

Welcome to the Patients Association Weekly News

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Survey: Tell us about your experiences of unsafe, premature discharge



The Patients Association has today opened a [new survey](#) to hear people's experiences of unsafe discharge from hospital.

In particular, we want to hear about times when someone has been discharged from hospital despite not being well enough to leave. If the person suffered harm as a result of this, or was at a real risk of harm, it was an unsafe discharge. We are not looking for information about times when a person has been discharged from hospital and problems have arisen because of a lack of support from social care services or local health services. A large amount of research has already been conducted into those situations.

Far less research has been done on discharges that simply happened too early, even though we hear about this from callers to our helpline. If you think your experience, or the experience of someone close to you, matches this description of an unsafe, premature discharge, please [share your experiences with us](#) in this short survey.

We will be issuing a report, based on what people tell us. The survey should take around seven minutes to

complete. Share your views [here](#).

[Complete the survey](#)

Have your say on how doctors should collect and reflect on patient feedback



The General Medical Council (GMC), the independent regulator of the UK's doctors, is inviting patients and the public to [give their views](#) on proposals about how doctors use feedback from their patients.

Doctors must regularly show the GMC that they are giving high quality care to patients and keeping up to date with the latest medical practice. This process is called revalidation, and the GMC's current guidance says that doctors must review feedback from a sample of their patients at least once every five years. This is usually done through a questionnaire, which is collected during a clinic or surgery, and often provided to a patient by a receptionist or other health professional, but some doctors have to give these out themselves.

The GMC's proposed changes include updating the method of collecting feedback to allow a wider range of patients to take part, and addressing patients' concerns that their comments may have a negative impact on their future care. It also considers the view that doctors should look at feedback from patients more than once every five years.

You can find more information about the GMC's survey [on their website](#). The survey is open until 23 July.

[Share your views](#)

Patient's Choice Awards - voting now open



[Voting is now open](#) to choose the winner of one of nursing's most prestigious accolades: the Patient's Choice category of the RCNi Nurse Awards. The award, which is supported by the Patients Association, enables members of the public to thank a nurse, midwife, health visitor, healthcare assistant or assistant practitioner who has provided exceptional care. Voting is open to everyone.

Five inspirational nurses have been chosen as finalists this year from scores of nominations by patients. Those who nominated the finalists include a young woman diagnosed with cancer while at university and a teenager whose mental health worker has supported her towards recovery.

Rachel Power, Chief Executive of the Patients Association, said:

"It was incredibly heart-warming to read patients' accounts describing how nurses have gone above and beyond the call of duty, and it was challenging to shortlist just five nurses for these prestigious awards. The commitment, care and dedication of these nurses to their patients is without question – it's now up to the public to make the difficult choice and decide who should be the winner."

Voting closes at midnight on 14 June, and the winner will be announced at the RCNi Nurse Awards ceremony in London on 3 July.

[Vote now](#)

Nominate the Patients Association for a national award



The insurer Ecclesiastical launched its [Movement for Good](#) awards recently, encouraging members of the public to nominate a cause close to their hearts for a potential £1,000 award.

500 charities will each receive the £1,000 award, and the Patients Association is in the running for this prize. The money could help us support dozens of people contacting our helpline in need of impartial advice and information, and could support us in our work for patients across the country.

Winners will be drawn at random but the more times a charity is nominated, the more chance it has of being selected – so please do take a moment to complete the short form [here](#). It's quick and easy to nominate us: you just need our charity number, which is 1006733.

You can nominate us until the close of the process on Friday 17 May.

[Nominate us here](#)

Patient representative sought for new initiative



The Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA), the body responsible for the specialty of anaesthesia in the UK, is [inviting applications](#) for a patient representative to join the Board of the Centre for Perioperative Care (CPOC). CPOC is a new initiative that brings together specialists from different medical backgrounds to improve patient safety. It aims to facilitate closer and more effective cross-organisational working through a multi-disciplinary team approach.

The RCoA is seeking an enthusiastic and committed individual to represent the patient voice on the CPOC Board. The ideal candidate will be someone who is familiar with the wider healthcare landscape and can demonstrate collaborative engagement with colleagues or stakeholders at board level. The patient representative will ideally join the Board in July 2019 with participation in quarterly board meetings and ad hoc projects.

The deadline for applications is this Sunday 5 May 2019. More information on the role can be found [here](#).

[More information](#)

From the helpline: do you need to be a patient's next of kin in order to make a complaint?



This week we heard from Carly*, who got in touch to find out more about next of kin with regard to a hospital complaint. Carly registered a complaint about her local hospital following the death of her father, but was told that the hospital would be unable to investigate as Carly's mother was listed as next of kin. Carly wanted to find out if not being listed as her father's next of kin prevented her from being able to make a complaint.

Our helpline adviser informed Carly that any interested party can make a complaint to the NHS and that the hospital must investigate her complaint. While the term next of kin has no legal standing, the policy in most NHS trusts is to ask patients to nominate their next of kin formally on admission to hospital. Hospitals have generally used spouses and close blood relatives to define next of kin. We pointed Carly in the direction of our online [information leaflet](#) about next of kin.

Our adviser shared information about the complaints process with Carly, and directed her to the various [complaints resources](#) on our website. We informed Carly that she would be unable to obtain a copy of her father's medical records unless she was named as an executor of his estate or if she is a beneficiary of his will. We signposted Carly to the Information Commissioner's Office website for information about who may lawfully obtain a copy of a deceased person's medical records.

Our helpline will be closed on Monday 6 May and will reopen on Tuesday. If you need health or care advice, call 0208 423 8999 between 9.30 and 5pm on weekdays, or email helpline@patients-association.com.

*Name has been changed

[Contact our helpline](#)



What our team is reading this week

[Dementia: The greatest health challenge of our time](#)

[Huge surge in stress-related illness in the NHS as staff report growing anxiety over underfunding and understaffing](#)

[Thousands more older people dying from injuries caused by falls, new figures reveal](#)

[Millions of patients were left without out-of-hours GP services last year](#)

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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