

## Barnabas Patient Voices

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From: Barnabas Patient Voices <[keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk)>  
Sent: 05 March 2024 12:15  
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, March  
Attachments: BPV\_Minutes\_20240117.pdf; Monthly\_Update\_202402\_EXTRA.pdf; NWL\_NHS\_Same\_Day\_GP\_Care.pdf; PA\_Newsletters.pdf; In-Touch\_148.pdf; PPG Newsletter - 2024 - February.pdf

Email to All **Barnabas Patient Voices** Members ...  
Printed copies to members without email.

A copy will also be posted on our Facebook group, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/barnabas.ppg>, and website, <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/>.

If you can't read any of the attached documents, or want printed copies of anything mentioned, please contact me and I'll try to send you a copy.

Welcome to the March update for **Barnabas Patient Voices** members.

**Please share healthcare news!** (But not anything about your personal care.) Please be brief – just a link to a news item is fine. Email to me at [keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk), or leave me a note with reception at the medical centre.

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### **IMPORTANT: Improving Same-Day Access to Primary Care**

I have received a short email from NW London NHS (NWL ICB), which seems to confirm what I had already heard: that across the whole of NW London same-day GP appointments will be provided only at local hubs and not by GP practices – and there will be no choice! Moreover it's reported that most of these same-day consultations will be done by Physician Associates, who are not qualified doctors, have only 2 years training, will have little GP oversight, and are not legally allowed to prescribe.

So far we do not have much of this directly from the NWL ICB – just that email and a letter it references, both of which are rather vague. Nonetheless we can read between the lines. My suspicions are supported by reports, apparently based on NWL ICB board papers, in respected medical media.

It is clear many of the details are still being worked out, but **if** (note **if**) these reports are accurate there are many concerns, not least around safety and continuity of care. Of course our suspicions may all turn out to be misplaced – we've been here before.

Anyway, please read my *EXTRA bulletin* (and linked articles) and the *NWL NHS Same Day GP Care* document (copies of both attached) for further information.

If you are concerned there is also a petition running at <https://www.change.org/p/doctors-not-call-centres-for-north-west-london> (although I think their headline is misleading).

We will have time to discuss this at our Open Meeting in a couple of weeks time (see below for details) and I am already collating a list of possible concerns. Having read the documents, please bring your thoughts to the meeting.

If you can't attend the meeting and wish to comment on item 3 (having read the documents noted above) then please drop me a note with your thoughts.

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**Coronavirus etc.**

The good news this month is that all indicators are that the most recent peak of Covid infections is past, with the latest estimates of only about 1 in 110 people currently infected.

That's good, because we've all had more than enough of this disease. As Ziyad Al-Aly, a clinical epidemiologist at Washington University in St Louis, USA has observed:

"However you slice it, whatever long-term health effect you look at, the risk [from reinfection] is not zero ... The truth is that, yes, we're sick and tired of the virus, we're sick and tired of the pandemic – but it's still here. It's still hurting people ... This ugly guest isn't going to leave us any time soon ... It's going to be here probably for decades."

[*Scientific American*, 13 February 2024]

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has also said recently that Covid continues to pose new challenges and that the pandemic is not over. There remains a concern over the possible appearance of a new variant that's highly transmissible, even more severe, and with significant ability to avoid existing immunity – which would mean people would need to be revaccinated very quickly. There are also worries at society and government level, including: complacency, reduced finance availability, reduced mental space, and a lack of political will to talk about Covid in the context of everything else.

Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO lead for Covid, is interviewed in *Scientific American*,

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/rampant-covid-poses-new-challenges-in-the-fifth-year-of-the-pandemic/>.

Additionally Christina Pagel, Prof. of Operational Research in Health Care, University College London has commented:

"Covid might be edging towards becoming a winter bug, but it is not there yet ... While people can be reasonably sure of not catching ... flu outside of the winter months, the same is simply not (yet?) true of Covid. For the clinically extremely vulnerable in particular, this hole in our knowledge of Covid prevalence will matter."

[<https://christinapagel.substack.com/p/england-covid-update-everything-trending>]

The indications are that all the other winter respiratory illnesses are also now past their peak, although there is still more flu around than there is Covid.

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## Barnabas Patient Voices News

### March Open Meeting – Agenda

This month's Open Meeting is on **Wednesday 20 March at 13:00, on Zoom**.

The agenda will be:

1. Introductions & Apologies
2. Approve Minutes of January Meeting [attached]
3. Same Day GP Appointments [see above] \*\*
4. Member Feedback
5. Practice Updates
6. PPG Updates
7. Matters Arising, AOB

\*\* Please read the documents noted above and bring your views to the discussion.

If you can't attend the meeting and wish to comment on item 3 then please drop me a note with your thoughts.

The Zoom link for the meeting is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7279594414?pwd=VmYwODdoWGg2eTFvTVJvVlZyRmhSQT09>.

Please do join us if you are able to.

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## Barnabas Practice News

### **Additional Receptionists**

The Practice has recently recruited two new Receptionist: Nicole Rina and Susannah Pierson. Hopefully they will make a difference to the phone queues.

The practice are also still looking to recruit another salaried GP.

### **Barnabas Bulletin**

The March issue of the Practice's quarterly newsletter, *Barnabas Bulletin*, should out in the next couple of weeks – it is with the Practice for final approval. I will ensure all members receive a copy as soon as it becomes available.

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## **Local Healthcare News**

### **Measles**

There is now a significant cluster of measles cases in London. This is especially worrying as only 75% of London children starting school have had both their doses of MMR vaccine – far below the 95% needed to keep measles away.

Measles is the most infectious of diseases (at least 10 times more than flu) and can be really serious – 20% of unvaccinated children need hospital treatment.

An extra reason measles is so dangerous is because it causes “immune amnesia”, where the immune system is wiped clean and the body loses its ability to fight off other previously encountered infections. This effect can last years, leaving the patient vulnerable to many infections, including those they'd previously encountered. However the MMR vaccination does not cause this immune reaction.

**Parents are advised to check the vaccination status of their children and ensure they have catch-up vaccination if needed.**

**There's a walk-in vaccination clinic every Wednesday, 09:00-16:45 at CP House, 97-107 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, W5 5TL – or contact the Practice.**

### **NHS App**

If you have a smartphone, there have been a number of updates and new function in the NHS App, including:

- view your latest prescriptions
- prescription barcode which, if you don't have a nominated pharmacy, can be presented at any pharmacy for the prescription to be dispensed
- view your GP medical records – not just the coded information but any freeform text (since last October)
- see the average waiting time for your hospital treatment, updated weekly
- view your Urgent Care Plan (if you have one).

More information at <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhs-app/nhs-app-features>, and in the upcoming *Barnabas Bulletin*.

### **Eating Well with Diabetes**

This is the title of an online event (being sponsored by NWL NHS) for people living with and affected by type 2 diabetes (also for healthcare professionals). It will include Abby Ixer, Diabetes Specialist Dietitian at East Kent Hospitals Foundation Trust, who will be discussing diet and diabetes “myth busting” and healthy eating guidelines. There will also be time for questions.

*Date:* Monday 11 March 2024

*Time:* 14:00-15:30

*Where:* Zoom

Register free at: <https://eating-well-with-diabetes.eventbrite.com>.

### **Young Person's Views on Vaccinations**

Do you know of anyone aged 10-18 that can share their views on vaccination? If so local health & social care organisations would like their views. Please share this survey link with them:

<https://smartsurvey.co.uk/s/B0IA0G/>.

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## General NHS & Healthcare News

### Pharmacy First Service

The *Pharmacy First* service was launched country-wide on 1 February. It is a new NHS service available to patients who fit certain criteria. The scheme enables patients with seven minor ailments to be treated by their local pharmacy. This should reduce the huge workload the Practice is currently under, and free up more appointments for patients with more serious conditions.

Pharmacists will be able to provide advice and NHS-funded treatment, where clinically appropriate, for seven common conditions:

1. Sinusitis for everyone aged 12 years and over (inflammation of the sinuses)
2. Sore throat for everyone aged 5 years and over
3. Acute otitis media for children aged 1 to 17 years (inflammation of the inner ear)
4. Infected insect bites for everyone aged 1 year and over
5. Impetigo for everyone aged 1 year and over (bacterial condition on the skin)
6. Shingles for adults aged 18 years and over
7. Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women aged 16 to 64 years.

There's more information at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-first/>.

### Diabetes

According to a report from the Office of National Statistics one million people in England may have type 2 diabetes but are unaware of it. Additionally around a further 5 million are at high risk of the disease (that's one in nine adults). Find a report on this at: <https://theconversation.com/one-million-people-in-england-may-have-undiagnosed-type-2-diabetes-what-you-need-to-know-224006>.

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## Newsletters

A round-up of potentially interesting newsletters received since the last update:

- **Patients Association Weekly Newsletters** – PDF attached – sorry as usual no printed copies due to size
- **UCL Social Biobehavioural Research Group, Winter Newsletter** – online at <https://us14.campaign-archive.com/?u=ce9be2cc2beb83dfc836a92d9&id=e5c6a10eef>
- **NHS In Touch #148** – attached
- Mike Lally's **PPG Newsletter** – attached

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That's all for this month, although I have that horrid feeling there's something I've missed.

If you can please join our Open Meeting on Wednesday 20 March for some important discussion.

Best wishes & good health ...

Keith

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