

Keith Marshall

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From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>  
Sent: 04 August 2025 14:21  
To: Barnabas Patient Voices  
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, August  
Attachments: 10-year-plan-SUMMARY.pdf; BPV\_Minutes\_20250719.pdf; PPGukNews - 26 July 2025.pdf; PPGukNews - 12 July 2025.pdf; PA\_News.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 August 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), see if you can find me on WhatsApp, or leave me a note with reception at the medical centre.

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## Important Reports

In the last month we've had two important reports released:

1. NHS 10-Year Plan
2. Leng Report on PAs & AAs

### NHS 10-Year Plan

The government's blueprint plan for the NHS over the next decade is based around three radical shifts:

1. hospital to community
2. analogue to digital
3. sickness to prevention

The full document is an unreadable 168 pages, and even the executive summary is 11 pages – so I've attached my two page summary which I wrote for our last Open Meeting.

All the official documents are at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-year-health-plan-for-england-fit-for-the-future>.

### Leng Report on PAs & AAs

This is an independent report for the government by Professor Gillian Leng; it looks at the safety and effectiveness of physician associates (PAs) and anaesthesia associates (AAs). The report made eight recommendations specifically about PAs which have been accepted by the government. Immediate changes being implemented are:

- The "Physician Associate" title is changed to "Physician Assistant"
- All new PAs entering primary care must have completed a minimum of 2 years' employment in secondary care
- PAs may not triage patients

- PAs may not see undifferentiated patients (essentially, patients who've not yet received a definitive medical diagnosis or whose condition doesn't neatly fit into a known disease category)
- PAs should have their roles reviewed by their named supervisor to confirm they have the appropriate skills and training, and to modify the roles if necessary.

The report documents are online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-the-physician-associate-and-anaesthesia-associate-roles-final-report>.

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## Infectious Disease Update

### Covid

The good news is that Covid infections and hospitalisations are still at a low level, although higher than earlier in the year. NB.1.8.1 and XFG are now the two most common variants globally, with XFG being the dominant variant in England. However it should be noted that Covid is NOT a seasonal infection (as flu is) and peaks of activity are possible at any time of year. It appears there will be an Autumn Covid booster vaccination programme with the same eligibility as the recent Spring programme.

### Measles

The latest monthly update on measles cases in England (published 31/07) shows an additional 145 reported measles cases in the preceding four weeks. Cases continue to be predominantly in children under the age of 10, with London and parts of the North West the biggest drivers. Almost half the 674 cases in England this year have been in London. Keep in mind also that it is well established that measles can potentially wipe out all your existing immunity to other infections – which it has taken you years to acquire, and will take years to replace. Consequently UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is urging parents to prioritise vaccine catch-up appointments during the summer break, as there are fears of a further surge once the new school term begins. Anyone whose child has not had their full two doses of the MMR vaccine should contact their GP.

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## Barnabas Patient Voices News

### Open Meeting 19/07 – Minutes

The minutes of our Open Meeting on 19 July are attached. Please read them as there was an open and frank discussion about both the NHS 10-Year Plan (see above) and the recently released results of this year's national GP Patient Survey (see below).

### Next Open Meeting

Our next Open Meeting is scheduled for **Saturday 20 September**, 10:30 at the Medical Centre. Agenda to follow in next month's update. Let me know if there's anything you would particularly like to discuss.

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## Barnabas Practice News

### GP Patient Survey

The GP Patient Survey was conducted in January-March this year, and the results were released in July. The results for Barnabas are, to put it politely, very disappointing. We have managed to drop from #1 or #2 in the area before Covid, to bottom place. The Practice are well aware of this, and are determined to turn things round. It seems that once patients get to see a clinician, then they have a

good experience; however we are being let down by the phone system, the turnover of reception staff, and the level of demand outstripping available appointments. We shall be monitoring progress and are looking for a follow-up survey in 3-4 months time.

[My documents summarising the survey were circulated before the meeting, so I'll not clog up your in-basket with them again. However if you need a copy, then let me know.]

### **Staff Updates**

As previously announced, Dr Bhatoa is taking a six month sabbatical from September; and Dr Strang will be on maternity leave from October. The Practice already have plans for full cover well in hand. The Practice has recently appointed another receptionist, who should join us later this month. This will bring us up to a full complement of nine receptionists.

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## **Local Healthcare News**

### **Northwick Park Hydrotherapy Pool**

Northwick Park Hospital have announced that they are closing their hydrotherapy pool, as it is not a requirement of an acute hospital. Needless to say there has been an outcry as there is no other nearby NHS facility and it is a lifeline for many patients with chronic pain conditions. Local news report at <https://harrowonline.org/2025/07/26/its-not-just-a-facility-its-a-lifeline-outcry-over-plan-to-close-hydrotherapy-pool-at-northwick-park-hospital/>.

[Thanks to Sennen Chiu for the alert]

### **Lung Cancer Screening**

NHS Lung Cancer Screening programme is for people aged between 55 and 74 who are current or former smokers to help early detection and treatment of lung cancer. The scheme is available to all current & former smokers registered with an Ealing GP and in the target age range. Assessment involves a telephone assessment and, if necessary, a lung scan. Those eligible will be invited. More at <https://lungcancerscreening-westlondon.nhs.uk/>.

[Again thanks to Sennen Chiu for the alert]

### **Homeless Patients**

Ealing and Northwick Park hospitals have teams dedicated to supporting homeless patients and addressing their health and social needs. The teams, which include GPs, nurses, housing officers, and occupational therapists, work to connect patients with appropriate housing, healthcare, and other essential services. The goal is to improve health outcomes, reduce hospital stays, and prevent readmissions.

[Thanks once more to Sennen Chiu for the alert]

### **ICB Merger**

There are plans afoot to merge our North West London ICB with North Central London ICB; they jointly manage healthcare for 4.5 million Londoners. (The Integrated Care Boards are local area NHS masters.) The boards of both ICBs have approved the plans for a full merger as providing "best value for money". The plans now go to NHS England for approval. More when available.

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## **General NHS & Healthcare News**

### **Parent's Guide to Summer Infections**

UKHSA have produced a quick reminder for parents of the health hazards most likely to be encountered by their children over the summer holidays. Full article at <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2025/06/13/a-parents-guide-to-summer-infections-and-health-hazards/>.

### **Summer Hotspots for Germs**

Here's a recent article reminding us all about the four most likely summer hotspots for germs. It also emphasises that not washing your hands does **not** strengthen your immune system – in fact the opposite is likely. Article at <https://theconversation.com/four-summer-hotspots-for-germs-and-why-not-washing-your-hands-wont-strengthen-your-immune-system-261635>.

### **“Sponge-on-a-String” Cancer Test**

People with persistent heartburn or acid reflux can now be offered a 10-minute screening test in high-street pharmacies, as part of a new NHS pilot to prevent oesophageal cancer. In the pilot dozens of pharmacies will offer the new test for Barrett's oesophagus, which can be a precursor to oesophageal cancer. The test involves patients swallowing a small pill on a thread, which expands into a small sponge in the stomach. After a few minutes, it is safely pulled out to collect cells from the lining of the oesophagus, which are tested for pre-cancerous changes in the lab. NHS news item at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/07/nhs-to-bring-sponge-on-a-string-cancer-test-to-the-high-street/>.

### **Universal Care Plan (UCP)**

UCP is an NHS facility which digitally shares the care preferences and support needs of residents in London. Currently it supports Londoners of all ages receiving end-of-life and palliative care, as well as those with sickle cell disease and other long-term conditions including dementia, frailty, learning disabilities and autism. It also supports carers by recording contingency plans. This enables the patient to be treated in a way that is compatible with their wishes. It also reduces the need for patients to repeat information different carers. GPs are being encouraged to approach eligible patients, and have a conversation with them about setting up the initial parts of their UCP. Patients with an existing UCP can review it via the NHS App. There's more on UCP at <https://ucp.onelondon.online/about/>.

### **Millions More GP Appointments**

NHS figures show general practice has delivered over 7 million more appointments in the 12 months to June 2025, compared with the year to June 2024. GP teams carried out 383.3m appointments in the last 12 months, compared with 375.7m in the previous year. In addition, figures for June 2025 show that practices delivered 31.4 million appointments – a record for June and nearly a third (31.9%) more than the same period pre-pandemic. NHS news item at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/07/millions-more-gp-appointments-delivered-in-record-year/>.

### **What Do We Really Want from Our GP?**

On the back of the NHS 10-Year Plan, *The Conversation* ran an article from an academic who has reviewed studies on what patients really want from their GP. And it isn't complicated. It included: choice; a friendly receptionist; good communication; a practice in their own neighbourhood; clean, calm waiting rooms; booking systems that were simple and user-friendly; no long automated phone menus. Additionally the current fetish for digital doesn't necessarily align with patient wishes. Full article at <https://theconversation.com/what-people-really-want-from-their-gp-its-simpler-than-you-might-think-260520>.

### **GPs to Offer “Back to Work” Coaching**

As if GPs didn't already have enough to do, there's a plan for (some) GPs to offer advice to patients on getting back to work, including career coaching or exercise classes, as part of a pilot project to

reduce the number of people who are signed off work sick. Hang on: I thought GPs were supposed to be clinicians, not employment counsellors. BBC News item at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwyx880d1w8o>.

### NHS Recruitment

Finally, it seems the NHS has been told by government to reduce its recruitment of overseas-trained medics. The target is to reduce the annual intake of overseas medics from 34% to just 10%. So where are they NHS to find an extra 25% of home-grown clinicians? News article at <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jul/02/nhs-in-england-told-to-slash-recruitment-of-overseas-trained-medics>.

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### Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association Weekly News** for 05/07, 11/07, 18/07, 24/07, 01/08 – attached but as usual no printed copies
  - **CQC July News** – attached in PA News
  - **PPGukNews** for 12/07, 26/07 – attached
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That's it for this month. Take care and have a good August.

Keith



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