

Your local health and social care champion

healthwatch
Northumberland

News and updates

October 2025



What do you know about Pharmacy First?



We'd like to hear your views on the Pharmacy First service.

By sharing your feedback, you'll help us to understand awareness of the scheme, plus any concerns or suggestions you may have.

Pharmacy First enables community pharmacies to provide treatment for a range of common conditions without patients needing to see a GP. They can also provide urgent repeat medicine.

Please leave your views online (scan the QR code or visit our website), or call us to leave feedback over the phone, or to ask for a paper copy. Closing date 31 October.

Help shape the WorkWell Programme



WorkWell is a new service from the NHS in our area. It will help people with health problems to:

- stay in work, or
- get back to work

More people in the North East are out of work due to poor health than in most other parts of the country.

WorkWell brings together the NHS, councils, job services, voluntary organisations and employers to offer joined-up support for those who need it most.

Help shape the programme by sharing your views and experiences. If you need help to complete the form email: nencicb.involve@nhs.net.

Hearing support drop-in clinics



You can now get support with your hearing at local drop-in clinics run by RNID.

The sessions offer hearing aid maintenance including supplies of batteries and tubing, information and support on hearing loss, and basic hearing checks.

Monthly drop-in clinics are happening in Alnwick, Berwick, Corbridge and North Shields with more locations coming soon, including Hexham.

We will keep you updated with new clinics and you can also search for a drop-in near you on the RNID website.

Annual Event – thank you Hexham!

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Annual Event this year. Over 80 people joined us for tea and scones and to hear from our guest speaker Joe Morris MP on plans for the NHS. Thanks go to Joe and our other guest speakers, local pharmacist Simon Clark, who spoke about pharmacy services, and Debbie Allman and Shirley Proctor from Northumberland County Council for an insightful presentation about Direct Payments for care.

If you were unable to join us, you can watch the recordings of the presentations by HexhamTV and view the slides and photos from the day on our website.



Here to Hear drop-ins October



As well as our Here to Hear drop-ins this month, you can find us at Blyth Community Hub for the Young at Heart event and Morpeth Town Hall for the Ageing Well event.

Seaton Valley Library: Monday 6 October, 10am–12pm

Blyth Community Hub (Young at Heart event):

Wednesday 8 October, 10am–12pm

Weavers' Court Alnwick: Thursday 9 October, 10.30am–12pm

Hexham Mart: Friday 10 October, 9am–1pm

Morpeth Town Hall (Ageing Well event):

Wednesday 15 October, 10am–2pm

Hexham General Hospital: Thursday 16 October, 10.30am–12.30pm

Morpeth Leisure Centre: Wednesday 22 October, 10.30am–12.30pm

Silver Sunday

Age UK's Silver Sunday is a national day where communities come together by hosting fun and free activities for older people. In 2024 there were more than 1,300 Silver Sunday events across the UK, organised by local groups, businesses and volunteers. This year, Silver Sunday takes place on Sunday 5 October 2025.

Get involved by searching for an event near you at: silversunday.org.uk or organise your own.

Join the People's Hub

The North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) is launching its new People's Hub to hear valuable feedback and ideas from patients, carers and families. By joining the People's Hub, you can help to make a difference to health and care in our area.

You'll receive a monthly update with news of current projects, how to have your say, and how patients' voices are making a difference. As a People's Hub member, you can take part as much or as little as you want – choosing the issues and subjects that interest you.

Visit: academy.boost.org.uk/participant/signup.

Feedback for August



The main feedback you gave us in August was about issues with GP services including a lack of up-to-date menopause treatment knowledge. We also heard about poor communication for hospital outpatients and how some people found it difficult to read letters from hospitals.

Thank you for sharing your experiences.

Online event: Prioritising mental health in the workplace

Friday 10 October, 1pm–2.30pm

Our online session this month is on World Mental Health Day.

We'll hear from Tyneside and Northumberland Mind, Northumberland Recovery College and NHS Northumberland Talking Therapies about common sources of stress in the workplace and tips and techniques to promote better mental health. There'll also be a chance to take part in a guided imagery exercise.

Get in touch to book your free place.

Get in touch

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