and closes on Tuesday 9th September. ➡ [More](#)

➡ Local Maternity Feedback - What We Heard

Earlier in the year, we visited a children's centre to speak with local residents about their maternity experiences. A total of 28 mothers attended. At the same time, we ran a survey, to get local views.

What did we find out? It's hard to get reliable information, especially for mothers with limited English. Information as a whole can be lacking - those who used children's centres said they were good, however had been 'discovered by accident'.

Services can be too spread out - leading to travel and timing issues. Also, a lack of continuity (a named midwife) further leads to dislocation. A lack of breastfeeding and weaning support was also cited, along with limited support for allergies.

On services, including at Northwick Park and Queen Charlotte hospitals, feedback was mixed. Read more in our full write-up (available soon).

➡ Out and About in Harrow!

On 5th August, volunteers Christabel and Ruby attended an event to mark Women's Health Day.

Ruby writes "It was a wholesome event that took a genuinely holistic approach to women's health, acknowledging the many intersectional factors from breast cancer, menopause, and mental health awareness to sexual health, policing, and violence against women and girls."



5th August 2025, Women's Health Day

Addressing these broader determinants is essential, not only to improve women's health but also to positively impact communities and wider society."

➡ Community Ambassadors Programme

Healthwatch Harrow is actively seeking to create a programme of Community Ambassadors as a way to reach out to more people in the borough and to ensure that all of the diverse voices across our communities are represented in our work.

We are keen to involve people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds, to support our work as volunteers and to hear the views from all sections of the community, especially from those who sometimes struggle to be heard but we need your help.

Are you part of a particular group within your community? Please let us know if you are interested in becoming one of our Ambassadors.

"The diabetes nurse was full of useful advice!"

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Musculoskeletal Conditions - Tap into Support!

West London Alliance has commissioned employment charity Shaw Trust to launch MSK Trailblazers, a new support service offering free gym membership, physiotherapy, and one-to-one job coaching to residents with joint, bone, or muscle conditions.

No diagnosis is required to access the free support, which people can apply for on the Shaw Trust website until 30th September 2025.

The service is available for North West London residents who are over 18 years old, unemployed or off work sick, living with joint, bone, muscle or chronic back problems, or mobility issues.



Benefits include free gym membership

Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions are a leading cause of workplace sickness and unemployment, accounting for 15.5% of all minor illness cases.

Research shows that good work offers numerous health and wellbeing benefits, but currently, more than 12,000 West London residents with MSK conditions are not working or looking for work. The new service aims to help more people into work with health and wellbeing support that is tailored.

Paul Nicholas, Head of Service Delivery at Shaw Trust, said 'The research is clear: good work is good for our health and wellbeing, reducing poverty and social isolation, and improving quality of life. At Shaw Trust, we believe that these benefits should be accessible to all, but health issues can be a real barrier to finding and keeping good work.' ➡ [More](#)

“Popping to the chemist did the trick!”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ The MMR Vaccine - Get Protected!

The MMR vaccine protects against measles, mumps and rubella (German measles).

These 3 infections spread easily between people and can lead to serious problems including meningitis, blindness and hearing loss.



The vaccine gives long-term protection

If pregnant, getting measles can cause premature birth, miscarriage or still birth. And getting rubella can cause serious problems for your baby such as damage to their sight and hearing.

2 doses of the MMR vaccine gives you long-term protection. Getting vaccinated also helps protect people who cannot be vaccinated, such as unborn babies, newborn babies and anyone with a weakened immune system.

“I want a named social worker.”

Join us today and have your say!

The MMR vaccine is recommended for all babies and young children, but older children and adults can have it if they were not vaccinated when they were younger.

How to get the MMR vaccine? Your GP surgery will usually contact you about your child's vaccinations. This will usually be by letter, text message, phone call or email.

Older children who missed being vaccinated when they were younger may also be able to get the MMR vaccine through their school. ➡ [More](#)

➔ Integrated Care Boards to Merge

The local NHS writes “The Boards of North West and North Central London Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) have individually approved moving to a full integrated merger.



‘Highly effective’ planning for services

The ICBs, responsible for planning and paying for local NHS and care services, are set to legally merge - becoming a new organisation serving 13 boroughs and circa 4.5m residents and service users.

In recent months, the teams at North Central London ICB (NCL) and North West London ICB (NWL) have been working together to explore how greater levels of collaboration could produce cost savings for both organisations, facilitate a move to being highly effective strategic commissioners, while still delivering for local populations.

“We need a single point of access.”

Join us today and have your say!

Both boards considered options appraisals which set out a range of potential approaches as well as a full merger, including remaining standalone, keeping an informal collaborative approach; and clustering - where both would remain legally separate organisations but with some elements of joint leadership.

These options were evaluated against key criteria to explore the extent to which each would enable both organisations to continue to provide high quality and robust services. Recently, the two Boards have both supported a recommendation that a fully-integrated merger was the best option.” ➔ [More](#)

➔ Regional Hospital Trusts to ‘Formally Group’

The boards of the four NHS trusts that make up the North West London Acute Provider Collaborative have agreed to move to a formal group structure, with an overarching group chief executive, from next April.

North West London Acute Provider Collaborative, established in July 2022, is made up of Chelsea and Westminster, Imperial College Healthcare, London North West University Healthcare and Hillingdon Hospitals NHS trusts.



Creating more ‘joined up’ care

The trusts say ‘We will continue as separate NHS trusts while developing organisational structures that enable more joined-up decision-making that will help us improve acute and specialist healthcare - as well as health more generally - for our diverse communities.

The first step will be the appointment of the group chief executive, with a formal, internal process getting underway within a few weeks. We expect that the group chief executive will be appointed later this autumn and will take up the role formally at the start of the new financial year in April 2026. This is also when we will move formally from an acute provider collaborative to a group.

Each trust continues to have its own chief executive who will report to the group chief executive and remain a key partner to our local stakeholders.’

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

“Good communication on the ward is vital.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Healthwatch England on the 'GP Choice Gap'

Healthwatch England writes "Our new research shows how important choice is to people when it comes to their care, and makes recommendations to help ensure they get those choices.

We learned that people want more choice when booking GP appointments. Organising appointments to work around their lives matters to people, with time of appointment, choice of booking method, appointment type (face-to-face versus remote), and health professional the most desired choices.



GP services should offer choice

People do not always get the choices they have a right to. The GP contract says that patients have the right to choose the method by which they directly book appointments. Yet under a third (30%) of people are always given a choice of booking method for appointments, and around one in six (16%) are never given this option.

Patients face a 'choice gap'. We found gaps between how often people wanted particular choices and how often those choices were offered. For example, 68% of respondents told us they want a choice about when an appointment takes place always or most of the time. But only 49% told us they always or mostly get this choice.

That choice gap affects some groups more than others. It is generally larger for older people, women, and those unable to work due to health issues or disability." ➔ [More](#)

"I need to be recognised as a carer."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Suicide Prevention - Free Courses

The Zero Suicide Alliance writes "Join us on World Suicide Prevention Day (Wednesday 10th September) for one of three powerful, virtual training sessions.



Enhance your insight and awareness

Whether you're new to suicide awareness or want a refresher, these sessions aim to share insights around suicide and tips for how to spot suicide warning signs and offer support.

Each ninety minute session will include suicide awareness training, insights from lived experiences, a live question and answer session with our panel members and links to further support and resources.

You will get a certificate of attendance.

Supported by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust's suicide prevention experts, we'll also be joined by Alison Furlong from Alfie's Squad and Neil Boardman from Champs Public Health Collaborative." ➔ [More](#)

"Receptionists do a difficult job."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ NHS Dental Costs

NHS dental costs were updated in April this year, however many patients are unaware, we hear.

As well as increases in the charges, there are also changes to certain exemptions.

Visit the Local Dental Committee website, to find out all you need to know. ➔ [More](#)

➡ Hospitals Offer Help to the Homeless

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) writes “Hospitals are now providing a safety net for the homeless with a team that addresses both their health and socio-economic problems.

The homelessness team at Ealing and Northwick Park hospitals can see up to 40 patients a month admitted for everything from skin ulcers and scabies to malnutrition to frostbite with numbers peaking during the winter months.



Partnership working across the hospital

GPs, nurses and an occupational therapist address their physical problems while two housing officers sort out accommodation, benefit claims and finding missing documentation, such as birth certificates, passports and national insurance numbers.

“I wish the letter was more detailed.”

Join us today and have your say!

Joe Laws, Housing Link Officer, said ‘People are often admitted with no ID, so it takes a bit of detective work to build a picture of who they are.

We have good links with community and voluntary groups like St Mungo’s and use a database called CHAIN which details homeless people’s interactions with these groups on the street.’

Joe is a familiar presence on the hospital wards speaking to patients who have been flagged up as homeless and offering the team’s support.”

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

➡ Adult Specialist Palliative Care - New Model

The local NHS writes “The NHS North West London Board has approved a new, single model of adult community specialist palliative care across all eight boroughs, following an extensive three-year process of engagement, co-design, and public consultation.

The decision confirms the adoption of ‘Option A’, the preferred approach developed in partnership with local residents, clinicians, hospices, and voluntary and community organisations. The new model will improve equity, consistency and access to high-quality care and support for people in the last phase of life, regardless of where they live in North West London.

Key benefits of the new model include 46 new enhanced end-of-life care beds (with all existing 57 inpatient hospice beds retained), a 24/7 advice line and round-the-clock access to care at home.



Strengthening community support

There will also be faster implementation and better value for money, including £8.7 million in annual ‘acute cost avoidance’.

Robyn Doran, Senior Responsible Officer says ‘This is a significant milestone for North West London.

For the first time, we will have a single, consistent model of palliative care that delivers on the things people told us mattered most – responsiveness, access, cultural sensitivity, and support close to home.’” ➡ [More](#)

“Getting physiotherapy has been a big help.”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Who is Your Healthcare Hero?

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) writes "Do you know an individual or team that has provided outstanding care in the past year and deserves to be recognised at the 2025 LNWH Staff Excellence Awards?"

If so, we want to hear from you! The annual ceremony recognises the achievements of both clinical and non-clinical staff working in our hospitals and communities.

There are 11 categories you can vote for including the new Patient's Choice Award where patients and the public can recognise outstanding individuals or teams who have provided exceptional care and support.



Who is your healthcare hero?

Pippa Nightingale, CEO of LNWH Trust, said 'There is plenty of great work going on so please shout about it. It is the one time of the year when we can celebrate and reflect on the stand-out individuals and teams working in our hospitals.'

This year we will also be celebrating our colleagues with 25 years plus service. These people deserve a special thank you for their commitment to the NHS through thick and thin. It means a lot of staff so please take the time to nominate someone.'

Please remember to include plenty of information about why you think an individual or team deserve to win. Nominations close on 8th September, apply now online." [➡ More](#)

"Parking at the hospital can be difficult."

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Northwick Park Hydrotherapy Pool to Close

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) writes "We have made the difficult decision to close the hydrotherapy pool at Northwick Park Hospital from 30th August."

The pool is used by a relatively small number of patients and is mostly used by fee-paying users. All users are being advised of the pool closure in good time and provided with information on alternative local providers of hydrotherapy.



The focus is on community provision

We are actively engaging with service users, patient and carer groups, and local MPs about the closure and will take into consideration any concerns that are raised with us. While this will not impact upon the decision, it may affect the way in which we manage or communicate the change.

"NHS 111 were fast and efficient."

Join us today and have your say!

Hydrotherapy is not usually provided in acute hospitals, and the new NHS 10-year plan makes a clear distinction between services that should be provided in acute hospitals and those best provided by community services.

As a hospital trust we are focusing all resources on providing care to acutely unwell patients, and not the funding of community services. If we were to continue providing this community service (which operates at a financial loss to the Trust) it would reduce the number of appointments we can provide for our acutely unwell patients, resulting in longer waits for essential care." [➡ More](#)

➡ Introducing Street Tag!

Harrow Council writes "Street Tag is a family friendly app to help you get out, explore Harrow and win prizes.

Earn points by walking, running or cycling. Collect virtual tags scattered throughout the community. Tags can also be found on school routes, in local parks and at local events. The further you travel, the more points you'll get.



Earn points by running, walking or cycling

Compete as teams or individuals to top the leaderboard and win prizes. Every 12 weeks, those earning the most points will win a prize.

The app runs in the background. It will automatically collect tags in a 40-metre radius." ➡ [More](#)

"I can't go shopping without support."

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Local Hospital Seeks 'Patient Safety Partners'

The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital is seeking two new Patient Safety Partners to work with their management team.

Patient Safety Partners take part in key governance committees - focusing on safety, risk, and quality.

This is a voluntary role requiring input of 2-4 hours a week. Sound interesting? Get in touch now to find out more:

✉ Diane.young1@nhs.net

➡ Harrow CAMHS Garden Project 'Flourishes'

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes "The Harrow Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Garden Project is in full bloom.

We recently caught up with Caitlyn Green, Clinical Associate Psychologist at Harrow CAMHS, to hear about their plans to transform their outdoor space - made possible in part to W6 Garden Centre, a valued corporate partner of CNWL NHS Health Charity.

Their generous donation of plants and supplies is helping to turn the garden into a vibrant, calming space for young people to enjoy.



A 'blossoming partnership'

Caitlyn says 'We're excited to share the wonderful progress of this year's Harrow CAMHS Garden Project - a green space initiative that has truly blossomed thanks to the passion and dedication of our service users, as well as the incredible support from our colleagues and partners.

This project has not only brightened our physical space but also empowered the young people participating. Their creativity, teamwork, and commitment has been inspiring to witness. From planting to planning and problem-solving, they've taken ownership and made this space their own.'

We're also thankful to our colleagues who rolled up their sleeves and mucked in!"

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

"I was involved in dad's care planning."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Debt Advice from the CAB

Dealing with money issues can sometimes be off-putting.

But if you don't understand how things like credit or mortgages work, you could end up losing out financially or getting yourself deep in debt.

The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) has a dedicated webpage, with comprehensive information and guidance including on getting help with the cost of living, help with debt, using a food bank, budgeting and debt solutions.



Don't 'lose out financially' - get advice

The resource is available now. ➔ [More](#)

Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Carers - Bi-Monthly Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital - Articulate Newsletters ➔ [More](#)

News Summary

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- ➔ Adult social care picking up tab for NHS continuing healthcare squeeze, report directors ➔ [More](#)
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- ➔ NHS to fast-track patients with head and neck cancer into cancer vaccine trial ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Social care practitioners to form part of neighbourhood health teams ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS urges pregnant women to protect their 'winter babies' against RSV ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Older people's access to social care based on 'unjust' postcode lottery, finds analysis ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Millions more GP appointments delivered in record year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Mental Health Bill: how legislation has changed under MPs' scrutiny ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS launches first ever review to tackle LGBT+ health inequalities ➔ [More](#)
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- ➔ Age UK responds to Government's 10 year NHS plan and neighbourhood services ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS publishes waiting list breakdowns to tackle health inequalities ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Targeted breast cancer treatment approved for routine NHS use ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ First NHS round-the-clock mental health unit opens under 10 Year Health Plan ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New GP drive to find undiagnosed infected blood patients ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS to bring 'sponge-on-a-string' cancer test to the high street ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Volunteers support the NHS for 6 million hours this year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS approves new IT system for GPs to help transform care ➔ [More](#)



**Healthwatch Harrow
Forum**
9 October 2025

Eyes, ears and mouth:
healthcare services
closer to your home

 Tell the professionals what works
best for you.

1.30pm – 4pm
Harrow Baptist Church,
College Road, Harrow HA1 1BA

Interested? Contact us

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Our partners

