

## Barnabas Patient Voices

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From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>  
Sent: 05 June 2025 13:22  
To: Barnabas Patient Voices  
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, June  
Attachments: BPV\_Minutes\_20250517.pdf; PA+Other\_News.pdf; PPGukNews - 31 May 2025.pdf; PPG Newsletter - 14 May 2025.pdf; Barnabas\_Stats\_Poster.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.

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

**Please share healthcare news!** (But nothing 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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## Infectious Disease Update

### Covid

There continues to be good news on Covid, with infections apparently remaining at low levels. Nonetheless there is some concern that we're going to see a summer wave of infection especially as there are two new variants, NB.1.8.1 and XFG taking off around the world. NB1.8.1 is a descendent of the Omicron variant, and while it may be more infectious – and is likely become the dominant strain – there is currently no indication that it causes more severe illness. It is thought that our existing immunity (although that's reducing for those of us who've not had a recent booster) will provide some protection. XFG is even newer and related to a very early Covid strain but with a lot of mutations on the spike protein, so it is unknown if it will turn out to be more infectious or more dangerous. There's more at <https://independentsage.substack.com/p/latest-covid-variants-and-outlook>.

### Measles

According to UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) measles cases are reportedly increasing across London. So a timely reminder that measles is highly infectious and can lead to serious health complications, particularly in immunosuppressed individuals and young infants; it is also more severe in pregnancy, and increases the risk of miscarriage, stillbirth or preterm delivery. Due to the low take-up of the Measles Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine, London remains at high risk of a very large measles outbreak.

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## Barnabas Patient Voices News

### Open Meeting & AGM – Minutes

The minutes of our AGM & Open Meeting on 17 May are attached. This was a really good meeting with lots of feedback and helpful discussion.

As you will see from the minutes I was asked to continue as Chairman for another two years – so you have to put up with me for a bit longer.

### **Next Open Meeting**

Our next Open Meeting is again in person at the Medical Centre on **Saturday 19 July at 10:30**. Agenda etc. to follow in next month's update; I'm hoping we might have a speaker.

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### **Barnabas Practice News**

There's not a lot of news from the Practice this month. You'll find the important news in item 6 of the attached meeting minutes.

### **Practice Service Report**

Each quarter I'm creating a poster of appointment stats for the Practice. You'll always find the latest version on the waiting area noticeboards, and the report for January-March 2025 is also attached.

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### **Local Healthcare News**

#### **GP Call Response Targets**

It is being reported that our NW London NHS Integrated Care Board (who procure and manage all health service in the region) are to impose a requirement on GPs to respond to 90% of calls within 10 minutes (and online consultations within one day). However from what I've seen it is not at all clear what "respond" means in this context. Article in *Pulse Today* at

<https://www.pulsetoday.co.uk/news/practice-personal-finance/icb-imposes-gp-call-response-targets-as-part-of-6-6m-access-funding/>.

#### **Neighbourhood Health Service for London**

London's five ICBs – with NHS England, London boroughs, Greater London Authority and others – have jointly agreed to a vision of a neighbourhood health service to transform care across the capital. So far it seems to be little more than a blue sky vision, and it is certainly not clear what is envisaged, how it will be done, or how it will be funded. There are two NHSE news items at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/2025/05/13/london-unveils-vision-for-a-neighbourhood-health-service-to-transform-care-across-the-capital/> and <https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/a-neighbourhood-health-service-for-london/a-neighbourhood-health-service-for-london/>.

[We seem to have heard variants of all this before, so why it is more likely to happen now is not at all clear.]

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### **General NHS & Healthcare News**

#### **GP Demand**

Researchers at the University of Manchester have found that (in England) the number of patients per GP increased by 9% between 2015 and 2022. Worse, if one looks at just those with chronic conditions the increase is 32%. This is against a background of a 2.7% drop in the available GP hours. University of Manchester news report at <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/about/news/study-shows-massive-rise-in-gp-demand-amid-drop-in-their-availability/>.

#### **Seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients in England: winter season 2024 to 2025**

UKHSA have published data on the uptake of last winters' flu vaccinations. Overall this is not a great picture with vaccination take-up rates for most groups down:

- Over 65s: 74.9% (down 3% on 2023/24)
- Those in a clinical risk group: 40.0% (down 1.5%)
- Children aged 2 and 3 years: 42.6% (down 2%)
- Pregnant women: 35% (up 3%)

Full report at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/seasonal-influenza-vaccine-uptake-in-gp-patients-winter-season-2024-to-2025/>.

### **Mpox & Gonorrhoea**

The government has accepted the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to implement from 1 August:

- a routine mpox pre-exposure vaccination programme
- a routine opportunistic gonorrhoea vaccination programme

The programmes will primarily target men who have sex with men as being at highest risk of exposure to these infections.

[Information from NHSE.]

### **Prescription Tracking**

It is estimated that around 45% of phone calls to pharmacies are just to check if a prescription is ready to collect. To help reduce this the NHS App now has the ability to track when your prescription is ready at the pharmacy. So far this is available for almost 1,500 high street chemists (including every Boots in England). It is expected to be rolled out to another nearly 5,000 pharmacies over the next 12 months; this will cover 60% of those in England. NHSE news item at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/05/amazon-style-prescription-tracking-goes-live-in-nhs-app-for-millions-of-patients/>.

### **Undiagnosed Infected Blood Patients**

As part of a drive to find (so far undiagnosed) patients affected by the contaminated blood scandal, all new patients registering at GP practices are to be asked if they had a blood transfusion before 1996. If the patient did have a pre-1996 transfusion, they will be offered a test for hepatitis C. NHSE news item at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/05/new-gp-drive-to-find-undiagnosed-infected-blood-patients/>.

### **West Nile Virus in UK Mosquitoes**

It has been announced that West Nile Virus has been detected in UK mosquitoes for the first time. West Nile Virus is in the same family as those which cause dengue and yellow fever. It is usually found in birds, and circulates through bird-biting mosquitoes; in rare cases mosquitoes can transmit the virus to humans or horses. However the risk to people is extremely low, especially as what has been found is virus fragments and not viable virus.

Government report at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-detection-of-west-nile-virus-in-uk-mosquitoes>.

And there's an article in *The Conversation* on what you need to know about West Nile Virus:

<https://theconversation.com/west-nile-virus-found-in-the-uk-for-the-first-time-what-you-need-to-know-257295>.

### **Mental Health Crisis Centres**

The BBC is reporting that specialist mental health crisis centres will be opened across England over the next 10 years to attempt to reduce crowding in A&E. News report at

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c75343nx06go>.

## Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association** Weekly News for 09/05, 16/05, 23/05, 30/05 – copy attached, but no prints as usual, sorry!
- **Our Future Health** Newsletter for May – attached with PA News
- **Social Behaviour Research** Group for May – attached with PA News
- **PPG.UK.News** for 14/05, 31/05

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That's all for this month. Let's we can enjoy some more sunshine – I know it makes me feel better!

Keith



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