

Keith Marshall

From: Barnabas Patient Voices <keith@barnabasvoices.org.uk>
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To: Barnabas Patient Voices
Subject: Barnabas Patient Voices Monthly Update, October
Attachments: BPV_Minutes_20260912.pdf; PA_News.pdf; PPGukNews - 30 September 2026.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 October update for **Barnabas Patient Voices** members. We have another sort update this month – either things are really quiet on the health front, or I'm missing stuff; I hope the former!

Infectious Disease Update

Covid

Unfortunately what we've suspected for a number of weeks is happening ... we're in an autumn wave. Infection rates are generally still rising, especially in London, and are now around 10 times higher than July's very low level. Consequently the risk is also rising, and it would be wise of us to take additional precautions (eg. masks) especially in crowded places (eg. healthcare settings, supermarkets) – and if you're eligible (or can pay) getting your Covid Autumn booster jab. Hopefully this wave will peak soon and not become a significant problem. More background at <https://bhawkins3.substack.com/p/covid-situation-report-oct-1-2026>.

Flu

Flu season is here, and infections are off to an early start with current rates running well above the average for this time over the last few years. That's another good reason for taking precautions, as well as getting your flu jab If you're eligible (or can pay). You can always find the latest official flu data at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2026-to-2027-season>.

Barnabas Patient Voices News

September Open Meeting – Minutes

The minutes of our Open Meeting on 12 September are attached.

November Open Meeting

Our next Open Meeting is on **Wednesday 18 November; 13:00 on Zoom**.

As in previous years we are switching to a lunchtime Zoom meeting for the coldest months of the year.

Agenda to follow in the November Update.

Barnabas Practice News

Accurx

The good news is that the switchover from eConsult to Accurx has been completed successfully and is resulting in much reduced phone queues. While the experience has been positive for most, one downside is that reception staff are handling a lot more in the way of admin tasks. There's a summary in the September Open Meeting Minutes.

Phone Callback Facility

At long last the practice now have a proper callback facility on the phone system. Press 1 at any time when you are in the phone queue.

General NHS & Healthcare News

Stuff that Actually Helps

In a recent issue of the Patients' Association weekly news (see below) there was a mention of a website called *The Sick List*, <https://thesicklist.co.uk/>. It's main page is titled *Stuff that actually helps when you're ill*. It contains useful lists of what you might want to take if you're going into hospital; what you should have in your hospital "grab bag"; how to help someone in hospital; and even what to get at Christmas for someone who is ill. And much more. It looks really helpful, and should help avoid some panic. And as I'm writing this I'm using it!

New in the NHS App

The NHS App is being regularly updated, and currently there is quite a bit which is new – all aimed at improving visibility and reducing confusion. Recent changes include:

- Invitations to those eligible for the HPV self-testing kits. See <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2026/08/nhs-rolls-out-discreet-home-testing-kits-against-cervical-cancer-for-millions-of-women/>.
- An option to update your home address online. See <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/help/profile/home-address/>.
- Current information on "Medicines Unavailable". To make it more useful this is now in the "Prescriptions" area along with your repeat prescription list.

And just a reminder that there is a 10-minute video *Introduction to the NHS App* on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbaCbfDTb5o>.

Newsletters

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

- **Patients Association Weekly News** for 11/09, 18/09, 25/09 & 02/10 – attached in a single PDF (but as usual no printed copies)
 - **PPGukNews** for 30/09 – attached
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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.

That's all for now. Stay safe and we'll see you next month.

Keith



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