

**Do you know someone struggling
With both poor sight and hearing?**

As we get older we have increasing difficulties with our sight and hearing, simply because we are living longer. Chances are someone close to you - family friend or neighbour, is finding life more challenging now both sight and hearing are affected.

They don't need to struggle alone!

Did you know, they can a special assessment from their local authority to look at their needs and support?

If you do know someone elderly whose sight and hearing is getting worse, and who may need help, please contact;

In Good Hands (quoting HBC1)

They are a Big Lottery funded project providing FREE, impartial help for older people with combined sight and hearing difficulties in the North East.

Phone; 0191 - 492 8237

WEB: WWW.in-good-hands.org

Email; Kathryn.maidment@in-good-hands.org

50+Forum Meeting

The next 50+ Forum meeting is taking place on the 9th November at 1:30pm at St Josephs Court sheltered Housing Scheme, Victoria Road, Hartlepool. please contact Healthwatch Hartlepool on 01429 - 288146.

Healthwatch Hartlepool Reports

The Healthwatch Hartlepool Investigation into Patient Experience of Dementia Diagnosis Update Report, has now been published. This report focuses on patient diagnosis of Dementia at GP surgeries and the subsequent diagnostic treatment pathways given as a result.

The Healthwatch Hartlepool `Enter and View` report for the Physiotherapy Department, at the University of Hartlepool, has also been published. This report highlights patient experience and feedback when accessing services within the Physiotherapy department at Hartlepool Hospital.

To view any Healthwatch Hartlepool reports please visit;

www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk

or telephone; 01429 - 288146 for further details.

Unhappy with your NHS treatment or care?

On the 3rd Wednesday of every month 9.30am - 12pm, your local I.C.A Advocate will be at the Healthwatch Hartlepool Office, the ORCEL Centre, Wynyard Road, Hartlepool, TS25 3LB

Why not make an appointment or drop in for a chat?

Freephone: 0808 802 3000

Email: ica@carersfederation.co.uk

Tony Leighton
Public Engagement Officer
Healthwatch Hartlepool
The ORCEL Centre
Wynyard Road
Hartlepool TS25 3LB
Tel: (01429) 288146

Future Healthwatch Meetings at ORCEL;

Acute & Elders; Tuesday 8th November 10am - 12noon

Primary Health & Social Care; Tuesday 13th Dec 10am - 12noon

Members of the public are welcome to attend!

Healthwatch

Healthwatch Hartlepool are holding a number of community engagement events over the coming month. Members of the public will be able to come along and tell them about their experiences good or bad, of health and social care services.

The Annexe, Wharton Terrace Wed 23rd Nov 10am-12.15pm.

Throston Library Wed 16th November 10.15am-12.15pm

Café 177 Wed 30th November 11:30am-1.15pm

Central Library Thurs 24th Nov, 10.15am – 12.15pm

ORCEL, Wynyard Rd Every Wed - 10am - 12noon

Hartlepool Hospital 28th November, 10am - 12noon

NHS England launches biggest upgrade to NHS cancer treatment in 15 years

NHS England chief executive Simon Stevens has announced a £130m investment to kick-start the upgrade of radiotherapy equipment and transform cancer treatment across England. The new £130 million fund will over the next two years enable half of the five year modernisation programme recommended by the Independent Cancer Taskforce. The investment will pay for over 100 replacements or upgrades of radiotherapy machines in hospitals around England. Over the next two years older Linac radiotherapy equipment being used by hospitals across the country will be upgraded or replaced, ensuring patients get access to the latest leading edge technology regardless of where they live. Recent advances in radiotherapy using cutting-edge imaging and computing technology have helped target radiation doses at cancer cells more precisely. As a result, they enable better outcomes, with improved quality of life for patients and reduced NHS costs in the long term, through patients experiencing fewer side effects. The NHS is successfully treating more people with cancer – with 134,000 radiotherapy treatment episodes, and over 150,000 patients receiving chemotherapy last year – and overall, patients continue to report a very good experience of care.

NHS England as the national commissioner of radiotherapy services will use the national purchasing power of the NHS to drive improved pricing and value from equipment manufacturers and suppliers.

Project 65 is a new project to help older people in Hartlepool access the latest technology.

Incontrol-able Community Interest Company will run Project 65, a free computer tablet loan service to help tackle social isolation. The 12-month project will help the older generation to get to grips with the new technology to empower them to keep in touch with friends and family, find out about local events and services and increase their confidence in using the gadgets. Michael Slimings, director of Incontrol-able said Project 65 developed from similar projects with visually impaired people and those with disabilities and long-term health conditions. He said: "We recognised through those projects that a lot of older people are excluded from digital technology. "It can be quite expensive if you are just starting out and people may be scared of the technology. "What we hope with this project is to take away the fear and show older people that they can access it. "We have a long list of people we are going to engage with. It is quite exciting and we are looking forward to it". Groups Incontrol-able will work with include Hartfields retirement village, Hartlepool Carers, Age UK and The Bridge dementia support service. It has taken on a new project programme team leader and staff will offer one to one and small groups support. Funding for the project has come from Northgate Public Services Community Fund which invests £40,000 a year in IT-related schemes and is being supported by Hartlepool Borough Council. The project is open to any Hartlepool resident aged 65 or over. For more details call 07775 081351, 07990 554844 or email projects@incontrol-able.co.uk

CQC State of Care report warns adult social care is approaching a tipping point

This year's [State of Care report](#) shows that most health and adult social care services in England are providing people with safe, high quality and compassionate care, but it also raises concerns about the sustainability of this position in the future.

The report provides the most comprehensive view yet of inspection findings to date and is based on inspections and ratings of more than 21,000 services.

Around three-quarters (76%) of NHS services, care homes, general practices and other services that were rated as 'inadequate' were able to improve their ratings following re-inspection. 23% went from 'inadequate' to 'good' and 53% went from 'inadequate' to 'requires improvement'.

47% of providers that were re-inspected following a rating of 'requires improvement' were not able to improve their rating.

Most worryingly, in 8% of cases, the quality of care had deteriorated so much that the rating was downgraded to 'inadequate'.

The report raises concerns that the fragility of the adult social care market is now beginning to impact both on the people who rely on these services and on the performance of NHS care.

The combination of a growing and ageing population, more people with long-term conditions, and a challenging economic climate means greater demand on services and more problems for people in accessing care.

Patient Rights - NHS numbers and NHS medical cards

NHS numbers help staff across the NHS get up-to-date information on patients' health. However, you don't need an NHS number or medical card to get NHS treatment.

A hospital should give your baby an NHS number shortly after birth. If the baby was not born in hospital, a number will be given once the hospital has been told about the birth. If your baby was born abroad and doesn't have an NHS number, you can get one by registering with a GP.

To get a medical card for your baby, you may need to get their NHS number to a chosen GP. However, procedures for getting medical cards vary from area to area. If in doubt, you should ask your GP.

If you don't have a medical card, or have lost it, you should contact your local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), giving your name, address and date of birth, and the name and address of your previous GP. If possible, you should also give your NHS number.

You can register with a GP without a medical card by completing a form supplied by the GP.

Problems with registering - Unless the GP's register is full, or you live too far away for home visits, it is unlikely that the GP will refuse to accept you.

However, if the GP does refuse to accept you, then they must have reasonable grounds for doing so. These must not have anything to do with race, gender, social class, age, religion, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, appearance, disability or medical condition. The GP must give you the reasons for their decision in writing. If a GP refuses to register you because of who you are, it could also be unlawful discrimination. If you have been unable to register with a GP, you should contact the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) or NHS England. You should send your medical card, with a letter giving the name of any GPs who have refused to register you, and of any GPs with whom you would prefer not to be registered.

The CCG will try to find a GP who is prepared to accept you. This will not necessarily be a GP of your choice. Once you have been allocated a GP, the GP must accept you and treat you, and can only remove you from their list under certain circumstances (see under heading [GP removes patient from register](#)). The CCG will then have to find you another doctor. The CCG cannot help you find another GP if you are already registered with a GP.