

YOUR HEALTHWATCH

(1) LAST CALL FOR: Long Covid sufferers and patients/GPs of closed surgeries



Long Covid Sufferers

Sussex NHS Commissioners are looking for someone who has had Long Covid and who would be willing to discuss the impact on their lives in the upcoming Infection Prevention Conference in early May.

If you are a Long Covid sufferer (or have had a healthcare acquired infection) and would be willing to talk about your experience, please contact us. You can email us or click on to our webpage (our 'Have Your Say' page and select the "Long Covid" option under services).

Patients and GPs The Practice Group (five surgeries, closed in 2016)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove have been contacted by the press who are interested in talking to any of the patients who were previously registered to, or GPs who used to work for, any of the five surgeries under The Practice Group, closed in 2016:

- The Practice Whitehawk Road,
- The Practice Hangleton Manor,
- The Practice North Street,
- The Practice Willow House in Bevendean and
- Brighton Homeless Healthcare in Morley Street.

If you would be willing to share your experience, please email us or click on to our webpage (our 'Have Your Say' page and select "I was a past patient or GP" under services).

Contact us

By email - office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

Or [click here](#)

(2) New report - “A Good Send-Off?” Patients’ and Family’s Experiences of End of Life Care. One year on

healthwatch
Brighton and Hove



We have published a follow-on report to “A Good Send-Off” - a study in which explored the experiences of people receiving end of life care.

What impact has our earlier report had to date?

Our [earlier report](#), published in September 2020, found that End of life care was not a dignified and well-arranged experience for many. The sensitivity and dignity of individual care planning that we would expect was not always provided. Our ten recommendations were accepted in full by the NHS with a pledge to improve the care pathway and correct the elements of personal insensitivity and absence of coordinated planning that we found. Since we published our [report](#), some formal processes have taken place to embed our report findings into strategy and policy, which provides confidence that having quality end of life care and dying well remains high on statutory agencies agendas.

1. On 3rd September 2020, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) formally responded to the Healthwatch report, accepting that all of our recommendations were appropriate and reasonable.
2. In October 2020, the report was presented to the Patient Experience Panel and the Quality Assurance Board at the BSUH, which is a strategic forum attended by senior Trust departmental leads. The Board agreed “*to improve the care pathway and correct the elements of personal insensitivity and absence of care planning that (Healthwatch) found when talking to patients and families*”. A formal response from the Trust can be read on page 4 of our initial [report](#).
3. In November 2020, the City Council’s [Health and Wellbeing Board](#) received the report and proposed that it formed part of their ‘Dying Well’ Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy delivery plan. They asked for it to be brought back to the Board to monitor progress on the 23rd March 2021.
4. In March 2021, a report was brought back to the Health and Wellbeing Board by the CCG updating the committee on actions emanating from the Healthwatch recommendations. The update included work in place to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, fast track domiciliary care, future commissioning intentions and work on training of staff and building networks on end of life care. The report was noted, and can be found [here](#).

Whilst some headway has been made, and there has been a recognition of the issues, in most areas, work to improve end of life care is in its infancy or in process rather than embedded.

Some planned improvements in end of life care have also stalled in part due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding, COVID-19 has highlighted how important it is to have a good send-off: and the impetus to deliver this remains with staff in services most closely involved in end of life care.

Healthwatch will continue to review and compare progress made against our recommendations. Once we can resume face-to-face contact, Healthwatch will continue its programme on end of life with a focus on frail older people. In the meantime, we continue to reflect views of patients and families on the End of Life Steering Group. Read our report [here](#)

(3) SAVE THE DATE Wednesday, 12th May, 12pm - 2pm (webinar)



Conversations about End of Life: What's important to you?

Save the date: Wednesday, 12th May, 12pm - 2pm (webinar)

Thinking ahead to the end of life is a sensitive subject that no one likes to think about. However, the better we plan the more likely we are to have a good send-off.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove invite you to join the conversation about how we can plan better for this important life-cycle event.

Watch this space for further information.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE UPDATES

(1) University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust - help shape the new website



On 1st April Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals and Western Sussex Hospitals have joined up to form a new NHS Foundation Trust for our area: University Hospitals Sussex.

You can keep using the existing BSUH website for information about our services, but to find out more about our new Trust and all our hospitals please visit www.uhsussex.nhs.uk.

Over the coming months they will be building a new website for University Hospitals Sussex to help patients, visitors and healthcare partners get the information they need about our facilities, services and the people who provide them.

You can help by telling them what you want from the new website and sharing your experiences of the BSUH website by taking this [short survey](#)

You can also access the survey on the [Healthwatch website](#).

(2) Which COVID-19 test is right for you?



Not all COVID tests are the same so it's important to get the right one. Find out where to go to get tested, which test is most suitable for you, and what to do if you get a positive COVID-19 test result.

Which test do I need if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

You will need a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test if you have at least one of these three coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- you've lost your sense of smell or taste or it's changed

Or...

- you've been in contact with someone who's tested positive
- you've been asked to get a test by a local council or contact tracers
- a GP or other health professional has asked you to get a test
- you've been asked to get a test to confirm a positive result
- you need to get a test for someone you live with who has symptoms

If you come under any of the point above, book a visit to a test site to have the test today. Test sites are open 7 days a week.

Order a home test kit if you cannot get to a test site.

[Get a free PCR test](#)

You should not use this service if you've received a positive PCR test result in the last 90 days unless you develop any new symptoms.

Remember, if you have symptoms, you and everyone you live with must immediately [self-isolate](#). Do not leave home until you get your test results, except to post a test kit or for a PCR test appointment.

Have you ordered a home test kit?

Make sure you register it so that you receive your results.

[Register your PCR testing kit](#)

Having trouble ordering a test?

You can call 119 free of charge, anytime between 7am and 11pm seven days a week.

Can I get tested even if I don't have symptoms of COVID-19?

Yes, if you do not have symptoms, you can:

- ask your employer or place of study if they provide tests
- [find your nearest rapid lateral flow test site](#)
- [find a pharmacy where you can collect rapid tests](#)
- [find a test site where you can collect rapid tests](#)
- [order rapid lateral flow home test kits online](#)

Which test do I need if I don't have COVID-19 symptoms but want to test to see if I am asymptomatic i.e., have COVID-19 but am displaying no signs?

If you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, you can test yourself for the virus using rapid lateral flow tests.

How can I order COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests?

You can order free packs of rapid lateral flow tests to be sent to your home. A pack of tests contains 7 tests. You can order one pack per household each day.

[Order your lateral flow test](#)

Other ways to get a rapid lateral flow test:

- [find a pharmacy where you can collect tests](#)
[9 in 10 pharmacies now offering free, rapid coronavirus \(COVID-19\) tests](#)
- [find a local site to get tested at](#)
- [find a local site where you can collect tests](#)
- get tests from your employer (if you cannot work from home)

When collecting packs of tests, you can collect two packs at a time (14 tests in total).

Do I need to record my rapid lateral flow test result?

If you had a rapid lateral flow test, you should get your result in 30 minutes after taking the test.

After your test packs arrive, you should take a rapid lateral flow test twice a week (every three or four days).

You must report a positive result to the NHS.

[report your result online](#)

report your results by telephone - 119

I've tested positive through my rapid lateral flow test - what do I do next?

If you or anyone in your household tests positive, everyone in the household must:

- [self-isolate](#) immediately
- [get a PCR test](#) to confirm the result (a PCR test is a different type of coronavirus test)

What is surge testing and how do I take part?

This is not currently taking place in Brighton and Hove.

Surge testing is increased testing (including door-to-door testing in some areas) and enhanced contact tracing in specific locations in England.

It involves testing of people who do not have any symptoms of coronavirus.

To see if your area is taking part in surge testing, click the link below.

[Find out if surge testing is happening near me](#)

Instructions in alternative formats

See [instructions on testing for coronavirus at home in accessible formats](#).

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) can send you braille, audio, or large print instructions. After ordering a home test you can either:

[send a request online](#)

Call 0303 123 9999 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm, Saturday 9am to 1pm)

Order by phone

If you cannot order online, call 119. Lines are open 7am to 11pm and calls are free

Still not sure?

[Go to NHS website](#) or phone 119 to find out which test is most suitable for you.

(3) COVID-19: What you need to know when visiting a care home



Take a look at what the guidance around visiting your loved ones in care homes means in practice.

From Monday 12 April, residential care providers can arrange for visits to residents from two named visitors and a single essential care giver. Visitors who are parents will also be able to visit with babies and very young children, who will not count as one of the visitors.

This guidance has been taken from [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

Go to full guidance

For the most up to date guidance, including information of what should be included in your care home's visiting policy, visit the [Gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).

[Visiting arrangements in care homes](#)

(4) Getting the most out of the virtual health and care experience



With more and more appointments happening online, we've put together some tips on how to get the most out of the virtual health and care appointments both for patients and health and care professionals.

Top tips for patients

- Ask for a timeslot for when your remote consultation will take place.
- Let your health care provider know how you prefer to talk by phone, video, or in-person.
- Find somewhere quiet and confidential and, if this isn't possible or is tricky, make this clear when you are making your appointment.
- Start with a phone call if you're not confident with video technology.
- Ask for help if you need it and, if possible, do a practice run with a friend.

- Take some time to prepare in advance, consider what you want to say and key questions you would like to ask.
- Ask your health care provider to summarise the next steps at the end of the appointment.
- Remote consultations can be useful for routine appointments or ongoing care with a health care practitioner.
- Not all appointments are suitable for remote consultations, if you would like to see someone in-person please say so.

[Read more](#)

(5) Vaccine Inequity Small Grants Scheme

Increasing COVID-19 Vaccination uptake Small Grants

Our Clinical Commissioning Group has launched the Vaccine Inequity Small Grants Scheme to help support the increase of vaccination uptake, small grants will be offered to assist with neighbourhood-based activity, across communities of interest or relating to people particularly at risk of serious illness if they contract COVID-19.

The types of activities that may be eligible are:

- Development of community-based communications
- Hyper local buddying schemes to support people in accessing vaccination
- Targeted work with local groups to increase awareness of facts about vaccine and dispel myths
- Making community-based videos and distributing appropriately

(The above are examples- innovative approaches are welcomed.)

Targeted communities and groups

Applications are invited from those working to support any of the following:

- South Asian Communities
- Black African communities
- Chinese communities
- People living in identified areas of deprivation
- Adults with learning disabilities
- Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities
- Those with physical or sensory disabilities
- Those who are clinically vulnerable or who live with long term health issues

For groups outside of the above list, **applications are also welcome**; however, you will be asked to provide information/insight on these groups/communities having a lower than average uptake of vaccination.

[Read more on our webpage where you can also access the application form](#)

(6) *REMINDER* Making it compulsory for care staff to have the COVID vaccine - your views



The government is seeking your views on a proposal to make COVID-19 vaccination a condition of employment in older adult care homes.

This consultation is [available here](#) and closes at 11:45pm on 21 May 2021

Consultation description

Older adults living in care homes have been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because of their heightened risk to COVID-19 infection, often with devastating consequences, as well as the risk of outbreaks in these closed settings.

Ensuring very high levels of vaccination of people living and working in these settings is an essential public health intervention.

While vaccination uptake rates are increasing slowly week on week, there are still a high number of older adult care homes which do not have the level of protection needed to reduce the risk of outbreak.

To increase vaccine take up, the government is considering amending the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

This would mean older adult care home providers could only use those staff who have received the COVID-19 vaccination (or those with a legitimate medical exemption) in line with government guidance.

LOCAL COVID NEWS

(1) A message from the Director of Public Health for our City



We're well into the second week of Step 2 on the roadmap out of lockdown and Brighton & Hove is back in business. In glorious weather, we're all enjoying catching up safely with much-missed friends and family in open-air venues. Once again, confirmed rates of Covid-19 in our city are lower than the week before - we're now almost half the rate of England as a whole.

With things going so well after a such long period of hard work and sacrifice it could be tempting to relax our guard. Please don't do that.

If we're to keep on track on the roadmap out of lockdown we all really do need to keep going and complying with Covid secure measures. We can't afford to relax while the vaccination programme is still rolling out. Especially with new variants of Covid-19 being found in parts of the country.

The Covid safety habits of 'hands, face, space and fresh air' have helped drive down rates of infection. Keeping them up will keep the virus in check. Letting them go will give Covid room to spread again.

To that list, I'd like to add another routine habit - symptom-free testing. It's now quick, easy, and simple to pick-up free self-tests when you're out shopping or get them delivered at home. Even as people get vaccinated, we need to test just as frequently to make sure we're slowing the spread of the virus.

The next part of our strategy to defeat Covid is vaccinations. There are plenty of doses of [vaccine available now at several locations around town](#), including the mobile vaccination service that is visiting communities around the city to provide an alternative to the main vaccination centres

If you are aged over 45 and didn't get to [book your vaccination](#) when you received your invitation, it's not too late to do it now. And if, for any reason, you're not able to make your first or second appointment please cancel and book another date, so that someone else can take your slot. Second dose appointments can't be brought forward, though, so if you're planning a holiday that requires full vaccination, you should arrange it for after your second jab.

Keep safe, it's not over yet, and keep each other safe too.

Kind regards, **Alistair Hill, Director of Public Health**

(2) Support that's available

Whilst NHS services are currently extremely busy, and demand continues to rise due to higher rates of COVID-19 in our communities, you can still access urgent medical help by contacting NHS 111 online or by phone. Please only call 999 in the event of a medical emergency.

The Sussex Mental Healthline offers crisis care 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0300 5000 101.

If you need support or advice during the pandemic the [Council](#) website has more information: [Brighton and Hove City Council Covid-19 pages](#)

A coronavirus help directory for Brighton & Hove is also available [here](#). Use this site to find support with food shopping, money, and work, COVID testing, and more. You can also use it to find help for friends, family, and neighbours.

For advice around attending school, college and universities please click [here](#). Answers to commonly asked questions are available [here](#).

(3) How and where to get a COVID test

Full advice from the Council is available [here](#). A test for suspected COVID-19 is free and NHS treatment for COVID-19 is free for all, including overseas visitors who are not usually entitled to free treatment from the NHS.

Click here to [get a coronavirus test](#). If you do not have access to the internet, you can call 119 to book or order a test.



Off to work? Get a Covid test on your way

Regular symptom-free Covid testing protects your business, customers and colleagues

Book at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/communitytesting

No one's safe until we're all safe

Brighton & Hove City Council

Symptom-free community testing is available in test centres and participating pharmacies across Sussex.

Anyone aged 18 and over who can't work from home is encouraged to book in for a symptom-free Covid-19 test. Local testing offers free, rapid lateral flow tests to anyone who isn't showing signs of Covid-19, who can't work from home and who can't access testing through other means. Further details, including how to book, are available on the Brighton & Hove City Council website at www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/communitytesting, or call 01243 642130.

You can order FREE coronavirus (COVID-19) rapid lateral flow tests [here](#). These are tests you perform yourself at home. A pack of tests contains 7 tests. You can order one pack per household each day

These websites contain all the information you need about testing:

- [Brighton and Hove City Council](#) (including links to translated materials)
- [Coronavirus in children](#)
- This link to the [government website](#) explains all you need to know about testing
- More information explaining how Test and Trace works can be found [here](#). [The council has updated their advice about obtaining a test for COVID-19](#)
- [Testing for coronavirus at home](#) How to use your coronavirus home test kit
- [COVID-19 self-test help](#) Find out how to test yourself for coronavirus (COVID-19) if you are asked to and learn what help is available. This contains a link to the self-test instructions for use and translated versions of it.
- [How tests and testing kits for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) work](#)
- [NHS Test and Trace: how we test your samples](#)
- [Testing for coronavirus before hospital](#)

Antibody testing is available for certain groups only.

You can get [a free at-home antibody test if all of these apply](#) you live in England , you are 18 or over and you work in paid adult social care.

LOCAL COVID DATA

(1) Local data on COVID and statistics published by the Council

Key statistics for Brighton & Hove

You can find key local data showing confirmed cases of COVID-19 and deaths related to COVID-19 on the [Brighton and Hove Council website](#). We have reproduced some of the data displayed on the website. The data is accurate as at the time of publication, but updates occur daily. The Council also provides links to other available data related to COVID which can be accessed [here](#).

HEADLINES

As of 21st April 2021, the total number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 (recorded since February 2020) in Brighton and Hove stood at 14,499. In the 7 days up to 17th April we had 31 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in Brighton & Hove.

The published data provides us with an average rate of new cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people over two time periods:

- a) the last 7-days
- b) the average since March 2020

The two averages are therefore different. For information, the population of Brighton and Hove is estimated by the ONS to be 290,885 (data by the Office for National Statistics).

(a) In the last 7 days

In the seven days up to 17th April we had 31 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in our city.

- This number decreased since our last bulletin dated 16th April.
- This is equivalent to a weekly rate of new cases of 10.7 per 100,000 residents (calculated as follows: $31 / 290,885 \times 100,000 = 10.7$).
- The rate for Brighton and Hove has decreased from 15.1 as published in our last Healthwatch bulletin issued on 16th April.
- For comparison, the current weekly rate for Brighton and Hove is lower than it was as its peak on 4th January 2021 when it stood at [334.7](#), and the rate is now back to same low levels as at the end of summer last year.
- The current weekly rate for Brighton and Hove is lower than the rate for England, which is 23.8 per 100,000 and similar to the South East which is 16.6 per 100,000. This data is published on the [Gov.uk website](#))

(b) Average rate since February 2020

As of 21st April, the total number of confirmed cases across the city stood at 14,499.

- This is equivalent to a rate of 4,984.4 per 100,000 residents (calculated as follows $14,499 / 290,885 \times 100,000 = 4,984.4$)
- This is lower than the rate for England, which is 6,828 per 100,000 and the South East which was 5,861.9 per 100,000. This data is published on the [government website](#).

(c) People tested, and positivity rates.

The number of individuals in Brighton and Hove who have had [polymerase chain reaction \(PCR\) test](#) in the 7 days up to 17th April stood at 6,472. The percentage of individuals who tested positive in the same time period was 0.5% which is lower than previously reported.

(d) Death rates

The total [number of deaths](#) recorded up to 9th April (registered as of 17th April) with mention of COVID-19 on the death certificate stood at 463. In the last 7 days up to 9th April, there were 0 new deaths recorded.

(e) Number of patients in hospital

On 22nd April March there were less than 5 [inpatients](#) with confirmed COVID-19 across the Royal Sussex County and Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital sites. No patients were receiving intensive care. These figures relate to all patients and not just those from Brighton and Hove.

[Government data showing the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Brighton and Hove:](#)

Date	Number of confirmed cases	Total number of confirmed cases
21.4.21	7	14,999
20.4.21	4	14,492
19.4.21	9	14,488
18.4.21	9	14,479
17.4.21	0	14,470
16.4.21	2	14,470
15.4.21	11	14,468

For the latest data and graphs please refer to the [Brighton and Hove Council website](#).

NATIONAL COVID DATA

(1) COVID-19 national data

(a) Death rates

Deaths are counted where a lab-confirmed positive coronavirus test result is reported in any setting.

Deaths within 28 days of positive test by area

Across the whole of the UK, as of 22nd April 2021, the total number of deaths of people who had had a positive test result for COVID-19 and died within 28 days of the first positive test stood at 127,345.

In the South East, the total number of deaths stood at 17,305 cases.

Data on death rates are published on the [daily dashboard](#).

(b) Infection levels

The data reveals that as of 22nd April 2021:

- Across the whole of the UK, the total number of lab-confirmed UK cases of COVID-19 since February 2020, stood at 4,398,431. This is the total number of people who have had at least one positive test result.
- In the South East, the total number of lab-confirmed UK cases of COVID-19 stood 538,127. There were 1,523 new cases in the last 7-days.

For up-to-date numbers of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and risk in the UK, click [here](#).

(2) Government announcements

The current situation means that new guidance is being issued daily. Below we have provided links to some announcements which may be of interest.

[Slides to accompany coronavirus press conference: 20 April 2021](#)

[Government launches COVID-19 Antivirals Taskforce to roll out innovative home treatments this autumn](#)

[Statement on vaccination progress and new variants](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): red list travel ban countries](#)

[10 million people receive second dose of COVID-19 vaccine](#)

[Weekly statistics for NHS Test and Trace \(England\): 8 April to 14 April 2021](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine adverse reactions](#)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove information and advice

The following Healthwatch COVID-19 guides are available (these are being regularly updated):

- [COVID-19 information and advice webpage](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination webpage](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Check webpage](#)
- [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Maternity and pregnancy advice and information](#)
- Top tips for [staying active and looking after your mental health](#).
- Guides which provide information about:
 - visiting a [dentist](#)
 - [seeing a GP](#)
 - [collection of prescriptions](#)

Plus, accessibility resources to help you communicate about COVID-19.

- **NEW:** [Beyond Words](#) is providing free picture stories and illustrated guides to support people with learning disabilities and autism through the coronavirus pandemic
- A series of videos aimed at encouraging people to continue to use health services if they are unwell. They are available in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [Farsi](#), [Kurdish](#) and [Sylheti](#).
- [Resources from Learning Disability England](#)
- [Sign health](#) has made their Interpreter Now remote BSL interpretation service available for free across all healthcare services
- [Signhealth](#) is providing a video of summaries of key coronavirus guidance in BSL
- [Signhealth advice for testing](#)
- [Public Health England stay at home guidance](#), translated and in Easyread.
- [NHS guidelines translated into up to 50 languages by Doctors of the World](#) and find video advice [here](#)
- [Easy read information on COVID-19](#) from Mencap
- [About the NHS Test and Trace scheme](#)
- [What to do if you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace](#)
- The NHS have also created [easy read posters like this](#) so people know when and how to get a test for coronavirus.
- [Public Health England resources](#) in accessible formats
- [COVID-19 guidance for providers of services for people experiencing rough sleeping](#)
- The [handwashing rap](#), produced to help people who have a learning disability



Join us!

You can sign up to receive regular bulletins and information from Healthwatch.

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