

## Barnabas Patient Voices

---

From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>  
Sent: 06 January 2025 12:24  
To: Barnabas Patient Voices  
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, January  
Attachments: BPV\_Minutes\_20241102.pdf; PA+Other\_Newsletters.pdf; PPG Newsletter - 2024 - December.pdf; BPV\_Governing\_Document\_2025\_DRAFT1.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.

---

## Happy New Year to you all!

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

**In this month's update, I need your feedback & input to our plan for 2025-27. Please see "Group 2025-27 Plan – INPUT REQUIRED" below, and complete the quick survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8YJ57R9>. Thanks!**

**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.

---

### Infectious Disease Update

As always I try to bring you a summary of the current science on infectious diseases. As a scientist it is my duty to share a balanced view; explain the concerns; and correct any misinformation.

### Covid & Flu

The good news this month is that we've just had the lowest levels of Covid over Christmas since the pandemic started. Of course that doesn't mean we're out of the woods yet; there could still be new virulent variants, or just waves due to rogue and mass spreading events. But it is at least hopeful; we watch and wait.

The bad news is that 'flu is rampant. Infection rates have rocketed over the last couple of weeks and this wave is already close to the very large wave of winter 2022/23, and it hasn't peaked yet. There's a tidal wave of flu cases hitting the hospitals, although fortunately they're not also having to currently cope with a Covid wave. The NHS reported that flu vaccinations surged a few weeks back following their warning of the flu "tidal wave".

RSV and Rhinovirus rates are still high, but are gradually falling.

More scientific commentary at <https://bhawkins3.substack.com/p/covid-situation-report-jan-3-2025> and <https://christinapagel.substack.com/p/its-definitely-not-a-quad-demic-but>. NHS provided data

at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2024-to-2025-season>.

The government has also announced early plans for the Spring 2025 Covid booster programme. The eligible cohorts are much the same as last Spring: adults aged 75 years and over; residents in a care home for older adults; individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed. The programme is expected to run for 1 April to 17 June. More information at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/preparing-for-a-successful-spring-2025-covid-19-vaccination-programme/>.

### H5N1 Bird Flu

The H5N1 Bird Flu which is now widespread in American cattle continues to be a concern. This is especially as there are now two (unrelated) cases of H5N1 (a teenager in Canada, an adult in Louisiana) which have resulted in both patients being hospitalised with serious illness. It is reported that both cases have the same variant and that during prolonged illness it is mutating within the patient in a way which makes it more likely to be able to transmit between people. The variant currently circulating in cattle is different; it cannot transmit between humans and would require several mutations to do so; it can however infect humans if they have direct contact with infected animals.

More background at <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/severe-bird-flu-cases-virus-can-mutate-lingers-body-rcna186009> and <https://christinapagel.substack.com/p/how-close-is-a-new-bird-flu-h5n1>.

---

## Barnabas Patient Voices News

### Group 2025-27 Plan – INPUT REQUIRED

I'm in the early stages of working on ideas for the group's plan for the next two years, beginning 1 April 2025. I would like your feedback, please. For this I've created a **quick six question survey** which will be **open until the end of the month**. You can find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8YJ57R9> (alternatively drop me a note with your ideas). Do please complete it as it is important that we understand what everyone wishes to see done.

I hope to be able to present some initial thoughts at the 22 January meeting, and then bring a draft plan to our March meeting.

### January Open Meeting – Agenda

Our next Open Meeting is on **Wednesday 22 January; 13:00; over Zoom**.

The agenda is expected to be:

1. Introductions & Apologies
2. Approve Minutes of November 2024 Meeting [attached]
3. Governance Updates [attached]
4. 2025-27 Plan: Initial Ideas [see above]
5. Member Feedback
6. Practice Updates
7. PPG Updates
8. Matters Arising, AOB

The Zoom link is, as always:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7279594414?pwd=VmYwODdoWGg2eTFvTVJvZyRmSQT09>

Please join us if you can.

## Provisional 2025 Open Meeting Dates

The other provisional dates for meetings this year are:

- 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

Do note that dates/times may change depending on the availability of the Practice. Please watch this space for confirmation of dates etc.

## Meet the Patients Dates

We now have a full complement of 2025 dates for our “Meet the Patients” sessions. The sessions are scheduled for:

- Second Tuesday each month, 10:00-12:30
- Last Wednesday each month (except December), 14:00-16:30.

Those who have volunteered to help with these session should have the schedule. Anyone else who would like to volunteer, please get in touch.

## Governance Review

In the last few days I have also reviewed our Governing Document. In my view it doesn’t need to be changed at this time and the only updates are the correction of a couple of typos. I attach a new draft document for approval at the 22/01 meeting. However if you feel that the document needs further change, again please get in touch.

## Local Healthcare News

### Online Consultation Solutions from April 2025

On 5 December 2024, NHS North West London Primary Care Executive committee made the decision to delay the re-procurement of online consultation solutions until April 2026 and to extend the existing contracts. NW London is not alone in this as other London ICBs are also unwilling to embark on re-procurement at this time. Apparently this is largely due to the current lack of guaranteed funding from NHS England, which limits procurements to one year; causing uncertainty and disruption if procurement has to be repeated annually. So we’re going to have to suffer eConsult for at least another year. More at <https://securefile.cloud/MTgyOTc/23-Dec/onlineconsultationreprocurementupdate002.pdf>.

## General NHS & Healthcare News

### Compassion Fatigue

A recent survey has found that 70% of GPs suffer from compassion fatigue. GPs say they are so emotionally and physically exhausted from hearing about patients’ problems and circumstances (which they can often do nothing about) that it is compromising the quality of care they provide. Guardian report at <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jan/02/seven-in-10-gps-in-uk-suffer-from-compassion-fatigue-survey-finds>.

### GP Reforms to Cut Red Tape

The government has said that GPs will be able to spend more time treating patients under proposed reforms to general practice which will bring back the family doctor and slash red tape. The proposals

are part of the new GP contract for 2025-26, which is out for consultation with the BMA. Government press release at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/gp-reforms-to-cut-red-tape-and-bring-back-family-doctor>.

## Physician Associates

Starting last month Physician Associates are regulated by the General Medical Council (GMC), which also regulates all doctors. There’s more on the GMC website at <https://www.gmc-uk.org/about/what-we-do-and-why/regulating-physician-associates-and-anaesthesia-associates>.

## Regulation of NHS Managers

While we’re on regulation, the government has issued a consultation, and is seeking views, on the possible options for regulating, and introducing a professional duty of candour, for NHS Managers. There’s a short survey at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/leading-the-nhs-proposals-to-regulate-nhs-managers>, which closes on 18 February 2025.



## Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association** Weekly Newsletter for 06/12, 13/12, 20/12, 03/01 – attached as a single PDF, but as usual no printed copies due to the size.
- **NIHR Be Part of Research** Autumn Newsletter – attached in the same PDF as the Patients Association newsletters
- **Social Biobehavioural Research Group** Newsletter – also included with the PA newsletters
- **Mike Lally’s PPG Newsletter** for December – attached

## Links / QR Codes for the Latest Publications

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

<b>Barnabas Bulletin</b> <a href="https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Barnabas_Bulletin.pdf">https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Barnabas_Bulletin.pdf</a>	
<b>What’s Where near Barnabas</b> <a href="https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Whats_Where_near_Barnabas.pdf">https://barnabasvoices.org.uk/docs/Whats_Where_near_Barnabas.pdf</a>	

That’s it for this month. Stay safe and avoid the ‘flu!

Keith



Keith Marshall, Chairman, **Barnabas Patient Voices**  
Phone: 020 8864 7993 – Mobile: 07847 149 417  
Email: [keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk](mailto:keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk)  
Web: <https://barnabasvoices.org.uk>