

Newsletter Issue 12



5th November 2020

Healthwatch City of London newsletter

Dear Reader,

I know that many of you will be anxious as we enter this second lockdown and second wave of infection. Things are different this time; the NHS has committed to continue treating as many of us as it safely can. All hospitals have worked hard to make sure that elective and emergency care pathways are designed to keep us safe, you can see more about this below. It's not just access to hospital care that's important but access to primary care, community services and social care. We are assured that these services will continue to operate as they do now.



We know many of you have experienced difficulties in finding dental services, accessing hearing services and foot health. The team at Healthwatch City of London continue to make sure that your concerns are raised and to push for improvements in the current access to services, we anticipate bringing some positive updates in our next bulletin.

At Healthwatch City of London we know that mental health is as important as physical health and accessing services at the right level is vital. We will be working with our partner organisations to keep everyone up to date on how to access care and support and advice. Over the next few weeks, we will be running some workshops in partnership with our colleagues in mental health services and would really value your input either as a user, potential user of services or if you are supporting someone.

Our ongoing work to make sure the voice of City residents is heard continues, especially as the new merged CCG begins to form. There is a lot going on and we must make sure we are at the heart of these changes. The merged CCG and the development of an Integrated Care System for North East London carries a risk that local voices are diluted. Whilst this is balanced by localism and bringing joined up services closer to individual users, we will be working closely with North East London colleagues to make sure user participation in these emerging changes is meaningful. Over the next couple of months, we will be talking more about the developing City and Shoreditch Primary Care Network and the impact this will have on us alongside the broader North East London changes.

In the meantime, please do tell us about your experiences and let us know what more you would like to see from us.

Stay safe

Gail Beer Chair, Healthwatch City of London

The Neaman Practice – service provision update

WHCoL contacted the Neaman Practice to understand their service provision as we enter the second lockdown. This is the information we were given:

Some of services remain unchanged until further notice however we still remain open from 8am-6.30pm.

All routine appointments are triaged first with a consultation with a member of our clinical team. **Please do not come to the practice unless you have been asked to do so (this is to help prevent spread of infection)**

Appointments: You can still ask for medical advice by requesting for a telephone triage appointment on the day from 8am (currently this cannot be booked in advance). This may be done via telephone, video consultation or a face-2 -face appointment depending on your clinical needs which your doctor will decide and discuss with you.

Telephone Triage appointments can be booked via your patient access login from Midnight the night before the appointment.

Online Consult: A quick, convenient and secure way to digitally contact your GP surgery and get advice, without having to wait on the phone or take time out to come into the surgery to discuss certain medical topics or administrative matters. For further details, please visit: <https://www.online-consult.co.uk/org/the-neaman-practice>.

City & Hackney Confederation Hub appointments: You can request a routine non urgent telephone triage appointment in advance to be booked at the C& H Hub service (The Neaman Practice hosts this service only) on Saturdays between 8am-2pm. Please speak to a member of our reception team for further information.

Prescriptions: All repeat prescription requests to be made via your NHS/Patient Access account or via your nominated pharmacy (Please allow 48 working hours). *Please note for new or expired or acute medication request, you may be required to speak to a clinician.*

Registering a newborn baby: please follow the link and complete the New Patient Registration GMS1 form <https://www.theneamanpractice.nhs.uk/new-patients-2> and then email theneamanpractice@nhs.net with your discharge summary and birth certificate and a member of our admin will be in touch with further instructions. Please note: all 6 weeks checks will be done at 8 weeks to align with the 8 week immunisation schedule. Postnatal checks will be carried out by a member of our clinical team, please call and ask for a telephone triage appointment.

Registering as a new patient: please follow the link and complete the forms on the webpage <https://www.theneamanpractice.nhs.uk/new-patients-2> and then email your proof of address and your completed New Patient Questionnaire and Patient Registration (GMS1) form to theneamanpractice@nhs.net. Please allow 5 working days to complete the registration.

If you need to self-isolate and need an isolation note for your employers, please follow the link: <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/> . We will NOT be providing sick notes for isolating. You can register for the NHS APP <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/the-nhs-app/>) via your APP store and order your repeat prescription.

Barts Health NHS Trust - planned surgery to continue

Barts Health NHS Trust have announced that all planned surgeries are still taking place across the trust, and the hospital will contact you directly in the event that your surgery is cancelled. Continuing on, they say, that the NHS is open for business and it's safe for anyone to seek help when needed. Your first port of call should be NHS 111 unless it's a life-changing emergency.

Are you booked in for an outpatients appointment or surgery during lockdown?

Elective surgeries at Whipps Cross and the Barts Health group will continue during the lockdown. Unless you are contacted directly by the hospital to cancel or reschedule your appointment, you are advised to proceed with any pre-surgery guidance advised and read their [visitor guidance](#) before attending your appointment.

If urgent or emergency treatment is needed, their A&E and urgent care services will continue to run as usual. If you are unsure about whether to attend hospital, please contact NHS 111 first for further advice

Their hospitals are adapting so our staff can continue to care for patients safely while the coronavirus remains a threat to everyone's health. There are still restrictions in place for people visiting their hospitals and you will have to wear a face covering when entering their buildings.

University College London Hospitals - update on services

UCLH are advising that you should continue to attend your appointments unless you have been told not to attend. You should attend these appointments alone, unless you have a designated carer that needs to attend your appointment with you. They also ask that at the current time you do not bring children to the hospital unless they are a patient. For the most up to date information on their services, [click on this page](#), then 'service updates' in the blue box.

Temporary changes are being made to children and young people's services in North Central London to prepare for the busy winter period and a potential second surge of COVID-19 cases.

The children and young people's emergency department at UCLH will remain temporarily closed. Local hospitals with a children and young people's emergency department are

[Whittington Hospital](#), Magdala Avenue, N19 5NF
[Barnet Hospital](#), Wellhouse Lane, EN5 3DJ
[North Middlesex Hospital](#), Sterling Way, N18 1QX
[St Mary's Hospital](#), Praed Street, W2 1NY
[The Royal London Hospital](#), Whitechapel Road, E1 1FR

The children and young people's emergency department at the Royal Free Hospital is also temporarily closed.

The emergency department remains open for adults.

Homerton University Hospital – services update

Homerton Hospital is gradually re-introducing services. The A&E, children's A&E and maternity services have been fully operational throughout the pandemic.

They have now started to perform elective (waiting list) operations. Patients coming to the hospital for an operation should access the hospital via the Day Surgery Centre. Please see [Elective Surgery leaflet](#)

Most outpatient consultations will remain by phone or conference apps at the moment.

Mental Health Support in the City

The City and Hackney Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provides support and services to children and young people experiencing mental health problems. They have produced this guide to getting help during the coronavirus pandemic

<https://cityandhackneycamhs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/City-Hackney-CAMHS-COVID-Getting-Help.pdf>

CAMHS are reducing their face-to-face contacts with patients, they ask that you not arrive for an appointment with their service until you have spoken to a clinician first. They continue to offer support to families by telephone and video sessions wherever possible. If you have a question relating to your next appointment here are the relevant numbers:

- First Steps Community CAMHS: 0207 014 7135
- CAMHS Disability: 0207 014 7071
- Specialist CAMHS: 0203 222 5600
- Off Centre (16-25 yo): 020 8986 4016
- Children & Family Services Clinical Service: 0208 356 5000 (Out of hours: 0208 356 5000)

East London Foundation Trust mental health service provision remains the same and are open for business as usual.

24 Hour Mental Health Crisis helpline

Residents in the City of London can phone the 24-hour Mental Health crisis helpline, if you are worried about your mental health, or are in distress and need to contact a health professional at any time. The telephone number is **020 8432 8020 (City residents only)**

Latest COVID-19 data for the City of London

The joint City and Hackney Public Health Intelligence Team produce regular statistics on Covid-19 levels in the City. The site below breaks down the cases in the City, and in Hackney, and by Ward, this enables residents to see the wider picture of infection rates. The site is updated regularly. <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-data>

National Lockdown

As announced by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, England will go into another period of lockdown from Thursday 5th November until Wednesday 2nd December.

Essential shops and the NHS will remain open. Unlike the previous National lockdown, vulnerable people will not be receiving specific letters advising them to shield, however the Government advise the following:

If you are over 60 or clinically vulnerable, you could be at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. You should be especially careful to follow the rules and minimise your contacts with others; and you should continue to wash your hands carefully and more frequently than usual and maintain thorough cleaning of frequently touched areas in your home and/or workspace.

Clinically vulnerable people are those who are:

- aged 70 or over (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
- chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- chronic kidney disease
- chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS) or cerebral palsy
- diabetes
- a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions or medicines they are taking (such as steroid tablets)
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- pregnant

There is a further group of people who are defined, also on medical grounds, as clinically extremely vulnerable to coronavirus – that is, people with specific serious health conditions. Over this period, the Government are advising the clinically extremely vulnerable to work from home.

You are encouraged to stay at home as much as possible but are encouraged to go outside for exercise. The Government will write to everybody who is clinically extremely vulnerable to set out detailed advice while the new restrictions are in place.

Flu vaccination

A reminder to get your flu vaccination if you are eligible. Flu vaccination is particularly important this winter to ensure that the NHS does not have to cope with the twin pressures of rising Covid-19 cases, alongside a national flu outbreak.

Speak to your GP or pharmacist to get the free flu vaccination. Children aged two to three can get a free nasal spray at their GP. School aged children up to year 7 will be offered the vaccine at school.

Who is eligible to receive the free flu vaccine now?

Pregnant women, children aged 2- 11 years old, if you are a member of a shielding household, persons who are 65+ years old, frontline health and social care workers.

Those with a long-term health condition such as:

- a heart problem
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or
- severe asthma
- kidney disease
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
- liver disease
- had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- diabetes
- a neurological condition, e.g. multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy
- a learning disability
- a problem with your spleen, e.g. sickle cell disease, or you have had your
- spleen removed
- are seriously overweight (BMI of 40 and above)

Vaccines for 50-64-year olds (who do not have any of the above-mentioned health conditions) should be available from November.

Square Mile Foodbank

The Square Mile Food Bank is run by local volunteers, in association with Age UK City of London, to help their neighbours in the City with food need during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic the use of their service has increased.

They urgently need food and store cupboard items, if you'd like to donate you can do so at the following locations:

Lauderdale Tower: Mon, Wed & Fri between 10 – 11 am

Golden Lane Community Centre: Tues – Thurs from 11am – 5pm

Speed House car park: Mon & Wed 11am – 6.30pm

***Items needed**

Food: UHT milk, cereal/porridge, tins of meat, fish, veg, baked beans, soup, rice, pasta, jam, peanut butter, sweet and savoury biscuits, tea, coffee, sugar, long life fruit juice (all with a reasonable "use by" date).

Toiletries/cleaning items: toilet roll, soap, shower gel, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand soap, washing up liquid, bleach, washing powder

If you need to receive help from the food bank you can Email them at SquareMileFoodBank or call **0203 488 5191**, all residents are eligible, regardless of age.

City Connections – events and befriending services

Our colleagues at City Connections run a health and wellbeing programme that is funded by the Corporation of London, linking people to health and wellbeing services in the Square Mile. Their November schedule of events is now available on their website

<https://cityconnections.org.uk/>

They also run two types of befriending services for residents that can help with social isolation, remote IT learning access and online activities.

The Telephone Befriending service provides you with a volunteer who can telephone you once a week for friendly and social conversation, that can help with isolation and loneliness.

The Digital Befriending service matches you to a volunteer, who will be able to assist you with using your digital device, getting online and also learning further with technology today via weekly telephone/Zoom calls.

All volunteers are trained and vetted.

For more information on these services, give them a call on 0203 957 9844 or Email Kevin Jones on: kevin@cityconnections.org.uk

Dragon café in the City

The next virtual Dragon Café in the City session is taking place on Wednesday 11 November on Zoom.

The session is free and open to anyone working or living in the City and provides a (virtual) space for them to release the pressure, take a break from their busy routines and engage in creative activities designed to foster positive mental and physical wellbeing.

Next week's programme includes:

- A comic and graphic novel workshop led by the writer and illustrator of Wallace & Gromit
- Guided meditation
- Yoga
- Laughter therapy ...and more.

The programme and a downloadable PDF poster can be found online [here](#).

Get in touch with Healthwatch City of London

Visit our website for more information, news and events, have your say about your care, and spread the word about Healthwatch City of London.

Web: www.healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk **Email:** info@healthwatchcityoflondon.org.uk

Tel: 020 3745 9563 **Twitter:** @HealthwatchCoL **Facebook:** @CoLHealthwatch

Portsoken Health and Community Centre, 14-16 Little Somerset Street, London E1 8AH