

Welcome to the Patients Association's Weekly News

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Pandemic Experience report launches next week



On Monday next week, we will be launching the results of our survey into the experiences of patients during the emergency lockdown caused by the pandemic.

In total, 953 people responded to questions in at least one of the four sections of the survey, which was available online from 6th May 2020 to the 17th August 2020.

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey.

The sample strongly reflects the experiences of older people with long term conditions: the majority of respondents identified as female (65%), were aged over 55 (74%, with 48% in the 65-74 age bracket), were White British (84%), and were heterosexual (86%). All regions and devolved nations were represented.

The Patients Association has been supported to fund this report through sponsorship provided by Novo Nordisk and ENGINE | MHP. Novo Nordisk and ENGINE | MHP has had no influence over the content of the report. ENGINE | MHP is also supporting us with our media activities to promote the results.

The report will be emailed to members, and also available online on our website, on Monday morning. There will be more details in next Friday's Weekly News.

COVID-19 – ongoing developments



Infection rates from coronavirus are continuing to rise again, and local restrictions are being imposed in multiple areas across the UK.

We have coronavirus articles on our website that outline the current situation and link through to the up-to-

date rules across all nations of the UK. Our [dedicated page on advice and guidance](#) contains links to official pages showing details of local lockdowns.

Other articles cover the rules around masks, what to do if you develop symptoms, including how to get a test, and the status of the 'shielding' list.

[Read the articles](#)

Monthly women's magazine looking for carer to interview



A UK-based women's magazine would like to talk to someone whose partner spent time in intensive care because of COVID-19, and who is now supporting their recovery at home.

If you have been through this experience and would like to share your story, please contact the journalist Tess Hilton via email hiltontessa6@gmail.com.

Get involved: patient and PPV roles in specialised commissioning



NHS England and Improvement are recruiting to a large number of patient and public voice roles to guide their delivery of specialise services.

Some of the roles are to provide patients' views to the national-level Programmes of Care that report into NHSE&I's senior leadership. These roles are at non-executive director level.

Other roles are on clinical reference groups, which are bodies of clinicians, patients and other experts that decide the details of services for particular conditions. Vacancies are available across a range of condition areas.

There are also vacancies on the Patient and Public Voice Assurance Group, which oversees engagement and communications about specialised services.

The NHSE&I website has full details on every role, application packs and email addresses to contact if you would like to find out more. The deadline for all roles is September 22nd.

[Read more](#)

GPs told to see patients face to face



We have spoken regularly in the media and in recent editions of Weekly News about patients' concerns at not being able to see their GP in person when they need to. On Monday, NHS England and Improvement wrote to GPs in England, and to the commissioners who fund their services, reminding them of their obligations to see patients in person when necessary.

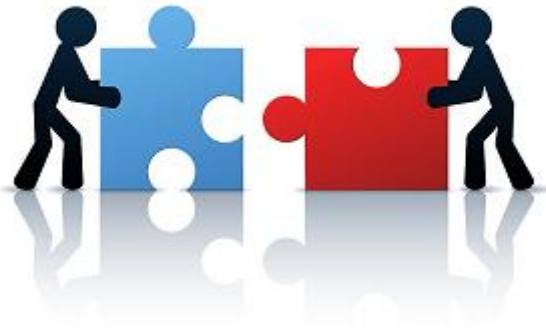
Our Chief Executive, Rachel Power, commented: "We supported the emergency measures taken earlier in the year by the NHS, but since the easing of lockdown patients have told us they are concerned that their GP practice might never reopen fully.

"Throughout lockdown many patients had difficulty accessing GP appointments – online, telephone or face-to-face. Patients have been patient but we hope that the call from NHS England will encourage more GP practices to increase the number of face-to-face appointments they offer.

"All parts of the NHS must provide services that work well for patients, and that includes those who value face-to-face contact, don't feel comfortable discussing delicate matters by phone, or don't have a private space in their home to make the call from, as well as those who are happy with remote consultations. Some patients are effectively shut out from GP services at the moment, which is worrying for them and not acceptable to the Patients Association."

[Read the letter](#)

Putting patients first – Medical Technology Group campaign



This week the Medical Technology Group, which we're members of, has launched a new patient-focused campaign, Putting Patients First Week.

The week of virtual activities has centred on ensuring patients are able to access care on the NHS by focusing on three recommendations:

- NHS and Government to provide clear communication to patients around accessing NHS services
- Ensure patients can work with healthcare professionals to make informed decisions around their own care
- Central guidance to be provided to NHS Trusts to increase capacity through joint working in local areas and making use of independent providers.

Visit the [MTG website](#) for more information on the campaign and the Group's [YouTube channel](#).

From the helpline



Concern about dental charges

Clodagh* from Aberystwyth called us looking for advice about dental charges.

She's an NHS patient and has four dental hygiene treatments per year for clinical reasons and is charged the NHS rate. But recently, Clodagh was told by her dental practice that any future such treatment would cost £60.00.

She asked our helpline if this increase was correct. Our helpline adviser informed her that dental cleaning and polishing when carried out for clinical reasons was chargeable on the NHS dental scale of charges. However, if the dentist carried out the treatment for non-clinical reasons, e.g. cosmetic reasons, then the NHS scale of dental charges did not apply.

Our helpline advised Clodagh to clarify with her dentist if there was a clinical reason for the clean and polishing, and that if there is then the NHS scale of charges should apply. We also advised her to contact The [Oral Health Foundation \(OHF\)](#) helpline for further advice as the Foundation advises people who have queries about dental treatment.

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

* Name changed for privacy

What our team is reading this week

[Will the UK's love for the NHS survive the pandemic?](#)

[Coronavirus testing: What's going wrong?](#)

[Patients urged to book A&E appointments through NHS 111 as emergency services tackle winter pressures](#)

[National Conversation on Health Inequalities: Video photo stories](#)

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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