



# Patient Experience Bulletin

September 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

#### **GIRFT national report offers practical steps for improving care and support for children and young adults living with diabetes.**

Practical steps to help ensure that every child and young adult living with diabetes in England receives high-quality care and support, regardless of where they live, are outlined in GIRFT's latest national report. See [report](#).

**Source: NHS England**

#### **Introducing the Macmillan App Library for people living with cancer**

There are a growing number of different health and wellbeing apps on the market but with so many available it can be overwhelming and difficult to know which ones you can trust. This can be even more so when you are living with cancer. That's why Macmillan Cancer Support has launched a dedicated app library with independently assessed digital health tools to support people throughout their cancer experience. See [here](#).

**Source: Macmillan Cancer Support**

#### **Charity funding helps mental health patients stay active and connected**

A new project funded by Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust's charity is helping patients moving into community care keep up sports they had enjoyed as part of a therapeutic programme of care on the Trust's specialist mental health wards. See [here](#).

**Source: Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust**

#### **Physical Activity for Adults and Older Adults**

"Moving More" self-care aware fact sheet, see [here](#).

**Source: Self-Care Forum**



### **The Sick List: recommendations by patients for patients**

The Sick List is a collection of practical guides created by patients to make hospital stays, treatment appointments and recovery at home more comfortable and less stressful. The guides offer useful recommendations on everything from eye masks that effectively block out hospital lighting to toiletries that help maintain your comfort and dignity. They also highlight the often-overlooked items that can make a big difference but are rarely included on packing lists. Whether you are preparing for a hospital stay yourself or supporting someone who is, this resource provides practical advice to help make the experience easier. Recommended by the Patients Association. See [here](#).

**Source:** The Sick List

## **Carers**

### **Balancing work and unpaid care: a critical issue**

Balancing work and unpaid care: a critical issue examines the growing challenge of combining paid employment with unpaid caring responsibilities. New polling by Opinion for Carers UK finds that one in five workers is now juggling work and care. An estimated 1.1 million people have left employment to care in the past two years - equivalent to 1,500 people every day - while millions more have reduced their working hours. See [report](#).

**Source:** Carers UK

### **Every care leaver to have someone in their corner after review**

£25 million investment to help thousands more care leavers access homes with support and connection. See [press release](#).

**Source:** Department for Education and Josh MacAlister OBE MP

## **Digital Technology**

### **Why patient trust matters to technology and data in healthcare**

The Patients Association heard how patients consistently want their data used safely, ethically and transparently. This reflects their response to the MHRA's call for evidence on AI regulation, where they found that almost half of respondents (49%) believe AI has already been used in their own care, yet only one in ten (10%) say they were clearly informed about it, and two in five (39%) were told nothing at all. See [here](#).

**Source:** The Patients Association

### **The public's views on the regulation of AI in health care**

Findings from deliberative research and public polling and implications for policy. See [report](#).

**Source:** The Health Foundation



### **Chelsea and Westminster AI speeds up blood clot diagnosis**

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has found that an AI-supported ultrasound pathway can provide most patients with a clinical decision on suspected deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in less than 30 minutes. See [here](#).

**Source:** Digital Health

## **Health Literacy and Communication**

### **Fixing how the NHS communicates with patients**

Webinar tackling communication issues in the NHS. In live poll, only a third of attendees said NHS communication is generally good, with just less than half saying it varies inconsistently depending on where and who you see. See [here](#).

**Source:** Patients Association

### **Weight-loss drug users turn to social media over doctors for advice**

People using weight-loss drugs are more likely to seek advice from social media than healthcare professionals, a study involving University of Leicester researchers has found. See [here](#).

**Source:** NIHR Biomedical Research Centre

## **Health Literacy and AI**

Listen to [Podcast](#) as Chris Trudeau and Helen Osborne discuss:

- AI (Artificial Intelligence) and AI Health. What these technologies are, how they have evolved in recent years.
- Benefits (actual, and potential) of such technology.
- Risks (actual, and potential) of such technology.
- What those of us who care about health literacy can do now when it comes to AI and AI Health.

**Source:** Health Literacy Out Loud

## **National Policy and Guidance**

### **First Point of Care: A Plan for a Better NHS Front Door through Connected Primary Care**

The Government has placed primary care at the centre of its plans to shift care from hospitals into the community, move from analogue to digital services, and strengthen preventative care. Primary care acts as the front door to the NHS and access to it is not only about the speed at which people are seen, but also whether the person seeing them knows their history, whether the care is continuous, and whether their need is ultimately met. However, people across England continue to struggle to access primary care, with the same failures appearing across general practice, community pharmacy, NHS dentistry and optometry. Meeting the Governments ambitions will therefore depend upon strengthening these measures of care to ensure equitable access across the sectors. See [here](#).



**Source:** Policy Connect

**Healthwatch's response to the expansion of the Pharmacy First scheme**

Patients to get quicker treatment for migraines, acne and three other everyday conditions at pharmacies. See [here](#).

**Source:** Healthwatch

**Advice on Prescription – turning advice into a health intervention**

This is the first in a series of case studies from the Cheshire and Merseyside VCFSE Health and Care Transformation Programme, showcasing how VCFSE organisations are supporting neighbourhood health through strong partnerships with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and wider health and care systems. See [here](#).

**Source:** Voluntary Sector North West (VSNW)

**Patients to get quicker treatment for migraines, acne and 3 other everyday conditions at pharmacies**

Patients will be able to get quicker, more convenient treatment for migraines, acne and 3 other everyday conditions at hundreds of pharmacies in England from autumn, without needing to see their GP first. See [here](#).

**Source:** NHS England

**Patient Safety**

**Tracking Hospital Admission Thresholds Within Emergency Departments**

Most patients who are admitted to hospital in an emergency will have first passed through an Emergency Department (ED). For every ED patient, a clinician must decide whether admission is necessary, weighing a patient's clinical needs against the availability of resources to manage those needs, either in hospital or in the community. These individual decisions - to admit or not - can be combined, at any level, to create an effective threshold for admission. An admission threshold affects the rate of emergency admissions and, in turn, influences hospital bed occupancy rates. See [here](#).

**Source:** The Strategy Unit

**Learning from investigations where intrapartum care has been given at home**

A new national learning report has been published setting out a number of areas in which care could be improved for women receiving intrapartum care at home. The report provides a series of safety observations and prompts for NHS trusts on topics such as staffing availability, training and guidance, and communications between different care professionals. See [report](#).

**Source:** Maternity & Newborn Safety Investigations (MNSI)



### **No second chances: What Complaints Teach Us About End of Life Care**

This report draws on what Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman has learned from investigating complaints about end of life care in adult social care. They've published it with a single purpose: to help ensure that when people are dying, and when their families, friends and those close to them most need support, that support is as good as it can be. See [here](#).

**Source:** Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

### **Patient Experiences**

#### **The future of patient feedback**

Led by The King's Fund partnering with National Voices, Edge Health and The Foundation, and commissioned by NHS England, this project aims to redesign how national feedback is collected, analysed and shared so it provides a clearer picture of people's experiences and helps drive improvements in care. See [here](#).

**Source:** The King's Fund

#### **Adult inpatient survey 2025**

This survey looks at the experiences of people who stayed at least one night in hospital as an inpatient. People were eligible to take part in the survey if they stayed in hospital for at least one night during November 2025 and were aged 16 years or over at the time of their stay. See [here](#). Local Trust [results](#).

**Source:** Care Quality Commission (CQC)

#### **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

#### **Are we failing people with sight loss in healthcare?**

People with sight loss have told us how inaccessible information, poorly designed environments and a lack of staff awareness can make it harder to access healthcare safely and independently. See [blog](#).

**Source:** HealthWatch

#### **New report finds families face a postcode lottery in children's palliative care**

Too many families of children with serious illness may be missing out on the care that helps them spend precious time together at home, Together for Short Lives new report has found. See [here](#).



**Source:** Together for Short Lives

**Children in crisis: Mental health pressures in emergency departments - quick read report**

Published in September 2026, our quick read presents data about A&E attendances among children and young people between 2019 and 2025 in England. It includes insights from clinicians, children and families and our recommendations for improving mental health support and care pathways. See [here](#).

**Source:** Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH)

**Mental health care in A&E: how different is it for children and young people?**

While most people attend A&E for a physical injury or emergency, a small group do so because of a mental health reason. With emergency departments in England expected to provide mental health liaison services and ensure that patients are seen by a liaison psychiatry team within an hour from referral, Stuti Bagri examines whether there's a difference in how quickly children and young people are seen in comparison to adults. See [here](#).

**Source:** Nuffield Trust

**Lived experiences of Roma people in England and Wales: 2025**

Explores experiences of Roma people in England and Wales, including migration and settlement in the UK, access to services, identities and sense of belonging. See [here](#).

**Source:** Office for National Statistics (ONS)

**Service Delivery**

**Managing the flow of patients through hospital from A&E**

NHS accident and emergency (A&E) services for urgent and emergency health needs are provided by around 200 organisations such as hospitals or walk in centres in England (as at March 2026). A&Es are classified into three main types, depending on the severity of the health conditions that they can treat, with many areas providing a combination of A&E types. Type 1 A&Es treat the most complex and urgent cases. See [report](#).

**Source:** National Audit Office

**Three quarters of A&E staff witness violence and aggression at work at least once a week, as "Safe to Care" campaign launched**

Around three in four UK Emergency Department staff have told the Royal College of Emergency Medicine that they experience or witness violence and aggression in their department on a daily or weekly basis. That's according to new survey data, revealed as part of the launch of RCEM's Safe to Care campaign. See [here](#).

**Source:** Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM)



### **BRIEFING: The Impact of Extreme Heat on Patients**

Following anecdotal feedback that this summer's heatwaves were particularly challenging in Wales and England, RCN surveyed their RCN membership in these two nations. They asked about the impact of extreme heat on members' ability to provide care and the impact of the heat on the people they care for. This briefing summarises the findings and sets out the RCN's analysis and recommendations. See [here](#).

**Source:** Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

### **Closing the Mortality Gap: Tackling health inequalities for people living with severe mental illness**

This report shines a light on the complex drivers behind the mortality gap - like fragmented care, the impact of living with a mental illness, stigma and poverty - and sets out clear, practical steps for change. Rethink Mental Illness have worked with people severely affected by mental illness, health professionals, and community partners to develop solutions that work. See [here](#).

**Source:** Rethink Mental Illness

### **Waiting Lists and Other Data**

#### **Beyond the waiting list: what patients told The Patients Association about accessing care**

Webinar asking attendees to name the biggest barrier they face accessing care or being involved in decisions about it. Long waiting times, views not being valued, and location and transport were the most common responses. When two of the top three biggest concerns are not clinical, it shows that patients experience of care is much broader than just clinical outcomes. See [here](#).

**Source:** The Patients Association