

### This week in the Patients Association Weekly News:

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- **Get involved: London Clinical Senate**
- **News from the helpline**

### A message from Rachel

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This is our last newsletter of 2019 and I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you all for your support throughout the year – it is so valuable to the work we do here at the Patients Association. We've had a great year and I hope we can rely on your continued involvement next year to make 2020 even better and a time of real change for patients.

In the meantime, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

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### Have your say: our surveys



We've got so many interesting projects on the go, and for most of them we need your help! A big thank you to everyone who has been involved over the year and completed our surveys. Your feedback is so important and provides the backbone for the projects we undertake.

We're keen to get even more people on board, so please share our surveys with as many family and friends as possible. Thank you.

## Hospital Discharge

Discharging your loved ones from hospital and into care can be a very difficult time and we want to find out just what the impact is on family and close friends. We've teamed up with ZBD Associates to collate people's experiences, whether good or bad, so if you do have any information to share please take a couple of minutes to fill out this quick survey.

[Take the survey](#)

## Food in hospitals

Are you looking forward to a special Christmas meal with all the trimmings next week? Food is an important part of life – bringing people together and keeping us nourished and healthy – and everyone has a food-related story to tell.

We want to hear about your experiences of food in hospitals – did you get a choice of food? How did it taste? If you needed assistance with eating, was there someone who could help you?

Earlier this year the NHS Hospital Food Review was launched, and the Patients Association has been asked to collect your opinions and experiences of hospital catering, to feed into this work. If you have been in hospital in the past six months, please do take a moment to complete this survey. It won't take more than five minutes and will help inform the work of the NHS Hospital Review Panel ahead of the publication of their review early next year.

In the meantime, let's spare a thought for people spending Christmas in hospital this year.

[Take the survey](#)

## Patient Experience



This is our major policy programme for 2020. Focusing on patient experience, it will be totally guided by what patients tell us and the survey asks about what has made a difference to your experience in the past, in terms of both the care you have received and the other aspects of your life. It also explores what the term 'patient' means to people – to explore patient experience, it's essential to be clear about whose experiences are being considered!

We're closing the survey in January so please set aside ten minutes to complete it.

[Take the survey](#)

## Patients Over Politics

We would like to know what you thought of our general election campaign, what you did to take part, what you liked about it, and what you would like to see done differently in our future campaigns. Please give us your thoughts so we know what to do better next time!

[Take the survey](#)

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## Get involved: London Clinical Senate



The London Clinical Senate supports the development of London's health and care services and the delivery of high quality, sustainable and cost-effective care by helping commissioners to make the best decisions about healthcare for their populations.

The London Clinical Senate Patient and Public Voice (PPV) group represents patients, carers and the public by reflecting their views in the Senate's advice to commissioners.

If you live in London and are interested in becoming a PPV member, please contact Katie Humphreys, London Clinical Senate Senior Project Manager, for more information at [katiehumphreys@nhs.net](mailto:katiehumphreys@nhs.net). The deadline for applications is 5pm on 27 January 2020.

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## From the helpline

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 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**

During the week, our helpline received a call from Jane\* who was so worried about the long waiting times on the NHS that she decided to see a private doctor. She was then extremely disappointed when she attended the appointment as she felt the doctor simply wasn't listening to her and had not prepared for the consultation.

When she subsequently received the bill she could not believe how high it was and called us to find out how she could make an official complaint.

We alerted Jane to the Independent Healthcare Sector Complaints and Adjudication Service (ISCAS), who have a guide for patients wishing to make a complaint in the independent healthcare sector, and gave her the contact details.

We also told her about the role of the Care Quality Commission and that, as a monitoring and inspectorate body, they are always interested in hearing from patients about their good and bad experiences. They want to know how safe, effective and caring treatments are and, whilst they don't investigate or resolve individual cases, all feedback helps them decide when and where they need to inspect. We told Jane that she could do this herself or, with her permission, we could contact them on her behalf.

Finally, we advised Jane that it was always a good idea to check any costs in advance of making an appointment and we referred her to our leaflet on private healthcare which is available [on our website](#).

\*Name changed for privacy

To get in touch with our helpline team and share your thoughts of health and care services, call 0800 345 7115, email [helpline@patients-association.org.uk](mailto:helpline@patients-association.org.uk) or visit our website. We also operate a Live Chat function on weekdays between 2 - 5pm for people who wish to receive advice online.

[Contact our helpline](#)

## What our team is reading this week

[New treatment aims to make chemotherapy more effective](#)

[Thousands at risk of flu this Christmas, doctors warn](#)

[Trusts told to create 'dedicated A&E space' for mental health patients \(£\)](#)

[Queen's speech – Boris Johnson hails radical programme](#)

[GPs 'shun full-time work as pressures take toll'](#)

## 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](#).