

## Welcome to the Patients Association's Weekly News



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### Northern Ireland consults on reform of adult social care



Photo by [K. Mitch Hodge](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The Department of Health in Northern Ireland is seeking views on proposed reforms to adult social care.

The consultation is open until 18th May and there are several ways to share your views, including online events.

The Department is reviewing adult social care because of several issues both current and anticipated. It is currently unable to provide domiciliary care services for all those who need

them and it has problems with the range, choice and quality of service provision in other aspects of social care.

These issues are only going to get worse, it believes, because of rising demand for services as the older population increases and the working age population decreases.

Visit the link below for more details on the consultation and ways to respond.

[Respond to the consultation](#)

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**Does chronic pain make time pass more slowly?**



Researchers at Liverpool John Moores University are exploring how chronic pain might alter our awareness of the passage of time. They are also interested in how different levels of pain might alter this awareness.

They are inviting readers of Weekly News to complete a short set of questionnaires asking about your experience of pain, mood and how quickly you feel time is passing on the day you

complete the questionnaire, during periods of high pain, and during periods of low pain.

The researchers will use the data to develop a better understanding of how chronic pain affects our experiences of time: does it make the days drag by and, if so, are there particular pain characteristics that may make this even worse?

They then want to look into how periods of pain can be made to feel like they are shorter or passing more quickly. The researchers think that if we understood how pain affects our perception of time, it may be helpful to people with chronic pain. Despite significant amounts of research focusing on reducing pain intensity, many people still experience chronic pain. Focusing on the duration of pain may, therefore, offer as yet under-explored therapeutic benefits.

[Take the pain survey](#)

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## The Patients Association on YouTube



We have recently recorded a selection of short videos, which are now available on our YouTube channel.

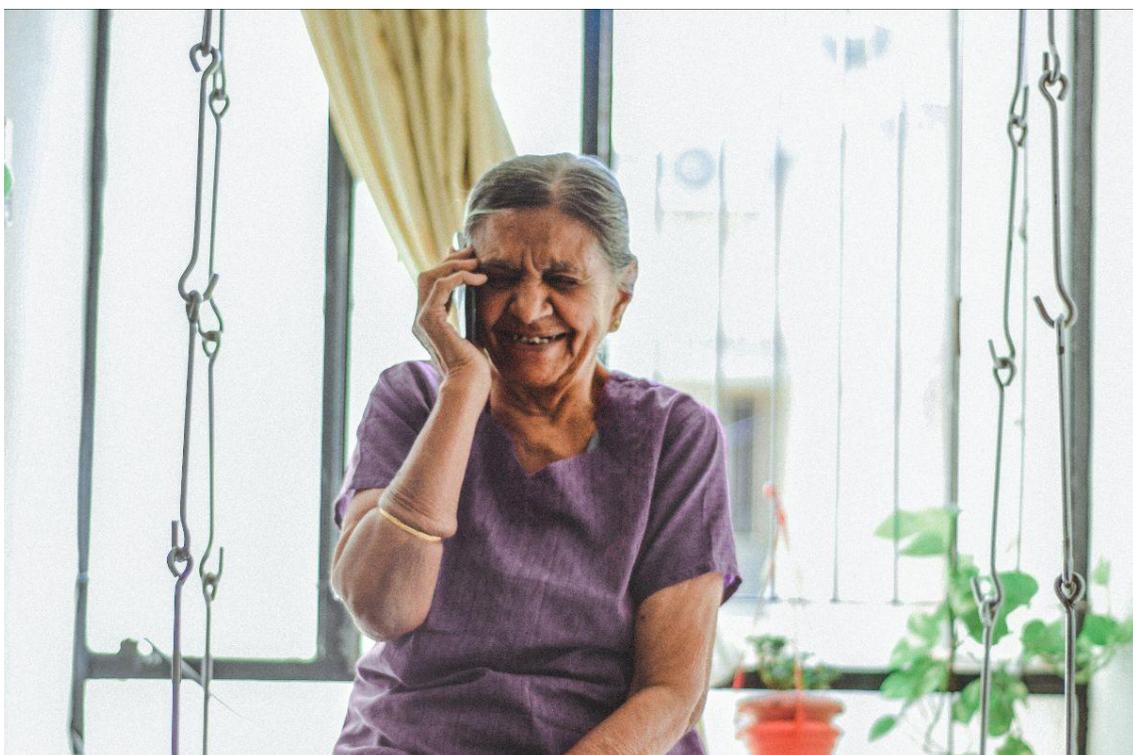
The videos cover patient partnership, the need for more doctors and nurses, and why communication from hospitals to patients waiting for care is so important. We'd love to know if there are other 30-second videos you'd like to see on our YouTube channel about our work, opinions or help and advice.

Let us know by emailing [weeklynews@patients-association.org.uk](mailto:weeklynews@patients-association.org.uk)

[Hear from us on YouTube](#)

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## Long-COVID in South Asian communities



South Asian Health Action (SAHA), a Leicester-based charity, wants to hear from members of the South Asian community who are experiencing symptoms of long-COVID.

The charity, which is working with NHS England and National Voices, wants to know how people are managing and if they've been able to get support. The findings will help in the development of services that better meet the needs of the communities that make up the UK's South Asian diaspora.

[Take SAHA's survey](#)

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## From the helpline

**Car park drama leads to promises of new all-terrain wheelchairs at hospital**



Janice\* called our helpline to tell us about difficulty attending outpatients with her friend Sue, and how to get help for patients who can't walk from the car park to the hospital.

Sue has a broken arm and needs to attend the fracture clinic of their local hospital. Sue also has difficulty walking. Janice knew that Sue would need a wheelchair to be able to attend outpatients and Janice believed she'd not be strong enough to push the wheelchair with Sue in it and would need help from one of the porters.

So before the attended, Janice phoned the hospital and explained the issue. She was told she where to find the wheelchair and that a porter would help, and was even given permission to use a disabled parking space.

But on the day of Sue's appointment, things did not go to plan. Although Janice found a wheelchair, and helped Sue into it, the porters would not come to the car park, saying they weren't insured to go outside the hospital. Luckily for Sue and Janice, a passerby helped them and they were able to attend the fracture clinic, where "the treatment was faultless. It was absolutely excellent service with very friendly staff".

Despite being rebuffed on their way in, Janice thought she'd ask one of the receptionists on their way out, if a porter could help them back to her car. Once again, they were told no. Somehow, the pair managed to get back to the car but as Sue will need to return to the fracture clinic, Janice was concerned how they would manage the next visit.

She asked our adviser: "What are people supposed to do? This is a dangerous situation. We must have access to help in the car parks when required."

Our adviser recommended that Janice contact the hospital's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and also facilities management to tell them about her experience and what could be put in place for Sue's next visit.

She heard back within a few days. The facility manager had put in an order for two all-terrain wheelchairs that will be better suited to the car park than the current wheelchairs the hospital has. He also told Janice that it would be made clear to the porters that if anyone in the car park needed help using a wheelchair, they should provide it. Until the new wheelchairs arrive, the facility manager suggested Janice uses the drop off bays for easier access to the site or disabled parking spaces.

\*Names changed to protect privacy.

To contact our helpline team, call 0800 3457115 between 9.30am and 5pm on weekdays or email [helpline@patients-association.org.uk](mailto:helpline@patients-association.org.uk). See [our website](#) for more ways to get in touch.

And remember, we have a [range of information](#) on our website from our very popular nutrition checklist right through to understanding your medicines.

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## What our team is reading this week

[Collaboration for change: Promoting vaccine uptake](#)

[Long COVID less common in fully vaccinated, UK health agency says](#)

[Child COVID vaccinations: Your questions answered](#)

[Midwives tell Sajid Javid to 'stem the tide' of those leaving NHS with patient safety at risk](#)

[Review highlights stark ethnic healthcare inequalities in the UK](#)

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**About Us**

Our purpose is to ensure that everybody can access and benefit from the health and care they need to live well, by ensuring that services are designed and delivered through equal partnership with patients.

Our strategic focus for 2021-25 is patient partnership in the design and delivery of health and care services.

We are a registered charity raising all our own funds. If you'd like to support our work for all patients and make a difference, please [donate or consider making a regular donation](#). Thank you.



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