

Having experienced one of the coldest winters in the last decade, we hope you've been able to keep warm these past couple of months. Healthwatch Hillingdon strives to keep all Hillingdon residents informed, and the Winter 2022/2023 Newsletter aims to keep you up-to-date with our latest events, key developments in the local area, and the services available to you. With volunteering opportunities available, we look forward to seeing some new faces join us. At Healthwatch Hillingdon, we hope that you are safe and remain in the best of health as we approach the warmer months.

## Pass it on...

Please forward this newsletter to your friends, family, and colleagues.

Join us and subscribe to Healthwatch Hillingdon's quarterly newsletter, to keep up to date with our latest events and the NHS Services that are available to you.

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## Healthwatch Hillingdon Bulletin

### ► Become a Board Member



Healthwatch Hillingdon's work has seen many achievements:

- Created greater access to knee operations across North West London,
- Helped to improve children and young people's mental wellbeing,
- Influenced changes to hospital discharge and community care,
- Provided senior strategic challenge to service delivery and commissioning,
- Given Hillingdon residents a strong voice to speak up.

We are looking for new Board members, to help us build on our proven record of success:

- Do you want to play an active part in changing your community?
- Join a successful team of like-minded people?
- Use your skills to improve people's lives?
- Champion a condition close to your heart?
- Experience new areas and learn something new?
- Keep your mind active and meet new people?
- Shape and influence future care services in Hillingdon?

If you have a passion to make a difference; want to help improve care services for now and the future; then this is the opportunity for you.

Contact us today to find out more!

**Telephone:** Lisa Taylor, Managing Director - 01895 272997

**Email:** [lisa@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk](mailto:lisa@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk)



### ► Join us as a Volunteer



**Do you live, work, or study in Hillingdon? Do you have a few hours to spare each month to volunteer for a local charity? Then why not volunteer with us?**

Healthwatch Hillingdon is a health and social care champion for people who use health and social care services. We are here to ensure that people who use these services have a say in how they are run.

Volunteering is at the heart of what we do, so we are always on the lookout for volunteers to join our small and friendly team.

There are many ways to get involved - from helping to run a stall at public events to creating digital content for our social media channels.

Volunteering with Healthwatch Hillingdon is not just a great way to meet new people and gain valuable work experience, but you will also be helping to give a voice to people who use health and social care services.

To find out more about volunteering with Healthwatch Hillingdon, email [office@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk) or call us on 01895 272997.

# Latest Services in Hillingdon

## ▶ Hillingdon Warm Welcome Spaces



With increasing cost-of-living pressures this winter, libraries and other faith and community buildings across Hillingdon are offering residents a free, warm and welcoming place to visit during the colder winter days.

While each space offers something a little different, visitors will be offered a warm and friendly place to enjoy some company, buy a hot drink and get help and advice on staying warm and healthy during the winter.

In addition, local Pharmacists are also working with Warm Welcome Centres across Hillingdon to provide regular wellbeing sessions that support the borough's residents to stay healthy and well this winter, and beyond, as well as drop-in sessions at the libraries with guests advising on how they can better insulate their home.



Drop into a participating Warm Welcome Centre to meet your local Pharmacist and receive:

- A free blood pressure check.
- Advice and guidance on vaccinations, such as those for flu and COVID-19.
- General advice on health and wellbeing.

- Support with achieving a healthy lifestyle, such as with weight management and giving up smoking.
- Advice on managing your medication.
- Information about the range of health services pharmacies offer.

Hot drinks are available for purchase inside the libraries, and they also provide free Wi-Fi, along with access to computers for all visitors.

Click here to find [your nearest Warm Welcome Centre](#) or to learn more about the [Health & Wellness sessions](#).

## ▶ H4All Wellness Directory

H4All (a charitable organisation made up of Age UK Hillingdon Harrow & Brent, DASH, Carers Trust Hillingdon, Harlington Hospice and Hillingdon Mind) has published its Winter Wellness Directory.

With the cost-of-living crisis impacting many households across the UK, H4All hopes that this comprehensive guide will help people navigate various challenges and stay well throughout the colder months.

The guide has been designed to provide helpful advice and tips on how you can manage your finances, with ideas on how to reduce outgoings and manage debt if needed.

You can access and download the directory [here](#).



## Service of the Quarter

At Healthwatch Hillingdon, we aim to support our residents and provide you with the help you need, which is why our newsletters will spotlight a service or organisation that may be useful to you. For this quarter, we will be focusing on **The Fertility Network**, a UK charity providing support for those facing fertility challenges.



fertilitynetworkuk

The Fertility Network offers people facing fertility challenges free advice, support, information and understanding. They are a nationwide, patient-focused charity for anyone:

- Trying to conceive, going through treatment or living without children, and those who've had successful treatment.
- Considering their future fertility.
- Trying to become parents.
- Successful after fertility issues.
- Facing the challenges of childlessness.
- Interested in their Fertility in the Workplace initiative.

The charity has local fertility groups, plus a range of free specialist UK-wide groups, including LGBTQ+, a Black Women's Group and a South Asian Group. The Fertility Network has a presence on Facebook and Health Unlocked, with online forums for peer-to-peer support.

These fertility support groups can provide an informal opportunity to chat and meet others. In addition, professional guest speakers, including fertility specialists/experts, are regularly invited to meetings. Most groups meet monthly for a couple of hours in the evening.

There is also a male-only 'HIM' fertility group available, along with the secondary infertility group, and the Pregnancy after infertility group, with participants, welcome to join more than one group.

Research suggests that there are inequalities in fertility treatment for people from ethnic minority communities, including barriers to accessing treatment, and poorer outcomes and experiences of care. Thus, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion are at the heart of the network's work.

To find out more email:

[jenny@fertilitynetworkuk.org](mailto:jenny@fertilitynetworkuk.org) - Ethnic Minorities Community Worker.

**Fertility Network UK**  
[www.fertilitynetworkuk.org](http://www.fertilitynetworkuk.org)

**UK-Wide Groups**

HIMfertility	40 and Over	Fertility Weight Loss
Pregnancy after Infertility	LGBTQ+	Pregnancy Loss
Black Women's	Secondary Infertility	Single Women
South Asian	Treatment Abroad	Moving on from Treatment
More to Life		






Scan this QR Code to visit our website and access all our UK Wide Groups

## Updates for Hillingdon Residents

### ► Plans for the New Hillingdon Hospital get a Massive Boost



Proposals for the new Hillingdon Hospital got a massive boost at Hillingdon Council's Major Planning Committee on 18 January 2023, where the plans had been approved.

The plans set out a new state-of-the-art facility for the people of Hillingdon and beyond that will support the very best of modern healthcare. The new hospital will have the same mix of services as available now at Hillingdon Hospital, be built in the same location (next to the existing hospital) and services will remain open during construction.

Following the Council's decision to grant approval, the planning application will be referred to the Mayor of London for the final sign-off - this is standard practice for a project of this size.

The Trust is awaiting final confirmation of funding for the plans from the central government.

Find out more about the plans [here](#).



### ► Expansion of 111 to Transform Patient Access

Patients are set to receive an enhanced NHS 111 offer, including increased access to specialist paediatric advice for children and direct access to urgent mental health support, as part of a [blueprint](#) to help recover urgent and emergency care services.

Parents and carers seeking health advice for children and young people using NHS 111 online or by calling NHS 111 will have increased access to specialist advice, including support from paediatric clinicians who can help them manage illness at home or decide the best route for their care.

This will see some children being referred directly to a same-day appointment with a specialist rather than attending A&E, avoiding hundreds of unnecessary hospital admissions.

Direct access to urgent mental health support using NHS 111 is also being rolled out right across the country - with people being able to select the mental health option when they call up for help.

The new plans will see an increased number of clinicians - including retired staff and returners - working in NHS 111 to provide the enhanced offer to patients, with flexible working options available.

[Bolstering NHS 111](#), which acts as the first port of call for over 50,000 people using the health service each day, is among wider data-driven measures being set out to support the recovery of urgent and emergency services.



## Experiences of Hillingdon Residents

### ► Tell us about your Experiences of Accident and Emergency Services in Hillingdon?



Healthwatch Hillingdon and POhWER are conducting a joint online survey to learn about people's experiences of using accident and emergency services in Hillingdon.

We want to understand why Hillingdon residents access A&E services and what their overall experience is when they attend.

The feedback gathered from this survey will be shared with commissioners and providers of local A&E services.

If you'd like to complete the survey over the telephone, call us on **01895 272997**.

To complete the survey online, click the link [here](https://healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk/ae-survey).

### ► New Data Shows that People are Increasingly Avoiding NHS Appointments and Prescriptions

**Healthwatch England's new data** shows a worrying increase in the number of people avoiding vital care. Thus, the organisation is calling for urgent action from the UK government and health and care services to ensure rising costs are not a barrier to healthcare.

Healthwatch conducted a tracker poll with 2000 adults in England between October and December 2022 to assess the impact of the cost of living on their health and wellbeing and

whether it had affected how they use health and social care services.

The poll found that more people avoided getting prescription medicines, and booking NHS appointments, including dental treatment, due to the fear of extra costs in December than in October.

### The poll also found that in December:

- Over 1 in 10 (11%) have avoided booking an NHS appointment as they couldn't afford the associated costs, such as accessing the internet or the cost of a phone call, up from 7% in October;
- 15% of respondents avoided going to a dentist because of the cost of checks ups or treatment, up from 12% in October;
- And 1 in 10 (10%) people have also avoided taking up one or more NHS prescriptions because of the cost, up from 6% in October;
- 1 in 10 (10%) avoided buying over-the-counter medication they normally rely on, up from 7% in October.

The findings also suggest that women are disproportionately affected by spiralling costs in comparison to men.

To help tackle these challenges, Healthwatch has [set out immediate actions](#) that the government, working with health and care services, can take to support people in the cost-of-living crisis and save money.

