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# Insight Bulletin

November 2024

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**If you would like a paper copy of this document or require it in an alternative format, please get in touch with us.**

## This bulletin: at a glance

### Hot topics

In this bulletin we are focussing on 4 key areas:

- [Thanks and praise](#)
- [Medication confusion](#)
- [Lack of compassion shown in hospitals](#)
- [Financial confusion and concerns causing stress for many](#)

You can also find out more about the [history of our Insight Bulletin](#), as well as how you can [have your say](#) on it and the [Government's 10 Year Health Plan](#).

### Who have we been hearing from?

Since our last bulletin we've heard from **106** people across Surrey, via our Helpdesk or during engagement events in the community.

- **25%** of the feedback relates to GP practices
- **34%** of the feedback relates to hospitals
- The majority of the remaining feedback relates to pharmacy, social care and mental health services
- Of those willing to share, **49%** were aged over 50
- Of those willing to share, **38%** had a long term condition.

## Thanks and praise

**Some people have shared really positive hospital experiences with us this month.**

People have praised the help and advice that they have been given, noting the importance of knowledgeable, supportive staff who also show kindness and empathy:

“I have seen the nurse and the doctor in outpatients. They are lovely. The nurse wanted me to have a blood test so I had it done there and then. They are really helpful. I have also been to the pharmacy, they are also very good.”

**221989, Farnham resident**

“The staff that I have interacted with prior, during and after [my hospital procedure] were fantastic and knowledgeable and supportive to my wife. The lady who gave us the advice after the surgery was excellent. When you are a patient you don't know what is a big problem and a little problem, but they were always happy to help. They also helped liaise with the correct teams to get the issue resolved. They were kind and considerate in the way that they talked to us as well.”

**222567, Guildford and Waverley resident**

People have also shared experiences of excellent clinical care.

“I have nothing to complain about. I was in the ambulatory emergency care units (AECU) for IV antibiotics and I cannot fault them. I was in for 7 days straight and the care I received was 100%.”

**222337, Surrey Heath resident**

## Medication confusion

**In September the Government launched their Primary Care Patient Safety Strategy which has recommendations to deal with diagnosis delays, medication errors and referral delays.**

We've heard from several people in Surrey this month who have been left feeling confused about their medication due to a lack of clear direction and explanation from their clinician.

"I am trying to get my medication from my GP practice. They reject my prescription all the time. Without this medication I can't have a normal life. My breathing and my heart rate are so bad without this medication. I had a stroke in 2019 too. I need to have this medication all the time to prevent another stroke. I don't know what to do with my GP and health centre about it."

**223139, Woking resident**

"My brother and I are on medication which can't be changed without the support of a specialist, however our GP decided to change it without telling us, which caused a big issue on Friday. They have resolved the issue for myself, but not for my brother yet, but he is going to sort it out today."

**222384, Guildford and Waverley resident**

"[The GP] didn't seem interested and just said to me "what do you want, a referral, drugs, what" and was just flicking round her computer screen and clicking down a drop down menu over and over.... So I explained I wasn't sure what the solution was as I need my pain meds for my back, but they could be causing the issue, the drugs to help it could cause further issues so I really didn't know what was best to do. I hoped they would advise me on a plan as I really didn't know what was best."

**222957, Surrey Heath resident**

## Lack of compassion shown in hospitals

This month people have told us that they feel that there can be a lack of compassion, care and patience shown towards people in hospital. This is particularly true for elderly people and can reveal itself most notably during the discharge process.

“There is little consideration given to supporting patients with any form of dementia, usually elderly. Staff spend too much time looking at their screens versus hands on care – comfort blankets, pillows, drinks, all can make a huge difference. Discharge, especially overnight, if not mobile, is terrible. System between A&E and patient transport for this group does not work, serving to keep beds full and people out of their familiar surroundings.”

**223398, North West Surrey resident**

“I am having a horrific time with [the hospital]. My mum has been in there for a month... I was going in and washing her, dressing her etc. and found a sore on her leg which they had not noticed. On [the ward] the medical team discharged her to be fit to come home, the only reason why she didn't go home was because she had caught Covid. I went in on the late afternoon, she didn't have any sheets on her bed and she was unconscious in the chair, but they didn't notice.”

**222321, Surrey Heath resident**

People are particularly frustrated when they don't feel listened to.

“I have been here several times so I am familiar with the process. I can't sit down due to the pain.... I am thinking about getting a private consultation and going to a different hospital who will solve the problem. I can't do anything – work or look after my kids. I don't want to be dismissed again I don't feel like I have been listened to.”

**223352, Elmbridge resident**

## Financial confusion and concerns causing stress for many

People have told us about their financial concerns around health and care services. In many cases it is the poor communication around changes to funding arrangements – and subsequent confusion – that leads to particular stress.

“Mum has a traumatic injury, she goes to Headway which is a social group. She has had a financial assessment recently and [they have] seen that she has some inheritance and is receiving benefits so they are now asking for her to pay for the past 4 years of going to Headways. Mum was as upfront as she could be about her financial situation but she has a brain injury, so sometimes she can struggle with processing information...The social worker called her up and told her all of this over the phone and it really upset my mum. She was hysterical and I had to leave work to calm her down.”

**222585, Surrey resident**

“Mum is 95, has Alzheimer’s and vascular dementia. She has had 24/7 care for 4 years since she broke her hip. Recently she has been needing to be hoisted out of her bed. She is incontinent, she can’t walk, she can’t feed herself and her food needs to be pureed. We have been self funding for the past 4 years, and we are now well below the threshold. There have been 3 assessments that have been conducted by adult social care. Adult social care have now said that she needs carers 4 times a day, leaving her alone for the rest of the day. The social worker said that they can leave water for her, even though she can’t lift a cup. I am concerned that she would have a mini stroke, while she is left.”

**222039, Epsom and Ewell resident**

“[our son] was receiving help getting to college, he was also having personal assistants (PAs). They turned around to my wife and said when he is discharged he won't be getting any more help. He won't be able to have PA's and they won't be able to get any mileage. They have now said that he needs to go in to a supported living facility, which we said we didn't want to do. I am not happy to talk to this woman, there is no reason why they have stopped the money. We don't have the money to cover the cost of petrol.”

**222782, Tandridge resident**

## Have your say! Our Insight Bulletin and the Government's 10 year plan

### The Healthwatch Surrey Insight Bulletin

#### A brief history of the Insight Bulletin

Our Insight bulletin began in 2020 as part of the COVID-19 response. We were no longer able to talk to people out in the community, but an increasing number contacted us via our Helpdesk to share their thoughts and concerns. So the Insight bulletin was born as a vehicle to inform our system partners about how the pandemic was affecting local residents. During the crisis we were publishing weekly bulletins, reflecting the speed at which the situation was evolving. As things returned to normal – and we were able to commence face to face engagements once again – we reverted to monthly bulletins but didn't want to lose this important insights sharing mechanism all together! We haven't covered COVID-19 for a while, but the bulletin is intended to provide an overview of what residents have talked to us most about over the last month.

#### What can we do better?

Is the Insight bulletin too long? Or too short? What works well? And what doesn't? How could it be improved? The Insight bulletin is written for you, so we'd love for YOU to tell us what you think of it! Please take a few minutes to complete our survey – [Insight bulletin – smart survey](#).



If you'd like a paper copy of the survey, please let us know and we can send one out to you.



## The NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England



Experiences, views and ideas submitted to the new online platform ([change.nhs.uk](https://change.nhs.uk)) will help to shape the Government's 10 Year Health Plan to deliver the mission to build an NHS fit for the future.

This is the biggest national conversation about the future of the NHS since its birth, with NHS staff, experts and members of the public all being asked to contribute.

So, have you had your say yet? Visit [Your ideas for change | Change NHS](#) to find out more. Accessible versions (including BSL and EasyRead) are available via this link: [Accessibility | Change NHS](#).

## Event invitation Reminder: Find out more about co-production

### Co-production Lunch and learn

Our Luminus colleagues are running **2 free online lunch and learn sessions** next month, exploring the key elements needed for making co-production a success. The first 'Understanding co-production' took place on Tuesday 12 November, but there is still time to book for the second one, which is about Co-production in practice.

Aimed at people working in health, social care, public services or university research roles who would like to co-produce with people from a range of communities, the sessions are run by Becki Meakin, Research Manager at Luminus.

Co-production in practice: Tuesday 3 December, 12 – 1pm

[Eventbrite booking page](#)



If you have any queries, please contact [becki.meakin@luminus-cic.uk](mailto:becki.meakin@luminus-cic.uk)

## Sharing our insight and raising concerns

Whilst this bulletin accurately reflects what we hear from the individuals we speak to, we are aware that it may not be representative of everyone's views of a particular service. Multiple references to a specific service may be due to where our community engagement has recently taken place.

If we hear a case of concern regarding patient safety, we immediately signpost the sharer to the appropriate body and escalate the case with the provider/commissioner. All appropriate information and signposting has already been given.

We share our wider themes with Trusts, Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), Surrey County Council, Public Health, Care Quality Commission (CQC), and in various boards and groups across Surrey.

If you would like more information or examples of what people have shared with us, please get in touch with us.

## Community engagement

Below are details of our upcoming engagement sessions where we visit venues in local communities to listen to what people think about local health and care services, and to ask specific questions related to [our priorities](#). We also provide information and signposting regarding health and social care. Each month we focus on a different area of the county. Last month this was Surrey Heath and through October we'll be focusing on Guildford and Waverley. Throughout the year, we also attend events across Surrey to raise awareness of our work.

Date	Place	Time	Open to	Surrey Area
05/11/2024	Planning for your Future event SCC and SAUK	12.30pm - 2.30pm	Public	North West Surrey
05/11/2024	Oakleaf, Walnut Tree Close Guildford	10am - 12 noon	Public	Guildford & Waverley
07/11/2024	Working Together for Woking Dementia Cafe	10am - 2pm	Public	North West Surrey
09/11/2024	St George's Parish Room, Ashtead	10.30 - 12 noon	Group	Surrey Downs
18/11/2024	Glenlyn GP surgery	10.30am-12.30pm	Public	Surrey Downs
21/11/2024	St Catherine's Hospice	9am - 3pm	Private	East Surrey
28/11/2024	Planning for your Future event SCC and SAUK	12 noon - 2pm	Public	North East Hants & Farnham
09/12/2024	Planning for your Future event SCC and SAUK	11am - 1pm	Public	Surrey Downs

**Please note: these dates may be subject to change.**

To share an experience with us, or for information and signposting about health and social care, people can also contact our Helpdesk in the following ways:

Phone: 0303 303 0023

SMS (text only): 07592 787 533

Email: [enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk)

Share your feedback via our website:

<https://www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk/feedback-centre/>

## About Healthwatch Surrey

Healthwatch Surrey champions the voice of local people to shape, improve and get the best from NHS, health and social care services. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure decision makers listen to the experiences of local people.

We passionately believe that listening and responding to local people's experiences is vital to create health and social care services that meet the needs of people in Surrey. We seek out people's experiences of health and care services, particularly from people whose voices are seldom heard, who might be at risk of health inequalities and whose needs are not met by current services. We share our findings publicly and with service providers and commissioners to influence and challenge current provision and future plans.

We also provide reliable and trustworthy information and signposting about local health and social care services to help people get the support they need.

## Our distribution list

If you would like to be added to or removed from the distribution list for this Insight Bulletin, please contact our Communications Lead  
[vicky.rushworth@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk](mailto:vicky.rushworth@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk)



We are committed to the quality of our information.  
Every three years we perform an audit so that we can be certain of this.

## Luminus

The Healthwatch Surrey service is run by Luminus Insight CIC, known as Luminus.

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