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healthwatch
York

Your spotlight on local services

Hello,

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of Healthwatch York's monthly e-bulletin. Here's what's coming up in this month's bulletin:

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- [Local Health and Social Care News](#)
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- [Training and Resources](#)
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If you would like to include an update in the September edition, please email healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk.

If at any time you would like to stop receiving these bulletins, please use the unsubscribe link below or email us direct.

Many thanks,

Healthwatch York Team

Healthwatch York News

Petition to save the independence of local voices in health and social care

Local Healthwatch, including Healthwatch York, have launched a joint petition. This calls on the government to review the decision to abolish the independent way for people to feedback about health and care services.

The current proposals to abolish Healthwatch mean people will need to share their experiences of care services with local authorities and of health services with NHS bodies or via the NHS app. This move could significantly damage the trust people have in organisations and compromise the impartiality and effectiveness of feedback mechanisms.

transparency, accountability, and meaningful change.

Local Healthwatch have launched a petition calling on the government to protect the independence of local voices in health and care. As part of the Healthwatch Network, Healthwatch York hopes people in York will add their support and sign the petition.

Siân Balsom, the Manager of Healthwatch York said: “For over twelve years, Healthwatch York has worked to bring more voices to decision making in the city. From demanding better support for people experiencing mental health crisis, to highlighting the challenges for Deaf people in accessing health and care support, they have advocated for people in York.

“Every day we’ve listened to people’s stories; we’ve connected them to people and support that makes a difference to their lives; and we’ve raised the voices of those too often overlooked in our health and care system. We’ve constructively challenged partners as needed, with the power of real-life stories. The stories we share are rich in the sorts of details a service review simply can’t provide.

“We have already heard from people across York who are worried about what might happen if Healthwatch York is abolished. We hope they, and others, will sign the petition and urge the government to make sure there is an independent place for everyone to share their experiences.”

Local Healthwatch believe the government needs to recognise the role independent voice can play in supporting the three shifts outlined in the 10-year health plan– by providing constructive challenge and supporting coproduction, particularly with those communities facing the greatest health and care needs.

People need an independent voice in the future of health and care. Sign and share the petition, link below.

Sign the petition



Your health, your views, your chance to make a difference.

Healthwatch York is your way to influence local health and social care services – hospitals, GP surgeries, home care services and many others. We also provide information about local services to make sure you know how to access the help you need.



New website for Healthwatch York

We have launched our shiny new website, which we hope contains all the same information and resources but in a much simpler, easy to navigate format.

Links to documents in our old website will no longer work, but you will find everything through the home page of the new website. All our guides, reports, magazines and bulletins can now be found in a consolidated 'Resource Hub'. If you have any comments or feedback, please get in touch.

Healthwatch York new website

New research by University of York: Improving general practice appointment booking processes

We are delighted to see our work referenced in research by the University of York. Their Administrative Fairness Lab has explored how to improve GP appointment booking processes.

This topic matters so much to people we speak to every day. With expectations that everyone can 'do' digital, the greatest burdens are being placed on those least able to bear them, increasing health inequalities through administrative injustice.

An essential and thought provoking read that also highlights the significant challenges our GPs are having in trying to do more with less.

Read the full report via the link below.

Report: Improving general practice



Healthwatch York Annual Meeting

The Healthwatch York Annual Meeting took place on Tuesday 29th July at the Priory Street Centre.

We were delighted with the turn out for this meeting, given that it came so soon after the announcement about the abolition of the Healthwatch network. It was wonderful to share our work over the last year, to thank all of those who have given so much time and energy to support us and to celebrate our 'Making a Difference Award' winners. We will feature our award winners in the Autumn Magazine.

Thank you to everyone who came along and for the amazing response and support offered!

What we are hearing: April to June 2025

The Healthwatch York quarterly report for April to June is available on our website now. The report shares the the issues you have reported to us in the last few months.

Healthwatch York Quarterly Report

Care home report - The Oaks Care Home

We have now published the report of our visit to The Oaks Care Home in New Earswick. Thank you to everyone who took the time to talk to us during our visit and to fill out the surveys.

The full report is in the Resource Hub on our website and can be accessed via the link below.

The Oaks Report

What we've been hearing

Healthwatch York is your way to influence local health and social care services – hospitals, GP surgeries, home care services and many others. Here are some key issues we are hearing about in York:

Excellent support from GP and hospital

We heard from a person who saw their GP about a throat problem. They were referred to ENT at the hospital as urgent, and it was explained that he shouldn't be worried if they talked about cancer and said that while they didn't suspect cancer it was possible. The person got an appointment at the hospital and was seen within two weeks. They were great and gave the all clear within four weeks. They said: "When the NHS works it is brilliant".

If you have an experience you would like to share, please get in touch.

Confusion over appointment

We have received feedback about a neurology appointment booked at York Hospital. The letter received clearly said it was a phone appointment and they should not attend the hospital. They later received a message on Patient Knows Best which had what appeared to be the same letter but said the appointment was at the hospital. No further letters were received and they tried to phone but didn't get through. As most of their previous appointments had been by phone they assumed it would be by phone too. No-one called at the appointed time, and they heard nothing until a few days ago when they received a letter about the cost of missed appointments and saying that they would write again with a new appointment.

Things we are aware of and would like to hear more about...

The feedback we receive covers a wide variety of themes and issues, but sometimes we start to hear more about new issues that we would like to examine further. If you have any experience to share about the following, please get in touch:

- Reports of perceived differences in treatment for men and women
- Support for men's mental health
- Accessing gender identity clinics
- Waiting for social care
- Experiences of seeking adult ADHD and Autism assessments

Contact us through our website (link below) or by email: healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk.

[Share your experiences with us here](#)

Health and Social Care News

NHS launches first ever review to tackle LGBT+ health inequalities

The NHS has launched its first ever review to tackle health inequalities experienced by LGBT+ people, including access to mental health care, cancer screening and primary care services.

The review will help the NHS understand how it can do more to meet the needs of LGBT+ people, including understanding barriers to accessing healthcare and the impact of LGBT+ health inequalities on outcomes and patient safety.

The six-month review will examine data and evidence from a range of research and clinical settings, including mental health, sexual and reproductive health, HIV, perinatal care, primary care and cancer screening as well as smoking, alcohol and drug prevention services.

This will build on significant evidence that LGBT+ people have worse access to healthcare, poorer experience and worse health outcomes than the general population.

Read more on the NHS England website, link below.

NHS England

NHS to publish waiting list data for community dental services

NHS England has told community dental services to start submitting waiting list data from this month on the number of adults and children waiting for assessment and treatment. These services see people with learning or physical disabilities, severe anxiety or other complex needs. The clinics are usually accessed only by referral and can involve patients waiting months or even years. Previously, it has not been clear how long children and adults have had to wait for appointments.

NHSE today acknowledged 'longstanding concerns about the lack of data at national level to understand waiting times for assessment and treatment, for vulnerable adults and children'. It said new requirements to submit monthly data would contribute to:

- visibility of national, comparable data on waiting times for both adults and children
- oversight and understanding of any health inequalities
- data to support oral health needs assessments.

The first monthly data set is due to be published in the week beginning 6 October 2025.

Read more on the NHS England website.

NHS England

People in North East and Yorkshire access more than one million Pharmacy First consultations

Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership has announced that community pharmacies in the North East and Yorkshire have provided more than one million patient consultations through Pharmacy First, NHS figures show.

Between February 2024 and May this year there were 1,020,000 consultations for the three elements of Pharmacy First – treatment for seven common conditions, minor illnesses, and urgent medicine supply.

Read more on the Humber and North Yorkshire Care Partnership website, link below.

H&NY Health & Care Partnership

Gas safety is everyone's responsibility

**Gas
Safety
Week**
gas-safety-week.co.uk
Keeping our nation safe

Unsafe gas appliances can put you at risk of gas leaks, fires, explosions, and carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep your family and those around you gas safe – get gas appliances checked every year by a qualified Gas Safe registered engineer.



Find a Gas Safe
engineer in your
area at:

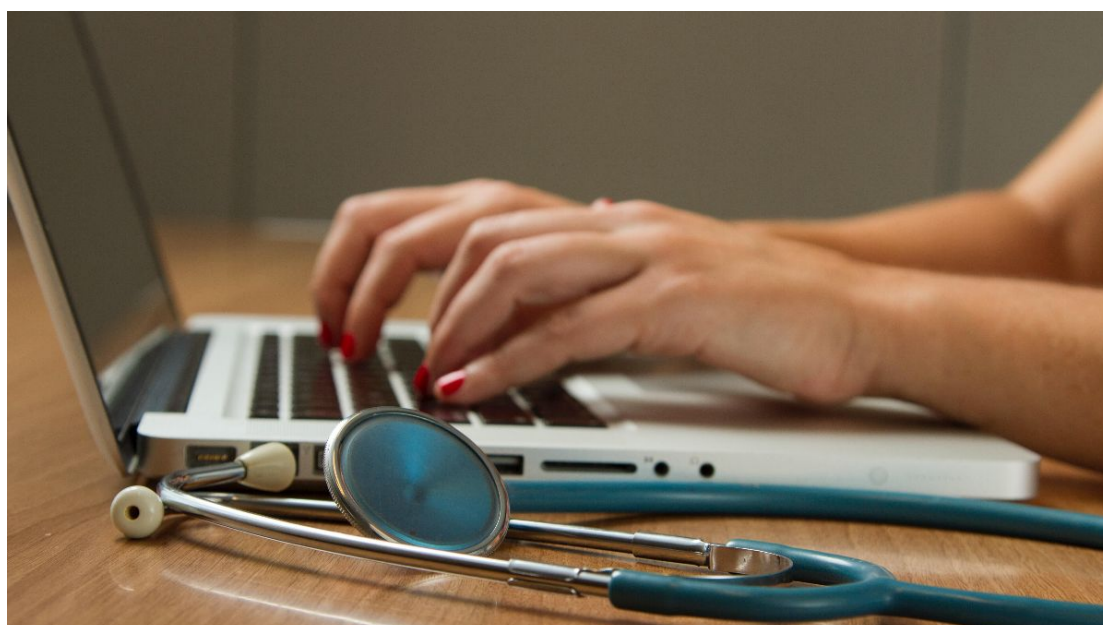
GasSafeRegister.co.uk

GAS
safe
REGISTER

 UK Government

**We are testing
Emergency Alerts
on mobile phones
across the UK on
Sunday 7 September
at 3pm.**

Find out more at
gov.uk/alerts



healthwatch

what would help?

Healthwatch England look at how to tackle care barriers among self-employed people.

In 2023, there were around 4.2 million self-employed people in the UK, according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Around half a million of these were gig workers, doing ad-hoc work such as food delivery that is facilitated through apps and other digital platforms.

Being self-employed or part of the gig economy can be attractive to those with health conditions, disability, or caring responsibilities. The flexibility of self-employment can help people better manage their health and work life.

However, self-employed and gig workers can also need greater support from health services, and research into the gig economy has highlighted concerns about working conditions and pay.

Healthwatch England looks at the health issues among self-employed people, and the barriers that might prevent them from getting care.

Read more on the Healthwatch England website, link below.

Healthwatch England

Local Health and Social Care News

Repeat prescriptions - only order what you need

The NHS in Humber and North Yorkshire spends £332 million every year on medicines. A huge £265 million of that goes on repeat prescriptions.

Many people reorder their regular prescriptions every month without checking what they need and then return unwanted medicines to their pharmacy. Unfortunately returned medicines cannot be reused or recycled. They must be destroyed. This adds up to £26 million of wasted medicines every year – money that your local NHS could use for other vital health services.

If you get repeat prescriptions (this can also include oral nutritional supplements), take a moment each month to check what you really need. Only order the medicines you're running out of – don't worry, you can always order more when you need them later.

To read more, see the Let's Get Better website, link below.

Let's Get Better

York Hospital officially opens Women's Unit after major refurbishment

York Hospital has unveiled its newly refurbished Women's Unit, transforming the space for female patients in the region.

Following an eight-month makeover, the unit has now officially opened and offers improved privacy and dignity for patients and their relatives.

Read more on the hospital website, link below.

York Hospital

CYC Inclusion and Belonging Strategy consultation

City of York Council is co-producing an Inclusion and Belonging Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision Strategy and they want your views to help shape this.

Every child and family in York deserve to feel that they belong at school, in their community, and in the wider city. That's why it's so important that schools, settings and families and practitioners help shape the Inclusion and Belonging Strategy.

Your experiences, ideas, and concerns are essential to getting this right. By taking part in this consultation, you're helping to build a strategy that reflects real lives and real needs.

To read more and to take part in the consultation, go to the CYC website, link below.

CYC Consultations

CYC Consultation begins on anti-poverty strategy

City of York Council is inviting residents, businesses and community organisations to help shape its new Anti-Poverty Strategy, with a public consultation now open.

The draft strategy sets out how the council, working with partners and communities, will tackle the root causes of poverty, reduce inequality and support those most at risk across York. The consultation runs until Monday 29 September.

Take part in the consultation via the link below.

CYC Consultation



AFFECTED BY CANCER

JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE
PATIENT/CARER ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

Leveson Centre, York 1.30-4.30 1st September
The Rope Walk, Barton 1.30-4.30 4th September
Health House, Willerby 1.30-4.30 8th September
Bridlington Sports Centre 1.30-4.30 10th September

Book your place by contacting karenlindley@nhs.net /
07851252430

 **Humber and North Yorkshire**
Cancer Alliance

Latest CQC Reports

All CQC reports can be accessed through the CQC website. Follow the link for the most recent reports.

[CQC](#)

Local Projects

Slipper Social and Information Fair

Friday 19th September, 10.30am to 12.30pm at New Earswick Folk Hall, Hawthorn Terrace, York, YO32 4AQ

City of York Council and York Older People's Assembly are hosting a slipper social and information fair to help address the risk of trips and falls for older people. This is an opportunity to pick up a free new pair of slippers, have a cuppa and have a look at information provided by a range of local organisations who will be present.

*Celebrating
30 years*

York Carers Centre AGM

Thursday 18 September, 5.15 pm

AGM runs 5.30 - 6.30 pm
with time to network afterwards



**Friends Meeting House,
Friargate, York YO1 9RL**

Buffet food & refreshments & birthday cake

**To book please email
events@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk
or call 01904 715 490**



York Carers Centre
Free Support for Unpaid Carers

Celebrate life, connections and creativity at York's only festival dedicated to the over 50s!

York Older People's Assembly and Age UK York announce plans for York 50+ Festival - Saturday 20 September to Wednesday 1 October 2025

York Older People's Assembly (YOPA) and Age UK York are collaborating to host the York 50+ Festival - a unique, 10-day event featuring an exciting mix of talks, performances and social activities. The only festival in York dedicated to those over 50, it's a fun social event where 50+ individuals, along with their friends and families, can explore available offers and enjoy free or low-cost activities.

This year's festival theme is Celebrating and Connecting. With 77,030 residents aged over 50 in York, their goal is to highlight the evolving and diverse experience of growing older.

Twenty years ago, no one was playing walking football or pickleball. Expectations of later life are shifting dramatically.

For more information, see their website, link below.

50+ Festival

Training and Resources



York VCSE Assembly - Health and Care

Wednesday 10 September, 10:30am – 12:30pm in the Main Hall at the Priory Street Centre.

The York VCSE Assembly – Health and Care meetings bring York's voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector together to discuss key local health and care issues, and to engage and connect with the [Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership](#) and the [NHS Integrated Care Board](#), in order to be a key partner in the design and delivery of health and care in York.

Book a place via the link below.

Eventbrite

North Yorkshire Police offer a collection of Prevent Training events, which includes an introduction to PREVENT for practitioners, looks at incel subculture, and PREVENT within educational settings.

Full details are on their Eventbrite page, link below.

Eventbrite

Funding Opportunity – Formal Peer Support for York’s Neurodivergent Community

The York Neurodiversity and Mental Health Group, part of the Mental Health Partnership, is pleased to announce a new grant funding opportunity for local organisations to develop and deliver a formal peer support offer for York’s neurodivergent community.

This pilot project seeks to address current gaps in provision and will develop and deliver formal peer support designed to offer flexible and person-led support for individuals aged 18+ with Autism and/or ADHD (not dependent on diagnosis). The initiative will prioritise inclusivity, accessibility, and lived experience, offering a blend of in-person and virtual support in safe, sensory-friendly environments.

Funding Available:

A total funding pot of up to **£80,000** is available. Organisations may apply for the full amount or for a proportion of the funding.

Key Dates:

- **Application deadline:** Monday 15 September 2025, 12:00am (midnight)
- **Shortlisting notification:** Thursday 18 September 2025
- **Presentations and interviews:** Tuesday 24 September 2025

Applications are welcomed from voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations, as well as limited companies that will not profit from the funding. Proposals should outline the delivery model, training and support for peer supporters, and plans for monitoring and evaluation.

Full details, including eligibility criteria and the application process, are available on the York CVS website, link below.

Please share this opportunity with your networks and if you have any questions or would like to discuss the opportunity further, please contact connectingourcity@york.gov.uk.

York CVS

City of York Council Health and Wellbeing Board - 24th September 2025

The purpose of the Health and Wellbeing Board is to bring together key partners from the NHS, public health and local government, including Healthwatch York as the patient's voice, to jointly plan how best to meet local health and care needs.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 24th September 2025 at 4.30pm. For more information, see the City of York website, link below.

CYC

Get in touch

Healthwatch York

FREEPOST RTEG-BLES-RRYJ
15 Priory Street
YO1 6ET

Telephone: 01904 621133

Email: healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk

Website: www.healthwatchyork.co.uk



We've moved to Bluesky!

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<https://bsky.app/profile/healthwatchyork.bsky.social>

We will no longer be posting on or using X.



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