

Keith Marshall

From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>
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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 December update for **Barnabas Patient Voices** members.

It's not such a dense issue this month, but you may wish to go back and reread last month's update as it did contain a lot of important information. You can find it online at

https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Monthly_Update_202411.pdf.

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, or leave me a note with reception at the medical centre.

Infectious Disease Update

Covid

Good news this month. From the little data available, and what I am seeing, Covid is currently around it's lowest level in two years, and with no worrying variants on the horizon. Not that this means we're out of the woods, especially with gatherings over the holiday season and the worst of the winter to come.

What isn't so good is that RSV and flu rates appear to be rising fast; while Rhinovirus rates are falling slowly. All three are currently look to be higher than Covid.

If this holds, and the respiratory viruses peak at different times (as they normally do) then the NHS may escape a winter meltdown; but if they all peak together then things could be very messy indeed.

Background and more information at <https://bhawkins3.substack.com/p/covid-situation-report-nov-28-2024> and <https://christinapagel.substack.com/p/what-is-winter-looking-like-for-the>.

Vaccinations

And don't forget ... If you are eligible for the year's Covid autumn booster, and you've not already had yours, you have under three weeks to get it as availability ends on Friday 20 December. More details at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2024/11/less-than-three-weeks-left-to-book-nhs-covid-and-flu-vaccinations-online/>. There are also vaccinations available for flu and RSV; different eligibility criteria apply.

Getting vaccinated is your best defence against winter viruses and will help prevent people getting seriously ill, reduce the number needing hospital care, and help keep people at home with their families this winter. **Vaccination isn't just about you, it's for everyone.**

Barnabas Patient Voices News

November Open Meeting – Minutes

I'm attaching the minutes of our November Open Meeting again this month. If you haven't done so already, **please read them** as they contain a lot of useful updates, as well as requests for feedback and volunteers. The minutes are also online at https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/BPV_Minutes_20241102.pdf.

2025 Provisional Open Meeting Dates

The provisional dates for our 2025 Open Meetings are:

- Wednesday 22 January; 13:00; Zoom [agenda etc. to follow in the January update]
- Saturday 15 March; 11:00; Practice
- Saturday 17 May; 11:00; Practice [AGM]
- Saturday 19 July; 11:00; Practice
- Saturday 20 September; 11:00; Practice
- Wednesday 19 November; 13:00; Zoom

Note that the Saturday meeting dates may change when the Practice knows which Saturdays they're scheduled to open. Please watch this space for confirmation of dates and venues. And please put the 2025 dates in your new diary!

“Meet the Patients”

Having asked last month for volunteers to help with “Meet the Patients” I'm sorry to say I've had little response except from the usual suspects.

I intend that we continue with the current schedule of the first Wednesday afternoon (mother & baby clinic time!) and the third Tuesday morning each month. I'll be scheduling dates for 2025 in the next few days – so there's still time to volunteer (even if you'd like to do different times/days) so do get in touch.

Barnabas Practice News

Clinical Practice Research Datalink

I recently came across this piece of the NHS. It is a real-world research service supporting retrospective and prospective public health and clinical studies, and delivered by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR). A majority of GP practices are a part of this work. As I'd not previously come across CPRD I asked if Barnabas was a member, and apparently we are. But who knew? It's a well kept secret. There's much more on CPRD at <https://www.cprd.com/>.

Local Healthcare News

Christmas & New Year Pharmacy Opening Hours

The opening hours for pharmacies over the holidays have been published. The list for the whole of London is online at <https://shorturl.at/v6lkF>. Ealing has three pharmacies (one in Acton, two in Southall) which are open at varying times on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. In

addition there are two others close by in Ealing Road, Alperton; and in Kenton Road, near Kenton Station.

Elective Orthopaedic Procedures.

All Northwick Park Hospital elective orthopaedic procedures have now moved to the new fast-track centre at Central Middlesex Hospital. Local press report at <https://harrowonline.org/2024/11/17/all-northwick-park-elective-orthopaedic-procedures-moved-to-new-fast-track-centre/>

Patient Views of Urgent/Emergency Care

If you want to know how patients view our local emergency and urgent care facilities, the CQC have now released the results of their recent survey – and you can search for your preferred hospital trust. See the CQC Newsletter (attached) for links etc.

General NHS & Healthcare News

Red tape challenge

NHS England are conducting a rapid review of how care is coordinated between different parts of the health service, including:

- how referrals are made and managed, including waiting lists
- how patients are discharged from hospital or other care providers
- how the different parts of the health service communicate safely and effectively with each other and with patients

There's a bit more detail and a short survey (open until 16 December) at <https://shorturl.at/3QZiL>.

Antibiotic-Resistant Infections

It's reported that antibiotic-resistant infections saw a rise last year across the country, but with London having the most cases. Local press report at <https://harrowonline.org/2024/11/17/antibiotic-resistant-infections-surge-last-year-with-london-having-most-cases/>.

Statins

According to NICE more people are benefitting from the recommended statins which help reduce the likelihood of heart attacks and strokes. Report and data at <https://www.nice.org.uk/news/articles/more-people-are-benefitting-from-nice-recommended-statins-to-reduce-heart-attacks-and-strokes>.

Thanks to Phiroze for the link

Heath Secretary, Wes Streeting

Two things from the new Health Secretary which have stuck me. Firstly he has written to all GPs in an attempt to keep them on-side following the October Budget. Sadly the cynic in me says it is no more than the usual management motherhood. His letter is online at

<https://securefile.cloud/MTgyOTc/PC-bulletin/27-November-27/sofs-lettertotheprofession.pdf>.

Secondly Streeting has ordered a review to end the somewhat acrimonious NHS staffing row over Physician Associates. BBC report at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8rl4r36y6eo>.

Bone Fractures

Anything up to 10% of fractures are missed on the normal x-ray images. Now NICE have reported that trials of AI technology to detect fractures have been successful in reducing the error rate and they're recommending the technology is more widely used. Report at

<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/articles/ai-technologies-recommended-for-use-in-detecting-fractures>.

Prescription Cost Analysis

If anyone is interested NHS England have published the latest figures on the annual volume and cost of prescriptions (up to 2023/2024). Highlights include:

- the cost of prescription items dispensed in the community was £10.9 billion, a 5% increase from £10.4 billion in 2022/23
- the number of prescription items dispensed in the community in was 1.21 billion, a 3% increase from 1.18 billion in 2022/23
- the most dispensed pharmaceutical was Atorvastatin, with 65 million items.

Full report and data at https://nhsbsa-opendata.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/pca/pca_summary_narrative_2023_24_v001.html.



Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association Weekly News** for 08, 15, 22, 29/11 – attached, but as always no printed copies due to the size.
 - **Imperial Patient Experience Research Centre Newsletter** for November – attached, bundled with the Patient's Association News.
 - **CQC newsletter** for November – attached. See the first item for patient views of urgent/emergency care
 - **Mike Lally's PPG Newsletter** for November – attached. As always Mike highlights a lot of background and explanatory reports.
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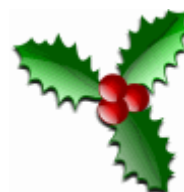
Links / QR Codes for the Latest Publications

These will always take you to the latest versions ...

Barnabas Bulletin https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Barnabas_Bulletin.pdf	
What's Where near Barnabas https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Whats_Where_near_Barnabas.pdf	



**However you celebrate, I wish everyone an enjoyable & peaceful Christmas, and a happy and healthy 2025.
God(s) willing I'll see you all again in January.**



Keith



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