



Brent Voices

Summer edition | 2022

Welcome to the Summer edition of Brent Voices, Healthwatch Brent's quarterly magazine

So far it's been a long, hot summer – and while many of us will be relishing the high temperatures, extreme weather conditions can also exacerbate existing health inequalities. This means it's more important than ever for us to speak up about the challenges we see within our local health services, and make sure the voices of patients and residents are at the heart of decisions.

In this month's magazine, we're sharing the headlines from our recent patient experience report, giving an overview of how integrated care systems will change the way that health services work together, and inviting you to join us as part of the Grassroots Community Voices network. You'll also find an overview of what's going on in Brent and more information about how to get involved as a volunteer.

We hope that you've been able to get the care you need from local health services this summer – but please don't hesitate to get in touch with any question or concerns.



Follow us on social media! We'd love to see you on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) – the best channels to stay up to date with our activity.

Feedback from local patients

287 Brent residents have shared their views over the past three months, through survey responses and other engagement activity.

We really appreciate the time that you have taken to share your views – as the feedback we receive is used to help improve our services and set our future priorities.



Services you told us about

177 people gave feedback on their GP

6 people gave feedback about the local authority

6 people gave feedback about local hospitals

Other people shared reviews about services such as CAMHS, dental care and adult social care



Key findings

26% of reviews were good or excellent,
47% okay and **27%** poor or very poor



This is an improvement on previous quarters, but still shows a need for services to address their patients' issues.

Our feedback report has been shared with local service providers, to highlight areas that are working well and what needs improvements. We are also sending more detailed service experience reports to the relevant teams, giving a breakdown of what patients are telling us.

In depth: GP feedback

60% of feedback we received was related to GP practices...

From the feedback we received...

- 42 were negative
- 90 were neutral
- 45 were positive

This is a vast improvement from feedback in the previous quarter.

Over the past three months we have received more neutral feedback about GPs, which is a positive improvement compared to previous negative feedback. However, patients are still raising key issues such as access to appointments, quality of care and communication between staff and patients. This reflects the findings from our GP Access report, which can be read [here](#).

“At the moment every time you try to see a doctor they are full, or you have to wait for weeks before you can see a doctor. I just had my kidneys out and the meds they gave me from the hospital had to be changed by my GP. I got through to the GP but they gave me the same drugs I got from the hospital when they were meant to be changed. We got the right drugs from the hospital but they were not happy with my GP.”

Get your voice heard

We collect feedback about health and social care services in Brent, including local hospitals, dental surgeries, mental health services and care homes. You can share your experiences – positive or negative – [through our online survey](#). This will help give local services an understanding of what patients want, and any improvements that are needed.



Be part of our Grassroots Community Voices network

Are you part of a local community group? Join our network to help amplify your members' voices.

What does Grassroots Community Voices involve?

This is an informal network, so the level of involvement is up to you. We send updates about projects and priorities every few weeks, so our grassroots partners can choose what they want to get involved with and which issues to give feedback on. We'll also signpost to your group from our website, so members of the public can find your service.

Who can join?

We'd like to hear from lots of different types of community organisations, so whatever type of group you have don't be shy! Some examples include:

- Faith groups and faith leaders
- Mutual aid groups
- Neighbourhood interest groups
- Parent and child groups
- Health-based support groups

How can our group share experiences with health and social care?

If your group would like to give feedback, we are happy to attend a meeting or event. We can also arrange a time to chat through your concerns one-on-one, in person or on the phone. Alternatively, you can share our survey with your members or send feedback via email.

Want to join the Grassroots Community Voices network?
Email Cleo Chalk on cleo.chalk@healthwatchbrent.co.uk

Introducing the North West London Integrated Care System

From 1 July this year, new integrated care systems have been put in place to offer a joined-up approach from GPs, hospitals, local authorities and other health and social care partners.

Brent is covered by the North West London ICS, alongside seven neighbouring boroughs such as Harrow, Hillingdon and Ealing. It brings together health and care organisations with four core objectives:

- Improve outcomes in population health and health care
- Prevent ill health and tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- Enhance productivity and value for money
- Support broader economic and social development

Our role

The role of Healthwatch Brent, and other local Healthwatch organisations, will be to make sure your views are represented within the ICS, and to give a voice to patients and residents who are least likely to be heard when decisions are made. We will also ensure service providers are engaging with communities and residents.

Want to know more?

Go to [our website](#) to watch a short video about healthcare systems and the introduction of the ICS, produced by the King's Fund



Introducing patches : your new online consultation service



GP practices across Brent are now using a new online consultation tool to help patients contact their GP, book appointments and access health device.

Replacing the previous online consultation system, PATCHS offers a streamlined approach.

Patients and carers will be asked a few simple questions about their symptoms, and the information will then be sent to your GP who will work out the best way to help you. This does not replace face-to-face appointments, but offers an additional option for getting in touch with your practice.

More information about registering should be available on your practice website – or contact your GP directly to find out more.

Monthly discussions tackle key health equalities

Once a month, we invite an expert speaker to share their views on topical issues –with plenty of time for questions and discussion.

27 July: How can we avoid adult mental health crisis?

Claire Murdoch brings her expertise as National Director for Mental Health to address the challenges around adult mental health support. Claire will be joined by Dr Gareth Jarvis, Divisional Medical Director at CNWL.

[Register for free here.](#)



Watch again: recordings of all our previous events are available [here](#), covering children's mental health, gambling addiction, food equality and more.

Evaluating Saturday services

More options for patients across the borough



If you've been to see your GP recently, you might have been offered a Saturday appointment as part of a pilot service currently on offer across Brent. Saturday appointments are being used for a range of routine appointments like blood tests and cervical screenings, as well as general health checks. Our team has been visiting the clinics to gather patient feedback and will share the results soon.

What's on in Brent



Join the North West London Residents' Forum
A collaborative space to discuss healthcare across NWL, run by NWL ICS. [Register here](#) to join on 27 July at 6pm.



Have your say about urgent treatment centres

NHS NW London is running a procurement process to provide urgent treatment centres across the area - including at Northwick Park and Central Middlesex. Join an online session to hear more about their plans: [details here](#).



Covid cases are rising: get your vaccine
Covid-19 is still with us, and Brent Council are making it easy to get the vaccine (including first doses as well as boosters). Book an appointment or get details for walk-ins [here](#).



Share your opinion about local pharmacy services

The pharmaceutical needs assessment lays out the needs for pharmacy services in Brent, including any gaps or required improvements. The draft assessment is now available for local people to review and comment on. Access it [here](#).



What can you do as a Healthwatch Brent volunteer?



We rely on our volunteers to keep the service running. Volunteers also contribute lots of local knowledge and experience, which helps us understand the needs of people in Brent. Some of the roles you can do include:



- Collect views through surveys and engagement,
- visit and evaluate local services,
- produce communications materials,
- represent Healthwatch at local events.

We'll match your skills, interests and any areas you would like to develop to find a role that suits you!

[Read more about volunteering on our website.](#)

**If you'd like to join us as a volunteer or learn more, contact Ibrahim Ali :
ibrahim.ali@healthwatchbrent.co.uk**