

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham Newsletter, February 2022 (Text Only Version)

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We would like to take this opportunity to welcome any new residents to Hammersmith & Fulham. Please make sure to share our newsletter & contact details with anyone who is new to the borough.

New Story: Carers Survey

Do you look after a friend, relative or loved one who could not manage without your help? You may be classed as a 'carer'. Our Carers' Project invites people - young and old - to share their views of:

- What support would you find most useful.
- Experiences of Carers' Assessment (If you've completed one).
- Access to healthcare services.

Are my details safe? We won't share your details with other organisations and your feedback will be anonymous unless you choose to leave your contact details to participate further in this study.

Want to share your experience in a different way?

We are happy to complete the survey over the phone, just get in touch. The call should take no longer than 10 minutes. Paper copies are also available. The closing date is 25th February. [👉 More](#). Story End.

New Story: Join Healthwatch H&F Committee!

We are looking for local people to join our committee and help guide our work in improving the local health and social care services.

The Committee advises and supports the Healthwatch H&F staff team with projects, such as our patient experience programme and research projects. It also plays an important role in representing Healthwatch in public meetings and providing staff and other volunteers with a fresh perspective on local issues.

The Committee Members are asked to commit 1 - 2 days a month, including reading and preparing for committee and project meetings, with this increasing to 3 days for those wishing to take on an executive role such as chair. All members are expected to attend at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year's meetings.

Applications are invited from people who are over the age of 16 and who live or work in Hammersmith & Fulham or who can demonstrate substantial knowledge of the borough and health and social care issues and services. Applications are particularly welcomed from men, those under the age of 40, and individuals from a variety of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

To apply or to find out more, please submit your application through our Volunteer Hub, or contact the office. [👉 More](#). Story End.

New Story: Mental Health Patience Experience Survey

We want to hear from people's experiences of mental health services in West London. If you or someone you care for have accessed mental health services in the last 12 months either in Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, or Hounslow, please spare a few minutes and complete our survey. [👉 More](#). Story End.

New Story: Covid-19 Update

Infection rates in H&F remain high, here's how to get vaccinated and tested for Covid-19.

Who can get vaccinated?

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from Covid-19. Currently the NHS is offering two doses for anyone over the age of 12.

You can get a booster vaccine if:

- You are aged 18 or over.
- You are aged 16 or over with a health condition that puts you at high risk of getting seriously ill from Covid-19.
- You are a frontline health or social care worker.
- You live or work in a care home.
- You are aged 16 or over and are a main carer for someone at high risk from Covid-19.
- You are aged 16 or over and live with someone who has a weakened immune system.

You can book a vaccine appointment on the NHS website, or by calling NHS 119 for free, or you can visit a walk-in vaccination clinic. [➡ More](#)

If you have difficulties communicating or hearing or are a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can use textphone 18001 119 or the NHS 119 BSL interpreter service.

Where to get vaccinated? There are pop-up clinics, hospital clinics at Charing Cross and Hammersmith and there are currently 10 pharmacies in H&F offering 1st, 2nd and booster doses. You can find out more about these options on our website. [➡ More](#)

How to get tested for Covid-19?

There are two types of Covid-19 test:

- PCR
- Lateral Flow

If you have symptoms of Covid-19 you need to get a PCR test. The three main symptoms are:

- A new, continuous cough.
- A high temperature.
- A loss or change of taste or smell.

To book a PCR test, go to the official government website, use the NHS app, or call 119. [➡ More](#)

Lateral Flow tests are for people with no symptoms. One in three people who have Covid-19 do not display any symptoms but can still pass it on.

There is a walk-in Lateral Flow testing site at H&F Council, 145 King Street, Hammersmith, W6 9JT (open weekdays - 8am to 4pm). Or you can order one on the GOV.UK website or by calling 119. [➡ More](#)

For up to date Covid-19 information, visit our dedicated webpage. [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Boost Your Immunity This Winter - Get a Flu Jab

Viruses spread more easily during the winter when people spend more time together indoors. It is important to get a flu vaccination if offered.

More people are likely to get flu this winter as fewer people will have built up natural immunity to it during the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you get flu and Covid-19 at the same time, research shows you're more likely to be seriously ill.

Getting vaccinated against flu and Covid-19 will provide protection for you and those around you for both these serious illnesses. If you've had Covid-19, it's safe to have the flu vaccine. It will still be effective at helping to prevent flu.

You are eligible to receive the free vaccine if you:

- Are 50 and over (including those who'll be 50 by 31st March 2022).
- Have certain health conditions.
- Are pregnant.
- Are in long-stay residential care.
- Receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick.
- Live with someone who is more likely to get infections (such as someone with weakened immunity).
- Are a frontline health or social care worker.

More information can be found online. [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Making a Local Health or Social Care Complaint

If you're not happy with the care or treatment you've received or you've been refused treatment for a condition, you have the right to complain, have your complaint investigated, and be given a full and prompt reply. You can raise a concern or make a complaint in writing, by email, phone or in person.

Most issues can be resolved without you having to make a formal complaint. Try having an informal chat with your doctor or a member of staff first. A formal complaint takes time and minor issues are resolved quicker if you just speak to a person on site. For example, if you have problems booking a GP appointment speak to the practice manager about it. If you are worried about something during your hospital outpatient appointment talk to one of the nurses or the clinic manager.

However, if despite everything this doesn't solve your problem, or even if it does but you would still like to make a formal complaint, you should ask to see the complaints procedure and follow the instructions on how to make a complaint. Making a complaint about a health or social care service can be complicated. You can either complain to the provider directly - such as a GP, a dentist surgery, care home - or to the commissioner of the services, which is the body that pays for the services you use. You cannot make a complaint to both.

In Hammersmith & Fulham, the majority of Health Services are commissioned by Hammersmith & Fulham Clinical Commissioning Group and the majority of Social Care Services are commissioned by the Council. Find out more in our detailed guidance, available now on the website. [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Support and Activities for Local Carers

It is important to be able to meet and talk to other people who look after loved ones as often their life experiences are similar and so they can understand and support you the best. Sometimes finding a time and a place to meet can be difficult.

To help make this easier, we have a list of support and activities within the borough, so you don't have to go too far.

Slow Flow Yoga (Online)

An online yoga session run by a volunteer, Abi. It will introduce calm and tranquillity to your Fridays (2pm-3pm) and slow down the hustle and bustle of your everyday life.

Challenges of Caregiving (Online)

A safe space to communicate with other caregivers. A forum to manage worries, learn about balancing your work life with your private life, and finding new relaxation techniques.

Caribbean Social Event (In Person)

Do you miss the fun, in-person interactions? If so, a Caribbean Social event is being put on at The Beethoven Centre, Third Avenue, W10 4JL. You will have the opportunity to meet with other carers while enjoying a free Trinidadian meal. A chance to experience a library specifically equipped with tested activity materials for African and Caribbean people living with dementia. Feel free to come with a loved one on 17th March, 12pm.

Art Class (In Person)

An opportunity for carers to join a free art class.

Express yourself creatively. Run by local carer Yasmin. Every Monday from 11am - 1pm at The Beethoven Centre, Third Avenue, W10 4JL.

Creative Writing Telephone Group (Telephone)

Produce your own writing inspired by poems, songs and short stories. Group discussions as well as time for solo writing. Run by volunteer Timna on Thursdays.

Zumba (Online)

A fun workout experience that keeps you excited to exercise! A chance to move your body. Taught by volunteer Siarons.

Mindfulness (Online)

A weekly online mindfulness group for carers. Relax the body, mind and reduce stress. A chance to pay more attention to the present moment - to your own thoughts and feelings, and to the world around you. Improve your mental wellbeing. Fridays 11am - 12pm, delivered by volunteer Kate.

☞ Carer's Coffee Morning (In Person)

The new monthly Hammersmith and Fulham Carer's Coffee Morning meets on the second Wednesday of the month, from 10.30am - 12pm, at Lyric Theatre Hammersmith Café, Lyric Square, King Street, W6 0QL. Hosted by the Carers Network, with up to two free drinks on offer.

To find out more about these activities, visit the Carers Network website. [☞ More Story End.](#)

New Story: Local Support for Dementia

Dementia is a term used to describe the symptoms that occur when there's a decline in brain function. This decline is associated with the abnormal buildup of proteins in the brain. Symptoms may include:

- Memory loss.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Finding it hard to carry out familiar daily tasks, for example getting confused over the correct change when shopping.
- Struggling to follow a conversation or find the right word.
- Being confused about time and place.
- Mood changes.

Dementia symptoms often start mild and gradually worsen over time, usually termed 'Mild Cognitive impairment' MCI, if the symptoms are not as severe enough to be diagnosed with dementia. Dementia Friends is an Alzheimer's Society initiative trying to change people's perceptions of dementia. It aims to transform the way people think, act and talk about the condition. To learn more about Dementia and to become a Dementia Friend, please visit their website. [👉 More](#)

We feature places where people living with dementia, and their carers, can find support for them. You can find more information on services on H&F Council's Living Independently website. [👉 More](#)

Acton Care Centre

Dementia care for residents over 65. The purpose-built home is set on the site of the old hospital with beautifully landscaped gardens. [👉 More](#)

Alzheimer's Society Hammersmith and Fulham

A range of support services for both local people with dementia and their carers. Features a day centre, peer support groups and specialist advice. [👉 More](#)

St Vincent's House Care Home

A modern care home offering residential, nursing, respite and end of life care for older people. [👉 More](#)

Options Day Opportunities Service

For adults with a learning disability, autism, mental health, physical or other needs. 020 8749 9602.

Nubian Life Resource Centre

Services for African and Caribbean older people living with complex health conditions. [👉 More](#)

MiHomecare

Work with people of all ages, and can help with complex conditions or general home support. [👉 More](#)

Hedgerow Homecare

A domiciliary home care provider supporting older people and adults with a physical disability. [👉 More](#). Story End.

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New Story: Free Courses on Age Related Hearing Loss

Charity Deaf Plus writes “Living with Hearing Loss has been running since 2015.

We provide free, informal, friendly courses and workshops to the over 50s with hearing loss, in and around London. This is the perfect opportunity to learn about the various causes of hearing loss, hearing loss prevention, maintaining healthy hearing and supporting others with hearing loss.

We practice lip reading exercises and talk about other ways of coping, all in a friendly environment. Here we can share experiences and reduce the isolation which occurs only too often with losing one’s hearing.

Since the Covid pandemic we have been offering all of our free courses on Zoom. We have also added two additional exciting classes to the project - BSL For Fun and Peer Support Group Workshops for people with hearing loss.

Online Lipreading runs for 7 weeks, for one hour per week. Online BSL For Fun runs for 6 weeks, for two hours per week. There are also online peer support workshops.”

To find out more, get in touch on 07732 449349 or information@deafplus.org. Story End.

New Story: Radar Project on Diabetes

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) writes “the RADAR project of using artificial intelligence illustrates the need of having access with suitable safeguards to a large amount of anonymised patient data.

This is only possible if patients do not opt out of NHS computer data systems that allow research to be carried out. Everybody benefits from diagnostic and patient management systems in the NHS so there should be no reason for patients to opt out subject to the NHS systems offering high level security. We can only benefit if we all contribute.

The RADAR project has good patient involvement which ensures that objectives will benefit patients and that the project is credible and well run.

Since North West London has high levels of ethnic diversity, the new system will be suitable for the whole of the UK.” [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Refugee Council - Accessible Information

The Refugee Council London has produced a range of health service information in several languages including Albanian, Arabic, Dari, Farsi and Tigrinya.

Topics include getting help with translation, maternity care and access to health services.

The resources are available now. [➡ More](#). Story End.

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New Story: New Medequip User Group Launched!

Do you or anyone you know make use of Medequip equipment and aids?

Are you a relative? A community expert from a relevant charity? Or a carer to someone that uses Medequip equipment? If so, then this role could be for you.

Your Voice in Health & Social Care (YVHSC) is working in partnership with Medequip to improve the quality of daily living for thousands of people using mobility equipment and aids. Join our panel, to help improve this important service for people in your area and all across London. [➡ More](#)

What is Medequip?

Medequip helps people stay independent for much longer, providing community equipment services such as grab rails, bed pans, bath lifts and more.

Over 200,000 people in London use Medequip equipment and aids provided by the council or local NHS to support their daily living. To get involved, get in touch:

 07944 391 223 or  vip@yvpsc.org.uk

You can find out more about the role online. [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Digital Health Tools Research - Get Involved!

The NHS in North West London are working with independent digital skills and inclusion charity Citizens Online to find out more about people's experiences of using digital health tools in North West London.

Please help this research by filling in their short survey. They are keen to hear from people who don't feel confident using the internet, use assistive technology and/or consider themselves disabled, or don't use the internet. [➡ More](#). Story End.

New Story: West London Lung Health Checks

A free service for people aged between 55 and 74 who are current or ex-smokers and are registered with a following local GP surgery:

- Brook Green Medical Centre
- Fulham Medical Centre
- Hammersmith Surgery
- North End Medical Centre
- North Fulham Surgery - 82 Lillie Road
- Park Medical Centre
- Richford Gate Medical Practice
- Sands End Health Clinic
- The Bush Doctors
- Dr Jefferies & Partners - Munster Road

During a phone consultation your risk of developing lung problems will be assessed.

[➡ More](#). Story End.

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New Story: Get Fit for the New Year!

Introducing activities to help improve your physical and mental health.

Open Age

If you are aged 50 or over and live in Hammersmith & Fulham, Open Age is offering a range of activities to help older residents maintain their physical and mental fitness as well as learn new hobbies.

Activities include Pilates, Zuma, Singing and Arts & Crafts.

To find out more, including how to register, visit the website or get in touch on mail@openage.org.uk. [↘ More](#)

Keeping Fit

There are three Better leisure centres in the borough that offer affordable memberships. They are:

Lillie Road Fitness Centre [↘ More](#)

Hammersmith Fitness and Squash Centre [↘ More](#)

Phoenix Fitness Centre [↘ More](#)

They offer concessionary prices as well as all-inclusive disability memberships which include free access for an accompanying carer.

Phoenix Fitness Centre also runs women only sessions that are designed for females of all abilities. For more information visit their website. [↘ More](#). Story End.

New Story: Activities for Disabled Residents

DanceWest and Mencap are offering all-inclusive activities for residents with disabilities. Move It Mondays is a dance class for disabled children and young people and it takes place at Sands End Arts Community Centre, SW6 3EZ and is completely free. To book or to find out more, get in touch or visit the website. [↘ More](#)

07494 513079 or projects@dancewest.co.uk.

HF Mencap's Activity Centre (W6 8LH) provide high quality, bespoke support packages for adults with learning disabilities, autism and/or complex needs.

Each support package is tailored to the needs of the client however they also offer numerous scheduled daily activities which can include sports, swimming, fitness, yoga and dance. To find out more, get in touch or visit the website. [↘ More](#)

020 8748 5168 (Option 1) or Manuel.moncayo@hfmencap.org. Story End.

This is the end of the newsletter. Thankyou for listening!

For more information about this newsletter contact the office:

Phone 020 3886 0386 or email info@healthwatchhf.co.uk