

This update is split into the following sections:

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(1) YOUR HEALTHWATCH

A) Report: Patient Opinion in East & Central Brighton Primary Care Network

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove looked at how residents feel about the services they received at the East and Central Brighton Primary Care Network.

East and Central Brighton PCN is an NHS Collaboration between eight GP Practices in the city. At the time of our survey, there were nine practices, two of which have since merged.

A total of 1,845 people responded to our survey which we ran during October and November 2021.

Headline findings include:

- In terms of patient's awareness of screening services and use, the highest proportions were for cervical cancer screening (39%), breast cancer screening (32%), bowel cancer screening (28%) and health checks for people aged 40-74 (28%).
- Only around two-thirds of women were using the screening service for cervical cancer from age 25 (68%) and for breast cancer (64%) from age 40.
- Three-quarters of people said that of all the services available, their preference was to make use of general wellbeing checks (73%) and blood tests (72%). Over 50% of people were interested in health checks for people aged 40-74 (66%) and blood pressure checks (58%).
- Just under one-half of the sample (46%) had received support for an emotional or mental health condition (including from friends or family members). Younger people and a greater proportion of women (52%) had received support compared to 39% of men.
- Most people (56%) had not used an online booking form to make an appointment with their GP. The main reason for not using the online booking system was being

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Patient opinion in East and Central
Brighton Primary Care Network



unaware that such a service was available (33%). The other common reason was wanting to phone the surgery. This opposition to online booking appears to be an issue of personal preference rather than people lacking the technology and skills. Only 8% rated their ability to use online technology as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Head to our [website](#) to read the full report

B) Evaluation of Brighton and Hove's Equipment & Adaptations Service Report



Our latest report highlights the views of service users and prescribers of Brighton & Hove's Equipment and Adaptations Service.

This review of the Equipment and Adaptations Service was commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council to inform their recommissioning process, due in 2023.

The Community Equipment Service (CES) aims to help individuals living with long term physical disabilities or illnesses to live as independently as possible at home. Health and Adult Social Care professionals assess the needs of eligible adults and recommend appropriate equipment and home adaptations with the intention of helping them live safely and independently at home. Minor adaptations are those that are easily installed and do not require structural changes to the home. They can include items such as grab rails, stair rails and external rails. Major adaptations are those that require some form of structural change such as widening doors, ramps, installing stair lifts and track ceiling hoists.

343 responses from those who use the service were received. The average age of respondents was 71 years. Most of those who responded to the survey were generally satisfied with the support they received regarding their equipment and minor adaptations. However, compared to our 2017 survey findings, a lower proportion of service users were 'extremely' or 'very' satisfied with the equipment they received from the service.

Key Findings:

- Most service users reported that they did not have any problems when waiting for their equipment.
- Most people were contacted by the Community Equipment Service when arranging equipment delivery.
- Delivery and fitting occurred mostly on the agreed day and time expected and was to a good standard.
- The equipment had ultimately helped most people stay at home rather than having to be in a care environment.
- However, one in five service users did have problems when waiting for their equipment. 17% who were not told how to report a fault or return the equipment,

and 16% were ‘very unhappy’ with the quality of the installation of a ceiling hoist, ramp, or handrail.

Click here to [read the full report](#)

C) Record NHS waiting times - behind every number is someone's story



The latest NHS data shows that a record number of people are waiting for care, although the number of people waiting a year or more has fallen slightly. Healthwatch England issued a response to this which you can read below.

New NHS data indicates that although progress is being made to tackle the number of people waiting for care, over six million people are currently on waiting lists for specialist clinical care or surgery.

The [new data published by the NHS](#) looks at performance in essential areas such as waiting times for elective care, and Accident and Emergency attendance and admissions.

How many people are waiting?

Over 6.18 million people are now waiting for care. This figure has been steadily increasing since May 2020 and is now up by 80,000 cases. This level is a record high for the NHS elective waiting list.

When it comes to how long people are waiting, the good news is that the number of patients waiting over a year for treatment has decreased by 12,050. The number of patients waiting over two years for treatment has also decreased slightly.

What can be done about the issue?

The Government has invested extra money, and the NHS has published a plan to tackle waiting times. However, it will take time to reduce waiting times, and our last report on the issue called for more to be done to support people while they wait for care.

Responding to the new NHS data, Healthwatch England National Director, **Louise Ansari**, said:



The NHS faced challenges before the pandemic, but today's waiting times figures highlight the scale of the issue we face. It's important to remember that behind every number is someone's story. The impact on those left waiting is very real and, in some situations, can cause harm.

"People have told us about operations cancelled with little notice, about not hearing from the NHS even when support had been agreed, being left to cope with painful symptoms that worsen over time. We've called on the NHS to do more to support people while they wait.

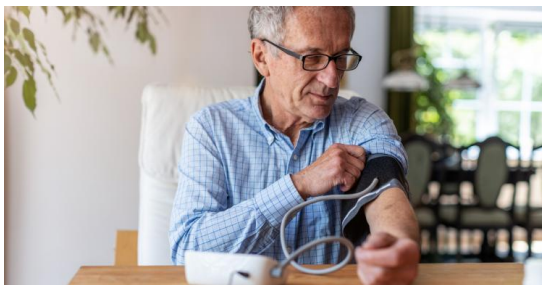
We need a greater focus to support those in pain to manage. We need to limit harm by enabling people to tell services when their symptoms are getting worse. Better communication and administration will also help ensure people don't feel left alone to cope and don't have treatment unnecessarily cancelled.

People know the NHS is working hard to get to them as soon as possible, the Government has invested extra money, but it's how we manage the backlog that matters."



Read the full story on our [website](#)

D) Using tech to monitor your health at home - what can the NHS learn?



People with high blood pressure are increasingly being asked to monitor their condition at home. Healthwatch England asked people what they think of using technology to keep tabs on their health and how they think the NHS can improve support.

[One in four people have high blood pressure in the UK](#) - even more in deprived areas. It can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and disability and indicate many other health conditions. Early detection and management of high blood pressure could potentially deliver better patient outcomes and reduce the pressure on NHS services. This is already a long-term target for the NHS.

To help support people, the NHS programme [‘Blood Pressure @Home’ \(BP@Home\)](#) enables people with high blood pressure to measure and share their blood pressure readings with their GP from home. In 2021, NHS asked Healthwatch to help evaluate the programme to see how it is working for patients and how GPs use their readings.

The research focussed on five local Healthwatch areas (Hampshire, Oxfordshire & Bucks, Gloucestershire, Darlington and Hammersmith and Fulham) selected by the NHS. Because we only had limited access to patients on the [BP@Home pilot](#), we encouraged anyone monitoring their blood pressure remotely to take part. Over 480 people responded to our survey, and we also carried out 26 in-depth interviews.

Some of the steps suggested by Healthwatch in their report as steps the NHS can take to improve support and outcomes for people who monitor their blood pressure from home include:

- Better information about high blood pressure, so people know why they should monitor their pressure, what 'normal' readings look like, how to reduce risks and when to act.
- Improved guidance on taking and submitting blood pressure readings.
- Feedback when readings are submitted and the provision of ongoing support.
- Advice on what to do to improve your blood pressure.
- Better solutions for submitting readings easily and efficiently from home.
- Acknowledgement of patient concerns and access to a GP if needed.

[Read our findings in full](#)

Carry on reading for health and social care updates!

(2) HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE UPDATES

A) Where can I go to get help for my health out of hours?



Health issues unfortunately don't leave us alone at the weekend and people are often in need of medical assistance out of hours. Using NHS guidelines, Healthwatch England has provided some advice and information on where you can go for help when your GP is closed.

If you need support for your health outside of the standard opening hours of your local GP, there are places that you can go for support.

Where you can go to get help out of hours

The NHS pledges to provide services at a time that's convenient for you. They have produced guidance on how best to access services out of hours that can be found in full [online](#).

- **Phone [NHS 111](#)**
This service is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is a service that provides medical advice as well as the details of the services closest to you that help you deal with your need following a medical assessment.
- **Visit your local pharmacy**
Your pharmacist will be able to help you with a number of issues. [How your pharmacy can help](#)
- **Visit your nearest NHS walk in centre**
If you need treatment for minor injuries or illnesses such as cuts, bruises and rashes you can visit your nearest [NHS walk-in centre](#), [urgent care](#)

[centre](#) or [minor injuries unit](#). These are not suitable for treating long term conditions. To be seen at one of these services you do not need an appointment, or to be registered. You may be referred to one of these services by NHS 111, or you can just walk in.

[Read the full guidelines on our website](#)

B) What medical support are you entitled to if you're new to the UK?



For new arrivals to the UK, it can be confusing where to go if you need medical assistance. Healthwatch England has outlined your rights as a refugee, where you can access emergency help and how to register for a GP.

What are my rights as a refugee when it comes to healthcare in the UK?

- Refugees' and asylum seekers are entitled to NHS care. In all four nations of the UK, refugees and asylum seekers with an active application or appeal are fully entitled to free NHS care. Below is a breakdown of some of the services they are entitled to:

Pharmacies

Pharmacists can offer clinical advice and medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains. The pharmacist will let you know if you need to visit a doctor or direct you to other healthcare professionals to make sure you get the help you need. You can also buy medicines for minor illnesses or first-aid supplies in a pharmacy or supermarket.

[Find your nearest pharmacy](#)

Dentists and Opticians

You'll have to register for a Dentist or Optician. Here's how:

[Find a Dentist](#)

[Find an Optician](#)

But if you're in pain, you should call 111 for Urgent Dental Care Services

GP practice or medical centre

A GP can offer medical advice, provide a diagnosis and prescribe medicines. They might be your first point of contact for many physical and mental health concerns. The GP practice is also responsible for coordinating and managing your long-term healthcare and they can refer you if you need more specialised hospital services. Everyone has the right to register for a GP. You don't need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

Find your nearest GP practice and [register online](#).

If you are having difficulty registering with a GP you can:

- [Download](#) a GP Access Card and show this to the GP receptionist
- Phone NHS England (0300 311 22 33) or Doctors of the World (0808 1647 686) for help

Community health services (Pregnancy, child health, contraception services)

Some health services are accessed in the community, and not in hospitals. These include mental health, child health and antenatal services and sexual health and family planning clinics. Find out more about [community health services](#) and what they look like.

More information on all the services available can be found on our [website](#)

C) Mental Health Awareness Week



This year, Mental Health Awareness Week will run from 9th to 15th May. This annual event, which focuses on improving good mental health across the nation, is hosted by the [Mental Health Foundation](#).

This year's theme will explore the impact of loneliness and how we can tackle it, following recent research by the Mental Health Foundation that showed that many people have increasingly been suffering from feelings of isolation and loneliness which has led to harmful consequences. They also discovered an increased demand from the public to see loneliness being addressed as a serious topic requiring urgent action.

Given the theme of loneliness, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in partnership with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities will continue to encourage people to '*Lift someone out of loneliness*' as part of the Better Health - Every Mind Matters campaign.

The campaign points people towards the [Every Mind Matters Loneliness](#) webpage, where there is advice for ways to help yourself or others who may be feeling lonely and suggested support routes.

D) Dementia Action Week 2022 16-22 May



This coming Dementia Action Week, the Dementia society are supporting local dementia friendly events running throughout the week. To encourage everyone to take action to improve the lives of people affected by dementia, working to create a dementia friendly UK where those with dementia feel included (please see list below).

Events Calendar

Date	Activities planned in Brighton & Hove
Throughout the week	Celebrating Creativity an exhibition of art works and photographs of creative workshops in Brooke Mead shared spaces, made by and with Brooke Mead residents and Fabrica . Private event for Brooke Mead residents.
Mon 16 May 11am	B&H Music for Connection's free Music in Motion: interactive dementia-friendly music session: familiar and new songs, sound-making, movement, and fun! For more details contact anna@musicforconnection.co.uk or 01273 569096.
Tue 17 May 4-5.30pm	Ingredients Cards Model led by Story Chaplain . The Ingredients Cards are designed to support meaningful moments with a person with dementia. Book via Time to Talk Befriending chelsey@tttb.org.uk / 01273 737710. Zoom session. Closing date 22 April.
Tue 17 May 11am-2pm	One Garden tour, music and picnic hosted by Hop50+ . Meet at Hop50+ to board a Brighton and Hove bus to One Garden for a tour, live music from Moving sounds and a picnic. Free event. Book ahead by calling 01273 729603.
Tue 17 May 1.30-3.00pm	Dementia Café at Patching Lodge , including refreshments. Cost £2 and no booking required.
Tue 17 May	A celebratory Drawing and Making for dementia session for Brooke Mead residents only. Led by Fabrica artist-facilitator Jane Fordham.
Wed 18 May 10-11.30am	Take Notice: A dementia friendly conversation event at Fabrica . A lively conversational event led by Charlotte Cranridge and inspired by Fabrica's current exhibition . Cost £3, book at www.fabrica.org.uk/events . Free warming refreshments.
Wed 18 May 10am-3pm	Market Place Event Age UK West Sussex Brighton & Hove is hosting an information event at Eastbrooke Centre with other local partners to share information on their services. No booking needed. Drop-in anytime. Refreshments for sale.
Wed 18 May 2-3.30pm	LGBTQ dementia advisory group are hosting a webinar: We are LGBTQ+ People Affected by Dementia: Ask Us Anything. Register here . This is a two-part webinar. Sign up for the first part here .
Thu 19 May 10.45-11.30am	Active For Life Strength & Balance Class at Patching Lodge . Free event. No booking required.
Thu 19 May 9.15-4.45pm	Time to Talk Befriending is hosting a Learning from Living with Dementia training day led by Fran Hamilton at CityCoast Centre . Book via info@tttb.org.uk /01273 737710. Lunch and refreshments provided. Closing date 22 April.
Fri 20 May 2.30-4.30pm	Hangleton & Knoll Pop-up Memory Café at St Richards Community Centre . Music for Connection , refreshments, activities, hand massage

	and raffle. To book contact Clare on 01273410858 / 07422692845 clare.hopkins@hkproject.org.uk . Free.
Fri 20 May 11:15am	B&H Music for Connection's free Music in Motion: interactive dementia-friendly music sessions: familiar and new songs, sound-making, movement, and fun! For more details contact anna@musicforconnection.co.uk or 01273 569096.

E) Getting Involved, Health and Care services in Brighton and Hove



Your local NHS wants to hear from you about your experience of using the Brighton Station Walk-in Centre. We have launched a short survey to gain insight and feedback from your visit in order to help improve patient experience.

if you have used the Walk-in Centre in the last year or so, share your experience by completing the Survey below.

Click this link to take you to the [survey](#)

F) Understanding where to go if you need medical help

Our A&E departments are extremely busy. If you need help from the NHS, please make the right choice when deciding which service to use. Upset stomach? A local pharmacy can help. Minor Injuries Units and Urgent Treatment Centres can treat fractures, sprains, suspected broken bones, minor head injuries, and burns. Save A&E for emergencies only.

Please make the right choice

SELF-CARE
hangovers, sore throats, grazed knees, etc
Visit www.nhs.uk for self-care advice

PHARMACY
upset stomach, headache, bites and stings, etc

YOUR GP SURGERY
for symptoms that won't go away - back pain, a lump, blood in your pee, etc

NHS 111
visit 111.nhs.uk or call 111 for urgent medical help when you don't know where to go or you need advice

URGENT TREATMENT CENTRE OR MINOR INJURIES UNIT
injuries or illnesses that are urgent but not life-threatening - sprains, fractures, burns, etc

A&E AND 999
for emergencies only - severe bleeding, breathing difficulties, chest pain, etc

G) Bowel cancer screening



Are you aged 56? You can now do your bowel cancer screening.

Catching bowel cancer early makes it easier to treat.

Bowel cancer is one of the most common types of cancer diagnosed in the UK. Knowing the symptoms of bowel cancer could save your life, and so could taking up the offer of bowel screening when invited.

Find out more on our website: <https://sussexhealthandcare.uk/bowel-cancer/>

Carry on reading for COVID updates!

3.COVID NEWS

As the weather improves, it is easier to meet friends and family outdoors and this limits the spread of COVID-19. If you do need to meet indoors, let fresh air in to keep each other safe.



Vaccination sessions



Walk-in vaccination sessions are taking place across our communities. You don't need an appointment, and you can simply turn up to receive your vaccination.

- [Click here for details of bookable appointments across Sussex](#)
- [Click here for more details of walk-in vaccinations](#)



For decades, vaccinations have protected children from diseases like measles, flu, meningitis and mumps.

The COVID-19 vaccine is one more vaccine that children can now have to protect them from illness.

Book online <http://nhs.uk/covidvaccine> or call 119.

For further information:

- To check the latest Government guidance please visit the [government website](#)
- To check the latest advice in Sussex visit [the Sussex COVID-19 vaccination programme](#) webpage.
- For the latest information about the vaccine go to the [NHS website](#).

For frequently asked questions and more information on covid vaccination, visit the Sussex Health and Care Partnership [website](#).



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