

JUNE 2026

COMMUNITY UPDATE

healthwatch
North Northamptonshire

WHAT IS HEALTHWATCH?

Healthwatch is an independent organisation that listens to people's experiences of health and social care services. It helps ensure services are safe, effective, and meet local needs. Healthwatch collects feedback, provides information, and uses people's views to influence improvements in NHS and care services within the local community.



HOW DOES HEALTHWATCH INFLUENCE CHANGE?

Healthwatch collects people's experiences through surveys, feedback forms, community events, and conversations with patients and carers. It also gathers views online and by phone. This information is analysed and shared with NHS organisations, local councils, and care providers. By highlighting trends and concerns, Healthwatch influences service improvements and helps decision-makers prioritise changes that reflect local needs.

HOW CAN I SHARE MY EXPERIENCE?

You can share your experience with Healthwatch North Northamptonshire by speaking to their team directly, completing an [online feedback form](#), or taking part in local engagement events and surveys. You can also email or phone them to describe your experience of NHS or social care services. All feedback is confidential and helps improve local health and care services.



NATIONAL MATERNITY AND NEONATAL INVESTIGATION

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WHAT WAS THE INVESTIGATION?

The independent National Maternity and Neonatal Investigation, led by Baroness Valerie Amos, reviewed maternity and neonatal services across England. It was established following concerns about patient safety, inequalities in care and the experiences of women, babies and families, with the aim of identifying improvements to make services safer and more consistent.



WHAT DID IT FIND?

The final report found that maternity services require significant improvement. Women were not always listened to, inequalities continued to affect outcomes, and inconsistent standards, poor organisational culture and fragmented services impacted the quality and safety of care. The report calls for a stronger focus on learning, accountability and compassionate care.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The report sets out eight recommendations to improve maternity and neonatal services. These include appointing a national Maternity and Neonatal Commissioner, strengthening leadership, introducing consistent standards and improving accountability. The Government and NHS organisations will now develop plans to implement the recommendations and drive long-term improvements across England.



PRESCRIPTION PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATE (PPC)

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WHAT IS A PRESCRIPTION PREPAYMENT CERTIFICATE?

A Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) allows you to pay one fixed charge for all your NHS prescriptions over a set period, rather than paying for each item individually. If you need regular medication, a PPC could save you money and make budgeting for your healthcare costs much easier throughout the year.



WHAT DOES IT COVER?

A PPC covers all NHS prescriptions issued while your certificate is valid, no matter how many prescription items you need. You can choose a three-month certificate if you expect several prescriptions over a short period, or a twelve-month certificate if you receive regular medication throughout the year. It can provide significant savings for people with ongoing health conditions.

HOW CAN I GET ONE?

You can apply for a PPC online, by telephone or at some pharmacies. Payment options include paying the full amount upfront or spreading the cost of a 12-month certificate by Direct Debit. If you regularly pay for NHS prescriptions, it is worth checking whether a PPC could save you money before paying for your next prescription.



NEW SERVICE: DENTISTRY FOR YOU

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A NEW DENTAL PRACTICE

Dentistry for You is opening a new dental practice in Wellingborough, helping to improve access to NHS dental care for local residents. The additional capacity will support more patients in accessing routine appointments, preventative care and treatment closer to home when appointments become available.



WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

The practice provides a range of NHS dental services, including routine examinations, fillings, preventive advice and treatment for common dental conditions. Private treatment options may also be available. Patients should contact the practice directly to discuss the services offered and current appointment availability.

HOW CAN YOU REGISTER?

If you would like to become a patient at Dentistry for You Wellingborough, you can request to join the practice by completing the online patient registration form. The practice will review your request and contact you if appointments are available. Visit the practice website to complete the form and find out more. [Online Patient Registration Form](#)



Learn more by visiting the Dentistry For You website::



<https://www.dentistryforyou.co.uk/>

URGENT DENTAL CARE SERVICE

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WHAT IS THE URGENT DENTAL CARE SERVICE?

The Urgent Dental Care Service provides assessment and treatment for dental problems that need prompt attention and cannot safely wait for a routine appointment. This includes severe toothache, facial swelling, uncontrolled bleeding, dental trauma or suspected infections. The service aims to relieve pain, prevent complications and ensure patients receive timely care.



WHEN SHOULD YOU USE IT?

Urgent dental care should only be used for problems requiring immediate assessment or treatment. It is not intended for routine check-ups, ongoing dental treatment or minor issues that can wait for a regular appointment. If you are unsure whether your dental problem is urgent, contact your usual dental practice or NHS 111 for advice.

HOW CAN YOU ACCESS THE SERVICE?

If you have an urgent dental problem, contact your regular dental practice first, as they should provide advice or arrange emergency treatment where appropriate. If you do not have a dentist, or your practice is closed, contact NHS 111. They will assess your symptoms and direct you to the most appropriate urgent dental service if needed.



WHEN TO CONTACT ADULT SOCIAL CARE (ASC)

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WHAT IS ADULT SOCIAL CARE?

Adult Social Care supports adults aged 18 and over who need help to remain safe, independent and well. Support may be available because of age, physical disability, learning disability, mental health needs, illness or caring responsibilities, helping people maintain their quality of life.



WHEN SHOULD YOU CONTACT ADULT SOCIAL CARE?

You should contact Adult Social Care if you or someone you know is finding everyday activities difficult, needs extra support at home, or there are concerns about their safety, wellbeing or ability to live independently. If you are an unpaid carer, dedicated support and advice are also available —see the next page to find out more.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

A member of the Adult Social Care team will discuss your circumstances and may arrange a Care Act assessment to understand your needs. They will provide advice, explain the support available and help identify the most appropriate services to support your independence. To speak to the team or request an assessment, call North Northamptonshire Adult Social Care on 0300 126 3000.



SUPPORT FOR CARERS

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WHAT IS A CARER?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid support to a family member, friend, or neighbour who could not manage without help due to illness, disability, mental health needs, or age-related frailty. Many people do not realise they are carers because they are simply helping someone they care about.



WHAT HELP CAN A CARER GET?

Carers in North Northamptonshire may be able to access wellbeing support, carers groups, respite services, emergency planning, and advice around finances and benefits. Support is available even if the person you care for does not receive social care services. Northamptonshire Carers also provides information, guidance, and local support for unpaid carers across the county.

HOW DO I GET A CARER'S ASSESSMENT?

Under the Care Act 2014, unpaid carers are entitled to a free Carer's Assessment to discuss how caring affects their daily life, health, and wellbeing. In North Northamptonshire, assessments are provided by Northamptonshire Carers on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council. To speak to Northamptonshire Carers or request a Carer's Assessment, call 01933 677907.



VOLUNTEER WITH HEALTHWATCH

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ENTER & VIEW VOLUNTEERS

Enter & View Volunteers visit health and social care services to hear people's experiences first-hand. This may include hospitals, GP practices, or care homes. They use interviews, observations, and informal conversations to understand what is working well and what could be improved. Findings are used to influence change and ensure services better meet the needs of patients, staff, and the wider community.



COMMUNITY LISTENER VOLUNTEER

Community Listener Volunteers support local people by helping them understand and navigate health and social care services. They are friendly, approachable, and skilled at listening, offering guidance to help people find the right information or service. This role plays an important part in reducing confusion and ensuring people feel supported when accessing care.

VOLUNTEER RESEARCHER

Volunteer Researchers support the collection and analysis of public feedback on health and social care services. This may include helping design surveys, supporting focus groups, gathering data, and contributing to reports. Working alongside staff, they help ensure local voices are heard and used to improve services across North Northamptonshire.



To find out more or apply for any of these volunteering roles, please email
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