

Spring 2022 Newsletter



Welcome to our spring newsletter, the first of 2022! The sun has started to make an appearance and the warmer weather is very welcome after what feels like a long winter.

Lots to share in this update, including our Waiting Times survey, an introduction to our new team member and various other updates. If you have anything you'd like to include in this newsletter or you have any questions, please email us [here](#).

A message from the Chair of the Board



It is nice to see the spring flowers, lighter evenings and hear the birds songs which signals to us that Spring and summer are on their way.

Despite all these lovely developments the world around us is still experiencing lots of difficulties not only internationally with the tragic war in Ukraine but on a national level the concerning rise with inflation and all the pressures this bring on families as well as our local Health and Social care services.

Healthwatch remains resolute in ensuring it focuses on its prime objective of ensuring that the population of Hampshire has a voice about

these services and that voice is heard by all those who need to hear it. Your team at Healthwatch are working very hard on your behalf to ensure that this continues to happen. Please keep your comments coming by [clicking here](#) and we will get them to where they need to be.

I would like to wish you and yours a peaceful Easter and a relaxing summer.

Ann Smith
Chair of the Board

Healthwatch Hampshire News:

Meet our new Volunteering and Engagement Officer, Jo

Jo has joined us from Healthwatch Wokingham where she has spent 3 years designing and delivering projects to better understand people's experience of Health and Social Care. She also facilitates antenatal courses for pregnant people, helping them to prepare for parenthood. She has worked in this sector for 12 years and has led on some interesting projects including setting up volunteer led peer support groups and developing antenatal education for women's prisons.

Jo's role at Healthwatch Hampshire will be focused on recruiting, training and developing our volunteers with a particular focus on involving children and young people.



You can contact Jo [here](#).

Current Projects:

Do you live in North East Hampshire? Are you or your loved one waiting for hospital care? Share your views...



The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many people having their operations, treatment and appointments delayed. A record number of people - more than 6 million - are waiting for NHS hospital treatment in England. We want to find out how this is affecting people locally and what can be done to better support people while they wait.

We have created a short survey to hear the views and experiences of those who have experienced waiting for hospital appointments or treatment. We also ask that primary carers for those who have waited also fill out the survey. Read more about the project by [clicking here](#) and complete the survey by [clicking here](#).

If you need this form in another format or version, please contact Healthwatch Hampshire on 01962 440262, email enquiries@healthwatchhampshire.co.uk or visit www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk

What we've been working on:

GP Access Survey



We wanted to say a HUGE thank you to the 2317 of you that took the time to complete our GP Access Survey. The response was incredible, with lots of great suggestions about how practices can improve your experience moving forwards.

We are in the process of writing up our local report, which will be ready to share with you in the coming weeks. If you have any questions about the project, you can email us [here](#).

Patient Participation Group Training



The team have been working closely with a GP practice in North Hampshire to develop training around running an effective Patient Participation Group.

We are hoping to develop a workshop that can be rolled out to other practices in Hampshire and look forward to updating you on this soon.

Coming soon- NHS Dentistry Project



We will soon be sharing details of a project around NHS Dentistry- something we are aware is an issue for many of you. Keep an eye out over the coming weeks for more information!

News and Information:

Hospitals facing unprecedented demand amid Covid surge



As many of you will have heard, local health services are under immense pressure due to a mixture of Covid/Norovirus cases and staff shortages. A&E departments are urging the public to only attend if necessary, and to consider the following options if possible:

- If you need urgent medical help but it is not a life-threatening emergency, call 111 first or visit 111.nhs.uk where a trained advisor will direct you to the most appropriate service for your needs
- Urgent Treatment Centres and Minor Injuries Units can help with a number of conditions such as sprains, bites and cuts. Find your local unit [here](#)
- Your local pharmacy team can provide expert advice about over-the-counter medicines to treat many common health conditions, such as colds, aches and pains and tummy troubles, as well as advice on medication and services such as healthy living support. For more information on how your pharmacy can help you, [click here](#)
- The NHS website provides lots of advice on conditions, symptoms, treating illnesses and injuries as well as when to seek further support. Visit the health A - Z section at www.nhs.uk.

Remember to also check with your hospital as many have updated and changed their visiting guidance.

Mental Health Support and Resources



We have come across some great mental health resources in the last few weeks, and are sharing here in case any of them are useful.

Op Courage: Op Courage offers mental health support for veterans, service leavers, reservists and their families in Hampshire. This is an NHS service and you can find out more [here](#).

Mental Wellbeing Hampshire: A partnership of organisations working to support good mental health and wellbeing in our communities. Lots of helpful resources and sources of advice and information. Find out more [here](#).

Kooth: Kooth is a free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support service providing young people aged 11-25 years with a safe and secure means of accessing support from a professional team of qualified counsellors. Access the website [here](#).

Signhealth: Therapy services for Deaf people experiencing things like depression and anxiety. Therapists are fluent in BSL- NHS funded too. You can self refer [here](#).

Carers Frequently Asked Questions & Answers



Solent NHS Trust have recently published a really helpful resource for carers. The frequently asked questions and answers is to provide information to you as a carer and to signpost you to organisations that will be able to help you in your role.

You can find this, along with a 'carers booklet' by [clicking here](#).

Looking after your digestive health



April marks both Bowel Cancer Awareness Month and IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) Awareness Month. Although both conditions are very different and vary in severity, we wanted to share some organisations who can give advice and support.

IBS

- NHS have a great page dedicated to information about symptoms, treatments and places for support around IBS [here](#)
- GUTS UK also have a range of advice and information, plus more about IBS Awareness Month. Read about it [here](#)

Bowel Cancer

- The NHS website has a page full of information on symptoms, treatment and more. Find it [here](#)
- Bowel Cancer UK have some great resources, including an 'ask the nurse' section. View their website [here](#)
- Locally, we have Wessex Cancer Trust who offer a community of support both remotely and via four local cancer centres. Find out more [here](#)

Come and find us on Social Media!



Did you know you can find Healthwatch Hampshire on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram? We have been working hard behind the scenes making sure there are regular updates across our pages- it is a great way to keep up to date with Health and Social Care news.

To find us on Facebook, [click here.](#)

To find us on Instagram, [click here.](#)

To find us on Twitter, [click here.](#)

If you have anything you think we could share across our social media or know of any organisations who do, drop us an email [here.](#)

Watch out for our next newsletter in Summer 2022!
Thank you for all of your support, the Hampshire Healthwatch Team



