

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Patient Participation Group update

27 March 2023

Welcome to the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Patient Participation Groups update

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Share your NHS patient experiences

We think it is important that people can share their experiences of the NHS in their own words.

There have been lots of changes and challenges happening in the NHS due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020. It is now more than ever, important for the ICB to get an understanding of what impact these changes have had on people and where improvements need to be made.

By sharing your experiences of the NHS since March 2020, you can help health care professionals and the ICB to understand what was good, what was bad and what would have made your experience better.

How to share your NHS experience - There are various ways you can share your experiences. Please see below:

- **Online form** - You can tell us your about your NHS experience by following this [link](#) to a short survey. The full survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PEXNHS>
- **By telephone or video call** - Contact the engagement team at hw.engage@nhs.net to arrange to speak to someone on the telephone or by video call.

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Reminder – Pre-election Period

There are a number of local elections due to take place across Herefordshire and Worcestershire on Thursday 4 May 2023. This will mean that all local and national public sector organisations, including the NHS, will enter into the pre-election period (previously referred to as ‘Purdah’) during March, and ending after the election results have been confirmed. This will restrict any activity that could be seen as influencing the political agenda and will include public engagement activity. Therefore, ICB engagement with patients and members of the public during this time will be limited.

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Local health campaigns and news

NHS urge people not to ignore the symptoms of abdominal and urological cancers

Health Leaders in Herefordshire and Worcestershire are encouraging people to see their GP if they have persistent tummy troubles, such as bloating or a change in you bowel movements for 3 weeks or more, as they could be early signs of serious conditions such as bowel, ovarian and pancreatic cancer. Similarly, anyone who finds blood in their pee or poo - even just once- should book an appointment with their Doctor, as it may be a symptom of cancer.

The number of people being sent for urgent cancer checks by their GP has been at record levels since March 2021, and the latest annual data shows that around 142,000 people were diagnosed with cancers in the abdominal area or urological cancers in England. Despite this some people who are suffering with abdominal or urological symptoms may be reluctant to visit their GP. They may be embarrassed about their symptoms, concerned that they might be wasting their doctor’s time, or they may just put their symptoms down to getting older.

While it’s probably nothing serious, anyone who experiences any of the symptoms above should contact their GP practice, because the sooner they seek medical advice the easier it will be to treat if there is something wrong.

Dr Will Taylor, Medical Director for NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire said:

“If you have noticed blood in your pee or poo or a change in your bowel habits lasting three weeks or longer, don’t ignore these symptoms. They might not be due to serious illness but getting them checked is essential.

“Please don’t delay, contact your GP practice for advice. If it is cancer or another serious problem, the earlier it is investigated the higher the chance of successful treatment.”

When you contact your GP practice you may initially receive a telephone call to discuss the problem with a clinician. They will then arrange a face to face appointment or further tests if required. If necessary they may refer you to a hospital.

More information on cancer signs and symptoms can be found here:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cancer/symptoms/>

NHS is urging women to book cervical screening as a third don't take up vital offer

Health leaders across Herefordshire and Worcestershire are urging those eligible to book their cervical screening, which can help stop cancer before it starts.

Women and people with a cervix aged 25-64 are eligible for cervical screening every three years, and are urged to book an appointment at their GP practice if they missed their last one, with nearly a third (around 4.6 million in England), not taking up their latest test. Those registered as male will need to request an appointment from their GP or a local sexual health clinic.

Two women die every day from cervical cancer in England. Yet it is one of the most preventable cancers and getting screened can help stop it before it starts. It has been estimated that in England, cervical screening prevents 70% of cervical cancer deaths and that if everyone attended screening regularly, 83% of cervical cancer deaths could be prevented.

Dr Will Taylor, Medical Director for NHS Herefordshire and

Worcestershire said: 'For most, cervical screening tests are not painful. But if you are worried that you may find the test uncomfortable, remember you are in control and can ask your clinician to stop at any time. Cervical screening takes only a few minutes but can save your life. Don't delay in contacting your GP or local sexual health clinic to book your screening if you are eligible'

Learn more about cervical cancer screening on the NHS website here: www.nhs.uk/cervicalscreening

Pharmacy opening times – Easter Bank Holiday weekend

There will be a change in opening times for some NHS services, including GP practices and pharmacies, with some closures over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend. Pharmacy open times can be found here [NHS England and NHS Improvement Midlands » Bank Holiday pharmacy opening times](#)

Local health news links

- NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICS: <https://www.hwics.org.uk/news/latest-news>
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust: <https://www.hacw.nhs.uk/news>
- Wye Valley NHS Trust: <https://www.wyevalley.nhs.uk/news-events/trust-newsroom.aspx>
- Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust: <https://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk/news-and-media/in-the-news>

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Engagement Links

- Current Engagement opportunities: <https://www.hwics.org.uk/get-involved>

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Best wishes,

The engagement team

The Engagement Team can be contacted by emailing: hw.engage@nhs.net Please email if you wish to unsubscribe from this mailing list. NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB holds your details confidentially and will not share them with a third party. It is important for the ICB to ensure the details we hold are accurate, it is your responsibility to ensure that the details provided are accurate and that you keep us informed of any changes in the future. If there are any contact detail changes please notify us by using the email address above.

