

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

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➔ Social Care: Who Cares? Join Us on 27th April

The Healthwatch Harrow Forum is an opportunity for local people to come together, to share their views, thoughts and experiences, and to engage with the people who plan and run our services.



Our next forum is about social care

Join us on Thursday 27th April, 1pm - 3pm at Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow.

The topic this time is Social Care, and the event will feature information, questions and answers with professionals, plus an opportunity to share your views, and to meet others.

Please book by visiting the website, or by getting in touch. [➔ More](#)

☎ 020 3432 2889

✉ info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

➔ Recent Trends - Accessible Information?

The Accessible Information Standard requires NHS services to make reasonable adjustments for those with a communication need.

However, we have found that online systems for booking appointments or simply getting in touch have not always been effective for patients with a sensory disability. We have heard that a lack of access affects not just physical health, but wider wellbeing and self-esteem. If you have a sensory disability, what is your experience?

“ I can't go shopping without support. ”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Our Report on the London Ambulance Service

During November 2022 - January 2023 we engaged with 52 local people in Harrow on their views and experiences of London Ambulance Service (LAS).

The report finds that staff overall have been caring and considerate, with a professional and hard-working approach - 'regardless of the pressures'. Good levels of communication and involvement are described by patients, in particular by asking questions, giving information and regular updates.



Patients supported 'right up to handover'

Excellent examples of situational awareness are given, with staff mindful of children and others. We hear that staff have been supportive throughout the experience, attentive in the ambulance and remaining with patients until handover to hospital colleagues.

“ The telephone just rings and rings. ”

Join us today and have your say!

Experiences of response times vary. While some crews have arrived 'within minutes', long waits for cardiac arrest or stroke patients have had life-changing consequences. A lack of hospital beds is highlighted and it is felt that greater provision of home and social care would enable more patients to be discharged sooner.

Those with a learning disability say having a parent or carer present is beneficial in helping staff to understand and accommodate needs, however some patients complain of feeling sidelined when parents or carers are present. The use of 'big words' is also not helpful. Read more in our full report. [➔ More](#)

➤ Report By Age UK London - 'Access Denied'

Age UK London has released results of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request made to 33 London councils requesting information on the availability of support for people without internet access. The findings, based on the responses from the 29 councils who replied, are published in a new report entitled "Access Denied: Accessing council services without the internet."

The report finds that nine, or 31% of respondents, do not offer offline access to council tax reductions or housing benefit. Five, or 17% of respondents, do not offer any offline access to council tax rebates, council tax reduction, housing benefit and Blue Badge applications.

As part of its Mind the Digital Gap Campaign, Age UK London is calling for action to tackle the barriers that face older Londoners who are offline. It is calling for decision makers and providers not to exclude those who cannot, or choose not, to use the internet.



Some essential services are now online only

In addition, mystery shopping conducted with twelve London councils showed that offline alternatives mentioned in responses to the FOI requests, did not always exist in practice.

In just under half of all cases, the mystery shoppers were not able to obtain the information they sought about how it would be possible to apply for either housing benefit or council tax reduction without using the internet. Read more in the full report, available now. ➤ [More](#)

“The midwife was right there for us.”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ A Focus on Optometry for Children

Malvi Patel, Clinical Lead Optometrist at SeeAbility writes "I'm an optometrist who leads on our work with children, and it's been a joy to deliver a new NHS service in special schools for children with some of the highest support needs. It is our mantra that any child can have a sight test (you do not even have to be able to read or speak), and the familiarity of being in their school certainly helps the children we see.



Making it easier for children to have eye tests

Of course, children with learning disabilities live all across the country, and not all of them attend special schools, so it's important to share advice and thoughts that will help parents and carers make it as easy as possible for their child to have a sight test.

“NHS 111 were fast and efficient.”

Join us today and have your say!

Firstly, we know that the current cost of living crisis is a concern to all. It may help to know that sight tests are free on the NHS for any child in full time education. If glasses are needed then there is an NHS voucher system in place.

Finding a local optical practice that can help prepare a child for a sight test, particularly a child with sensory sensitivities or high support needs, may also be a challenge for parents and carers. We have a searchable list of practices on our website and also lots of useful information on how to help prepare for the visit.

Much more is in a guide we helped write for NHS England, so please do take a look". ➤ [More](#)

➔ Local Psychotherapists 'Bridging the Family Gap'

Two psychotherapists from Pinner are working together to bridge the gap between parents and children and promote good mental health.

Robyn Saffer and Laura Herman, who both have many years of experience working with young people, adults, and parents, have united to create Thinking Together (TT), which seeks to assist parents understand their children as they move into the turbulence of their teenage years.



Helping local families through transition

Robyn says "The two times in our lives when the brain is going through huge changes are during babyhood and adolescence. Add to these hidden changes the pressures of being an adolescent and young people have an awful lot to cope with. In our experience, relationships between young people and their parents can break down at this crucial stage.

We want to educate parents on these changes, the pressure on young people and what is 'typical teenage behaviour'. We want to help parents understand that their relationship with their child needs to change at this important time in their child's development and we think with parents about how best to listen and guide their children and which parenting style works best."

TT have hosted numerous workshops in Pinner and local schools, the latest taking place at The Verden Gallery in Pinner Park.

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

“GP’s and pharmacists should work together.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Understanding Lynch Syndrome

The Eve Appeal has launched a new information guide on Lynch Syndrome.

Lynch Syndrome is an inherited condition that increases your risk of developing some cancers, including bowel, womb and ovarian cancer. It is caused by an alteration in one of five different genes. It is estimated that around 1 in every 250 people has Lynch Syndrome, although up to 95% may not be aware of it.

Having Lynch Syndrome does not mean the person will have or will get cancer, it just means they have an increased risk over their lifetime of developing it compared to someone without the condition.



1 in 250 people have Lynch Syndrome

Many people with Lynch Syndrome live a normal life; however, being diagnosed with it does carry important considerations - for individuals and families - and can open up important options when it comes to reducing your risk of cancer or detecting it at the earliest stage.

“Disabled people find it hard to use the bus.”

Join us today and have your say!

The guide has been made to support anyone offered genetic testing for Lynch Syndrome, whether they have been diagnosed with a related cancer, or a close family member who has been diagnosed.

It was created with input from experts, people with Lynch Syndrome and Ask Eve nurses.

View the guide online now. [➔ More](#)

➔ An Opportunity to Help the RNOH

The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) Patient Group is looking to expand its membership.

They are an independent group of current or former patients, relatives, carers and interested members of the public who work in partnership with the RNOH Trust as a critical friend to provide a lay perspective on Trust services.

They meet regularly on the hospital site in Stanmore and the group's activities include undertaking regular ward and department visits; preparing reports of visits; attending committees; reviewing patient literature and assisting with audits and inspections



An opportunity to help shape the service

If you would be interested in learning more please contact the Chair, Mrs Pat Jones. All enquiries are welcome.

✉ pat.jones1@nhs.net

“I got my referral for a scan within days.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Calling All Young People!

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes “We’re setting up a forum just for young people - and we need your help.

We want to hear about your experiences of CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), find out what’s going on in your local area, and get your advice on new developments. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Become a Patient Representative!

Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH) writes “We are committed to working in partnership with patients and the public, to improve patient safety, patient experience and health outcomes, and supporting people to live healthier lives in their communities.



Working ‘in partnership with patients’

We’re recruiting more Patient Representatives to help us listen to people who use and care about our services, understand their diverse health needs better, and focus on and respond to what matters to them.

The representatives help us make improvements, develop new ideas and ensure patient voice is at the heart of everything we do. We need more Patient Representatives at CLCH and we want to ensure we have a diverse range of patient voices shaping our work and making a lasting impact on patient experience.

Young people can join us as Patient Representatives too! We are always looking to work closely with young people (14-18) who are in contact with our services to share ideas and improve the work we do.

At CLCH, we have a simple system for working with young people called TUNE IN which ensures your voice is heard and respected. You’ll be suitably rewarded for your time and it’s a great experience for young people interested in a career in health and social care. ➔ [More](#)

“Mental Health need not be a hidden condition.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Introducing the Single Point of Access (SPA)

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWHT) writes "A nurse-led call centre is helping to ease pressure on services at Northwick Park. Single Point of Access (SPA) is staffed by specialist nurses who take up to 70 calls a day advising GPs and hospital departments on where best to send patients for treatment and follow-up care.



Helping patients to get 'same day' access

The quick response service (all calls are answered within 25 rings) is helping ease pressure on A&E by redirecting up to 25 patients a day to Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC), for up to 25 medical pathways. Patients are given an appointment, treated and allowed home the same day helping avoid admissions, reducing length of stay as well as managing patient flow through the hospital.

Jane Porter, Head of Nursing, said "The GPs like the service because they can get quickly in touch with one of our advanced nurse practitioners who can advise on where best to send a patient. It's more practical and responsive than the previous system of a single consultant answering all the calls". ➔ [More](#)

➔ Harrow Borough Based Partnership

The Harrow Borough Based Partnership brings together health, social care, wider local authority services and Harrow's voluntary and community sector, working alongside local communities to help the people of Harrow thrive; aspiring to improve health & wellbeing and reduce inequalities. ➔ [More](#)

“Meals are cheap, but well cooked.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Qwell - Online Mental Health Service

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes "We are pleased to announce that we have commissioned the digital mental health platform, Qwell.

Qwell is available for all adults aged 18+ in North West London.

The service provides access to free, safe and anonymous support through an online mental health community provided by qualified practitioners. Qwell will sit alongside the existing Kooth service available to young people.



An online mental health service for adults

Kooth.com is for 11-25 years. The content of this site is specifically aimed at children and young people.

Qwell.io is for over 18 years. The content of this site is specifically aimed at the adult population. Both services provide:

Professional support: immediate access to emotional wellbeing and counselling support from qualified practitioners. This is delivered as a live text chat through the platform.

Therapeutic content and activities: Every week, over 100 'lived experience' articles are submitted in addition to clinical therapeutic content and activities across a range of over 70 subject areas.

Peer-support Community: Users can get help from others in the community, providing a positive peer support space.

Self-guided therapy: Users can use their own private space to journal and both on their own and together with their practitioner, they can set and achieve goals". ➔ [More](#)

➔ Healthwatch England on A&E Delays

Healthwatch England writes “The waiting list for routine NHS care has fallen for the first time since the pandemic began.

However, 7.19 million people are still waiting for hospital treatment, such as hip replacements. This includes an estimated 1,423 people in England who have been waiting more than two years to start routine hospital treatment at the end of November.

Meanwhile, the number of patients waiting more than 12 hours in A&E for treatment has exceeded 50,000 a week for the first time.



One patient spent ‘14 hours waiting for a bed’

Our national director Louise Ansari said “Pressures on the NHS right now are intolerable, with patients and staff paying the price.

Over the Christmas period we received feedback from a nurse detailing her experience, which summed up many of these pressing issues. She told us when she experienced uncontrolled bleeding she did everything in her power not to go to A&E. She rang 111, she rang her GP, she spoke to the pharmacist, but repeated missed attempts to help her early left her having to go to hospital.

She spent a total of 14 hours waiting for a bed, and even that was in a corridor. With no curtain, no bell, and no privacy. As the statistics show, her experience is just one among over 50,000 in December alone”. Read more in the full article, available now. [➤ More](#)

“Getting physiotherapy has been a big help.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Proposal to Improve Orthopaedic Surgery

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust writes “Almost 2,000 patients and local people have taken part in a 14-week public consultation on the proposal to develop a ‘centre of excellence’ for inpatient orthopaedic surgery at Central Middlesex Hospital, Park Royal.



Aiming to create a ‘centre of excellence’

North West London Acute provider Collaborative, made up of the four acute NHS trusts in North West London have proposed bringing together most of their routine, inpatient orthopaedic surgery - primarily hip and knee replacements - into a dedicated site completely separated from emergency care services.

“I have no help to fill in the forms.”

Join us today and have your say!

The trusts, in partnership with the integrated care board for North West London, have been inviting patients and the public to share their views on this proposal during the consultation period, which closed on 20 January 2023. An evaluation of the responses written by the independent research agency Verve Communications has been published and will now be used to inform next steps.

A total of 1,959 people participated in the consultation. Overall, participants thought that the proposal for an elective orthopaedic centre for most routine surgery was a good idea and hoped that it would help to reduce waiting times for patients, while there were some people who would prefer to have all their treatment at their local hospitals for convenience.” [➤ More](#)

➔ Survey on the Needs of Local Women

The Resourceful Women's Network writes "We have been funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) to assess the needs of local women and explore which groups and services are needed to meet those needs.



'Exploring the needs of local women'

We want the views of individual women and the professionals and organisations working with women in the area. To take part please complete our short survey - it should take approximately 4 minutes.

We are a women's centre supporting women living in North West London. We run a low cost counselling service, a free family law legal advice service, and hold regular groups and talks on subjects ranging from yoga or meditation to nutrition, mental health and finances". The survey is available now. ➔ [More](#)

“The reception team are wonderful!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Childhood Vaccinations

You want to do what is best for your child. You know about the importance of car seats, stair gates and other ways to keep them safe.

However, did you know that one of the best ways to protect them is to make sure that they have all of their vaccinations?

Vaccination can save your child's life, they are very safe and effective, and immunisation protects others you care about. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Carers in Harrow - Strategy Event, 19th April

Harrow Carers writes "Welcome all to the launch event of the Harrow Carers Strategy 2023 - 2026 and to meet the team.

Wednesday 19th April, 6pm - 8.30pm, St Peters Church, Colbeck Road, Harrow, HA1 4BS.

You do not have to be a carer to attend, please come and take information for your friends and family. There will also be a presentation on Dementia and how you can support anyone with the condition.



Learning about supporting people with dementia

Advice and Information stalls will be available from Voluntary and Community Groups and the Council."

For more information, get in touch:

✉ admin@harrowcarers.org

➔ The Cost of Living Crisis and Mental Health

Local resident Keith writes "The cost of living crisis is a pressing issue that affects millions of people every day. From rising energy prices to ever increasing food costs, households are struggling to make ends meet.

This infographic will provide an overview of the current situation, outlining the reasons behind the crisis and exploring possible solutions. It will also examine the impact of the crisis on the UK economy, looking at how the cost of living affects people's lives and what can be done to help". ➔ [More](#)

“Hospital passports are a very good idea.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Keeping Well This Winter - Tips from Age UK

This winter might be even tougher than usual, but there are lots of practical things you can do to look after yourself.

Age UK has compiled an online resource, containing information, advice and tips - on topics including maintaining your mental and emotional wellbeing, managing your money, how to access booster jabs, looking after each other and staying well in colder weather.

The page also includes videos and downloads.



Helping you to keep well this winter

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

Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Rethink Support Group - Newsletter, January 2023 ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust - Our Trust Newsletters ➔ [More](#)

News Summary

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- ➔ The latest news from Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest from the Recovery News Channel ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Women urged to take up NHS breast screening invites ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Expansion of NHS 111 to 'transform' patient access ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS website sees demand for burns advice almost double on Pancake Day ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Social Work Recap: #CareDay, campaign for neurodivergent staff and recruiting from overseas ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New NHS campaign urges people to use their bowel cancer home testing kit ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ CQC checks on council adult services still set for April 2023 start ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS Digital and NHS England complete merger ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ More people face paying for care as means-test threshold is frozen for 13th year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ First baby receives life-saving gene therapy on NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS to offer licensed cannabis-based medicine to treat rare genetic condition ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Patients urged to seek life-saving care during busiest strike period on record ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Councils to face targets in return for adult social care funding ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Ambulance response times improve in face of ongoing winter pressures ➔ [More](#)
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- ➔ Hundreds of thousands more patients to benefit from major NHS surgical capacity boost ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The draft Mental Health Bill: parliamentary proposals for change ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS offers more than 400,000 final chances to get boosted ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Major plan to recover urgent and emergency care services ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Average care worker earns less than over 80% of wider workforce ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ People with learning disabilities 'not always protected from abuse' - CQC ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Care sector 'unsustainable' without more support, warn providers ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS rolls out new electric vehicles to help patients and the planet ➔ [More](#)



Social care. Who cares?

Have your say on social care services. Meet the people who provide social care in Harrow and ask them questions about your concerns.

Thursday 27 April
1pm to 3pm

Harrow Baptist Church
College Road
HA1 1BA

Please email any questions in advance to info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk, this is to ensure the key issues are discussed. There will also be the option to ask questions on the day.

**Click here to book your place
at the forum.**

www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk