

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

In this Issue!

Healthwatch Harrow Update!	2
Your Experiences of Getting Prescription Medication	3
Going Green - Recycling Your Walking Aids! Would You Know the Signs of a Heart Attack?	4
Protect Yourself and Others Against Flu and Covid-19 this Winter Support With Needle Phobias	5
Launch of New Electronic Patient Records Introducing 'Preventing Diabetes'	6
How Does Improving Communication Improve Healthcare? New Young People's Mental Health Service	7

... plus more!

➡ Healthwatch Harrow Forum, 29th November

The next Healthwatch Harrow Forum is titled 'How has health and social care changed for you in the last 2 years?'

Join us, so we can learn how services are changing, and how the cost of living, and other issues are affecting how local people access services.

It is also an opportunity to talk to our panel of experts in the health and social care sector.



What's your experience of local services?

The event takes place on Wednesday 29th November, 1.30pm - 4.00pm at Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow, HA1 1BA.

To book, visit the website or get in touch. ➡ [More](#)

☎ 020 3432 2889

✉ info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

Out and About...

We are out and about all year round, across Harrow. This month we have attended meetings at Northwick Park Hospital, The Conversation Café and dropped in to see the Citizen's Representative at South Harrow.

Drop us a line if you have an event coming up so we can share the details through our newsletter and on social media. We also like to attend your events whether online or in person.

“The welfare of carers is very important!”

Join us today and have your say!

➡ Your Voice Counts!

Our volunteers and team have always reached out to residents in order to hear their experiences of health & social care services and share intelligence.



We listen to local people across the borough

Feedback from residents helps us recognise trends in Harrow. We share these trends with providers and commissioners and this helps to influence change.

Your voice counts and we encourage people to share their stories. Let us know when things are good but also when you are not so happy with a service.

“The vaccine was fast and effective.”

Join us today and have your say!

Recent Trends...

In the last 3 months (July to September) we have heard from 534 local people. Satisfaction is up by 3% overall, compared with the previous 3 months, and while difficulties clearly remain, there are fewer complaints about accessing GP services - this includes getting through on the phone, ability to book appointments and waiting times.

According to feedback online systems (such as PATCHS) are becoming more effective and we'd like to mention Pinn Medical Centre, who have received many compliments from patients.

New Website, Coming Soon!

We are redeveloping our website, stay tuned for the launch date, and updates.

➔ Experiences of Getting Prescription Medication

Healthwatch England writes “People rely on prescription medication to treat and manage their conditions and keep well. In our new blog, we highlight the challenges people have recently told us about when trying to get prescription medication.



Having to make ‘trips to multiple pharmacies’

Shortages of medication

We increasingly hear that people can't always get their prescribed medication dispensed at their usual pharmacy. People must make repeat visits to their pharmacy until the medication is back in stock or make long trips to multiple pharmacies until they find one that stocks it.

“Fast service today at radiography!”

Join us today and have your say!

People may also have to queue up for long periods to collect their medication. Those who need multiple medications on their prescription may have to make do with the items that pharmacists have in stock and get an IOU for the medication not available.

We've heard about shortages of a wide range of medication, including hormone replacement therapy, painkillers, statins, and medication for ADHD, heart conditions, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Those with allergies to some of the ingredients in prescription medication report being unable to get medication without any allergens. People describe the stress and the extra effort they must make to get the medicine they need to stay well.

Healthcare leaders should urgently consider how to tackle medicine shortages and set out how they will address them as part of the forthcoming winter planning.

Delays in getting repeat prescriptions

In addition to medication shortages, people report delays in getting repeat prescriptions issued.

Repeat prescriptions allow people to request further medicine supply without having to book another GP appointment and form around two-thirds of the prescriptions issued by doctors, pharmacists and dentists.



Shortages of some medicines are reported

We've heard that delays in GPs authorising repeat prescription requests and ongoing difficulties in contacting GPs by phone to request a repeat prescription add to delays in getting prescription medication that might be in short supply.

Lack of staff or pharmacies closed

We also hear that people can't get their prescriptions dispensed because no pharmacist is available or local pharmacies have closed. As a result, people have to travel further to get their medication.” Find out more in the full article. [➔ More](#)

Your Views?

If you live in Harrow, and would like to share your experiences of prescription medication, good or bad, contact Healthwatch Harrow - in confidence.

“Been waiting months for talking therapy.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Going Green - Recycling Your Walking Aids!

The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital is delighted to announce they are now recycling walking aids!

If you were issued with crutches and no longer need them you can take them to the red walking aid recycling bins located at the main hospital entrance, in outpatients and in the main ward block.



Walking aids can now be recycled

Volunteer manager Diane Young said "This fantastic volunteer-led initiative is saving the NHS money and reusing valuable resources. Crutches are thoroughly checked and cleaned before they are put back into stock."

“The Practice nurse put me at ease!”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ When Was Your Last Blood Pressure Check?

The local NHS writes "High blood pressure is a leading cause of major health problems like heart attack and stroke, but it can be controlled. We are encouraging you to check your blood pressure, because knowing your numbers could save your life.

If you are concerned about your blood pressure, arrange a check today - it's quick, easy and painless. If you are 40+, you should have a blood pressure check at least every five years.

There are more than 280 pharmacies in North West London offering free blood pressure checks with no appointment needed." ➔ [More](#)

➔ Would You Know the Signs of a Heart Attack?

The local NHS writes "World Heart Day was on Friday 29th September this year, reminding everyone around the world to take care of their hearts. This year focused on 'knowing our hearts first'.

Recognising the possible signs of a heart attack and anything that may be unusual for you, is essential in being able to get help quickly.

A recent survey published by NHS England revealed a lack of confidence in recognising the symptoms of a heart attack, with almost half (47%) of people surveyed in London saying they were not confident that they could recognise the signs.

Furthermore, almost 1 in 4 Londoners claimed they would not call 999 if they or a loved one were displaying chest pain - the most common symptom.



Anyone with symptoms should call 999

Heart attack symptoms can vary from person to person, but can include squeezing across the chest and a feeling of unease. Symptoms don't always feel severe and some people may have other symptoms such as shortness of breath, feeling or being sick and back or jaw pain without any chest pain. Anyone experiencing symptoms should call 999.

People's chances of surviving a heart attack are far higher if they seek care earlier - overall around 7 in 10 people survive a heart attack, which increases to more than 9 in 10 for those who reach hospital early to receive treatment." ➔ [More](#)

“I want one port of call and one number.”

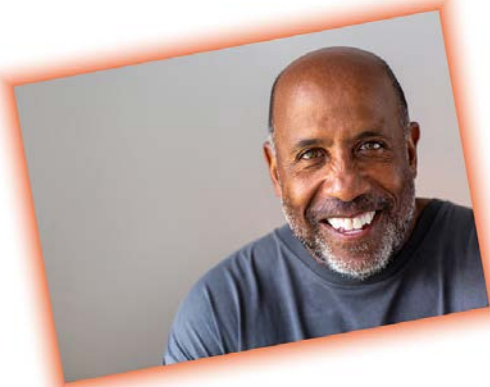
Join us today and have your say!

➔ Protect Yourself Against Flu and Covid-19

The local NHS writes "It's that time of year to get your Covid-19 and flu vaccinations. The national booking system is now open for those eligible and walk-in vaccination sites have opened up across North West London.

West London GP and vaccine lead Andrew Steeden explains "During the colder months, flu and Covid-19 spread more easily as we spend more time indoors. These viruses are unpleasant, but for some, particularly those with certain health conditions, older people and pregnant women, they can be very dangerous and even life-threatening, which is why it is so important to have these vaccinations."

The NHS will invite people to book-in, but if you are eligible and you have not been contacted yet for the free vaccinations there are several ways you can get both vaccinations.



Protect yourself and others this winter

You can access the online booking system, or use the NHS app, or if you can't get online, call 119.

If you are contacted by the NHS to have your vaccinations please come forward, even if you have had a vaccine or been ill with flu or Covid-19 before, as immunity fades over time and these viruses change each year.

Those who are eligible for both may be able to have them in the same visit". Find out more in the full article. [➔ More](#)

"I want a genuine choice on referral."

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Support With Needle Phobias

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes "As winter approaches, seasonal vaccinations (like the flu jab) are now being offered to staff and patients who are more vulnerable to infection.



Staff will accommodate any worries

We've put together a short video to remind everyone that needle phobias are common and nothing to be ashamed of. Simple exercises with practice can help to overcome them quickly too.

"The care assistants get to know you."

Join us today and have your say!

Overcoming your fear of needles. Tell the person who is coordinating your care, or the person who is giving you your injection or blood test, about your worries. They may be able to answer any specific questions you have. They may also be able to help you cope with the procedure, for example, by chatting to distract you.

Also, think about whether there has been anything which has helped you to cope with needles in the past. Can you use something like this to help you again? Vaccinators are gentle and sensitive to phobias, they can support you in any way you need.

Our staff Keeping Well Service, has a page of tips to support with phobias and self-help resources.

Talking therapies services are also able to help anyone with any phobias". Find out more in the full article, which includes useful links. [➔ More](#)

➔ Launch of New Electronic Patient Records

London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust (LNWT) writes “Recently we launched our new electronic patient record, in a move to modernise and improve patient care in our communities. The launch is the result of more than three years’ planning and represents a major investment in local health services.



Information ‘together in one place’

Electronic patient records bring health information together in one place, allowing our clinical teams to have access to the right information at their fingertips. We will be able to share information swiftly and easily with our neighbouring trusts at Hillingdon, Chelsea and Westminster and Imperial.

This is good news for patients across North West London who need care at more than one trust, whilst also helping GPs and hospitals to share test results far more quickly.

Fortunately, patients and carers do not have to do anything differently, as our teams have transferred the health records we already hold for them into our new electronic patient record. They might however notice members of our clinical team doing more work on computers, phones, or other electronic devices than before.

This is simply part of their work checking patient records and adjusting to the new system, so they can look after patients with the highest possible standards.” [➔ More](#)

“I prefer to see my own GP.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Introducing ‘Preventing Diabetes’

Online personal support is now available for people who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes, thanks to the new ‘Preventing Diabetes’ website.

The NHS in North West London has launched the website to help the 200,000 people who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the area.

GP and diabetes lead Dr Tony Willis explains “We know that patients may feel overwhelmed when they are told they are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. They are often given a blood glucose reading or a high blood pressure reading from their GP and advised to make some lifestyle changes. For many they leave this conversation not really knowing what to do next and how to make real changes to improve their health. This is where the new website can help.”



Helping you to make ‘real changes’

Across North West London patients who have had a recent blood test result that shows they could be at risk of developing type 2 diabetes (called non-diabetic hyperglycaemia) will be directed to the new website. Anyone who would like support or is worried about developing type 2 diabetes is also welcome to go directly to the website and join.

After registering, patients will be able to see a personalised healthcare dashboard, displaying their latest blood results, including blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood glucose.

The dashboard will offer advice about what is good, improving or getting worse in terms of health and prevention of type 2 diabetes.

Support is then available on the site including educational courses, meal plans and day-to-day advice to help patients understand how to go about making positive long-term changes. [➔ More](#)

➔ Improving Communication Improves Healthcare

Healthwatch England writes “We’ve looked at the good and the bad when it comes to how services communicate with patients. What’s clear is that taking time to get communications right benefits both patients and services.

Our recently conducted polling on confidence in the NHS supports this finding.

What works? Good communication held face-to-face, taking the time to explain issues to patients. This reassures people and reduces confusion.

Getting your online approach to communications right. While many patients like face-to-face appointments, for others, there are advantages to using digital systems to discuss their health.



Take the time to ‘explain and reassure’

Ensuring patients don’t feel forgotten. If someone is waiting for care, a regular check-in makes all the difference.

What could work better? Patients have told us they are less likely to respond if services use private numbers to call them because they don’t know who you are. We’ve also heard of services providing contact details, like emails that don’t work.

Not taking account of people’s communication needs. Providing unclear information or information in the wrong format frustrates patients”. Find out more in the full article. ➔ [More](#)

“ I want to be treated as a person, not an issue. ”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ New Young People’s Mental Health Service

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) writes “From October, a new service will be piloted in Brent, Harrow, Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. It will be jointly funded by CNWL and the Primary Care Networks (PCNs).



You’re not alone - help is available

The Children and Young People Mental Health Primary Care Service aims to improve access to mental health support in the community within the principles of the THRIVE Framework - a person centred and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and their families.

The service will provide timely consultations and discussions within GP settings outside of the traditional referral pathways, offering preventative rather than symptom-led involvement from mental health services.” ➔ [More](#)

“ My pharmacist had the answers. ”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Carers Rights Day, 23rd November

Carers Rights Day, this year on 23rd November aims to ensure that carers are aware of their rights, and know where to get help and support. It also helps to raise awareness of the needs of carers.

Visit the Carers UK website, to view this year’s main topic, and to find out more about entitlements and support that may be available for you. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Harrow Health & Wellbeing Network

Meeting three times a year, this new forum brings together residents, local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, healthcare partners, and local authorities to address issues in community health and social care.

The space provides a platform for health and wellbeing leaders to connect, share best practices, and stay informed about community health and wellbeing initiatives.



Learning from those in the sector

Each meeting focuses on a specific topic, encourages attendees to share updates from their organisations, and fosters networking, fundraising, and partnership-building opportunities.

The next meeting is on 13th December, 10.00am - 12.00pm and takes place online. ➔ [More](#)

“The food was fantastic and the ward clean.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Social Isolation and Loneliness Survey

Harrow Council is collaborating with Imperial College London on a research study to help identify ways to tackle social isolation & loneliness in the community.

Please consider participating in this brief online questionnaire which should not take more than 5 minutes to complete.

You can choose your preferred language and all responses will be anonymous. ➔ [More](#)

➔ Introducing 'Joy Marketplace'

Harrow Council writes "Joy Marketplace is the new way to bring your groups, activities, services and support close to the communities who need them.



Connecting services with local people

We have made it free for local voluntary organisations and community groups to use. GPs, Social Prescribers, Health Coaches and Care Co-ordinators can refer directly through the Marketplace to your service.

We aim to connect services that help improve health and wellbeing, with the people that need them, and we'd love to welcome you onboard. It's quick and easy to get started.”

To find out more, get in touch:

✉ support@thejoyapp.com

➔ Introducing the Conversation Cafe

An opportunity for Unpaid Carers and the people they support to meet face-to-face with representatives from Adult Social Care, Voluntary Organisations and Charities.

Join us every Tuesday, 1.00pm - 3.00pm at St. Peter's Church, Colbeck Road, Harrow, HA1 4BX.

To find out more, get in touch:

✉ conversation.cafe@harrow.gov.uk

“I rely on translation, it needs to be there.”

Join us today and have your say!

➔ Dementia - Living Well After Diagnosis

Have you recently been diagnosed with dementia?

Get your copy of the latest version of the dementia guide. Compiled by the Alzheimer's Society, it has lots of tips and advice to help you live well with dementia and keep you doing the activities that you enjoy.

It will help you to understand more about dementia and the treatments, support and services that are available.



A useful guide by the Alzheimer's Society

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

Latest Newsletters

- ➔ Harrow Council - Harrow People Newsletters ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Harrow Carers - Newsletter, October/November 2023 ➔ [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](#)
- ➔ Skills for Care to develop social care workforce strategy ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New treatment that could prove curative for blood cancer patients to be offered by the NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS blood pressure checks at the barbers to prevent killer conditions ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Open letter from NHS medical leaders to patients and the public ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 425,000 NHS patients use online GP registration service in first year ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Faster ambulance response times for patients despite summer of record demand for the NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS delivers 10,000 virtual ward beds target with patients treated at home ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Nearly 1 in 2 adults in England do not feel confident in spotting signs of a heart attack ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ New awareness campaign to help reduce hospital admissions for urinary tract infections ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS rolls out world-first programme to transform diabetes care for under 40s ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Millions can book flu jabs online from Monday ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS world first rollout of cancer jab that cuts treatment time by up to 75% ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Public asked to shape future use of health data by the NHS ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Social worker shortages leaving mental health patients without safeguards, leaders warn ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS delivers over one million covid vaccines in a week ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ £10m boost to adult social care funding to tackle NHS winter pressures ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ More than half a million people have made organ donations via NHS App ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS England invites more than one million people for lung cancer checks ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Visits to NHS website's head lice advice page jump by a third in back-to-school spike ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ Annual DoLS case numbers hit 300,000 following 11% hike ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS delivering record number of tests and checks with more one-stop shops ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ 'Failing' council adults' services will not be turned over to independent trusts ➔ [More](#)
- ➔ NHS Winter vaccine rollout kicks off with care homes ➔ [More](#)



How has health and social care changed for you in the last 2 years?

Share your experience and talk to our experts.



Wednesday
29 November 2023



1.30pm – 4pm



Harrow Baptist Church
College Road
Harrow HA1 1BA



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

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

www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk