

**Welcome to The Patients Association Weekly
News**



**The Patients Association is pleased to announce the
appointment of Rachel Power as its new chief
executive**



Rachel joins the Patients Association with over 20 years' experience of working in health and social care within the voluntary sector.

"I'm hugely excited to be joining the Patients Association at such a critical time for everyone who needs, or will need, health and social care. With an ageing population, the challenges of Brexit, an unsustainable funding settlement and the pressing need for a thorough transformation of how we deliver health and social care, the need to ensure the voices of patients and services users are heard loud and clear has never been greater.

“I look forward to continuing the Association’s strong history of a willingness to speak up on behalf of patients and service users when necessary.

“I am determined to look closely at the issues where we can make the most difference and develop evidence-based policy with rigour, as well as working constructively with other leading organisations in the sector.

“I know that my deep passion for empowering others will focus me in my new role, alongside my core values of inclusion, compassion and justice.”

Liz McAnulty, Chair of the Patients Association, said: “Rachel’s appointment marks the start of an exciting new chapter for the Patients Association. I am asking her to focus its work on the rapidly changing priorities for patients and service users in a shifting political, social and economic landscape, while maintaining its traditional strengths of determination and fearlessness in speaking out.

“She has outstanding leadership qualities which will hold her in good stead for taking us forward, as we continue to deliver the important work we do. I have no doubt that the Patients Association will thrive under her direction.”

Patients Association condemns NHS mail blunder as scandalous

Liz McAnulty, of the Patients Association, said: “The failure of the NHS to manage essential medical correspondence effectively is scandalous, and the lack of transparency about these errors is at least as bad. Patients have become totally lost in all this: it has become a matter of contracts and administration – neither of them remotely well managed. The system clearly lost sight of the people it was supposed to serve.”

Even after the publication of the National Audit Office’s report, the impact on patients remains alarmingly unclear. We know that at least 1,700 patients could have been harmed, but how many have in fact suffered harm as a result is still being investigated.

The Patients Association is calling on NHS England to set out a new approach to sharing patient information between clinicians, that has a clear focus on the needs of patients. This must involve much clearer accountability – although it’s obvious things went badly wrong this time, it’s not at all clear who should have been responsible for the effective operation of the system. Another arrangement that involves a complex web of contracts will be vulnerable to the same problems happening again.

This episode is also likely to dent patients’ confidence in the safety of their data with the NHS. This is a major problem for the future – patient data will be ever-more vital to planning services, empowering patients through controlling their own data, and to medical research. But if patients lack confidence in the system, they will be reluctant to allow their data to be used.

Patients Association responds to rising dissatisfaction with the NHS



The Patients Association has responded with concern to the findings of the BMA's latest survey of public opinion on the NHS.

John Kell, Head of Policy at the Patients Association, said: "After months of alarming media reports about the pressures facing the NHS, many of them well justified, it's not surprising that there is growing worry among the public. It's a particularly sad day when dissatisfaction with the NHS outweighs satisfaction. We've been saying for some time that whether we fund the NHS adequately or not is a political choice – the Government must now face up to that choice, and be candid with the public and patients about its decisions."

The Patients Association has been calling for the 2015 spending review settlement for health and social care to be revisited, and for spending to be raised to the sorts of levels recommended by the independent Barker Commission and the Office for Budgetary Responsibility.

Ahead of the general election, the Association also called for the transformation of health and social care services under the Five Year Forward View to be continued, but with proper funding and more comprehensive engagement of patients in redesigning services.

Policy Focus: Survey finds support for increasing spending is the highest since 2004

A survey ran by the National Centre for Social Research has found that 48% of people support raising taxes and increasing public spending, the largest amount to do so since 2004.

The British Social Attitudes survey also found that people thought health was the most important area to prioritise spending. 83% of people surveyed thought the government should spend more on health, higher than the amount who supported more spending on education or the police.

Roger Harding, head of public attitudes at the National Centre for Social Research, suggested the results showed that people's tolerance for austerity is "drying up", even if it meant they would pay higher taxes.

[Read the full story](#)

Helpline

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[Online submission form](#)

In the news: The Sun launches awards to celebrate work of NHS staff

The Sun has launched the 'Who Cares Wins' awards to celebrate the selfless work done by NHS staff. They are asking people to nominate any NHS staff who they believe deserve recognition by the 1st of September.

NHS chief executive Simon Stevens said, "Time and again over recent weeks, in the most tragic of emergencies, our NHS staff have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

"But day in, day out, our NHS nurses, therapists, doctors and other staff are providing amazing care for all of us, our families and our neighbours.

"So it's great that The Sun is now helping the nation say a huge thank you – to some of the heroes of our health service."

The awards are also being supported by celebrities including Katie Piper. The TV presenter has relied on the NHS after being severely burned after an acid attack in 2008. She said: "I am really looking forward to presenting an award at the Who Cares Wins Health Awards and honouring the NHS which has been a huge part of my life over the last 10 years."

[Read the full story](#)

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About Us

The Patients Association's mission is to listen to patients and to speak up for change.

Our vision is for health and social care services that provide high quality and safe care, where patients and their carers are valued as expert partners and recognised as individuals. And for a health system that is compassionate, accessible and inclusive for everyone that seeks to improve and innovate.

Likewise, we want to see a culture where transparency thrives, patients, their families, carers and staff are empowered to raise concerns and make complaints to contribute to a better and safer healthcare system. We believe this should be an accountable system where this feedback is valued and acted upon.



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