



# NEWS

All the latest news, views and reviews from the Patient Opinion team

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## Website development: WHO DID WE NOTIFY?

It will be no surprise that transparency is central to our mission at Patient Opinion. We've led the way in making feedback from patients and carers visible to everyone, and we're doing the same with responses from the health and care system.

And now we've taken another small but significant step in this direction, by making it easy to see on Patient Opinion which organisations we have notified about each story we publish. On each story page you'll find a link – "Who has Patient Opinion told about this story?" – which takes you to the notifications page for the story.

In the public view, this shows you which organisations we have alerted, and how many people at each. As a logged in subscriber, you'll also be able to see the detail of who has been

alerted within your subscription, and who has read or responded to the story.

It isn't just public users of Patient Opinion who can benefit from this information: we are also making the activity of staff in different organisations visible to one another. In an increasingly complex and sometimes fragmented system, this offers a way to reconnect people around the experiences of patients.

For example, in some areas the local commissioner or Healthwatch may be looking at feedback about local providers. They will be able to see easily whether a local provider is being notified and if so, whether they are reading and responding to the feedback from their users.

So this increased level of transparency creates new possibilities for discussion and debate between different parts of the system. Next, we'll be looking at how we can enable organisations to "nudge" others to listen and respond effectively to what patients and carers are saying.

### PO AND NHS CHOICES INTEGRATION

You might already know that Patient Opinion and NHS Choices share stories and responses back and forth between our sites.

We do this to make life easier (we hope) for our users. The idea is that you can come to Patient Opinion and see all the feedback about a service, whether it was originally posted on one site or the other. And, of course, the responses too.

Over the last few months we've done a lot of work to make this a smoother and more reliable process for all concerned.

We're now at the stage where we can offer you the following:

- 1: Stories posted on Patient Opinion will be sent across to NHS Choices, usually within 4 hours**
- 2: Stories and responses posted on NHS Choices will be pulled across to Patient Opinion, usually overnight**
- 3: If you post a response to a story on Patient Opinion (even if it came from NHS Choices) we will send it across to NHS Choices, usually within about 4 hours**

## MAKE EVERY MOMENT MATTER

It's always inspiring to hear about the benefits (and challenges!) that organisations get from using Patient Opinion and Care Opinion.

We often hear about the good work our subscribers are doing through our blogging feature. This is a great way to share ideas and experiences, and recently Diane Parkes from John Taylor Hospice used the platform to share how they've been using Patient Opinion.

"We're keen to encourage people to share their experiences on Patient Opinion. There will always be people who prefer to write a personal card or come in and say hello, we know that," Diane said.

"But hopefully as we continue to share awareness and encourage people to tell us about their experience at the hospice – whatever that experience is – we will see more and more families finding this a useful tool."

Being one of the first hospices to work with us, we're keen to hear how Patient Opinion fits in and we are always looking to improve our levels of support. There will be challenges, but we're delighted John Taylor Hospice share their experiences for others to learn from.

We've recently started to work with a number of hospices, including Norfolk Hospice and Ayr Hospice who have started receiving feedback online. We're looking forward to taking this work even further, and providing a valuable option for patients and their families to share their experiences.

To read the blog in full, please see [this link](#). You can also read more about John Taylor at [www.johntaylorhospice.org.uk](http://www.johntaylorhospice.org.uk)



This means you can use either one site or the other, according to your preference, to respond to all your stories. The important thing is that you should never have to post a response twice - if you've posted a response to a story, we will link it up to the story on both sites.

# ON THE ROAD TO INTEGRATION

*One's destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things.* Henry Miller

If health and social care integration is a destination, what will it look like for people with health and social care needs? And their families? And staff?

The Scottish Government states that: "At its heart, health and social care integration is about ensuring that those who use services get the right care and support whatever their needs, at any point in their care journey."

The care profession often talks of the patient, or service users' journey and systems are designed to show people's pathways through services. That may be fine from a service design perspective, but people with care and support needs don't necessarily see their experiences as journeys from one place to another (although it can often feel like that!). They see their 'care support needs' as day-to-day living that helps maintain their health and well-being. What's important to them and their families

is the quality of care, being kept informed about changes to their support and how these changes will affect them. And that's what Care Opinion is great at showing as in these two examples:

Elderly father's care provision.

I know where to get support now.

The move towards health and social care integration won't be easy. But Care Opinion offers the chance for people using services and their families to tell it how it is and for services to show that they are listening and developing their services based on these experiences. And of course, these are the people who are in the best position to say whether integration is working or not, regardless of whether they are on a journey or a pathway.

For more information on Care Opinion, please contact Mike Hamilton, Integration Development Officer, at

[mike.hamilton@patientopinion.org.uk](mailto:mike.hamilton@patientopinion.org.uk)

## LEARNING FROM OTHERS: EXEMPLAR VIDEOS

We recently identified five organisations that we regarded as Patient Opinion Exemplars based on their excellent work promoting Patient Opinion, responding on the site and sharing the patient voice through all levels of the organisation.

We interviewed staff at two hospital trusts, a community organisation and a mental health trust. We asked staff how they use Patient Opinion, what benefits do they see and how has this type of Patient feedback affected the culture of the organisation. In one of the videos, podiatrist Lisa Metcalf told us:

"More than just listening, it has helped us to focus on what we can change to improve our service. We've learnt that Patient Opinion gives patients a powerful voice, which in turn has empowered us."



Watch the videos [here](#).

Interested in hearing more about how your organisation could become a Patient Opinion Exemplar? Contact Sarah Ashurst, Senior Subscriber Support Officer, at  
[sarah.ashurst@patientopinion.org.uk](mailto:sarah.ashurst@patientopinion.org.uk)



GUEST  
ARTICLE

## JOHN'S CAMPAIGN

We hear a lot on Patient Opinion about the very mixed healthcare experiences of people with dementia – particularly hospital inpatient care. So we are excited to be supporting John's Campaign, aiming to establish the right for carers to stay with people with dementia in hospital for as long as they are able, at whatever time meets the needs of the patient.

John's Campaign was founded by Nicci Gerrard and Julia Jones after the death of Nicci's father, Dr John Gerrard in November 2014. John had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's 10 years previously and had been living at home with his wife. He was admitted to hospital for leg ulcer care and stayed five weeks. Family visiting was severely limited by hospital regulations.

As Nicci wrote in the Observer: "My father entered hospital articulate and able, he emerged a broken man." John could no longer speak, move, feed himself, take himself to the toilet or reliably recognise the people who loved him. Nicci and her family are certain that it was the isolation that led to this catastrophic decline.

Julia Jones's mother, 91, also lives with Alzheimer's. The support of her carers and family is crucial to her everyday well-being. Depriving her of this during a hospital stay makes as much sense as leaving a very young child alone with strangers. Indeed, John's Campaign is inspired by the campaigns which made it normal for children in hospital to be supported by parents.

Patient Opinion will support this important campaign by showing where hospitals are enabling carers to stay with people with dementia, and where change is still needed. So if you have a story to share about this, please do post it on Patient Opinion, and be part of the change.

[www.johnscampaign.org.uk](http://www.johnscampaign.org.uk)



Contact us...

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