

This week in the Patients Association Weekly News:

- **Patients Over Politics: all the latest updates and a call to action**
- **The Patient Experience: we launch a major new survey**
- **News from the helpline as caller numbers continue to increase**
- **A busy week in the media: what we've been reading**

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Patients Over Politics - take action today!



**PATIENTS
OVER POLITICS**
Remember what really matters

Patients Over Politics is now fully launched, so with the election campaign in full swing now is the time to take part!

There are lots of ways to get involved, and there are plenty of ideas and suggestions on [our dedicated microsite](#). Click through to find out more about the many ways to take part, which include:

- Meeting your candidates and asking them if they put patients over politics
- Contacting your candidates online – via email or social media
- Putting a campaign poster in your window
- Spreading the word to your friends and family, online and in real life
- Take our survey – are you confident that politicians will put patients over politics?
- Send us a video, saying why it matters to you that politicians put patients over politics.

Whatever action you take, we want to hear about it – take pictures, and send them to patientsoverpolitics@patients-association.org.uk, or share them with us on Twitter and Facebook. Include the hashtag #PatientsOverPolitics, to spread the message as wide as possible.

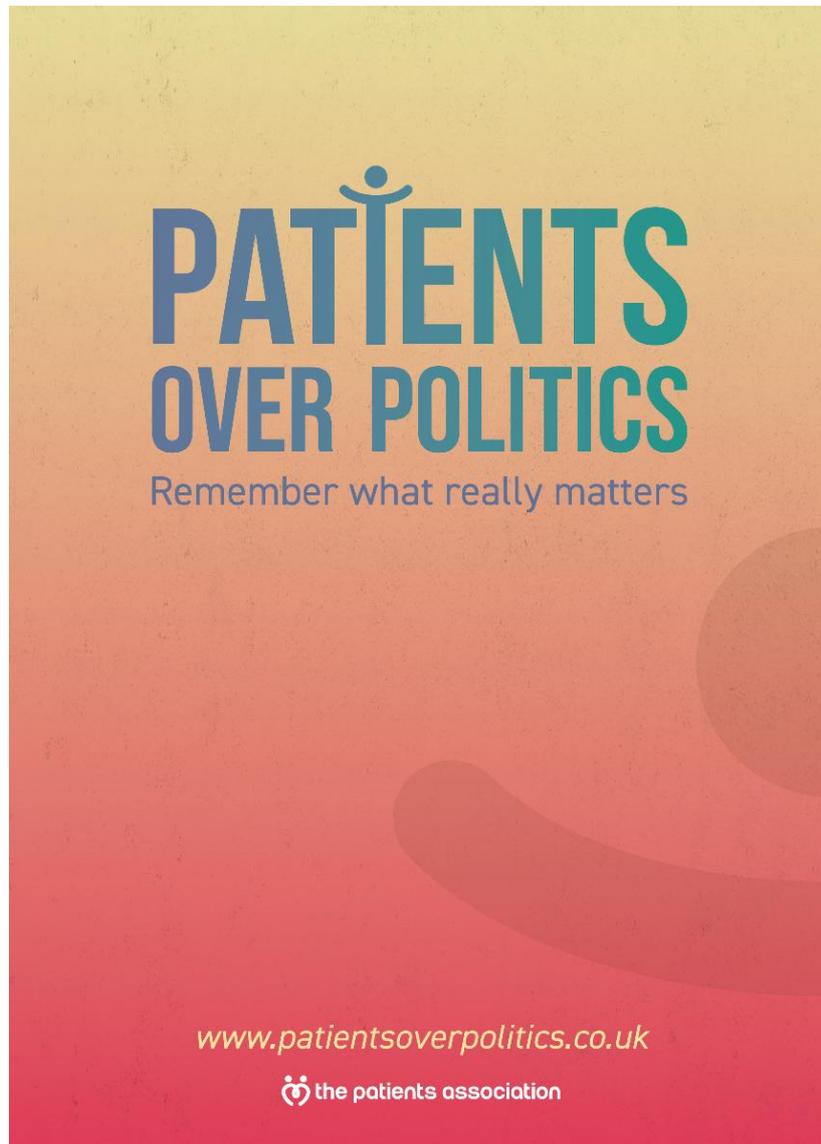
[Take part now](#)

Your opinion matters

We are running a survey to find out whether patients feel confident in politicians to take the right decisions about health and care. The survey is short and will take two minutes to complete – have your say now! Thank you.

[Take the survey](#)

Campaign posters



Campaign posters are a staple part of every election campaign. For this election, we want people to see posters that speak up for patients.

There are multiple ways for you to do this. You can order a large, professionally printed Patients Over Politics campaign poster from [our online shop](#), and display it in your window.

Alternatively, you can download a file from our [Take Action page](#) and print it at home. We realise that not everyone will have a printer capable of printing the poster to a high standard, so if you would like us to send you an A3 poster free of charge, please email patientsoverpolitics@patients-association.org.uk to request one, remembering to include your postal address.

When your poster is up, be sure to take a photo and send it to us, so we can spread the word and encourage others to follow your lead!

Campaign props



Whether you want to put a poster in your window, or spread the campaign's message online or in real life, we have created a range of items to help you do it. Visit our [online shop](#) to obtain greeting cards, mugs, bags and other items with the Patients Over Politics logo. Whatever you choose, tell us about it and send in photos!

All items are being sold at cost, so that as many people can take part as possible.

[Spread the message](#)

Rachel Power would like a word



"We're so excited about the opportunities of the Patients Over Politics campaign, and we really hope as many people as possible will take part. The message could not be more fundamental: health and care are top of everyone's priorities, and we want politicians to remember why they are such important issues when they discuss them in this campaign."

"Whether you have just a few moments to spare, or are keen to get out and meet your candidates, there is an action here to suit you, so please look through the options and get involved!"

[Get involved](#)

The Patient Experience



The focus of our policy and campaigns work through to the end of next year will be patient experience.

We will be developing policy recommendations and campaign actions to improve key aspects of the experience of being a patient - but what those are will be entirely determined by what patients tell us!

So this is your opportunity to have your say in detail. Our new survey asks in depth about your experiences, what made them good or bad, and what should be better.

The questions are developed from what supporters told us in our earlier scoping survey - thank you to everyone who responded to that!

The survey is somewhat in-depth, so please set aside ten minutes to tell us about your experiences. The results will be published in the new year, with more information about what the next steps will be.

[Take the survey](#)

From our helpline



 the patients association

Calls to our helpline are now free of charge!

We've launched our new 0800 number, making it free for people to speak to our expert advisers:

0800 345 7115

Since the summer, our helpline team have noticed a substantial week-on-week rise in the number of callers concerned and distressed about the online service provided by Patient Access. This is a service which allows patients to book appointments with their GP, order repeat prescriptions and have easy access to their medical records. As with many on-line only services, there is no helpline to call when the system breaks down and that can lead to many unhappy users – in this case patients with very real concerns. It is clear that the response time from the service has in some cases been unacceptable as any delay in receiving repeat prescriptions, for example, can have devastating effects.

Our helpline team are unable to resolve individual requests for medical help, as that is down to the NHS, but we are able to recommend helpful next steps for anyone having difficulty with Patient Access.

We now suggest callers contact Patient Access via social media – particularly [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) - as their response on these platforms is considerably faster than through their website. In addition, we are collating and forwarding all the concerns we receive to the CQC for their review, and we will continue to do this on an ongoing basis.

If you need health or care advice, call 0800 345 7115 between 9.30 and 5pm on weekdays, or email helpline@patients-association.com. You can also visit our website to find out more about our helpline, and visit our advice and information leaflets [here](#).

[Contact our helpline](#)

What our team is reading this week

[Waiting times in England worst on record](#)

[NHS – what to look out for in manifestos](#)

[Ramping up exercise is linked to lower heart risk](#)

[Care Trust offers tips for staying well over the winter](#)

[Is there a crisis in student mental health?](#)

About Us

Our vision is that health and social care will be delivered in a way that meets every person's health and social care needs.

Our mission is to give effect to the patient voice, to improve patient experience and support people to engage fully in their own care. Find out more about our values on our [website](#).

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Our mailing address is:

The Patients Association
PO BOX 935
London, England HA1 3YJ
United Kingdom