

Your local health and social care champion

# News and updates

**healthwatch**

Northumberland

October 2023



## There's still time to register for our AGM in East Bedlington



It's not long until our public annual meeting at East Bedlington Community Centre on 18 October, taking place from 10am - 12pm.

This event is for you if you are interested in health and care services in the county. We'll be hearing the plan to tackle inequalities in Northumberland from the public health team, and you can hear more about our work as local health and social care champion.

And did we mention free lunch?! Find out more and register by getting in touch in a way that suits you, or scan the QR code above.

## Your experiences of getting prescription medication



People rely on prescription medication to treat and manage their conditions and keep well. Yet Healthwatch England's analysis of public feedback shows people are increasingly facing barriers to getting their medication. Read the full article on the Healthwatch England website or ask us for a postal copy.

We'd like to hear more about what is happening in Northumberland. Please get in touch to tell us if you have experienced difficulties with getting your prescription medication, or where services are working well for you and your family.

## Free online event: Self-harm information and support



Every month we hold a free, Friday lunchtime online information session. The theme or topic changes each month and we invite experts along to speak about the subject.

Our next event is on Friday 13 October, from 1pm to 2pm, where we will hear from Jenny Groves, Founder and CEO of Battle Scars, a survivor-run charity providing support to those affected by self-harm.

The event is suitable for people who self-harm and family, friends or professionals supporting those who self-harm. Please get in touch to register for a place.

## Where to find us in-person this autumn

Please come and see us at one of these events to tell us your stories of using health and care services or ask a question about local support and services.

**East Bedlington Community Centre: Fridays 6 Oct and 3 Nov, 10am-12pm**

**Wellbeing Day Blyth Community Hub: Wednesday 11 Oct, 10.30am-12.30pm**

**Weavers' Court, Alnwick: Thursday 12 Oct and 9 Nov, 10.30am-12.30pm**

**Our AGM: Wednesday 18 October, East Bedlington, 10am-12pm (see above)**

**Prudhoe Spetchells Centre: Thursday 19 October, 11am - 1pm**

**Health and wellbeing fair Prudhoe Hub, Wednesday 15 Nov, 10am-2pm**

**Morpeth Library: Wednesdays 25 Oct and 22 Nov, 11am-1pm**

**Wellbeing Event at Alnwick Garden: Thursday 26 Oct, 10am-1pm**

**Blyth Community Hub, Keel Row Shopping Centre: Wednesday 15 Nov, 10am-12pm (No October drop-in due to AGM event)**



## World Mental Health Day: 10 October 2023

World Mental Health Day takes place on 10 October. The event aims to raise awareness of mental health issues and drive positive change for everyone's mental health. It's also a chance to talk about mental health, how we need to look after it, and how important it is to get help if you are struggling.



The theme for 2023, set by the World Foundation of Mental Health, is 'mental health is a universal human right'. We have a dedicated mental health webpage which has lots of information about local and national support. If you're not online please get in touch and we can give you more details of services.

### Shingles vaccinations

People who turn 65 on, or after, Sep 2023 are eligible for a free shingles vaccination this year, as are those over 70 years. Please wait to be contacted by your GP practice to be offered an appointment.

Shingles can occur at any age, but the risk and severity of shingles and its complications increase with age and is higher in individuals who have a severely weakened immune system. Please get in touch if you would like further information.

### Hospital discharge



If you have been in hospital in the last 12 months Healthwatch would like to hear about your experience of being discharged, in a short survey for patients and carers. Sharing your views will help providers see what is working well and where improvements are needed. Scan the QR code or give us a call to leave feedback.

### Could a First Contact Practitioner help you?

If you are experiencing musculoskeletal problems with your neck, back, bones, joints or muscles, you can refer yourself to a First Contact Practitioner (FCP) at your GP surgery. Any registered patient aged 16 or over can book an appointment without seeing a GP first. The FCP can provide specific advice and exercises, arrange further investigations or referrals and organise further clinical review. Contact your GP's reception team to arrange an appointment.

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### Our latest feedback reports

You can read all of our monthly reports on our website, including the latest one for August and our mid-year trends report for January to June. These give an overview of the feedback we've had and who we are hearing from.

Please ask if you would like a paper copy of any of our reports.

## Get in Touch

To unsubscribe from this newsletter or to contact us with feedback or a question, please get in touch.

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**Write to:** FREEPOST Healthwatch Northumberland, Adapt (NE), Burn Lane, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3HN

### Social Media:

