

Newsletter

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Public meetings on local mental health services

Residents across Norfolk and Waveney are being invited to a number of public events to discuss the future of mental health services.

A review of local adult mental health services is underway, and hundreds of people have already completed an online survey to share their thoughts.

The review will inform the development of a 10 year mental health strategy, ensuring services are delivered in ways that meet future needs.

Mental illness is thought to affect 163,000 adults in Norfolk and Waveney. Although rates of severe mental illness such as psychosis are broadly in line or lower than the UK average, there is a higher level of disease related to 'common mental illness' – problems such as depression, stress and anxiety. Up to 19.1% of the adult population are affected by depression or anxiety.

The region's ageing population has also driven dementia rates above the national average, most notably in North Norfolk where 1.2% of the population suffers with dementia compared to 0.8% across the UK.



Dr Tony Palframan, Chair of the Norfolk and Waveney STP Mental Health Forum said: "We need to deliver a new mental health strategy for Norfolk and Waveney to ensure the resource we have is being invested in a way that makes the most difference. We also want to ensure this is developed by listening to local service users, carers, professionals and residents to help us define a way forward."

Patricia Hewitt, Independent Chair of the Norfolk and Waveney Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) said: "We started a conversation with local people in May and, building from that, are now expanding this important work to ensure residents have every chance to tell us what they think are working and, importantly, what needs to change."

The review team will also look at examples of best practice from elsewhere in the UK and from other countries, to build a case for change centred around three key ambitions:

1. Improving prevention and wellbeing so that people are helped to stay well.
2. Improving outcomes and the quality of services provided.
3. Making accessing services easier, and providing services in the correct setting, with smooth hand-overs from a service user's perspective.

Residents can book a place at two main public events, one in Lowestoft and the other in King's Lynn.

1. 2.30pm-4pm on Wednesday 7 November at the Orbis Centre in Lowestoft

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/developing-norfolk-and-waveneys-10-year-mental-health-strategy-tickets-50693953981>

2. 10am-12.30pm on Wednesday 14 November at King's Lynn Town Hall

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/developing-norfolk-and-waveneys-10-year-mental-health-strategy-tickets-44347559745>

A third is being organised for Norwich and the details of that event will be announced shortly. Places should be booked for each event on the Eventbrite webpage.

Anyone can also feedback their views through the following online survey:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/NWMentalHealthReview/>

Doctors in Norfolk and Waveney urge pregnant women to get the flu vaccine

Pregnant women in West Norfolk are being urged to have a free flu jab to protect themselves and their babies.

NHS West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is encouraging all pregnant women to have the vaccine as soon as possible so they are protected from the flu virus this winter.

Uma Balasubramaniam, a GP on the CCG's Governing Body and its Gynaecology Lead, said: "Pregnant women are at risk of severe illness from flu at any stage of pregnancy so it is important to have the flu vaccine as soon as possible. Pregnant women have a higher chance of developing complications if they get flu, particularly in the later stages of pregnancy.

"One of the most common complications of flu is bronchitis, a chest infection that can become serious and develop into pneumonia.

"Studies have shown that it is safe to have the flu vaccine during any stage of pregnancy, from the first few weeks up to your expected due date. Women who have the flu vaccine while pregnant also pass some protection on to their babies, which lasts for the first few months of their lives.

"We are urging all pregnant women to have the vaccine as soon as possible so they are protected from flu viruses circulating this winter."

A spokesman for the Royal College of Midwives added: "It is vital that more pregnant women come forward for the vaccine.

"During pregnancy, a woman's immune system naturally weakens to ensure that the pregnancy is successful and leaves her less able to fight off infections. That means if a woman catches the flu while pregnant she has a higher chance of getting bronchitis or pneumonia."

Pregnant women with flu are at a greater risk of having a miscarriage, giving birth early or having a baby with a low birth weight. Between 2009 and 2012, 36 pregnant women died from flu in the UK and Ireland, accounting for one in 11 of all maternal deaths during this period.

If you are expecting a baby please ask your midwife, GP or pharmacist about the vaccine. You can also read more here: www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/flu-jab-vaccine-pregnant/

The following groups are eligible for the free flu vaccine in 2018/19:

- all children aged two to nine
- those aged six months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- those aged 65 years and over
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers



West Norfolk CCG appoints new Audit Lay Member

Ian Pinches has been appointed as the new Lay Member (Audit) for NHS West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Mr Pinches is a Fellow of The Chartered Association of Certified Accountants with an Executive and Non-Executive Director level background gained over two decades in Social Housing, the NHS and the Emergency Services.

He currently serves in Non-Executive Board level roles across the wider public sector – with Freebridge Community Housing and the Office of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Police and Crime Commissioner – and brings recent and relevant NHS Acute Provider Non-Executive Director and Audit Chair experience to West Norfolk CCG.

Mr Pinches and his wife Lesley have recently retired from running their own small business and enjoy walking their dogs and renovating their house – a ‘retired’ village pub in West Norfolk.

Mr Pinches said: “I am very pleased about my appointment to the CCG’s governing body and look forward to working with the CCG to continue to develop sustainable, quality and equitable health services for patients across West Norfolk.”

Dr Paul Williams Chair of West Norfolk CCG, said: “I am delighted to welcome Ian to the CCG’s Governing Body. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience that will be a great benefit. We look forward to working closely with him.”



Patients urged to Check Before You Tick

Patients are being asked to “Check Before You Tick” as part of a new NHS campaign being supported by NHS West Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (WNCCG).

A special eligibility checker has been launched providing a handy online tool to help people work out if they qualify for free prescriptions or not.

Many patients assume they are entitled to free prescriptions but getting it wrong could result in a penalty charge of up to £100.

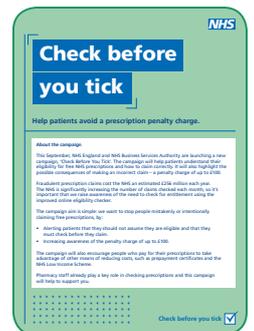
Dr Paul Williams, Chair of WNCCG, said: “A lot of people incorrectly assume they qualify for free prescriptions and this can lead to avoidable fines. It also impacts on the busy workload of the NHS.

“Answering a few simple questions will help you understand if you can tick the box for a free prescription, and what proof you need to show your pharmacists when you are collecting your prescription, or when it is being delivered to you.

“The Check Before You Tick campaign has been launched by NHS England and NHS Business Services Authority and aims to help patients better understand who is eligible for free prescriptions, and if eligible, how to claim correctly and avoid unnecessary penalty charges.

The NHS loses an estimated £256 million a year because people claim free prescriptions when they should have paid.

Over the next few months, the NHS will be improving the prescription checking service to reduce this loss, including significantly increasing the number of prescriptions checked each month.



The eligibility checker can be found at:

www.nhs.uk/checkbeforeyoutick

Financial help may be available for those who are not entitled to free prescriptions such as the NHS Low Income Scheme and NHS Prepayment Certificates. To find out more visit:

www.nhs.uk/healthcosts

If you would like more information about any of the topics in this newsletter or would like to provide feedback or get involved please contact:

Get Involved!

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