

This week in the Patients Association Weekly News:

- **Welcome to 2020**
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Happy New Year



A very warm welcome to 2020 to all our members and supporters. Here at the Patients Association we are very excited about the year ahead with many important new projects coming up over the next few months.

In the meantime, we have three surveys underway that will all be closing during January. Please do take some time to fill them out if they're relevant to you – your feedback is key to the success of our analysis and the more of us taking part, the more powerful the

results. That's why we're keen to hear from as many people as possible, so please share our surveys with your family and friends and spread the word! Thank you.

Here's a quick reminder of what's currently on the go.....

From hospital into care



Discharging your loved ones from hospital and into care can be a very difficult time and we want to find out just what the impact is on family and close friends. We've teamed up with ZBD Associates to collate people's experiences, whether positive or negative, so if you do have any information to share please take a couple of minutes to fill out this quick survey.

[Take the survey](#)

Food in hospitals



Have you been in hospital recently? What was the food like? Good, bad, indifferent?

We want to hear about real experiences of food in hospitals – did you get a choice of food? How did it taste? If you needed assistance with eating, was there someone who could help you?

The NHS Hospital Food Review was launched in 2019, and we have been asked to feed into this work by collecting your opinions and experiences of hospital catering. If you have been in hospital in the past six months, please do take a moment to complete this survey. It won't take more than five minutes and will help inform the NHS Hospital Review Panel ahead of the publication of their review early next year.

[Take the survey](#)

Patient Experience



This policy programme is very important to us and will be our key focus for most of this year. Looking at the patient experience in its entirety, we will be totally guided by what patients tell us. The survey asks about what has made a difference to your experience in the past, in terms of both the care you have received and the other aspects of your life. It also explores what the term 'patient' means to people – to explore patient experience, it's essential to be clear about whose experiences are being considered!

Based on your feedback, we'll be launching recommendations and initiatives in the coming months so, if you have ever been a patient in any capacity whatsoever, please set aside ten minutes to complete it. It really is very important.

[Take the survey](#)

Hospital car parking



The excessive cost of parking your car at hospitals has been under debate for quite some time and we have often been asked for our opinion on the subject. Just after Christmas, the Government announced that free parking for thousands of patients, staff and carers would be available from April 2020, implementing a pledge in the [Conservative Party's election manifesto](#).

Knowing that we would be asked our views on this, our Chair Lucy Watson issued a statement to the media confirming our position:

“Free hospital car parking for some will be welcomed by those groups who will benefit from it, particularly parents of sick children, regular attenders at outpatients and relatives of people who are gravely ill. They will face a reduced cost burden, and not have to worry about whether their car parking is running out when appointments overrun and so on.

“However, we are concerned about how this complex measure will work in practice: how will people know their entitlement, how will they access it, and will patients and their families face another bureaucratic process to navigate at an already distressing time?

“We are ultimately disappointed that the Government has not provided free hospital parking for all patients, as part of a full funding settlement for the NHS. We urge the Government to commit to funding the NHS fully, including money for abolishing car parking charges entirely.”

Our full position on car parking charges can be read on our website.

[Read our position](#)

Patient Safety Congress 2020



We are one of Wilmington Healthcare's partners for this year's Patient Safety Congress and, as such, are helping to promote the event and make sure all our members and supporters are aware that tickets are currently available at early bird rates!

The Congress takes place over two days – 13th and 14th July – and brings together over 1,000 people, all with an interest in helping to transform patient safety. Speakers will include national leaders, policy makers, frontline innovators and patient advocates, and every session will be designed to ensure everyone leaves with practical solutions to challenges and inspiration to improve care.

Why not attend and take part in all the influential conversations, discuss challenging content and hear from patient advocates on an equal platform?

Further details and the opportunity to buy tickets can be found [here](#).



Calls to our helpline are now free of charge!

We've launched our new 0800 number, making it free for people to speak to our expert advisers:

0800 345 7115

To get in touch with our helpline team and share your thoughts of health and care services, call 0800 345 7115, email helpline@patients-association.org.uk or visit our website. We also operate a Live Chat function on weekdays between 2 - 5pm for people who wish to receive advice online.

[Contact our helpline](#)

[What our team is reading this week](#)

Not enough NHS staff for people with cancer

Artificial Intelligence better than expert radiologists at spotting breast cancer

Health and social care staff and senior leaders among those praised in new year honours

Nursing union describes unprecedented pressures at hospitals

Mental health – expert tips on tackling anxiety and depression

About Us

Our vision is that health and social care will be delivered in a way that meets every person's health and social care needs.

Our mission is to give effect to the patient voice, to improve patient experience and support people to engage fully in their own care. Find out more about our values on our [website](#).

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