

Welcome to the Patients Association's Weekly News

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 Forward

Enough is enough - letter to Secretary of State



We watched, aghast, this week at two television reports showing the dire state the NHS is in.

The reports, as well as warnings from [the NHS Confederation](#) about the threat to patient safety because of staff shortages, prompted us to write to Steve Barclay, the Secretary of State.

You can read the full letter from our Chief Executive, Rachel Power, on our website. In brief, we asked him to imagine what it is like to be a patient waiting for an ambulance that never seems to arrive, and to take action to pull the

NHS back from the cliff edge we have reached.

We called on him to get the Government to develop a long-term workforce strategy and to urgently fund social care.

We'll let you know when we hear from him.

[Read the letter](#)

Exercise your right to choose



Time to choose

How patients exercising their right to choose
can help clear the NHS elective backlog

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

 the patients association

Our latest report, produced with the Independent Healthcare Provider Network, shows that many patients could cut weeks off their NHS waits by travelling to hospitals outside of their area.

But it also shows that many don't know that they have the right to choose where they receive their NHS care.

We found patients do not need to travel long distances to access care more quickly. On average, a patient would need to travel just 13.2 miles to go from one of the worst performing providers to one of the top performers. Doing so could save patients 14 weeks of waiting if they move from providers with an average waiting time of 22 weeks to one with an average of 8 weeks.

Patients didn't know that they could receive NHS care in private hospitals -

many thought it would be too costly for the NHS.

Based on these findings we want NHS England to do more to make people aware of their right to choose and to provide a one-stop portal where people can find out what the waiting lists are at providers.

Finally, we'd like readers of Weekly News to **share this report** with at least one other person so they know about the right to choose.

[Read the report](#)

Patient Voice is back

Members' stories

- *"I lost 31lbs in 3 weeks in hospital"*
- *Let's talk about care for the frail elderly*

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Shared decision making and why it's so important for patient partnership

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Meet Miriam Knight, patient safety champion

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**We're 60
next year!
Join our
celebrations**

Find out how on page 15

Our members magazine Patient Voice is back after a long break.

While it's been in a pandemic-enforced lock-down we've taken the time to redesign and expand it. It's got more information on what the Patients Association does, how you can work with us to raise your voice, and many more stories about members.

Normally, Patients Voice is a members-only publication, but we're so pleased to be publishing it once again that we're making this issue available to anyone

who would like to read it - just follow the link in the box below.

The magazine is a PDF. If you would like to change aspects of Patient Voice to make it more accessible for you, [visit this page](#) on Adobe's website that explains how to do this.

If you enjoy the magazine and would like to receive it regularly, just sign up as a [member](#) and let us know to send you Patient Voice when you fill in your membership details.

[Download Patient Voice](#)

Become our new Honorary Treasurer



We are looking for a new Honorary Treasurer, to join our Board of Trustees.

We're looking for someone with accounting qualifications and experience. Knowledge and expertise in charity finance, fundraising and pension schemes is desirable as well as an understanding of the UK health and social care sector. That person would also need to share [our values](#).

If you'd like to know more or would even like to have an informal discussion about the role, please contact the Chair of Trustees Lucy Watson lucy.watson@patients-association.org.uk, the Vice Chair Julie Thallon Julie.thallon@patients-association.org.uk or the Chief Executive Rachel Power Rachel.power@patients-association.org.uk

Apply to be our Honorary Treasurer

Member details update



Members of the Patients Association should have received an email from us asking them to check we have the correct details for them.

As part of the check, members also have the opportunity to let us know what interests them so that we can get in touch with opportunities we think they may like join in.

If you know you're a member, and didn't receive the email, contact us at mailbox@patients-association.org.uk and we can resend it.

From the helpline
Confusion about communication



Jim* from Nottinghamshire, called our helpline on behalf of his daughter, Christine*, who emigrated to Australia in 2008, to find out how to get a copy of her hospital records.

Shortly before Christine emigrated, she'd undergone surgery in England. Now, she was having investigations for a problem relating to her digestion. Christine and her Australian doctors thought it would be helpful to have these older records.

Our adviser told Jim it would be best if Christine makes the request of the hospital where she had her surgery. Christine has a right to obtain a copy of her medical records and our adviser explained the process of how she should do this.

Our adviser shared details of our leaflet on obtaining your medical records and also suggested Jim and Christine visit Action against Medical Accidents's (AvMA) website to review its self-help guide on the same topic.

*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. 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.

What our team is reading this week

ITV films patients stuck on hospital trolleys for days as NHS struggles to cope

System on a cliff edge: addressing challenges in social care capacity

Our (CQC) new single assessment framework

Let's talk differently about health: why framing matters

Monkeypox declared global health emergency by World Health Organization

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](#). If you use Amazon, you can help raise funds by nominating us to receive funds via AmazonSmile - for more information on how to do this visit our [website](#). Thank you.





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