

Welcome to the Patients Association's Weekly News

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Bursary places available to Patient Safety Congress



The bursary places are open to patients who have not yet booked their place at this year's Patient Safety Congress in Manchester, 20-21 September.

Successful applicants will receive:

- A complimentary ticket to both days of the Congress
- Access to the event app, all published materials and all session recordings available to watch on-demand from 27 September for 4 months
- One night's accommodation near the venue
- Travel expenses covered

There are [terms and conditions](#) associated with this offer, which you should read.

Entries close on Monday 12 July 2021 at 9:00am.

You can apply at the link below.

[**Apply now**](#)

Chief Executive presents award at NHS Parliamentary Awards



Our Chief Executive, Rachel Power, attended the NHS Parliamentary Awards and presented this year's award for Excellence in Urgent and Emergency Care to the London Ambulance Service Macmillan End of Life Care Programme Team.

In these awards, members of the public recommend to their MPs which individual working in the NHS or organisation has done outstanding work and the MPs then nominate local services in one of the award categories.

Rachel has been on the judging panel of the NHS Parliamentary awards for the last three years.

Ombudsman tells Government - prioritise improvements to imaging services



Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) has written to the Government urging it to prioritise improvements to NHS imaging services as part of the health sector's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter highlights findings from a report published this week that shows recurrent failings in the way X-rays and scans are reported and followed up across NHS services.

PHSO's casework shows the devastating impact these failings have had on patients and their families. In several cases, signs of cancer in X-rays and scans were not reported, which led to delayed diagnoses and poorer outcomes for the patients.

Another common failing was inefficient handovers between departments and services. Investigations also

found that trusts did not learn from previous errors related to imaging, which meant they repeated the mistakes.

In his report, Ombudsman Rob Behrens stresses that failings related to imaging are found across the NHS, in both primary and secondary care services, and not solely in imaging departments. He calls on the Government to commit to a system-wide programme of improvements for more effective and timely management of X-rays and scans.

The report is based on analysis of 25 complaints about failings related to imaging that occurred between 2013 and 2020.

[Read the report](#)

Health and Care Bill starts its legislative journey



The Health and Care bill was introduced to Parliament on Tuesday and has had its first reading.

The Government describes it as building: “on the proposals for legislative change set out by NHS England in its Long Term Plan”.

You may recall, we responded to the white paper consultation earlier this year. We were – and still are – supportive of the aims of integrating care and expect that the current proposals will achieve this to a significant degree, but the lack of a meaningful role for patients in the design and delivery of NHS services will undermine the ultimate effectiveness of the proposals.

Even before COVID-19 struck, our health and care system was labouring under the weight of multiple structural problems. Decisions about the resources available for health and care will be one critical factor in overcoming these problems during the recovery from COVID-19, but the other will be whether or not patients are properly made part of what happens.

The Government says the changes in the bill are vital to help the NHS build back better from the pandemic but a recovery that does not understand patients' needs and perspectives, cannot fully succeed.

[Read our response to NHS white paper](#)

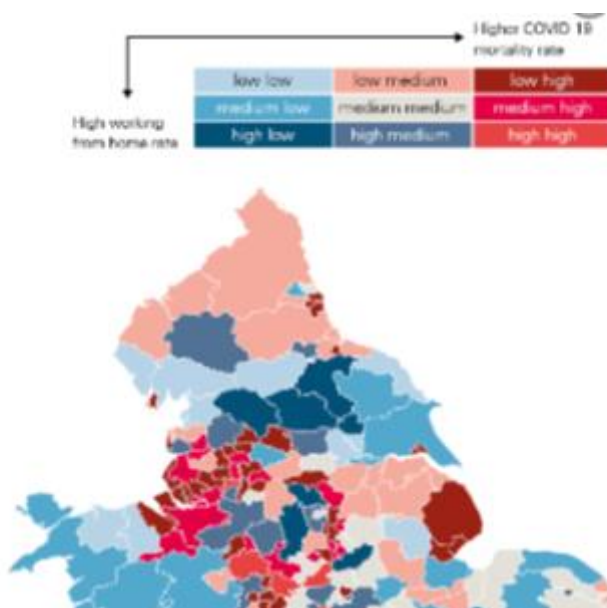
Could do a lot better - Select Committee's verdict on the state of English maternity services

The Health and Social Care Committee published its review of the safety of maternity services in England this week.

The report says that despite improvements there “remains worrying variation in the quality of maternity care which means that the safe delivery of a healthy baby is not experienced by all mothers”. We’re pleased to see recognition of the influence of underlying health inequalities and the need for other governmental departments to play a role in improving the health and well being of mums to be in the report. But we’re disappointed that despite several reviews into maternity care, adverse practices persist “...including a defensive culture, dysfunctional teams, and poor quality investigations without learning taking place”.

[Read the report](#)

Inquiry into pandemic finds pre-existing inequalities defined pandemic's impact



The Health Foundation's COVID-19 impact inquiry, published this week and which we contributed to, found

that poor health and existing inequalities left parts of the UK vulnerable to the virus and defined the impact of the pandemic across the country.

The report found that those younger than 65 living in the poorest 10% of areas in England were almost four times more likely to die from COVID-19 than those in the wealthiest.

The researchers found that the legacy of the 2008 financial crisis had had a direct bearing on our experience of the pandemic. Deep-rooted issues – poor health, increased financial insecurity and strained public services – left the UK more vulnerable to COVID-19's health and economic impacts.

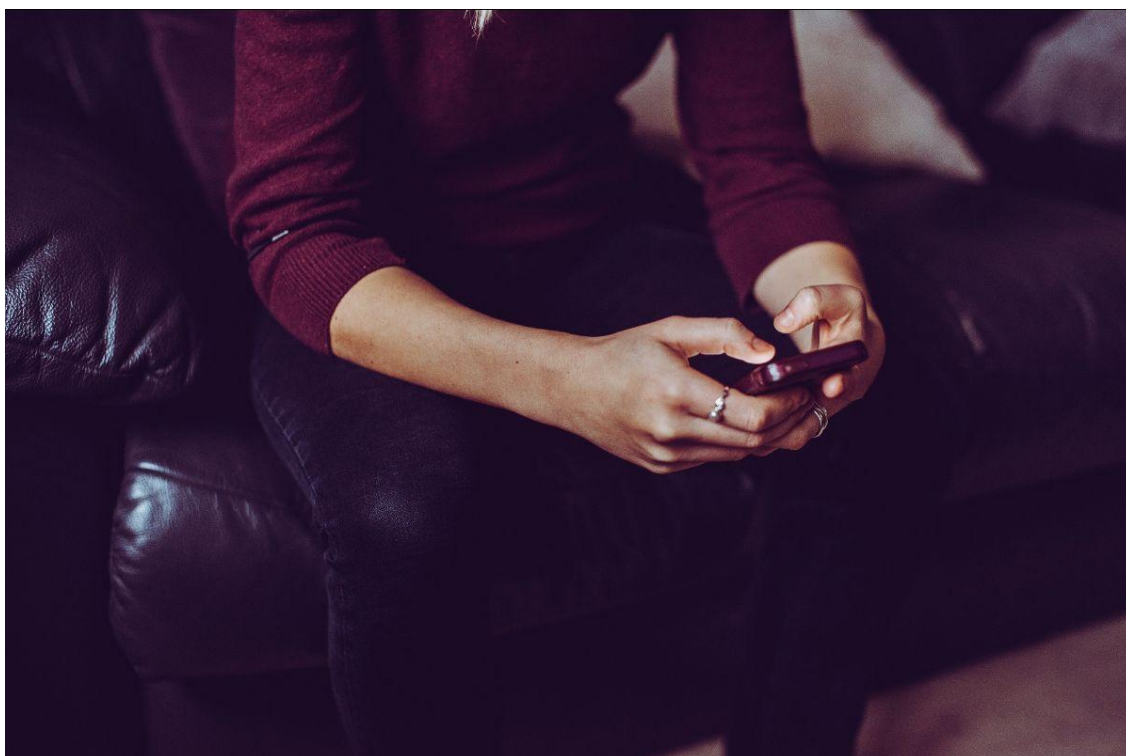
Recovery needs to prioritise creating opportunities for good health – a vital asset needed to 'level up' and rebuild the UK economy, says the Health Foundation, and adds that there is an opportunity to create a healthier, more resilient society.

You can read the full report or watch the [webinar](#) A healthy recovery – Acting on findings from the COVID-19 impact inquiry, which highlights the main findings.

[Read the report](#)

From the Helpline

Patient wants her money back from private doctor



Jennifer* called our free helpline from the East Midlands seeking advice about how to make a complaint about a doctor she had seen privately and how to get her money back.

She'd already called the General Medical Council (GMC), the regulator that deals with doctors, which had told her to contact us.

Jennifer was unhappy because treatment she had paid for hadn't been effective, in her opinion, and the doctor had used a picture of Jennifer on her website without her permission. Jennifer told our advisor that the doctor claims to have a release signed by her, but Jennifer says this is a forgery.

The doctor is not a subscriber to the Independent Sector Complaints Adjudication Service (ISCAS), which provides independent adjudication on complaints about ISCAS subscribers: it is a voluntary subscriber scheme. If the doctor had been a subscriber, then Jennifer could have turned to ISCAS for help.

Our adviser recommended that Jennifer call her credit card company and her bank regarding the credit and debit card payments to the doctor. We also suggested she contact Citizens Advice for consumer advice. Other advice included directing Jennifer to our complaints and private healthcare leaflets on our website.

And even though the GMC had sent Jennifer to us, our adviser did suggest she go online and make a complaint about the doctor to the regulator.

- If you're thinking about using private healthcare, read our [what to expect from private healthcare](#) information on our website.

* Name changed for privacy.

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.

What our team is reading this week

[Unequal pandemic, fairer recovery: The COVID-19 impact inquiry report](#)

[Women's health inquiry: Anger at slow progress](#)

[Wales' health minister says Covid's third wave won't cause as much serious illness](#)

[Patient safety at risk as NHS struggles to cope with summer crisis, warn healthcare bosses](#)

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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