

APRIL 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.



NHS FREE HEALTH CHECKS

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WHAT IS AN NHS HEALTH CHECK?

An NHS Health Check is a free check-up for adults aged 40–74 without certain existing conditions. It assesses your risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease. It includes blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI measurements, and questions about lifestyle such as diet, smoking, alcohol use, and physical activity.



WHY ARE NHS HEALTH CHECKS IMPORTANT?

An NHS Health Check is important because it helps detect potential health problems early, often before any symptoms appear. Conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and type 2 diabetes can develop quietly over time. Early detection allows for lifestyle changes, monitoring, or treatment, reducing the risk of serious illnesses such as heart disease and stroke.

HOW CAN I GET AN NHS HEALTH CHECK

If you are eligible, you may be invited for an NHS Health Check by your GP or local council every five years. You can also contact your GP practice directly to ask. In some areas, community pharmacies and local clinics offer appointments. Booking is usually by phone, online, or through your GP reception team.



NHS FREE SPRING VACCINATIONS

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VACCINATION TYPE

FLU (Nasal &
Injectable)

COVID-19

RSV

Pertussis
(Whooping
Cough)

MMR 1&2

MMRV

HPV

Pneumovax

MenB

ELIGIBLE PATIENT GROUP

Anyone eligible aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2025 (ie born between 1 Sept 2022 & 31 Aug 2024)

Anyone aged 75+ or aged 6 months+ & has a weakened immune system

Pregnant women from 28 weeks of pregnancy
People aged over 75 years

Pregnant women from 16 weeks of pregnancy.
Children aged from 6 months to 10 years

Anyone eligible who has missed 1st &/or 2nd dose

Pre-school children, based on birth date

From aged 12 to 24 years

One routine dose offered at age 65 onwards, or younger people with long term health conditions or a weakened immune system.

3x Doses to babies aged 8 weeks, 16 weeks & 12 months. Also available to people at high clinical risk of any age.

OPPORTUNITY TO VACCINATE

Available between September 2026 & March 2027

From 13th April to 30th June 2026, & from October 2026 to January 2027

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility

All year round, based on eligibility



NHS FREE SPRING VACCINATIONS

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VACCINATION TYPE

MenACWY

Pneumococcal
13

Rotavirus

DTap / IPV / Hib /
HepB (6-in-1)

DTap / IPV (4-
in-1)

Td / IPV (3-in-1)

ELIGIBLE PATIENT GROUP

Routinely given from age 14 to
age 25 years

All infants: 1st dose at 16 weeks
& booster dose at 12 months.
Also given to high-risk under 2
years.

Babies: 1st dose at 8 weeks &
2nd dose at 12 weeks. Cannot
be given beyond 24 weeks.

Babies: at 8 weeks, 12 weeks &
16 weeks

Babies: at 8, 12 & 16 weeks.
Also, at 18 months for children
born on/after 1 July 2024

Available from age 13

OPPORTUNITY TO VACCINATE

All year round, based on
eligibility

All year round, based on
eligibility
















All year round, based on
eligibility


All year round, based on
eligibility

All year round, based on
eligibility

All year round, based on
eligibility

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

-  May 1  Market Street, Wellingborough, NN8 1AF  10.30am to 3.30pm
-  May 5  Irchester Village Hall, Wellingborough, NN29 7AW  10.30am to 3.30pm
-  May 14  Grangeway Co-op, Rushden, NN10 9JE  10.30am to 3.30pm
-  May 19  Co-op, High Street, Earls Barton, NN6 0JJ  10.30am to 3pm
-  May 29  Aldi, Irthlingborough, NN9 5GF  10.30am to 3.30pm

 Vaccinations are available via a mobile healthcare unit, offering convenient walk-in access with no appointment needed. Trained medical professionals can securely check patient records to confirm vaccination status and identify any vaccines that may be due, helping ensure individuals stay up to date and protected.

Read our article on Vaccinations Services
available in North Northamptonshire here:



<https://www.healthwatchnn.org.uk>

KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR URGENT CARE

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NHS 111

NHS 111 should be used when you need medical help or advice quickly but it is not a life-threatening emergency. They can assess your symptoms and guide you to the most appropriate service, such as a GP, pharmacy, or urgent treatment centre. It is available 24/7 by phone or online and helps you avoid unnecessary A&E visits.



The NHS
non-emergency
number



CORBY URGENT TREATMENT CENTRE

Corby Urgent Treatment Centre is for urgent health issues that are not life-threatening but still need same-day attention. This includes minor injuries, sprains, cuts, burns, infections, or illnesses that cannot wait for a GP appointment. It provides faster access to treatment than A&E and is designed to support non-emergency urgent care needs in the community.

A&E & 999

A&E and 999 should only be used in serious or life-threatening emergencies. This includes symptoms of a stroke or heart attack, severe breathing problems, major injuries, heavy bleeding, or unconsciousness. If someone's life is at immediate risk, call 999 or go straight to A&E. These services prioritise the most critical and urgent medical situations.



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT: KNOW WHERE TO GO

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CRISIS CAFES

Crisis Cafés provide a safe space to talk about your mental health, whether you are in crisis or simply need support to stay well. They can help with stress, anxiety, or low mood and offer early support before things escalate. Services are delivered locally through Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Northamptonshire Mind and Kettering Mind, without appointment.



24/7 MENTAL HEALTH LINE & CHAT HEALTH

The 24/7 mental health line (0800 448 0828) and the 24/7 Chat Health text service (07480 635531) are for mental health concerns when you need support, advice, or information but are not in immediate danger. Trained professionals will listen, assess your situation, and guide you to the right help, such as Crisis Cafés or community services. It is available day and night.

A&E & 999

A&E or 999 should only be used in a mental health emergency where there is immediate risk to life or safety. This includes overdose, severe self-harm, or immediate risk of suicide. In these situations, urgent medical care is needed straight away. Call 999 or go to A&E so emergency and mental health teams can provide immediate, life-saving support.



Read our article on Mental Health Support available in North Northamptonshire here:



<https://www.healthwatchnn.org.uk>

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 Claire.Neilson@healthwatchnn.org.uk

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

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North Northamptonshire

KETTERING SURGERY

 KCU, 51 Gold St, Kettering NN16
8JB

 Monday 11th May |  10:00am –
3:30pm

Join us for our Community Surgery,
where our team will offer:

- Free, impartial advice
- Guidance on health & social care rights
- Support to make informed decisions



KCU

Kettering Community Unit



CORBY SURGERY

 Corby Library, The Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17
1QG

 Friday 15th May |  10:00am – 4:00pm

Join us for our Community Surgery, where our team
will offer:

- Free, impartial advice
- Guidance on health & social care rights
- Support to make informed decisions

RUSHDEN COMMUNITY EVENT

 RUSH 2TheDen, Rushden

 Saturday 23rd May |  10:00am – 4:00pm

Join us for a free community event offering:

- NHS Health Checks (Age: 40-74 years)
- Mental health & Young People's support
- Advice on diabetes, dementia & COPD
- Cancer screening & smoking awareness
- Support for families, carers & veterans

Empowering healthier, informed communities.



Check what events we have going on in North
Northamptonshire by visiting our events page:



<https://www.healthwatchnn.org.uk>