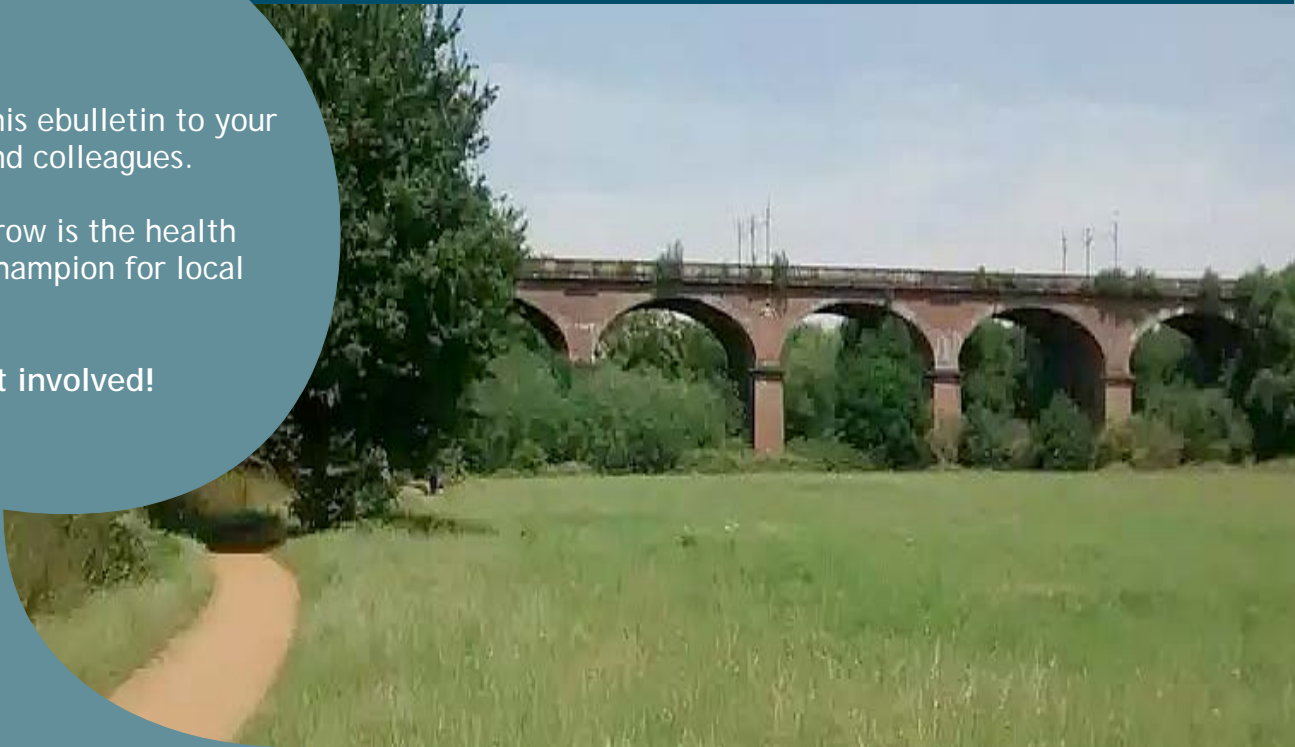


## Pass it on...

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: A Local Nature Trail

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... plus more!

## ➔ Social Care - Who Cares?

On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 75 local people attended our 'Social Care - Who Cares?' event.

Hosted at Harrow Baptist Church, this in-person event was an opportunity to share experiences around social care, and to put questions to our panel of professionals in the social care sector.



Speaking, Senel Arkut (Harrow Council)

In his opening address, Healthwatch Harrow Chair Ash Verma said that "Social care challenges are significant today, especially around learning, and sharing what is happening in Harrow". This was reflected at the event, with much of the discussion around information - knowing what is available, and how to get access and support.

It was felt that a joined-up approach is needed, for example, not having to speak with several people about the same issue or support need, and getting a timely response to referrals and requests.

Other topics included care assessments, respite for unpaid carers, parental support, advocacy, digital exclusion and hospital discharge.

Find out more in our event write-up, which details the questions and answers in full. We would like to thank all those who attended and assisted on the day. [➤ More](#)

A presentation, delivered at the event by Senel Arkut (Corporate Director of People, Harrow Council) is also available. [➤ More](#)

**“Fast service today at radiography!”**

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Reaching Out

Since our last newsletter we have celebrated Volunteer's Week (1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> June) during which we thanked all of the volunteers who give up their valuable time, to listen to residents' views and experiences. The feedback they collect really enriches our evidence and reports.

Following our recent forum on Social Care, we have shared a lot of information with stakeholders, to raise awareness of dementia, mental health (with a focus on anxiety), diabetes and cancer.



Our volunteers help us to improve services

Carer's Week (5<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> June) was an opportunity to acknowledge the important work of unpaid carers in the borough.

We love to share, so if you have an event coming up or information to promote, get in touch:

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

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

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Recent Trends - 'Don't Forget the Basics!'

Each month we hear from around 300 local people in Harrow, with views expressed on a wide range of topics. One person told us, how important it is, for health care staff - at the hospital or clinic, to introduce themselves, and to give patients, families and carers the information they need. Our data suggests that communication could be improved, so this is our ask - don't forget the basics!

### ➔ Cost of Living - A 'Barrier to Healthcare'

Healthwatch England writes "Over the last year, many charities and campaign groups have warned that millions of people are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

We have heard from our Healthwatch network about the impact the cost of living is having on people.

To understand the scale and nature of this impact, especially on people's health and their use of health and care services, we commissioned a nationally representative (of England) poll.

Our poll of 2,000 adults, conducted four times between October 2022 and March 2023, suggests that people are increasingly avoiding vital health and care services due to the fear of extra costs.



People are 'increasingly avoiding' health services

This includes going to a dentist because of the cost of check ups or treatment, booking an NHS appointment because they couldn't afford the associated costs (such as accessing the internet or the cost of a phone call), buying over the counter medication they normally rely on, and taking up one or more NHS prescriptions because of the cost.

One person says "I can't get a GP appointment. The highest I have ever got in the telephone queue is number 11, and so I gave up in the end as it was costing me a lot of money on my telephone bill and I am a pensioner. All I want is a referral to an audiologist as I am losing my hearing." [➤ More](#)

**“Popping to the chemist did the trick!”**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ The Macmillan Citizens Advice Service

Macmillan Cancer Support writes "Macmillan Cancer Support and Citizens Advice Harrow are working together to provide the Welfare Benefits Advice Service for residents of Brent, Ealing and Harrow.

This is a specialist service giving free, confidential and impartial benefits and money advice to local people living with cancer.



Get advice on money and benefits

Do you need help with the cost of cancer? If you or your family are living with cancer and struggling to cope with its financial impact, there is help available. We know cancer can be expensive. You may have to pay for a special diet, childcare, higher heating costs or travel to a hospital. It may be hard to keep your job. That's where we come in.

**“It's difficult to register for NHS dentistry.”**

Join us today and have your say!

Our service offers one-to-one sessions with specialist advisers to help identify the problems you are experiencing and explore the options available to you. We can go through your paperwork with you and discuss the best course of action. We can help you identify the benefits you are entitled to, as well as filling in the forms. We can help you access debt management support and make you aware of other help that may be available.

We may also be able to help you access a grant from Macmillan. Grants are one-off payments designed to help people on low incomes meet unexpected costs or provide some respite". [➤ More](#)

### ➔ North West London Health and Care Strategy

The local NHS writes “We have now published a first draft of our health and care strategy for North West London. The strategy is intended to set out our plans for healthcare services across our eight boroughs.



Early diagnosis and treatment is very important

We know that in some areas and communities in North West London people have poorer health than in others. The conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age can impact our health and wellbeing. The waiting times and access for some services and specialist doctors are too long and difficult to get to. Some conditions, including cancers, are being diagnosed too late.

“The phone is engaged constantly!”

Join us today and have your say!

We have started a plan, but need your views to get it right. This is an early draft, shared in the ‘spirit of transparency’ for comment and feedback. It takes account of the work of all our programmes, which is informed by the feedback we have received across a range of areas from the public.

This strategy is expected to change before we publish a final draft later in summer. In particular, we are continuing to work with and across our local authorities, which together with feedback from local residents and health and care staff, will help shape the final draft.

There is a survey for local residents, which closes on 30<sup>th</sup> June. You could win a £100 voucher”. ➔ [More](#)

### ➔ Community Eye Health Services Survey

The local NHS writes “Across North West London a range of different community eye health services are being provided to patients through contracts with local providers.

At the moment the way local people access and how GPs refer patients for this kind of treatment varies across eight boroughs. This has led to inequality and inequitable access for patients.

Community eye services allow patients to be seen away from the hospital for review and monitoring of eye conditions. This includes identifying patients who have conditions including cataracts (which can affect patients vision) and raised eye pressure which could be a sign of glaucoma. The services also help with the management of some minor eye conditions.



Improving access to community eye services

Our aim is to ensure that community eye health services are easy for GPs to refer into, providing the same level of access and equitable provision for all patients in North West London.

We want to find out from you about how the current service is working for residents and what might make it work better. This will help the NHS design and improve how services work for patients and clinicians as well as reducing the differences between our boroughs”.

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

“Lots of activities here for residents.”

Join us today and have your say!

## ➔ Polio and MMR - Is Your Child Protected?

Parents across London are being urged to ensure their children are up to date with their routine immunisations, particularly for mumps, measles and rubella (MMR) and polio.

With low vaccination rates for MMR in some parts of the capital, there are concerns about the increased risk of an outbreak of measles, mumps or rubella (German measles), which could lead to serious illnesses including meningitis and pneumonia.



Vaccination is the only protection from polio

Vaccination rates have fallen in London, in part as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns which led to missed appointments. A high level of vaccine uptake is essential to keep everyone safe by reducing the spread of disease and risk of larger outbreaks which could severely affect children's health.

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

Join us today and have your say!

Some children may have missed their routine vaccinations over the last few years, increasing the risk of preventable diseases, but it's not too late to catch up. The NHS is urging parents to make an appointment with their GP as soon as possible.

The NHS is also working closely with schools, GPs & community groups for their support in encouraging the take-up of immunisations, particularly among communities where vaccination levels are lower than average. Parents should check their child's health record (red book) to see if they are up to date on all their routine immunisations. ➔ [More](#)

## ➔ Introducing the Local Dental Committee

Local Dental Committees have been around since the inception of the NHS in 1948. They exist across England. They are statutory bodies who represent Primary Care Dentists in their local areas.

Our local committee writes “The London Borough of Harrow falls under the Northwest London Dental Committee which also includes, Brent, Hounslow, Hillingdon, Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster, and Ealing.

The committees support NHS dentistry, assist local dentists in NHS practices, help to improve the dental patient journey, and work towards addressing local dental health needs and inequalities.



The committee aims to improve oral health

The work of the committees is important. Poor oral health can have an adverse impact on our overall health. There is some relationship to poor oral health with conditions such as diabetes, mellitus, cardiovascular disease, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic kidney disease and others.

Tooth loss and decay can also lead to dissatisfaction with appearance, eating and chewing and can cause pain and discomfort, all of which have an impact on an individual's wellbeing. It is important for patients to see their dentists for regular check-ups”.

Find out more about Local Dental Committees on the British Dental Association website. ➔ [More](#)

**“Good communication on the ward is vital.”**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Virtual Wards Offer 'Online Care'

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes "We have opened our fourth 'virtual ward' (VW) in response to Government calls for more patients to be treated at home.

One-in-four hospital patients has diabetes as an underlying condition and the diabetes VW focuses on discharging them as safely and early as possible.

Diabetes patients spent an average of two extra days in hospital but could be discharged into a VW where their condition is remotely managed by diabetes specialist nurses via an app. North-West London has a high national prevalence of diabetes affecting around 168,000 people.



Some conditions can be 'remotely managed'

Diabetes Nurse Consultant Sharon McCarthy said "The majority of people don't want to stay in hospital any longer than they have to so we provide the support to make it happen. The best place for these patients is home and, if they do need to come in, they are referred straight to the diabetes centre rather than A&E". [➔ 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](#)

**"I have to wait 2 weeks to see my GP."**

Join us today and have your say!

### ➔ Call for More Midwives

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust writes "Can you help deliver a better midwifery service in North West London?"

Northwick Park Hospital's maternity department supports more than 5,000 births a year and is looking for Band 5 preceptorship and Band 6 midwives to join its busy team.



Offering 'excellent training and development'

The department will be holding an Open Day on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June, where you can have a tour of the department and chat to staff about supporting one of the most culturally diverse communities in the UK. The Band 6 roles will particularly suit those with an interest in birth centre midwifery care, maternity triage, homebirth, safeguarding and obstetric posts.

**"We can't praise our key worker enough."**

Join us today and have your say!

The department is currently implementing its Maternity Improvement Plan and a state-of-the-art birth centre will be refurbished and open for business this summer. It offers excellent development and training opportunities and actively encourages staff to fulfil their potential. A great example of this is the hospital trust's chief executive who started her career as a midwife.

If visiting midwives like what they see they can be interviewed and offered a job on the day, subject to background checks. Please note attendees must be registered midwives and show evidence of continual professional development". [➔ More](#)

## ➤ Improving Care for Homeless People

The local NHS writes “A scheme to help reduce inequality for one of our most vulnerable groups, has been given the green light for another three years.

The homeless health teams in North West London have been so successful that they have helped reduce rough sleeping in the patients they have supported by over half in the first year of operation.



Helping with wider support needs

The support scheme is designed to help people experiencing homelessness with their wider health and support needs, both when they are in hospital and in the community when they leave.

Dr Natalie Miller, Clinical Lead for the Homeless Health programme, said “We need to be able to spend more time with people who are vulnerable in our community. Working as a dedicated multi-professional team means when they are in hospital allows us time to support them holistically as well as their health issues.”

The scheme, with its future ‘now secured’ has been effective in helping people experiencing homelessness who regularly need hospital care. The ‘homeless health teams’ work in a number of different ways with homeless patients in hospital to maximise the benefit of their time there, providing specific health interventions, social care, housing, support and practical input so that patients leave hospital in an improved situation, reducing hospital re-admittance and homelessness”. ➤ [More](#)

“I need to be recognised as a carer.”

Join us today and have your say!

## ➤ Making a Primary Care Complaint

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, the way members of the public make a complaint about primary care services to the commissioner is changing.

By primary care services we mean GPs, dentists, opticians or pharmacy services.

There are two ways you can make a complaint:

You can complain to the healthcare provider - this is the organisation where you received the NHS service, for example a GP surgery or dental surgery.

You can complain to the service commissioner - this is the organisation that paid for the service or care you received.



Complaining helps to improve services overall

After 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 if you want to make a complaint about primary care services to the commissioner you will now contact NHS North West London instead of NHS England.

You can do this by phone, or email:

☎ 020 3350 4567 (automated service)

✉ [nhsnwl.complaints@nhs.net](mailto:nhsnwl.complaints@nhs.net)

## ➤ Children’s Community Outpatients Survey

The NHS would like to hear your views on community neurology (headache clinic), gastroenterology, out-patients (paediatrics) and ear, nose and throat.

Please take a moment to complete this brief online survey. ➤ [More](#)

You can also email your thoughts:

✉ [nhsnwl.healthiernwl@nhs.net](mailto:nhsnwl.healthiernwl@nhs.net)

### ➔ Eight Tips for Healthy Eating - A Guide!

This online guide, from the NHS outlines eight practical tips which cover the basics of healthy eating, and can help you make healthier choices.

The key to a healthy diet is to eat the right amount of calories for how active you are, so that you balance the energy you consume with the energy you use.

If you eat or drink too much, you'll put on weight.

On the other hand, if you eat and drink too little, you'll lose weight.



Eat a 'wide range of food' for a balanced diet!

Eat a wide range of foods to ensure that you're getting a balanced diet and that your body is receiving all the nutrients it needs. ➔ [More](#)

## Latest Newsletters

➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)

➔ London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust - Our Trust Newsletters ➔ [More](#)

Send us a link to your latest newsletter!

## 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 North West London Integrated Care Board ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ The latest from the Recovery News Channel ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS to open new specialist clinics for obese children and young people ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Thousands of sickle cell patients to benefit from quicker access to expert NHS care ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS announces nominations of health service heroes ahead of 75th birthday ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Retired specialists set to help with tackling Covid backlog ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 40% of unpaid carers face financial difficulties, new research found ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Weekly visits to NHS website's hay fever advice reach 122,000 as pollen levels rise ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS rolls out new 'lifeline' combination therapy for hundreds of women with womb cancer ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Rough sleepers in homeless hotspots to benefit from NHS mental health support ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Patients to benefit from faster care, under major new GP access recovery plan ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of patients receiving lifesaving NHS cancer checks has doubled in a decade ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Labour-commissioned report sets out plans for National Care Service ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS plan to improve workforce experience ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Number of repeat prescriptions ordered via NHS App up by 92% in the last year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Thousands of new HIV and Hepatitis cases identified thanks to NHS testing pilot ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harnessing technology to tackle the challenges of assessing pain in people with dementia ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New NHS measures to improve eye care and cut waiting times ➔ [More](#)
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- ➔ Sara Hurley, the Chief Dental Officer for England, to stand down ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Report reveals Disabled children disproportionately affected by cost-of-living crisis ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New Chief Midwifery Officer for England announced ➔ [More](#)



# HOW ARE YOU?

In our adult years, the lifestyle choices we make can dramatically increase our chances of becoming ill later in life.

Making small changes now can improve your health right away and double your chances of staying healthy as you get older. It's never too late to start.

**Talk to your doctor or nurse about your health today.**

BECAUSE THERE'S ONLY  
**ONE YOU**