

Welcome to the Patients Association's Weekly News

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Social care can't wait



We are signatories to a letter sent to the Chancellor Rishi Sunak today by the Care & Support Alliance asking him to fulfil his obligation to social care now.

The Alliance is calling on the Chancellor to give local authorities a funding settlement at the Spending Review, later this month, that enables them to stabilise, strengthen and improve social care.

The great bulk of the money announced by the Government in the last few weeks benefits the NHS, not social care, as we noted in [our analysis](#). Money for social care will not be available until 2023.

In the letter the Care & Support Alliance says: "We believe that only substantially more money from central Government to local authorities can provide the financial certainty needed to 'fix social care' and we look to you as Chancellor to deliver it at the Spending Review. It's all down to you now."

You can [read the letter online](#), learn more about the campaign and sign the Alliance's petition.

[Sign the petition](#)

Last chance to take our NEPTS survey



Our survey into your experience of using non-emergency patient transport services (NEPTS) closes this weekend.

NEPTS help people get to NHS appointments if they are not able to travel independently, or do not have anybody to help them make the journey.

NHS England is currently consulting on a new set of eligibility rules for using these services, and we will be making a submission. We would like to hear from you if you have used NEPTS or have supported someone you care for in doing so, to be able to have a good understanding of how people's experiences of the services.

Please complete our short survey to tell us about your experiences.

[Take the survey](#)

Digital equity for all



Today is [International Day of Older Persons](#) and this year's theme is Digital Equity for All Ages, a goal we support.

Since the pandemic started there has been a lot of talk about digital-first services but, so far, few patients have experienced digital healthcare and the opinions of those who have are mixed on its value.

We have the example of online systems for renewing prescriptions or making GP appointments. These systems should offer patients benefits but the feedback we've heard is mixed.

As for online video consultations, live chat and online symptom checkers, there is a broad range of experiences, but the trend in what patients tell us is towards negative feedback. It's clear more work needs to be done to ensure the digital services that do exist work as advertised.

But we know that digital health technology has great potential for many patients. That's why we've joined with several Royal Colleges, health charities and other patient groups to form the Patient Coalition for AI, Data and Digital Tech. Working through the Coalition, we want to ensure the interests of patients are at the heart of the development of policy in digital health technology.

Read more about the [Patient Coalition for AI, Data and Digital Tech](#) on our website.

What do you think of Weekly News?



Photo by [Brett Jordan](#) on [Unsplash](#)

If you've not yet completed the online survey to give your opinions on this newsletter, please take a few minutes to share them. The survey should take no more than three minutes to complete.

We will use your feedback to enhance Weekly News.

[Take the survey](#)

Help improve end of life care



The National Audit of Care at the End of Life (NACEL) aims to improve the quality of care of people who die in hospital.

It does this by asking those who are bereaved about the care of their loved one, and about the communication between them, the health professional and the family during the last two days of their loved ones' life. NACEL does this using a survey.

NHS England funds this audit and on its behalf, Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) is, looking into what the audit will look like and who will run it in the future.

HQIP wants to involve patients and members of the public in its work and would like to hear from people who have experienced the death of a loved one in a hospital setting. HQIP will use this information to inform the design of the renewed audit.

If you have experienced loss in a hospital setting and want to feedback on this audit, please contact Kim Rezel on kim.rezel@hqip.org.uk who will send you a very short questionnaire.

Scottish consultation on suicide prevention



A public consultation has opened on a new suicide prevention strategy for Scotland

The public questionnaire is one part of the work the Scottish Government and the Convention for Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) have committed to undertaking. There are online events where you can also share your thoughts and ideas. Details of these events and how to attend them can be found on the [COSLA website](#).

The questionnaire will close on 21 November. The Suicide Prevention Strategy will be published in September 2022.

[Answer the questionnaire](#)

**From the helpline
Demoted from being next of kin**



Jennifer* called our free helpline extremely unhappy about the staff on the ward where an elderly family member is being cared for.

She is her relative's next of kin but without discussing with Jennifer or her relative, who has full mental capacity, staff changed the patient's next of kin to another family member. This had been done following a phone call and the family member just asking to be listed as next of kin.

Jennifer contacted the ward matron as soon as she found out. Matron apologised and immediately changed the details for next of kin back to Jennifer.

Although Jennifer resolved her own situation she called our helpline to ask how to raise her concerns formally "to make sure this does not happen again" to another family.

The advisers on our helpline take a lot of calls about next of kin and it is the second most popular information on our website (second only to How to see your medical records). Our adviser explained our to How to make a complaint and directed her to our website to our information on [making a complaint](#) and [next of kin](#).

* 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

[Tackling the elective backlog – exploring the relationship between deprivation and waiting times](#)

[Mental health patients still dying in North Wales due to 'cover-up culture'](#)

[Personalised care: how to prioritise shared decision-making in your practice \(subscription needed\)](#)

[Face-to-face GP visits still near lockdown levels](#)

[COVID-19: What restrictions still remain in Northern Ireland?](#)

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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