

## 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: Local Georgian Architecture

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*... plus more!*

## ➡ Social Media - Volunteer Required!

We are looking for a volunteer to create social media posts to help us promote the work of Healthwatch Harrow. You will be comfortable using X, Facebook and Instagram.



**Help us to keep local residents informed**

What's involved? Reading our website to identify content that can be repurposed for social media posts; drafting posts that include CTAs (calls to action); brief descriptions based on our website content; and links to relevant content.

Ideally, you would be proficient in Canva to create post images and graphics aligned with Healthwatch branding.

How much time is involved? Our volunteering roles are flexible and fit around your schedule. We will always work closely with you to ensure your volunteering role fits with your other personal and social commitments. Ideally we would want you to commit to 4-5 hours per month but, if you wish to apply, we can discuss further.

How to apply? Simply get in touch:

☎ 020 3432 2889

✉ [volunteer@healthwatchharrow.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@healthwatchharrow.co.uk)

## Other Volunteering Roles...

We have a broad range of opportunities, visit the website to find out more. ➡ [More](#)

**“The phone is engaged constantly!”**

**Join us today and have your say!**

## ➡ Healthwatch Harrow Forum, 15<sup>th</sup> September

We asked Harrow residents how the cost of living affects their healthcare choices. Now we're asking what providers and practitioners can do to make access and treatment more affordable.

Please join us at our next forum event, for residents and providers.



**Cost pressures continue to increase**

When?: Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2026, 11am - 1pm.  
Where?: Online (Zoom Meeting).

Book your place now. ➡ [More](#)

**“My GP referred me without delay.”**

**Join us today and have your say!**

## ➡ ‘Delayed or Difficult’ Hospital Discharge Survey

Healthwatch England writes “Have you, or someone you support, had a delayed or difficult experience leaving hospital in the last 12 months?”

If yes - we want to hear from you.

This could include a delay leaving hospital; leaving hospital before you felt ready; leaving before the right care, support, equipment, medication, transport, housing or follow-up arrangements were in place; or something else that was difficult. If leaving hospital was straightforward, this survey is not for you.”

To complete the survey, or to find out more, visit the website. The closing date is 9<sup>th</sup> October. ➡ [More](#)

## ➡ Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) writes “PALS help patients, relatives and visitors to the Trust who may need information, advice or wish to make a comment about any aspect of the services we provide.

PALS listen to concerns about any issue to do with services provided in our hospitals, and escalate these to the appropriate staff and teams as either feedback or for resolution.

They signpost enquirers to the correct service if they are unsure who to speak to, and help with appointment queries, particularly where patients or relatives are having difficulty contacting the appropriate staff.



**Write, phone or visit on-site!**

They also give advice on how to submit a formal complaint, and supply information on advocacy services, available to patients and their relatives.

Our PALS team are available between 9.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

We have an office where you can speak to someone in person at our Northwick Park and Ealing Hospital sites”.

Drop in or get in touch. ➡ [More](#)

☎ 020 8967 5653 (Ealing) 020 8869 5118 (NPH)

✉ LNWH-tr.PALS@nhs.net

**“Hospital letter arrived late, again.”**

**Join us today and have your say!**

## ➡ Adult Out-of-Hours Mental Health Crisis Service

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes “We’ve started a new overnight Mental Health Crisis Response Team for adults in Kensington, Chelsea, Westminster, Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon.



**Get emergency help, out of hours**

The team operates every night from 8pm to 8.30am, offering community support to help individuals return home safely from emergency departments if they require ongoing mental health crisis care.

Referrals will be taken from our Single Point of Access (SPA) as well as local Home Treatment and Psychiatric Liaison teams.

For London boroughs, phone us on 0800 0234 650, or email [cnw-tr.spa@nhs.net](mailto:cnw-tr.spa@nhs.net).

If you or the person you are calling about is already receiving care from one of our mental health teams (between the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) we encourage you to call the team that looks after you”. Learn more about the service now on the official website. ➡ [More](#)

## ➡ Emergency Dental Care Through NHS 111

It’s important to access emergency dental care when you need it.

NHS 111 can advise you where you can get seen and, in appropriate cases, organise an appointment, which might be at a different practice from your regular NHS dentist but usually nearby.

If you have a regular dentist, contact your practice.

If you don’t, or you need advice out of hours, [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) is here for you. ➡ [More](#)



### ➔ CEO Appointed for Integrated Care Board

The local NHS writes “We are pleased to announce that, following a national recruitment process, Katie Fisher has been appointed as the CEO for NHS West and North London Integrated Care Board.

Katie has been acting as interim Chief Executive, appointed in January 2026 on a nine-month secondment, from her substantive role as Chief Executive of NHS South West London.



CEO, Katie Fisher

A nurse by background, she has more than two decades of senior leadership experience within the NHS, charitable organisations, and the private sector. Her previous roles include being CEO at Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals, and at West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust.

**“Our dentist explained all the costs.”**

Join us today and have your say!

Commenting on her appointment, Katie said ‘I am delighted and excited to have been appointed Chief Executive of NHS West and North London. We have made significant progress in bringing together our new organisation, with a new remit, new responsibilities and focus’.

Dame Caroline Clarke, Regional Director for the NHS in London, said ‘Katie brings exceptional experience to this role, having demonstrated strong and effective leadership as CEO of NHS South West London. I look forward to working with Katie as she builds on the strong foundations already in place, and to the contribution she and her team will make to improving health outcomes.’” ➔ [More](#)

### ➔ Booking is Now Open for Flu Jabs

The NHS is urging millions of people to book their flu jab, as the health service starts winter preparations ‘earlier than ever’.

The national booking system is now open so eligible people can pre-book their flu vaccinations, which start on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

The NHS wants to do everything it can to ease winter demand after back-to-back heatwaves have seen staff treat record numbers this summer.

A&E attendances hit a record 2.5 million in July – and staff experienced the 3 busiest months ever recorded between May and July in emergency departments.



**Are your loved ones protected?**

Flu season usually peaks in December and January, so the NHS is starting vaccinations in autumn, to ensure those at risk are protected and fewer people are hospitalised.

Local NHS services will begin sending invites to the first cohort of people eligible – children and pregnant women – via their GP practice, NHS app or letter.

Eligible people will be able to get their vaccination from a variety of places in their local community, including their GP practices and participating high street pharmacies.

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

**“A single point of access would be helpful.”**

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Become an NHS App Ambassador

The local NHS writes “The NHS App is making it easier than ever for patients to manage their health, from booking GP appointments and ordering prescriptions to viewing test results and records.

The NHS App Ambassador programme is inviting NHS staff and community members in North West London to spread the word.

Ambassadors play a simple but important role - helping people discover the app, showing them how to use it and supporting those who may find digital tools challenging. Whether you're a GP receptionist, pharmacist, volunteer or community leader, you can make a difference.



**Could you be an app ambassador?**

As an ambassador, you'll get access to training, resources, and a supportive network across the country - plus the chance to develop your skills while supporting better patient care.

The NHS App is helping patients take control of their health and saving practices valuable time. By becoming an ambassador, you can be part of that change in your own community.” ➔ [More](#)

### About the NHS App...

The NHS App gives you a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services. Download the NHS App on your smartphone or tablet via the Google play or App store. ➔ [More](#)

**“The receptionists do a difficult job.”**

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ What do Autistic People Want from Services?

Healthwatch England writes “Autism affects how someone communicates, and processes the world around them. Around one in 100 people in the UK are autistic, though the true figure may be higher.

Autistic people are significantly more likely to experience poor health outcomes - life expectancy remains lower than the general population, and autistic adults are more likely to die from preventable causes.



**Communication difficulties are common**

The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training in Learning Disability and Autism, introduced in 2021, aims to improve understanding among health and social care staff. Trial evidence shows staff value it, but feedback we've heard suggests many autistic people still face communication misunderstandings and lack of consistent adjustments from services.

**“My vaccine was fast and efficient.”**

Join us today and have your say!

The consequences of a lack of awareness can be serious. One parent told us their son's normal autistic responses were interpreted as anxiety during a stay in a mental health unit, leading to medication they believed caused him additional harm.

People described GP surgeries that didn't accept messages or emails, leaving some unable to make contact at all, particularly those with auditory processing difficulties. One person said trying to explain themselves over the phone is “excruciating”. Read more now, in the full article.” ➔ [More](#)

### ➔ New Look for Local Neonatal Unit

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWH) writes “The Neonatal Unit at Northwick Park is currently undergoing a year-long refurbishment to provide a lighter and more spacious space that will benefit babies, parents and staff.



Benefitting patients and staff

It's been a long time coming. The last time the unit had a major refurbishment was nearly a quarter-of-a-century ago in 2002 leaving plenty of room of improvement to meet the latest guidelines.

This includes repurposing existing rooms and corridors while the unit continues to function.

Krzysztof Zieba, Consultant Neonatal Paediatrician, said ‘It's a challenge because we have to make better use of the existing space, but careful planning is allowing us to complete each phase of the works with minimal disruption.’” ➔ [More](#)

**“The nurses kept us well informed.”**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Bank Holiday Opening Times for Pharmacies

Bank Holidays can affect the opening hours of local pharmacies. A list has been compiled, detailing the opening hours for pharmacies in London which have been asked to open over the late summer bank holiday on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026.

It's important to order & collect your prescriptions in advance to ensure you have enough supply during this period. The list is available now. ➔ [More](#)

### ➔ Cancer Screening Centre Marks 20 Years!

St Marks writes “Our Bowel Cancer Screening Centre is celebrating 20 years of helping to save lives.

The centre has supported thousands of people across Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon and parts of Ealing identifying early signs of bowel cancer and helping patients access further investigation and treatment when needed.

Sarah Marshall, Clinical Manager, has been with the service since its launch in 2006 at Northwick Park Hospital and has seen it evolve dramatically over the past two decades.



‘Over 40’ procedures performed weekly

Sarah said ‘When we first opened, we had little dedicated space or equipment. I didn't even have a desk or chair and spent my first few months borrowing office space wherever I could find it. It was a very different service then.

Today, we're proud to have the only purpose-built bowel cancer screening centre in the country, following significant investment in the refurbishment and upgrade of our endoscopy and screening facilities’.

The service has grown substantially since its early days. In its first full year of operation in 2007 it sent out 41,871 home screening kits to people aged 60 to 69 and carried out 10 colonoscopies each week. This has increased to more than 162,000 kits a year, with up to 40 colonoscopies performed each week for patients aged 50 to 74 in 2026.” ➔ [More](#)

**“My surgery has been cancelled, again.”**

Join us today and have your say!



## ➔ The Importance of Carer-Friendly Communities

Age UK writes “Carers Week (8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> June) is an annual campaign, supported by Age UK and a range of other charities, that aims to raise awareness of the challenges faced by unpaid carers and to recognise their immense contributions.

This year, the campaign focused on how to build carer-friendly communities, so that carers can get access to the essential services and support they need without compromising their own wellbeing and quality of life.

These concerns ring true for Muriel, 80, as she cares full-time for her husband Harry, who lives with Alzheimer’s disease. Like many carers, Muriel didn’t step into this role overnight. It crept up gradually — small changes at first, then growing responsibilities, until caring became a full-time role.



Navigating a ‘complex, fragmented system’

‘We’ve been married for more than 55 years’ she explains. ‘So of course I’m going to care for him. But nothing prepares you for what that actually means’.

When Harry was finally told he had Alzheimer’s, after delays getting a diagnosis during the pandemic, Muriel hoped it would open the door to more support. Instead, she was left with a stark message - there would be very little help available.

Since then, Muriel has found herself navigating a complex and fragmented system largely on her own.

From managing appointments and medication to handling finances, transport, and long-term planning, the role of a carer has become all-encompassing. And without any nearby family members to step in to help, the sense of responsibility is constant. Muriel’s hobbies have fallen away, social time has disappeared, and even rest can feel out of reach.

‘It’s like going back to full-time work’ she says. ‘The admin alone is overwhelming. But I’m also the linchpin. If anything happens to me, everything falls apart. We’re on our own. So you just keep going. You have to.’



Caring without support can be ‘overwhelming’

Muriel’s experience highlights something carers across the country will recognise - support is often talked about, but much harder to access in reality. Knowing where to start — and having the time and energy to do so — can feel like an impossible task.

**“As a deaf person I often feel dismissed.”**

**Join us today and have your say!**

She’s already learned that where you live can make a world of difference. Muriel lives less than a mile from an area with strong dementia services — but because she falls just outside the boundary, she can’t access them. Instead, she relies on voluntary organisations and local community groups to fill the gaps.

Muriel is particularly thankful for her local Age UK, Age UK Reading, which has provided her with emotional support as well as practical advice on navigating life as a carer. ‘I’m so grateful for them’ she says. ‘But it shouldn’t depend on luck or geography.’ ➔ [More](#)

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

**Join us today and have your say!**

### ☛ The Bigger Conversation Café!

Harrow Council writes “Our monthly conversation events are starting again. And they are bigger!

Do you need help with adult social care, being an unpaid carer, understanding benefits and support, or navigating services?



The new café is now bigger!

Do you need support for your own health and wellbeing?

Join us, and connect with people and organisations that can support you. Meet Adult Social Care, Citizens Advice and a wide range of local charities and community groups offering advice, guidance, practical help and opportunities to get involved in your community.

When? The first Tuesday of the month, 10am to 1pm.  
Where? St Peters Church, Sumner Road, HA1 4BX.  
To find out more, simply get in touch.”

☎ 020 4583 4088 or ✉ [ccafe@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:ccafe@harrow.gov.uk)

**“My pharmacist had the answers!”**

Join us today and have your say!

### ☛ Patient Information Resources Translated

The Patients Association writes “With funding from GSK and Novartis, we’ve translated two of our factsheets – ‘Knowing your rights and accessing support as a patient’ and ‘Getting the most out of your appointments’ into Arabic, Bengali, Portuguese, Romanian and Urdu. View online now.” ➡ [More](#)

### ☛ Young People’s Garden Project

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes “On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July, Harrow Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) held its annual garden project, bringing together young people, colleagues and community members to care for the service's much-loved outdoor space.

The project was supported once again by CNWL NHS Health Charity and W6 Garden Centre, whose continued partnership helped provide funding, plants and expert advice for this year's garden refresh.



Connecting with nature

Giving up their Saturday morning, young people and colleagues worked side by side to replant flower beds, add colourful new plants and tidy the garden, helping ensure it remains a welcoming space for children, young people and their families.

Project Lead, Sonya Lewin says ‘The garden has been part of Harrow CAMHS for more than 10 years, and it's wonderful to see it refreshed each summer.

It's a space where young people and families can spend time outdoors, connect with nature and enjoy a calmer environment when visiting the service.’

A huge thank you to everyone who gave up their time to take part in this year's project. The enthusiasm, teamwork and commitment shown by colleagues and young people helped ensure the garden is ready to be enjoyed throughout the year.”  
Read more in the full article. ➡ [More](#)

**“Calling 111 did the trick!”**

Join us today and have your say!



## ☛ Sunscreen and Sun Safety

The NHS writes “Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy.

There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects. Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.

Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.”



Be sensible in warmer weather

Get more sun safety tips online. [☛ More](#)

## Latest Newsletters

- ☛ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Harrow Carers - Newsletters and Bulletins [☛ 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 news from NHS West and North London [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Energy bills set to rise again: Age UK reacts to Ofgem's energy price cap announcement [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Age UK responds to The Pensions Commission's Interim report [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS heroes recognised after accelerating cancer diagnosis and transforming patient care [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS to offer 'multi-beam' precision radiotherapy to thousands with prostate cancer [☛ More](#)
- ☛ 500,000 NHS staff to get new artificial intelligence tools to free up more time for patients [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS rolls out life-extending drug for hundreds of women with ovarian cancer [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Supermarket scans spotting thousands of cancers [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Chair of new NHS online hospital trust is named [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS overhauls clinical standards to reduce maternal deaths [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Councils to face full adult social care assessments every 3 to 4 years, CQC confirms [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Thousands recruited for "new era" severe mental illness study [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS urges those eligible to book a flu jab ahead of this winter season [☛ More](#)
- ☛ "Life-changing" SMA therapies to be available on NHS in long-term [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS detects tens of thousands of bowel cancers thanks to screening programme [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS urges 'tap the app' as 1 in 4 miss appointments [☛ More](#)
- ☛ People searching NHS advice on high blood pressure skyrocketed last year [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Why treating providers as equals is key to improving adult social care [☛ More](#)
- ☛ '1-minute' immunotherapy jab rolled out on NHS for tens of thousands with cancer [☛ More](#)
- ☛ 'The worrying lack of legal literacy when using AI in social care' [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Hospital patients can now check appointments in the NHS App [☛ More](#)
- ☛ Social care practitioners to form part of neighbourhood health teams [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS inviting 500,000 men to join major prostate cancer research programme [☛ More](#)
- ☛ 100,000 people receive treatment to cure deadly hep C virus on NHS in just ten years [☛ More](#)
- ☛ NHS keeps its cool as temperatures and demand soar [☛ More](#)

# Healthwatch Harrow Online Forum

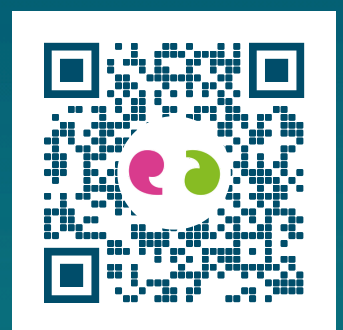


## The cost of staying well

We asked Harrow residents how the cost of living affects their healthcare choices.

Now we're asking what providers and practitioners can do to make access and treatment more affordable.

**Tuesday**  
**15 September 2026**  
**11 am – 1 pm**  
**Venue:** Zoom meeting



Scan QR code  
to register

If you have any questions, please email us:

**info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk** or call us on **0208 869 8484**