

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: Into Canons Park

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Available in additional formats

Contact Us

➔ Our Report on Social Isolation & Loneliness

During November 2024 - January 2025, 82 local people in Harrow completed our survey on social isolation and loneliness.

Findings reveal that poor health is a leading cause of isolation, and that those in good health, are much less likely to be affected.

Of the respondents citing poor health, 40% say they often feel isolated, comparing with 8% of those in good health. A third (33%) lack companionship, go out just once a week (or less), or have poor life satisfaction, and a fifth (20%) feel 'left out' and have inadequate support networks.



Understanding the causes of isolation

Many needing help do not seek it. We heard about 'feelings of embarrassment', and worries that friends and families may be 'too busy'. A level of stigma - around poor physical and mental health is reported.

There is a difference between the genders - women are more likely to feel isolated while men are more likely to lack companionship and as a whole, are 'less satisfied' with life.

On households, we are surprised to find that those living alone, are less likely to feel 'left out', and have better support networks - than those living with others. Other issues include the loss of partners or family members, and a lack of carer support.

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

“The automatic callback is a good idea!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Drop-in Session for Parents of Newborns

Do you want to know more about baby vaccinations? Are you interested in weaning and looking after your baby's teeth?

Do you need breastfeeding information? Do you feel isolated or overwhelmed?



Ask a question, or share your views!

Then join us, on Wednesday 12th March, 9am - 11am at Hillview Children's Centre, 2 Grange Road, Harrow, HA2 0LW.

Get information and share your experiences. To find out more, get in touch:

☎ 020 3432 2889

✉ info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

“I need to be involved in my care planning.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Issues Around A&E and 'Corridor Care'

Hospitals and in particular emergency departments are busier than ever this year. With that, comes issues around waiting times and admission onto wards.

According to our research, satisfaction with A&E at Northwick Park Hospital has declined by 5% over the winter months and compared with the year before, it is down by 20%.

Please tell us about your experiences. We work with the hospital, to drive much-needed improvements.

➔ NIHR - Public Committee Member Recruitment

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) writes "We are looking for Public Partners to help us assess funding applications for health and social care research.

We would love your support in sharing this opportunity with your networks, members, and anyone who may be interested.

We are particularly looking for people with lived experience and/or a good understanding of patient and public involvement in research.

This could include experience in reviewing applications, working with researchers, being part of a research study, or serving on committees or advisory groups.



Embedding patient involvement in research

Public committee members will read and review funding proposals and provide a written summary of their reflections. We offer a fee to acknowledge their valuable time and input.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please pass this opportunity along. Their insights and lived experiences can help shape research that matters to them and improve health and care services."

The closing date for applications is 27th February 2025. To find out more, visit the website or get in touch. ➔ [More](#)

✉ publicrecruitment@nihr.ac.uk

“The dentist explained all the costs.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Improving Planned Care - Your Views?

The local NHS writes "This spring, NHS North West London wants to talk to residents, health and care professionals, and community groups on how we can improve planned care for all. Planned care refers to non-emergency health care, such as hospital outpatient appointments or planned surgery. This piece of work does not cover mental health care.



Aiming to improve waiting times and care

We want to improve waiting times, fair access and peoples' experience of planned care. To do this, we need to consider the changing needs of people in North West London, the increasing number of people who are seeking care, and how we tackle the unfair differences in waiting times and care experiences for people from different communities.

We want to capture your views so that we can help make improvements to planned care in North West London. For background, we have produced a paper, that sets out the issues and challenges. ➔ [More](#)

“Unplanned discharge causes distress.”

Join us today and have your say!

Your Views? You can get involved by completing our short survey. You can also send written comments by post (Freepost, Healthier North West London) or to the email address below.

Please share your views by 15th March 2025. ➔ [More](#)

Join our virtual Residents' Forum on 5th March, 6pm - 7.30pm. Book your place now." ➔ [More](#)

✉ nhsnwl.communications.nwl@nhs.net

➔ NHS Complaints System 'Lets People Down'

Healthwatch England writes “Making a complaint is a right enshrined in the NHS Constitution. Yet, our research found a number of barriers that prevented people from making a complaint about their healthcare.

We commissioned a poll to find out whether people know how to make complaints about their NHS healthcare and get support to do so, following Lord Ara Darzi's independent investigation into NHS performance last year.



We need a 'better response' to feedback

The investigation found serious failings in how the service listens to and responds to patient feedback. It highlighted that the patient voice is simply 'not loud enough' - there are real problems in the responsiveness of services to the people they are intended to serve.

“The ward nurses were very professional.”

Join us today and have your say!

Our poll, conducted by YouGov, found that out of 2,650 adults living in England who had a poor experience of NHS healthcare, over half, 56%, took no action about their care, and fewer than one in 10, nine per cent, made a formal complaint.

Among those who didn't formally complain when they had a poor experience, our research identified a number of key barriers to doing so.

Around a third of respondents, 34%, didn't believe the NHS would use their complaint to improve services.

A third, 33%, thought NHS organisations wouldn't respond effectively to their complaint while 30% didn't believe the NHS would think their complaint was serious enough.

One in five, 20%, were scared that complaining would affect their ongoing treatment, 19% said they didn't know who to contact to make a complaint.

Overall, over half of people who made a complaint to an NHS organisation were dissatisfied with both the process of making a complaint, 56%, and the outcome of their complaint, 56%.

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch Chief Executive, said 'We know that public satisfaction with the NHS is at record low levels, with too many patients receiving poor care. When patients feel their complaints are not taken seriously or don't take any action due to a complex system, services miss out on vital information to help them improve.



Improvements can be made - 'by listening'

We flagged failings with the NHS over a decade ago, following the patient safety scandal at Mid Staffordshire Hospital.

Ten years on, our research shows that the public still lacks confidence in the NHS complaints system.

We need a step change in how people's complaints are handled and acted on. Healthcare leaders should focus on developing a culture of listening and learning from complaints across the sector'."

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

“Not everyone can use a computer.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Introducing Enhanced End-of-Life Beds

The local NHS writes “As part of our work to improve specialist palliative care services in North West London, we are proposing to introduce 46 new enhanced end-of-life beds within our adult community specialist palliative care bed services.

The 46 new beds will be a significant step forward in providing compassionate and specialised care for patients nearing the end-of-life and will double our existing bed capacity.

The new beds will be available to residents of all eight boroughs in North West London. They are designed to bridge a gap in our current healthcare provision that many residents who contributed to the development of the proposed new model of care identified, and will help ensure that patients receive the quality of palliative care they need.



Part of a ‘new model of care’

The enhanced end-of-life beds will be integrated into existing community bed services, such as nursing homes or other community bedded units.

These beds will be staffed 24/7 by nurses and healthcare assistants, who have received specialised training in palliative and end-of-life care.

There will also be a weekly ward round of the patients admitted to the enhanced end-of-life beds by the community specialist palliative care team, and patients will have access to the community specialist palliative care multidisciplinary team throughout their admission.” [➔ More](#)

“Popping to the chemist
did the trick!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Walk-In Service for Mental Health Crisis

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes “From 27th January people in North West London are able to walk in to CNWL’s Mental Health Crisis Assessment Service (MHCAS) at St Charles Hospital in Kensington and Chelsea.

Based at St Charles Hospital in Kensington and Chelsea, the service is open 24/7 and provides a calm, therapeutic alternative to visiting an emergency department.



Have a chat, over a hot drink

This service is available to anyone aged 18 or over experiencing mental health difficulties, who does not require urgent physical health treatment, and resides in Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster, Brent, Harrow, or Hillingdon.

What to expect? MHCAS is a calm environment where you can talk to professionals about your mental health. The experience of coming to the centre may feel upsetting, but people should feel welcome and cared for at all times.

You will be seen by a specialist nurse soon after arriving. We want you to feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible. There will also be food, hot drinks and snacks available.

Where appropriate, you may be referred for follow up psychological interventions, or to voluntary sector services near to your home, as well as other services to meet your individual needs.”

To find out more, visit the website. [➔ More](#)

Further Help

You can also contact your community mental health team or call our Single Point of Access line 24/7 for support and advice on 0800 0234 650. [➔ More](#)

➔ Stress Awareness Month

Harrow Council writes “Stress Awareness Month is a yearly event held each April since 1992, aimed at raising public awareness of the impact and importance of stress on quality of life and health.

The Stress Management Society, a non-profit organisation founded in 2003, has been leading this initiative for more than 20 years.



It's important to reduce stress

Stress is often characterised by an overwhelming sense of pressure. It can present itself in various ways, causing feelings of irritability, anxiety, anger, depression, or a lack of interest in life.

“It's time to talk about mental health.”

Join us today and have your say!

It can also lead to physical symptoms such as fatigue, sleep disturbances, digestive problems, weight fluctuations, and more. If left unchecked, prolonged stress may increase the risk of heart disease, sleep disorders, frequent infections, gut issues, and mental health disorders like anxiety or depression.

It is important to reduce stress as much as possible. The best way to treat stress is to identify the underlying problem and, if possible, reduce contact with the stressor. However, this is not always possible, so we must focus on reviewing our lifestyle and coping strategies.

Our lifestyle plays a key role in stress reduction. Developing good habits can help”. Find out more in the full article. ➔ [More](#)

➔ New Test for Bowel Cancer

St Mark's Hospital writes “Local clinicians have developed a new method of detecting bowel cancer among patients with inflammatory bowel disease.

Researchers from St Mark's Hospital used an algorithm to analyse DNA changes in pre-cancerous cells that is 90% accurate.

They are now hoping to develop a simple blood test to identify those most at risk already living with inflammatory bowel disease.

Professor Ailsa Hart, co-lead of the study, from St Mark's, said ‘Patients with inflammatory bowel disease have a higher risk of developing colorectal cancer than people without, and need to undergo assessment with regular colonoscopies to try to detect early signs of cancer.



Earlier detection has many benefits

These tests are onerous and unpleasant for patients, imperfect at detecting early cancer changes and costly to health services.

If early signs of cancer are detected, surgery, which involves removing the colon, is advocated. Finding smarter ways to assess these colons is much needed.’

The research was funded by Cancer Research UK and conducted in partnership with the Institute of Cancer Research.”

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

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

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Congratulations to Radio Harrow!

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes "Congratulations to Radio Harrow who are in rude health after being shortlisted for three awards at this year's Hospital Broadcasting Association Awards.

The awards celebrate the work of hospital and community radio stations across the UK.



Radio Harrow - shortlisted for awards

Radio Harrow, which is based in Northwick Park, offers hospital and community-based programming, promotes health awareness and connects people through music, interviews, and local news. The station has been short-listed for the Best Newcomer, Best Event and Best Station Promotion." ➤ [More](#)

➤ Harrow's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

Harrow Council writes "Recently Harrow's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) moved in to the former Elmgrove Children's Centre.

It's now a 'single front door' for children needing support and protection. Families can now walk in for help from key services - including the police, health, social care and housing services, and domestic violence support. The services now 'sit under one roof'.

The new site offers expanded space for multi-agency collaboration, enabling quick and early intervention and out-of-hours support." ➤ [More](#)

“GPs and pharmacists should work together.”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Appeal for Green-Fingered Volunteers!

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes "Green-fingered volunteers are needed to help prepare and plant designated areas around Ealing and Northwick Park hospitals.

The green makeover was given the thumbs up by staff last year who voted for four projects as part of a £1m donation by LNWT Charity.

The trust, which is working in partnership with Cultivate London, is looking for up to 20 volunteers who can be periodically available during the next ten months with the busiest time between March & May.

Several locations have been identified on each site which will be used to encourage biodiversity including attracting more insects and wildlife.



Do you have green fingers?

Cultivate London will provide supervision and equipment with the first ground preparation session planned in February." ➤ [More](#)

“GPs and pharmacists should work together.”

Join us today and have your say!

➤ Survey on Mental Health Crisis Care Services

This survey is specifically intended for individuals who have accessed crisis care services through the NHS 111 'select mental health option' service.

Its purpose is to gather feedback on your experience and the support you have received.

The survey closes on 15th July 2025. ➤ [More](#)

➔ 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 - Bi-Monthly Newsletters ➔ [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's statement in response to government announcement on social care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS rolls out lifesaving home testing for bowel cancer to over 50s ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hundreds of people at increased cancer risk identified by new testing programme ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS jabs tens of thousands more against flu than last winter ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hospitals 'jammed' following busiest week for NHS this winter ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS supports thousands more people back into work ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Social worker numbers hit new record high in adults' services ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Government unveils plan to prevent risks to telecare users from digital switchover ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hundreds of thousands of patients to get faster access to NHS care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Revolutionary gene-editing therapy for sickle cell 'offers hope of a cure' for NHS patients ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS opens new mpox vaccination sites across England ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Digital eye screening for people with diabetes could save thousands of hospital appointments ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS 'ping and book' screening to help save thousands of women's lives ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Hospital admissions for strokes rise - as NHS urges the public to 'Act FAST' ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Age UK London reveals the extent of public toilet decline in the capital ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS launches search for 150,000 volunteers to help transform cancer treatment ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS rolls out 'stop-smoking' pill to help tens of thousands quit ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New iPhone device to help rule out throat cancer ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Bill to overhaul 'outdated' Mental Health Act introduced ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Millions of patients benefitting from improved care as new NHS IT software rolled out ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS busier than ever going into winter ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ More than one million people get RSV jab in first ever NHS rollout ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Assisted dying: social work role proposed to safeguard those going through process ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ More people receiving adult social care following years of decline, data shows ➔ [More](#)

NHS

Royal National
Orthopaedic Hospital
NHS Trust



Telephone:
0208 909 5394

Email:
volunteering@rnoh.nhs.uk

Drop-in session for parents of newborns

- Do you need breastfeeding information?
- Are you interested in weaning and looking after your baby's teeth.
- Do you want to know more about baby vaccinations?
- Do you feel isolated or overwhelmed?

**Share your experiences
with us**



**Wednesday 12 March 2025
9-11am**



**Hillview Children's Centre
2 Grange Road
Harrow HA2 0LW**

If you have any questions,
please email us:
info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk
or call us on 0203 432 2889