

## Growing Older/Planning Ahead - Learning Disability & Autism Survey

Healthwatch Hartlepool and Healthwatch organisations across the Tees Valley are working together in partnership with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) to deliver a local response to the national requirement to improve the planning process for when families may no longer be able to support their family member to stay at home.

We would like to know what the needs are of those with a learning disability, what would make the transition easier as those people get older, what has been the experience of health and social care services and help to ensure sufficient and adequate services are in place for those with more complex needs.

It is important that services know what this looks like and how it feels.

Visit the Healthwatch Hartlepool website to complete the survey;  
[www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk/](http://www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk/)



**A Dementia Advisor will be at the Central Hub every Tuesday**

**10 - 12noon**, offering advice and support. We are still taking appointments if anyone wishes to come to The bridge for advice.

**Please call 01429 - 868587**

## Unhappy with your NHS treatment or care?

NHS Advocacy is now provided by **People First**, supporting individuals making a complaint against the NHS.

Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy supports people to raise their concerns and complaints about NHS care and treatment. Call our helpline for information, guidance and support. **9am - 5pm Monday to Friday. Tel:03003 - 038037**

For further information please visit;  
[wearepeoplefirst.co.uk/advocacy/nhs-advocacy/](http://wearepeoplefirst.co.uk/advocacy/nhs-advocacy/)

A member of the Healthwatch Hartlepool team will be in the **Central Hub every Wednesday from 10am till 12 noon**. If you have a question or query or want to talk about an experience of using any Health and social care service, why not pop along for a friendly chat.

**For guidance and support on anything related to Covid - 19, please visit the link below:**

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>



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## NEWS UPDATE

September 2023

### **New research shows worryingly low public confidence in being able to access NHS services.**

A third of adults in England lack confidence that they can access timely care, including GP services, mental health support and hospital care. As the winter period approaches, Healthwatch England commissioned a representative survey of adults living in England to understand public confidence in accessing essential NHS services. HWE also wanted to know how much this had changed since the start of the year amid rising waiting lists, workforce issues, industrial action, and other pressures. The survey asked 2,507 people to rate their confidence in timely access to 13 NHS services, including A&E, ambulances, non-urgent operations and procedures, GPs, pharmacists, mental health services and dentists.

The survey suggests low public confidence in accessing GP services and preventative care, such as mental health service and non-urgent procedures, while a relatively high confidence in more urgent care, such as A&E and 999 services. The research suggests perceptions of access to NHS care is a health inequality issue, with some of the most vulnerable groups having the lowest confidence that they will get the care they need in a timely way. People aged 65 and over have the lowest confidence in accessing all the 13 NHS services. Across the 13 services, only 24% of people in this group felt confident accessing health services. This is followed by people who said they struggle financially – an average of 26% of people who are not financially comfortable are confident they can access those services. By contrast, 35% of financially comfortable people said they were totally or very confident about accessing the 13 NHS services. Four in ten people who had used an ambulance or paramedic (45%) or attended A&E (42%) in the last six months were totally or very confident they could access timely care from that service. By contrast, only 30% of people who hadn't used an ambulance or attended A&E had the same confidence level, respectively. **Louise Ansari, Healthwatch England Chief Executive** said:

"With demand for care likely to rise this winter, the negative perception that the NHS can't provide timely care needs urgent attention to ensure people do seek medical attention when needed. If people are not confident in requesting a referral for treatment or calling an ambulance, they put their health at risk. Delaying medical attention also adds further strain on NHS services.

People seeking care need to have higher confidence in NHS services, given the hard work of NHS staff and local improvements achieved in many areas, supported by national recovery plans for primary care and urgent and emergency care.

As the busy winter period for the NHS approaches, we urge healthcare leaders to address the lack of confidence that many people, especially older people and those on lower incomes, have in accessing timely care when they need it. Simple steps such as improving patient communication and accurately recording treatment plan details will also help assure people that the NHS is there for them."



# World Mental Health Day

Tuesday 10th  
October 2023



Open  
10am - 4pm

Hartlepool Town Hall, TS24 8AH | Free Entry



Join us to celebrate World  
Mental Health Day.



We have stalls, social  
dancing, arts, a choir, a  
raffle and so much more...



## NHS England is moving forward the timetable for the autumn COVID-19 and flu vaccine rollouts.

From 11 September, millions of eligible people will now be offered a COVID-19 vaccine. Residents of older adult care homes and those most at risk, including those who are immunosuppressed, will receive their COVID-19 vaccine first.

From 18 September, the NHS will start inviting people in priority order of risk. Those who are eligible for a vaccine will be able to book an appointment on the National Booking Service. Carers, pregnant women, and health and social care staff will also be among the groups to be offered a COVID-19 jab this winter, as well as adults aged 65 and over. Eligible people should wait to receive an invite from their local provider.

In line with advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, those eligible for a flu vaccine this year include:

- those aged 65 years and over
- those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023
- school-aged children (from Reception to Year 11)
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- 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 workers in a social care setting without an employer led occupational health scheme including those working for a registered residential care or nursing home, registered domiciliary care providers, voluntary managed hospice providers and those that are employed by those who receive direct payments (personal budgets) or Personal Health budgets, such as Personal Assistants.

Those eligible for an autumn covid vaccine are:

- residents in a care home for older adults
- all adults aged 65 years and over persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group
- frontline health and social care workers
- persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts (as defined in the Green Book) of people with immunosuppression
- persons aged 16 to 64 years old and staff working in care homes for older adults.

In total, more than 149 million covid-19 vaccinations have now been given by healthcare staff and volunteers since the NHS delivered the world's first COVID-19 jab outside of clinical trials to Maggie Keenan, in December 2020.

But it is important that those eligible this year come forward for their vaccinations as protection fades over time, and the virus that causes flu can change from year to year. As in previous years, the NHS will let people know when bookings open. Adult flu and COVID-19 appointments will be available through the NHS App and website, or by calling 119 for those who can't get online. Flu vaccines will also be available through local GP practices and pharmacies. There will be no change to flu vaccinations for children which will be offered in schools from early next month, to prevent children from getting seriously ill from flu and ending up hospital, and to break the chain of transmission of the virus to the wider population.