

Healthwatch is the independent consumer watchdog set up to collect information and represent the views of the public on health and social care. Healthwatch is here to give patients, service users and local people an opportunity to influence and challenge decision making about local health and social care services.

## NHS complaints revolution 'needed'

A recent review of the NHS complaints system has said “The culture of delay and denial over NHS complaints in England must come to an end”



MP Ann Clwyd

The government commissioned inquiry led by veteran **MP Ann Clwyd** said too many patients found the current approach unresponsive and confusing.

It said it was putting the health service on a year's notice to improve accountability and transparency. To achieve this, the review has got 12 key organisations to sign up to a series of pledges. These include:

- The Nursing and Midwifery Council to include new duties over complaints handling in its code of conduct.
- A pledge from Health Education England to develop an e-learning course to improve training.
- NHS England promising to work with local managers to hold hospitals and other providers to account.
- The Care Quality Commission to place a strong focus on complaints in its new hospital inspection regime.
- Hospitals will also be expected to publish annual reports in "plain English" on complaints.

Ms Clwyd was asked to lead it after she broke down in a BBC interview last December while describing the poor care her late husband had received. **Continued on page 2.**

Ms Clwyd was sent more than 2,500 letters and emails from people describing similar problems and dissatisfaction with the way complaints are handled. They said they were often unaware of how to make complaints or of the identities of staff they wanted to complain about. They also said they feared reprisals if they did raise concerns.

**Sharon Grant, Interim Chair for Healthwatch Haringey** was an aide to Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP on the Review of the NHS Complaints System. Sharon said:

One of our priorities in Haringey must be to ensure that our hospitals listen to patients and their families, respond to their concerns and learn from any mistakes and shortcomings in services. It should be easy to make yourself heard, and quick to get a response when things go wrong.

We know that this is often not the case so Healthwatch Haringey will be pressing for improvements in the coming months, and we hope that people will tell us about their experience of complaining.

### Open hospitals

As well as the steps mentioned on page 1, it said relatively simple measures, such as providing patients with paper and a pen beside their beds and displaying the names of staff on duty, could also help.

Ms Clwyd said: "When I made public the circumstances of my own husband's death last

year, I was shocked by the deluge of correspondence from people whose experience of hospitals was heart-breaking. It made me determined to do my best to get change in the system."

"The days of delay, deny and defend must end and hospitals must become open, learning organisations."

**Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt** welcomed the report and said: "I want to see a complete transformation in hospitals' approach to complaints so that they become valued as vital learning tools."

**Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham** said: "The NHS has an unfortunate tendency to push complainants away and pull down the shutters. That has to change."

### Call for advice service

The report comes as the health ombudsman calls for a 24-hour advice service for unhappy patients. Writing in the BBC News website's 'Scrubbing Up' column, ombudsman Dame Julie Mellor said: "Too often we hear of patients not having the confidence to raise a concern on a hospital ward."

She said patients and carers should be able to access advice on how to raise a concern "24 hours a day, seven days a week", and that "every patient, carer and relative would have the opportunity to raise an issue in person, by email or over the phone".

The report concluded there had been a "decade of failure" and called for a revolution in complaints handling.

**You can download the report here:**

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-hospitals-complaints-system-review](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-hospitals-complaints-system-review)

## Do you have a **complaint** about local health and social care services?

If you have a complaint about the services you received at a **Hospital** contact:

### **Whittington Hospital**

Tel: 020 7288 5551

Email: [whh-tr.WhittHealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.WhittHealthPALS@nhs.net)

### **Chase Farm Hospital**

Tel: 020 8216 4924

Email: [bcfpals@nhs.net](mailto:bcfpals@nhs.net)

### **North Middlesex University Hospital:**

Tel: 020 8887 3172

If you have a complaint about **GP's, Dentists, Pharmacies** or **Opticians** contact:

The service directly and let them know that you'd like to make a complaint.

If you have a complaint about **Mental Health Services** contact:

The Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust Patient Experience Team

Tel: 020 8702 3932

Email: [complaints@beh-mht.nhs.net](mailto:complaints@beh-mht.nhs.net)

If you have a complaint about community services - **Health Centre's, Physiotherapy** or **Podiatry** services contact:

Whittington Health PALS Team

Tel: 020 7288 5551

Email: [whh-tr.WhittHealthPALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.WhittHealthPALS@nhs.net)

If you need help making a complaint contact **Voiceability** who run the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

Tel: 0300 330 5454

Email: [nhscomplaints@voiceability.org](mailto:nhscomplaints@voiceability.org)

## focus on addiction...

## Haringey Family Support Group

The Haringey family support group provides practical and emotional support to families, carers and friends affected by someone else's drug and/or alcohol use. The group was set up to fill a gap in support services for families, and has become a valued place for families to talk, share and draw strength from each other.

Supporting someone who misuses drugs and/or alcohol is a huge journey for the whole family but there is often very little support. Confidentiality issues can prevent workers from finding family members who need help so families can be left alone to support a loved one through the process of treatment and rehabilitation and the after-effects of addiction. They can face many day-to-day problems such as debt and childcare issues and emotional issues linked to broken relationships and loss of trust.

The support group gives families strength to face the things each day may bring and to share their feelings without judgement. Family support helps those affected overcome isolation and loneliness and allows families and carers to deal with their own health and care needs, which in turns helps them to provide better support for the loved one who is receiving treatment.

If you are affected by addiction and would like to attend this support group, please get in touch with **Karen Wright**, the Family Drugs/Alcohol Inclusion Worker, on **020 8885 6195**

## What have people been telling Healthwatch Haringey?

Healthwatch Haringey continues to communicate with local people at public meetings, on the telephone, in emails and through its signposting service - directing local people looking for information about services, or ways of making a complaint. It continues to gather feedback and is now dealing with the issues that are affecting patients, the public and service users.

### ■ Support for deaf people

The Engagement Team recently carried out a focus group with Haringey Deaf Services. People at the meeting reported a lack of access to BSL interpreters for deaf people using local health and social care services. Concerns were also raised over the lack of training for frontline staff to support service users who are deaf.

The Floating Support Officer from Deaf Services said it would be very useful to have the contact details of the translation/BSL person in local hospitals and the contact details of the Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) so that they can book interpreters.

### ■ MIND - HWH Focus Group

Healthwatch Haringey gave a presentation about what Healthwatch is and what it will do. People were asked to give feedback on their experiences of using health and social care services which Healthwatch Haringey recorded and logged. A common complaint was one of poor care and the difficulties of making a complaint. Many service users didn't know who to contact and if they did they didn't receive a response.

### ■ Health inequalities in Haringey

Local health inequality is a common theme that comes up when Healthwatch Haringey talks to local health and social care service users. It carried out a focus group at the local 'Personal Budget Group' and issues were raised once again. This time it was with specific regard to the difference in service that people receive in the east and west of the borough.

Healthwatch Haringey is sharing this information and feedback with the people who plan and run services in order to help them work better. If you need to complain see page 3.

### Have you been affected by any of these issues?

If you have experienced any of the issues detailed above Healthwatch Haringey wants to hear from you. Please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/nvh9baj> and tell us about your experience.

### SMS 999 service for deaf people

Deaf people now have an alternative to TypeTalk and dialling 999 for emergency services. It requires registration, which can be done from a mobile phone or via the internet. Full details of the service can be found at [www.emergencysms.org.uk](http://www.emergencysms.org.uk). The SMS number is 999.

The SMS message needs to say: what service, why, where, e.g. ambulance, man unconscious, jct Oxford Street and Regent Street.

## Local interpreting services UPDATE

In our October issue we highlighted concerns over the lack of interpreters to support local people who require them when attending appointments.

Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have kindly provided an update: Language Line offer contracts for face to face signing, telephonic interpreting and written translation. All Haringey GPs continue to have access to Language Line for telephonic interpreting for their patients. In the past, this was funded by primary care trusts, which now no longer exist. Responsibility for the Language Line contracts has recently transferred to NHS England [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk).

Haringey residents also have access to interpreting services for appointments at local hospital and community services e.g. Whittington Health and North Middlesex University Hospital. Interpreting services for these appointments are arranged by the trusts themselves. **More information for patients can be found via:**

- Whittington Health interpreting web page - [www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=9376](http://www.whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=9376)
- North Middlesex University Hospital PALS service - 020 8887 3172

HWH will now carry out a survey to identify which GPs are using Language Line and the ones who are not. We will provide an update in our next issue.

## WELLHAPPY App

**Wellhappy** is a free health app for young people aged 12-25 in London. It allows people to search for over a thousand local support services including mental health, sexual health and substance misuse services.

So whether you want to find mental health services in Haringey, smoking services in Southwark or to talk about depression in Dagenham, WellHappy can point you in the right direction!

**WellHappy** contains lots of frequently asked questions that you may find yourself asking. It also contains a comprehensive jargon buster covering each main area to help young people navigate the sometimes confusing language of the health world. A list of helplines for everything from alcohol issues to sexual health advice is available in the app.

The app is now available here

[www.myhealth.london.nhs.uk/health-communities/young-people/download](http://www.myhealth.london.nhs.uk/health-communities/young-people/download)



# Haringey mosque opens its doors

A Haringey mosque recently opened its doors to the community to help shake off negative misconceptions of Islam.

More than 400 residents visited the London Islamic Cultural Society, in Wightman Road, for the annual open day and were given a guided tour of the traditional purpose-built mosque with a special opportunity to observe prayer.



Healthwatch Haringey ran an information and participation stall at the event encouraging members of the local Muslim community to share their experiences of health and social care services and to get involved with Healthwatch Haringey so that it can help to improve the services they use.



**Sharon Grant, Interim Chair of Healthwatch Haringey, said:**

“Healthwatch Haringey wants to hear from everyone in our vibrant and diverse community, and we’ll be present locally wherever people are gathered in large numbers - and the many hundreds gathered for this event provided the perfect opportunity!”

Real Impact, a Haringey-based youth organisation made up of young Muslims, delivered an inspired presentation on the meaning of terrorism, making reference to well-respected figures such as Gandhi and Nelson Mandela who, ironically, had both been labelled terrorists at some point in their lives.

**Derma Ioannou, Director of Haringey Race & Equality Council, said:** “There was a great turn-out and it was a really good day. People really got involved and the presentation by Real Impact was refreshing. Not only did they talk about the negative impacts terrorism has had on young Muslims they also took a look at the concept of terrorism on the whole. I think everyone enjoyed it.”

## Future local meetings in public

Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group  
(CCG) Governing Body  
[www.haringeyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.haringeyccg.nhs.uk)  
30th January 2014, 1.30pm  
Council Chamber  
Haringey Civic Centre  
High Road, Wood Green N22

Haringey Health and Wellbeing Board  
<http://tinyurl.com/ofzmrrf>  
7th January 2014, 1.30pm  
(subject to change)  
Venue to be confirmed

# Choose well this winter

A new 'Choose Well' campaign has just been launched in Haringey which aims to provide local residents with information on how to choose the right NHS service this winter.

The 'Choose Well' campaign, run by NHS Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), aims to help residents understand the range of health services available to them, and make choices to enable them to get the right care for their needs in the right place. This will also help keep services such as A&E free to treat emergency cases.

The campaign gives people more detail on when it's best to use self-treatment, pharmacists, GP services, urgent care centres, A&E and the new NHS 111 phone number to help them 'choose well'.

A series of campaign materials have been produced which will be widely distributed around Haringey over the coming months. The materials can also be viewed online at [www.haringeyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.haringeyccg.nhs.uk). If you would like us to send you some materials, like posters, leaflets and wallet-sized 'choose well' cards, please contact: [commissioningsupport@nelcsu.nhs.uk](mailto:commissioningsupport@nelcsu.nhs.uk) or call 020 3688 1081.

## Haringey Personal Budget Users Forum

**Advice Line: 07719 486645**

If you receive a Direct Payment to pay for your social care or continuing health needs and you would like some advice or information related to your Direct Payment please phone the advice line.

The advice line is available on the following days:

**Monday 10am to 4pm**

**Wednesday 10am to 4pm**

**Friday 10am to 4pm**

**Excluding Bank Holidays**



 Telephone: 020 8888 0579

 Email: [info@healthwatchharingey.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchharingey.org.uk)

 Visit us: [www.healthwatchharingey.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchharingey.org.uk)

 Follow us: @HWHaringey

 Write to us:  
Healthwatch Haringey  
14 Turnpike Lane  
London N8 0PT

## Friends of Healthwatch Haringey

Everyone who uses local health and social care services or cares for someone using these services can get involved. Friends of Healthwatch Haringey receive news and information via email and are regularly asked for feedback on the planning and development of local health and social care services. Local organisations can also become friends of Healthwatch Haringey.

If you are interested please get in touch using the contact information above.



Look out for leaflets and posters!



Haringey Race  
and Equality  
Council

