

Barnabas Patient Voices

From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>
Sent: 05 September 2025 14:36
To: Barnabas Patient Voices
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, September
Attachments: BPV_Minutes_20250719.pdf; NIHR_News.pdf; PA_News.pdf; PPGukNews - 23 August 2025.pdf; PPGukNews - 9 August 2025.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 September update for **Barnabas Patient Voices** members.

As befits the holiday season, there hasn't been a great deal of useful news over the last month.

Please share any 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 Update

The bad news is that the number of Covid infections has been rising steadily all year; the percentage of positive tests has risen from around 2.3% in January to 9.3% this week. That's still low, especially when you remember that most testing is now done only in hospitals. While the rate of infection is still low, the steady increase does indicate an increasing level of risk. Could this be an autumn wave? Given that schools have just gone back an autumn wave seems a distinct possibility. More information & background at <https://bhawkins3.substack.com/p/covid-situation-report-sep-4-2025>.

Covid Autumn Boosters

Bookings are now open for those who are eligible for this autumn's Covid booster; jabs will be given starting 1 October. The following are eligible:

- those aged 75 or over (including those who will be 75 by 31 January 2026)
- those aged 6 months to 74 years who have a weakened immune system because of a health condition or treatment
- those living in a care home for older adults

You can book your booster via <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/vaccination-and-booking-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/>.

Annual Flu Vaccination

This year's flu vaccinations are now getting under way.

From 1 September the following can be vaccinated:

- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years old (on 31 August 2025)
- all primary school aged children (Reception to Year 6)
- secondary school-aged children (Years 7 to 11)
- all children in clinical risk groups aged from 6 months to 18 years

From 1 October eligibility is extended to the usual groups:

- those aged 18 to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- those aged 65 years and over
- carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- frontline social care staff
- those in long-stay residential care homes or nursing homes, or who are house-bound

You can book your jab via <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/vaccination-and-booking-services/book-flu-vaccination/> or the NHS App; or wait until you're invited by the Practice.

Barnabas Patient Voices News

Open Meeting 20/09 – Agenda

Our next Open Meeting is on **Saturday 20 September**, 10:30 at the Medical Centre. The agenda is likely to be:

1. Introductions & Apologies
2. Approve Minutes [attached]
3. Focussed Discussion Topic (subject tbc)**
4. Member Feedback
5. Practice Updates
6. PPG Updates
7. Matters Arising, AOB

** This is something different which I want to try; if successful we can make it an occasional agenda item. The intention is that we discuss a specific topic (chosen in advance) with the aim of finding new ideas (beyond the same old gripes). For instance discussion topics could include:

- How can the waiting area be improved
- What innovative things would we like the Practice to do
- What can we do to make group membership more inclusive
- Do we have ideas for making the Open Meetings more useful

I'll try to send out a reminder a week or so before the meeting, and include the discussion topic I've drawn from my top hat.

Barnabas Practice News

Reception Team

The reception team continues to expand, with I think three fairly recent arrivals, bringing the team up to a full complement of nine. However at this point I don't have the details – more when available.

Phone System

At long last the phone announcement message have been rerecorded and updated. The new messages are much shorter.

That's all I have from the Practice this month – well it has been holiday season, and for several reasons we've not been able to have our usual update meeting with the Practice Manager.

Local Healthcare News

New Mental Health Service

HFEH Mind has launched a new mental health service “Mind Within Counselling”. The initiative is intended to provide low-cost (but means-tested) counselling and therapy to adults with mild to moderate mental health needs.

Local press report at

<https://www.ealingtoday.co.uk/default.asp?section=community&link=http://neighbournet.com/server/comm on/conhfehmind2508.htm>.

Further information from HFEH Mind at <https://www.hfehmind.org.uk/get-support/mind-within-counselling/>.

General NHS & Healthcare News

Busy July

General practice teams across England delivered a record 33.6 million appointments in July 2025. That's up 4.3% on July 2024 and up nearly a quarter on July 2019 (ie. pre-pandemic).

NHS news item at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/08/busiest-july-on-record-for-general-practice-teams/>.

Chickenpox Vaccination

The government has announced that from 1 January 2026, children in England will be offered vaccination against chickenpox. Eligible children will receive the vaccine during routine GP appointments, often alongside their MMR vaccination.

Government press release at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/free-chickenpox-vaccination-offered-for-first-time-to-children>.

Guardian report at <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/aug/28/england-needs-to-wake-up-to-faltering-infant-vaccination-rate-experts-warn>.

BBC News report at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c860n445vyxo>.

Prescription Tracker

Almost half a million people have used the NHS App to track their prescriptions and check if they are ready to collect from the pharmacy. This facility is being rolled out gradually across the country (I don't think it is available here yet, although all Boots chemists are said to be participating). Early experience suggests that it is reducing the number of phone calls to community pharmacies by almost half.

NHS news item at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/08/hundreds-of-thousands-use-amazon-style-prescription-tracker-in-nhs-app/>.

Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association** Weekly News for 08/08, 15/08, 22/08, 29/08, 05/09 – attached, but as usual no printed copies
 - **NIHR** August Newsletter – also attached but no printed copies
 - **PPGukNews** for 08/08 & 23/08 – attached
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Take care and enjoy the last days of summer.

Keith



Keith Marshall, Chairman, **Barnabas Patient Voices**

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