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Working in partnership with



**1 September 2022**

Dear GP Partner / Practice Manager

**RE: Registering with a Haringey GP**

As we are sure you are aware, [NHS guidance](#) states that **everybody has the right to register with a GP, regardless of their immigration status, and without having to provide proof of address or ID.**

Unfortunately, some patients are getting rejected because they can't supply requested documents proving their ID or address. Others are unable to register where a practice only allows online registration. The people most likely to be turned away are refugees, migrants, people who are homeless and people from other vulnerable communities.

Healthwatch Haringey, the Integrated Care Board (formerly the CCG), Haringey Council and Haringey GP Federation are working together to make sure that everyone who tries to register can do so easily. We will do this by providing the following support:

### **Training**

Doctors of the World will be providing training opportunities for your staff in September 2022. We invite ALL practices to attend, even those accredited as Safe Surgeries. We would like to welcome as many practice staff as possible, particularly those working on reception.

Tuesday 20th September 13.00 – 14.00 [Register on Eventbrite](#)

Monday 26th September 13.00 – 14.00 [Register on Eventbrite](#)

These training sessions are identical – you are invited to attend one session only.

The session will be hosted on Microsoft Teams.

The aim of this training is:

- To provide an understanding of entitlement to NHS care in England.
- To understand the barriers faced by refugees and migrants when accessing healthcare.
- To share practical steps to create an equitable and welcoming GP Practice for everyone.
- To recognise how important all staff are in a person's healthcare journey.

Should you be unable to attend, Healthwatch Haringey may be able to provide a short online briefing to a team meeting at your practice.

### **Mystery shopping**

From **October 2022**, Healthwatch Haringey will be 'mystery shopping' GP practices through phone calls and practice visits. Healthwatch Haringey will be checking every Haringey GP practice to find out if they will register a new patient without proof of address or ID. They will also be finding out if practices offer a translation service and/or help with completing the registration forms.

### **Communications**

Healthwatch Haringey will produce online communications with hard copy leaflets and posters in English and community languages, letting people know their right to register with a GP. These communications will be produced by **January 2023**.

### **Safe Surgeries**

We currently have 24 Safe Surgeries in Haringey. These practices have committed to tackle the barriers many migrants face in accessing care. We will be encouraging all Haringey GP Practices to sign up to the Safe Surgeries programme in **Winter 2022/23**.

### **Launch event**

In **January/February 2023** Healthwatch Haringey and Haringey Welcome will host a hybrid in-person/online public meeting. GP practice staff, VCSE sector partners and the people they support will be invited to attend. The meeting will last for about an hour and a half and will:

1. Display the results of the surveys and good practice.
2. Launch hard copy leaflets and posters for patients.
3. Provide a quick reminder of the responsibilities of practice staff in relation to registration/interpreting services.
4. Launch the Healthwatch Haringey project report.

We hope that this work will be useful and supportive for you as a practice.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with Tanya Murat if you have any queries.

Email: [tanya@healthwatchharingey.org.uk](mailto:tanya@healthwatchharingey.org.uk)

Telephone: 07735 143 528

Best wishes,

**Sharon Grant OBE,**  
Chair Healthwatch Haringey



**Councillor Lucia das Neves,**  
Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care  
and Wellbeing, Chair of the Health and  
Wellbeing Board, Chair of the Haringey  
Welcome Advisory Board



**Cassie Williams,**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Haringey GP Federation



**Miri Weingarten,**  
Haringey Welcome



**Rachel Lissauer,**  
Director of Integration for  
Haringey Development and  
Population Health Directorate,  
North Central London  
Integrated Care Board



**Will Maimaris,**  
Director of Public Health,  
Haringey Council



**Marina Davidson,**  
Advocacy Manager (Primary Care Lead),  
Doctors of the World UK



Resources and tips on following page...



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## Resources

Doctors of The World have collated a [toolkit](#) to provide a refresher for Safe Surgery staff and new recruits of the principles of Safe Surgeries. There is also a [Quick Reference Poster for Reception Staff](#) that reminds reception staff of good practice guidelines for registering patients. For more information and to sign up as a Safe Surgery, please visit [their website](#).

## Top tips for easier registration

### 1. Don't insist on proof of address documents

- Practices may use the practice address or a Homeless Support Centre address if patients do not have an address.

### 2. Don't insist on proof of identification

### 3. Never ask to see a visa or proof of immigration status

- Overseas patients are not required to complete the supplementary questions of the GMS1 [on residency status] to register with the practice.

### 4. Do what you can to protect patient information

- You are under no legal obligations to share information with the Home Office if requested (you should only do so if there is a court order, a public health risk or it's in relation to a serious crime – immigration offences aren't serious crimes).
- If a patient is concerned about sharing their address, register them with an alternative address.
- Support patients during the registration process and take them out of the main reception area for confidential discussions if possible.

### 5. Use an interpreter

- Ensure reception/admin staff have access to practice language line information.

### 6. Display posters to reassure patients that your surgery is a safe space

### 7. Empower frontline staff with training and an inclusive registration policy

- Ensure online processes are up to date and relate to the registration policy.
- Ensure reception/admin staff have access to practice language line information.
- Ensure all staff know the registration policy and have received training on how they can support and help new patients.

Details about this project, the NHS guidance and other useful information is available on the [Healthwatch Haringey website](#).