



Patient Experience Bulletin

May 2026

The aim of this current awareness bulletin is to provide a digest of recent guidelines, reports, research and best practice on patient experience in the NHS.

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Latest Evidence
Best Practice, Guides and Toolkits
<p>NHS App step by step guide</p> <p>This guide will walk you through setting up and using the NHS App on a smartphone or tablet. You will need to be connected to the internet to follow along with each step. See here.</p> <p>Source: NHS England</p>
<p>NHS complaints in England</p> <p>Find out how to make complaints about NHS care and treatment in England. See here.</p> <p>Source: UK Parliament</p>
<p>Misinformation toolkit</p> <p>This guide is to help understand false health information. It was developed from Patient Information Forum resources. See here.</p> <p>Source: The Eve Appeal (The gynaecological cancers charity)</p>
<p>Infopool: the prostate resource</p> <p>The infopool has been created by Prostate Cancer Research, a registered charity in England and Wales (1156027). It has been co-designed with patients and clinicians. The information on the infopool is based on the latest evidence and is reviewed every year. It is written in plain English. See here.</p> <p>Source: Prostate Cancer Research</p>
<p>Optimising shared decision-making in the chronic angina care pathway</p> <p>This report presents the findings of a project delivered by the Patients Association and The Open University, supported by Societal Challenges funding, to develop a toolkit to improve shared decision-making in the care pathway for chronic angina treated with planned coronary angioplasty (heart stents). The project explored patient and staff experiences of decision-making, informed consent and care</p>



pathways, and identified opportunities to strengthen support for shared decision-making in cardiology services. See [here](#).

Source: Patients Association/The Open University

Digital Technology and AI

The use of AI in UK healthcare: Public perceptions and healthcare priorities

This report examines the public's attitudes towards AI in healthcare – both its personal use and its role in clinical settings – revealing a public that is already engaging with AI technology, but with significant anxieties and divisions about how far it should go. See [here](#).

Source: The Policy Institute (King's College London)

One in seven people have used AI instead of seeing a GP, study finds

One in five people who use AI for health advice say it has discouraged them from seeking professional healthcare AI is creating a significant shift in how people access healthcare, yet public attitudes to the technology remain deeply divided, according to a major new study by King's Health Partners, Responsible AI UK and the Policy Institute at King's College London, see [here](#).

Source: King's College London

Beyond bed management: ENABLING WHOLE-SYSTEM PATIENT FLOW THROUGH DIGITAL INTELLIGENCE

The roundtable discussions reaffirmed the critical importance of addressing patient flow as a system-wide challenge rather than a narrow logistical problem, emphasising the need for governance reform, considered application of digital intelligence, and user-centric approaches. See [report](#).

Source: Public Policy Projects

Health Literacy and Communication

NHS Communications: What are the four things people want?

Learn how poor NHS communication harms patients and how staff can improve it. See [here](#).

Source: Healthwatch

Strengthening inclusive NHS England messaging

This reports shares findings on how NHS England can design inclusive messaging that supports people to act on appointments, tests, and care information without increasing inequalities. See [here](#).

Source: National Voices

Can you trust cancer advice online? That Cancer Conversation Season 4: Ep.7



When cancer touches your life, it's natural to look for answers. But online, those answers can be overwhelming, and sometimes dangerously wrong. In this episode of That Cancer Conversation, Cancer Research UK explore the rise of cancer misinformation and why false claims about "miracle cures" spread so quickly on social media. See [podcast](#).

Source: Cancer Research UK

Patient Safety

Infected Blood Inquiry: recommendations for recognition, healthcare and patient safety

The Infected Blood Inquiry made recommendations to improve patient care and safety, and strengthen the voice of patients in the healthcare system. See [here](#).

Source: UK Parliament

New NHS complaint decisions

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman have published their latest decisions on complaints about the NHS in England. These include decisions on the care and treatment provided by NHS Trusts, hospices and dental practices. See [here](#).

Source: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

Patient Stories

What Healthwatch are hearing about maternity care

People who have used maternal health services told us what matters most to them: feeling listened to, receiving clear and accurate information, and having continuity of care. See [here](#).

Source: Healthwatch

Service Delivery

The Neighbourhood Health Framework: enabling the 'left shift' or entrenching the 'right drift'?

Shifting care from hospitals to the community is a core part of the Labour government's 10 Year Health Plan. To help realise this ambition, often referred to as the 'left shift', the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England (NHSE) have released a [Neighbourhood Health Framework](#). The framework outlines plans to redesign care in the community, help people stay well at home, deliver more joined-up care and reduce pressure on acute services. It also reiterates the purpose of three new contracts anticipated to deliver these plans. See [here](#).

Source: The Health Foundation



Improving Discharge summaries for patients admitted with cerebrovascular events

Best practice shared from Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust on The Academy of Fabulous NHS Stuff, see [here](#).

Source: The Academy of Fabulous NHS Stuff

Bowel cancer awareness video in 26 languages

PIF TICK ambassador Dr Aziza Sesay has developed a bowel cancer awareness campaign available in 26 different languages. Working with fellow doctors, she produced a video for Bowel Cancer Awareness Month encouraging everyone invited for bowel screening to take part. The campaign includes languages such as Punjabi, Krio, Fanti, Hindi, Yoruba and Igbo. Watch the video on [LinkedIn](#).

Source: Patient Information Forum / PIF TICK ambassador Dr Aziza Sesay

Digital Technology / AI

Demystifying clinical AI in mental health

Key considerations for adopting artificial intelligence in mental health services. See [here](#).

Source: The NHS Alliance

Care on Hold

On World Health Day 2026, Reengage are calling on UK governments to make accessing GP appointments easier for older people as many practices continue to insist on online bookings only. They have discovered that one in three people aged 75 and over can only get to see their doctor if they book digitally, and the same proportion feel they are cut off from care. With nearly 90% of older people still trying to make appointments by phone or in person, we believe many of them are being cut off from their doctor, which risks increasing their loneliness and isolation. See [here](#).

Source: Reengage

Improving patient experience with the help of AI

When patients share concerns about their care, it is important to respond with kindness, compassion and understanding. Barts Health NHS Trust are starting to use artificial intelligence (AI) to support this work. This does not replace the personal touch. Instead, it helps their teams spend more time focusing on what matters most, speaking with patients and their families and resolving concerns. At Newham hospital, a new AI project has helped make the complaints process quicker and more efficient. By reducing time spent on administrative tasks, staff have been able to focus more on supporting patients directly. See more [here](#).

Source: Barts Health NHS Trust



Health Literacy

Prescription Drug Promotion by Social Media Influencers: A Systematic Scoping Review

Prescription drug promotion by social media influencers (hereinafter *influencers*) is a growing phenomenon that raises concerns about misleading advice, insufficient regulatory oversight, and ethically problematic marketing practices. Understanding the scope and risks of influencers' promotional activities is essential to protect public health, see [article](#).

Source: Gell S, Dave S, Willis E, Vitale EJ, Woloshin S, Heiss R. Prescription Drug Promotion by Social Media Influencers: A Systematic Scoping Review. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2026;9(3):e262738. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2026.2738

Blog: Macmillan Cancer Support on the reported increase on bowel cancer in the under-50s

Health journalism plays an important role in raising awareness of symptoms and risk factors for illnesses and medical conditions, as well as highlighting the support and treatment available. There are multiple examples of where media coverage of health issues, often linked to the personal story of a high-profile public figure, has helped prompt people to report symptoms or take up screening. There is also a risk that more sensationalist articles can negatively affect some people's understanding of risk and their response to symptoms. See [here](#).

Source: Patient Information Forum

Should you really trust health advice from an AI chatbot?

See the investigation on the BBC website [here](#).

Source: BBC

Patient Safety

Persistent risks to safe insulin care in hospitals

Patients with diabetes who rely on insulin are facing persistent and serious safety risks when admitted to hospital, according to HSSIB's latest investigation report. See [here](#).

Source: Health Services Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB)

Patient Stories

Backing the healthtech that changes lives

When the right technology reaches the right patient, lives change. In this episode of NICE Talks, we hear directly from people whose lives have been transformed by NICE-recommended healthtech, including a hybrid closed loop system for type 1 diabetes, an implantable cardiac monitor to detect atrial fibrillation following a stroke, and a rapid genetic test that protects newborns from hearing loss caused by a common antibiotic. See [here](#).



Source: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

Service Delivery

Delivering the left shift: the 24/7 neighbourhood mental health pilot sites

An overview of the six pilot neighbourhood mental health centres aiming to provide 24/7 support as part of the wider neighbourhood health agenda. See [here](#).

Source: The NHS Alliance

Community mental health survey 2025

The results show improvement in some areas, including support while waiting for care and interactions with staff. However, overall performance of NHS community mental health services remains poor, especially for certain groups. Many people are still reporting poor experiences of contacting crisis services and the care they receive. Wider areas of a person’s life are not being supported where people would have liked this support including support with physical health, joining a group or finding work or benefits. Overall, younger people, autistic people and disabled people reported worse than average experiences of care. See [here](#).

Source: Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Supporting young people to transition into adolescent and adult services

This guidance supports services to provide developmentally appropriate care for 0 to 25-year-olds. It sets out proposed actions for integrated care boards, providers and clinical teams to enable safe and effective transition between services. If adopted by systems, this approach will improve continuity of care, health outcomes and young people’s experience. See [here](#).

Source: NHS England

People living with learning disabilities: Access to health and social care

People with a learning disability often face challenges accessing appropriate health care. Several organisations have identified people with a learning disability as having worse life expectancy on average than the population in general. Both the current and previous governments have introduced measures intended to reduce these health inequalities, including training and the use of reasonable adjustments to improve access to care. See [here](#).

Source: House of Lords

Speaking up for better care: Healthwatch’s annual report 2024/25

In our latest annual report, Healthwatch show that listening to people’s health and care experiences and giving them a voice is more important than ever. See [here](#).

Source: Healthwatch

Public satisfaction with the NHS and social care in 2025 (BSA): Results from the British Social Attitudes survey

In 2025, 26% of British adults were satisfied with how the NHS runs – a statistically significant 6 percentage point increase from 2024, and the first increase in



satisfaction since 2019. 2025 also saw the largest fall in dissatisfaction in 25 years, falling from 59% in 2024 to 51%. See [here](#).

Source: The King's Fund

10 actions the government and NHS leaders should take on NHS admin

NHS admin – how the NHS communicates with people about their appointments and care – is a fundamental aspect of a patient's access to and experience of health care. This briefing sets out 10 actions the government and health care leaders should take to improve patients' experiences of NHS admin. Although some of these actions involve changes to national policy, many can be taken forward by local leaders to make admin work better for patients in the services they manage. See [here](#).

Source: The King's Fund

Maternity services in England

This briefing gives an overview of women's experiences of maternity services in England, including disparities in the care received by women from minority ethnic groups. It provides details of investigations into maternity units at individual NHS trusts, the government-commissioned national maternity and neonatal investigation, and policies to improve care. This briefing supplements the Library paper Quality and safety of maternity care (England) which contains information on key policy documents and developments (until February 2025). See [here](#).

Source: UK Parliament

Understanding Patient Experiences and Conditions

Children spending thousands of days stuck in hospital waiting for the right support to go home, as Children's Commissioner warns of 'hidden crisis' in community and social care

Children are spending tens of thousands of days stuck in hospital when they don't need to be because the support they need to go home is not available – meaning children who desperately need hospital care are left waiting for beds. New analysis of NHS England data on the length of children's hospital stays by the Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza shows almost 70,000 children spent more than two months or more in hospital over the course of their childhood – 1,300 of whom were there for more than a year. See [press release](#), read [report](#).

Source: Children's Commissioner

A Health Needs Assessment of Women's Health in Lincolnshire

The national "Women's Health – Let's talk about it" survey received over 100,000 responses. In Lincolnshire, around 1,500 women participated in surveys and engagement on women's health (Lincolnshire ICB, 2024; Healthwatch, 2024). Locally and nationally, women consistently report the same poor experiences of the healthcare system. They feel dismissed and ignored by unknowledgeable and uninterested healthcare professionals (HCPs), and report long waits for diagnosis and specialist care. As Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board's (ICB's) women's



health engagement report concluded, a more inclusive, supportive and effective healthcare system is needed that addresses the specific needs of women. See [report](#).

Source: Lincolnshire County Council

Learning from patients – The Spring Edition of the Patient Experience Library’s quarterly magazine

How can healthcare systems learn from patients? Sometimes the answer lies in conventional mechanisms such as patient surveys and the Friends and Family Test. But sometimes learning comes from letting patients explain - in their own words and on their own terms - what matters to them. Mark Gamsu, on page 3 of this edition of The Patient Experience Library’s quarterly magazine, offers some insights from his experience of rare disease, and the point at which principles of evidence-based medicine seem to falter. His proposed solutions seem feasible and deserve consideration by NHS organisations and health charities alike. See [here](#).

Source: The Patient Experience Library

The doctor will see you... two weeks ago

Almost 1 in 4 NHS patients and carers receive appointment invitations after their scheduled appointment date, new analysis reveals – highlighting widespread administrative failure across the health service. See [here](#).

Source: The King’s Fund

Still lost in the system: the urgent need for better NHS admin

A year on from our December 2024 poll, King’s Fund’s latest research shows no improvement in people’s experiences of NHS admin. NHS admin plays a central role in shaping how people experience and perceive the NHS. Our findings point to a major opportunity for government and NHS leaders to act. See [here](#).

Source: The King’s Fund

Waiting Lists and Other Statistics

Statistics on people with a learning disability and autistic people in mental health hospitals, AT: March 2026, MHSDS: February 2026

Latest monthly statistics on people with a learning disability and autistic people in inpatient services from the Assuring Transformation (AT) collection and Mental Health Services Data Set (MHSDS). See [here](#).

Source: NHS England Digital

A&E Attendances and Emergency Admissions

The Weekly and Monthly A&E Attendances and Emergency Admissions collection collects the total number of attendances in the specified period for all A&E types, including Urgent Treatment Centres, Minor Injury Units and Walk-in Centres, and of these, the number discharged, admitted or transferred within four hours of



arrival. Also included are the number of Emergency Admissions, and any waits of over four hours for admission following decision to admit. Data are shown at provider organisation level, from NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts and Independent Sector Organisations. See [here](#).

Source: NHS England

Cancer Waiting Times

The following reports provide information and monthly data on the waiting times of people referred with suspected cancer or breast symptoms and subsequently told the outcome of their diagnosis, and treated for cancer by the NHS in England. See [here](#).

Source: NHS England