

# Asthma + Lung UK's Westminster Support Group



<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/>

Helpline 0300 222 5800

[helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk](mailto:helpline@asthmaandlung.org.uk)

0737 8606728 for questions on asthma.

**Westminster Breathe Easy support group.**

Contact [t.jelen@btinternet.com](mailto:t.jelen@btinternet.com), or text: **0794 6514380**

*We support people with respiratory conditions, their friends, family and carers, helping with information and companionship.*



The 4-page printed newsletter is for our non-digital members. But if you use email, why not receive the full multi-page newsletter direct to your in-box by registering with [www.breatheasywestminster.com](http://www.breatheasywestminster.com) to become a free member with regular updates and information.

The **Westminster Breathe Easy monthly meetings** are at 11 am on the third Monday of every month at the top floor, Ada Court, 16 Maida Vale, W9 1TD, (text 0794 651 4380 for updates).

Our monthly **ZOOM** meetings are on the first Friday every month, login at 12.30, through [THIS](#) link. We have talks by clinicians and other professionals.

**NEWS UPDATE,** We plan to be able to continue our Westminster group and are booked up with talks, events and outings until the end of 2024, when I wish to retire. This means that some things we do may change, but hopefully the Ada Court meetings will continue, allowing you all to carry on networking and supporting each other. I do hope so. I must say it has been a privilege knowing and sharing with all you supportive members for the last ten years.

If you would like to find out about Breathe Easy support groups **in other areas**, you can email [supportgroups@asthmaandlung.org.uk](mailto:supportgroups@asthmaandlung.org.uk) or call the Asthma and Lung UK Support & Development Officers on 0300 3030 253.

And to receive the National Asthma & Lung UK **information** direct to your inbox register [HERE](#).

**Issue 55  
June  
2024**

**Charity  
number  
326730**

Contact for  
pressed  
flower cards



8 cards with  
envelopes  
for £10.00  
*plus postage.*



Please return  
your inhalers  
and blister  
packs  
to your  
pharmacy

QR code  
for free  
membership



In April we had a marvellous talk by the Metropolitan Police on scams.



To report a text spam, forward it to 7726.

To report a spam email, forward to [Report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:Report@phishing.gov.uk)

They told us how a password made from a single sentence can easily be hacked, but 5 short sentence password confounds them. Also, the double check of getting a pass number sent to your mobile is extra protection.

Following up from the Mets talk on how much revenue the scamming industry is making, a leading City lobby group is calling on the next government to bring in scams legislation that forces big tech and social media companies to cough up £40m a year to reimburse customers and fight fraud on their platforms.

Some of the police local direct dial help lines are discontinued, but in case of need, contact details are Police Emergency: 999, Police non-emergency: 101

## Westminster Council

The council updated [Report-it](#) website offers a 24 hour response rate to "street problems" e.g. ASB, fly tipping, noise, graffiti, ongoing parking violations, abandoned vehicles. For those of you who are non-digital, call their main switchboard on 0207 641 600. Crime Stoppers: 0800 555111 and Victim Support: 0845 30 30 900



Westminster Libraries are starting up hubs in libraries and we hope to (at the very least) to have quarterly sessions to tell people about respiratory and related support subjects, like how to use inhalers, support, research and pollution.

## "Up and Coming" events with Breathe Easy Westminster.

*Our live meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, and our Zooms are on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month.*

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 28 June   | Visit to the Royal Mews.                 |
| 5 July    | Zoom: Group update and MSK support       |
| 15 July   | Ada Court: Optician 'care for your eyes' |
| 2 August  | Zoom: Falls Team                         |
| 19 August | Ada Court: Kapil, Open age Health Lungs  |
| 6 Sept    | Zoom: on "The Care Conundrum"            |

**Our sincere thanks to Shaftesbury Capital**, who are linked with us through Paola of "One Westminster" and who donated a laptop to Samuel, our Registrar. Samuel has for years, faithfully sent out a card to each of our members on their birthdays. His maintenance of our membership listing has been meticulous. Our special thanks for this support.



Once again, with the support of [One Westminster](#), we were introduced to Jessica of Atkins Realis. She organised funding for an outing to the Dairy at Kenwood House with lunch and a tour.



We had a lovely day and were blessed with perfect weather. Our sincere thanks to Jessica for her enthusiasm and kindness.



### **"No Internet, Only Phone?"**

[Westminster Contact Centre](#) may be able to help 020 7641 1444.

[Benefits](#) 0800 072 0042 .

[Age UK Westminster](#) 020 3004 5610 (10.00 – 14.00) offers advice and assistance.

[Abbey Community Centre](#) 020 7222 0303 has lots of local support and fun.

[Open Age](#) for venues, activities and advice 020 4516 9978.

[Penfold Hub](#) guide to support pathways 020 3815 0033.

[Westminster Citizens Advice Bureau](#) 0808 278 7834.

[Westminster Libraries at Home Service](#) 020 7641 5405.

[Nickie Aiken MP](#) City of London and Westminster 020 139 5125.

[POhWER's Independent Health Complaints Advocates](#) making an NHS complaint 0300 456 2370

[Carers Network](#) 020 8960 3033 (see [HERE](#) for their amazing full contact help list).

[Independent Age](#) 0800 319 6789.

[The Patient Association](#) 0800 345 7115

### **£1 tickets for admission to The King's Galleries**

are available to anyone in receipt of most benefits. Apply through <https://www.rct.uk/one-pound-tickets>.



For those who are non-digital, tickets can be booked through 0303 123 7321

## NHS APP HELP DROP-IN

Every Tuesday  
13:00 – 15:00  
Until the end of June 2024  
Location: HAPPY HUB  
23 Third Avenue, W10 4BS

**Sessions to assist people on**

- Setting up the NHS App Account
- Access your NHS services
- Book GP Appointments
- Repeat Prescriptions
- View Your Records

**Register with Ease**

For a seamless registration process, we recommend bringing the following items:

- Your NHS Number
- Photo ID or
- Request for a ODS Code from your GP

**For More Info**

07883316387  
www.ubuntuplege.com  
info@ubuntuplege.com



**UBUNTU PLEDGE** In Partnership with **NHS**  
North West London

DOWNLOAD **NHS App**



### Self Help

Note the help at Third Avenue with setting up the NHS app on your phone. This is a very useful app and further links can enable you to see your test results. (PKB).

Also are you using your inhaler correctly? Many people aren't. Your pharmacy can help you with a new device or you can see details of all inhalers on [RightBreathe](#) with demonstration videos

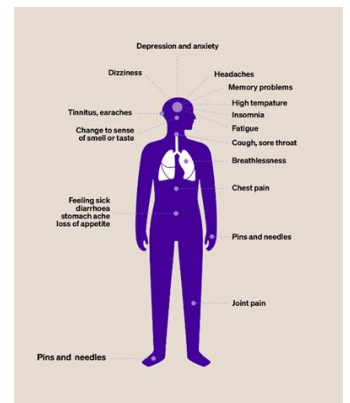
### Community Pharmacy services

Patients are now able to get treatment for seven common conditions without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

Pharmacies will be able to treat sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bite, the skin infection impetigo, shingles, and women with uncomplicated urinary tract infections.

## LONG COVID

There was a huge focus on mortality in the early days of the pandemic, and rightly so. **But now there seems to be no focus on morbidity.** Those affected with long covid seem to be not so important? The government, the media, has failed to keep it topical, probably because of "a psychological need" to move on. Yet there are many still suffering, adding to the unemployment figures and the quandary as to whether their symptoms are believed or not, as testing still cannot prove this condition; though research is now beginning to see that covid can leave identifiable traces in the blood.



Asthma & Lung UK has [basic information](#) on their website and details of [NHS support](#). The charity [Long Covid Kids](#) is another lifeline.

## Antibiotic resistance

### Did you know that antibiotics only work on bacterial infections, not viral?

What can we do to help stop antimicrobial resistance (AMR), one of the top global public health and development threats. [WHO](#) estimates that bacterial AMR was directly responsible for 1.27 million global deaths in 2019 and contributed to 4.95 million deaths. The misuse and overuse of antimicrobials in humans, animals and plants are the main drivers in the development of drug-resistant pathogens. We can help by ensuring we take the FULL course of antibiotics whenever prescribed. In a respiratory exacerbation the prescribed route now is initially a steroid alone and an antibiotic only taken when bacterial infection, usually noted by change in phlegm colour.



This following digital part of the newsletter is full, with a multitude of links to open up to further information. (*cntrl + click when hovering over a blue highlighted field*). There should be something to suit everyone.



Some is easy and some clinical. **Be selective**, choose to explore what appeals, search by the magnifying glass or save looking into some links for another day.

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# Asthma & Lung UK (A+LUK)



Why not call A+LUK helpline. 0300 222 5800, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm if you need advice.

See ALUK's 10 priorities in their report on "**Fixing Lung Health in the UK**" [HERE](#)



Every 5 minutes, someone dies from a lung condition in the UK. And yet there's a lack of political will to fund the research that could save these lives. Today, the Lung Research and Innovation Group have set out 10 priorities the government needs to take seriously to fix the lung research pipeline and fix the nation's lung health.

If the government and other key stakeholders invest in the 10 respiratory research priorities outlined in this report, we will, address the largest driver of winter pressures in the NHS, make huge savings for the healthcare system, and serve the needs of the 12 million people in the UK who will develop a lung condition during their lifetime.

## Further about ALUK

ALUK information on the [our Impact](#) page on their website which summarises their achievements in research. See also the link to their [Annual reports](#) page which contain relevant information. For additional information on research strategy, see [R+I Strategy: 2022-2027](#), and also their [organisation strategy page](#).

## Literature

See some samples of available COPD support literature: -

- [Living with COPD](#)
- [COPD Management Plan](#)
- [First steps](#)

## Young Lungs



Just to remind you about the next Asthma + Lung UK Parent Carer Support Network meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. See [HERE](#)

This month's topic is 'Breathing Well'. Does your child get out of breath climbing the stairs? Or maybe they find P.E. lessons and after school clubs difficult.

## Bronchiectasis

Asthma & Lung UK has lots of online information on bronchiectasis [HERE](#). And you can join the online volunteer led [bronchiectasis group](#), BeHappy group run by the enthusiastic and supportive Patricia. She also has information on [drugs in development](#) and other sources of information, such as the **The 2024 [NTM and Bronchiectasis Conference](#), which was a huge success!**

The conference brought together nearly 500 attendees, fostering valuable connections and empowering patients. With close to 150 participants gathering in person and over 300 joining virtually, the event facilitated a dynamic exchange of knowledge and support. Lookout for details coming soon on our May 2025 conference!

[Check out the slideshow below featuring photos of this powerful event!](#) the slides are amazing and airway clearance for any respiratory condition.

## Mental Health

Support links [HERE](#)

## Travel

**ALUK** travel advice for people with lung conditions – take a look before you set off on your travels [Travelling Safely with a Lung Condition](#)

## Breathe Easy International

To join the International Meetings, register [HERE](#). It is a useful meeting for people who cannot make respiratory meetings in the daytime. With the death of Derek, who ran the group from Wales, ALUK took over, but the uptake is sadly dwindling. We had such fun and to hear about experiences from international members. Let's hope it can keep going.

## Breathe Easy Westminster

*Our Westminster Breathe Easy is an Asthma & Lung UK Support Group, we are one of over 200 groups nationally that are patient led and patient run.*



**Cartoons for emotional self-assessment for people with chronic respiratory diseases**



PCRS are pleased to launch a three part animation series on Challenging Perceptions of COPD. Each animation provides a concise guide which healthcare professionals can use to support people with COPD to:

- remain active and healthy
- understand that 'flare-ups' of their COPD are not normal
- **Watch now**

**Reducing the Steroid Burden:** Medication Review for Patients with Asthma on Biologic Therapy'. This webinar is now available to [view on demand](#) and share with colleagues.

## Disabilities and Impairments

*(with our sincere thanks to our member Fran for the below information)*

Several millions of people of all ages cannot use a telephone. Any type of telephone: smart or dumb, due to a wide range of conditions: hearing/speech impairments, hand sub-luxation, rheumatoid arthritis, Parkinson, neurodivergence etc... [BT Relay UK](#) provides a free "read and type" service which is life saving for many.

[Citymapper](#). A phone app that plots your route. A boon to all us enthusiastic freedom pass holders . I find this invaluable getting around, particularly the "step free" option meant for wheelchair users, avoiding stairs, listing lifts, or the "walk less" option" which plots a route on the basis of minimal legwork rather than speed or efficiency. Also good for when it is raining! Both fabulous. Avoids those ghastly mile long corridors changing tubes etc.

**Vision loss:** good work has been done to ensure those with vision loss or poor literacy can automatically be offered text-to-speech tools. Some hospitals use *ReciteMe*, some GP practices use *ReachDirect* and MS Edge browser offers *ReadAloud*. All provide translations in many languages. But this is only a start!

A typical call using Relay UK



Some shops have buttonless touchscreen card readers, meaning you need sight to tap in your PIN. They are increasingly popular because they are cheap and the screen can be used to advertise items at checkout. Many blind people report they have had to tell their PIN to strangers so they can have it typed in for them, or be forced to leave their unpurchased items behind because they're unable to pay. Awareness of new products and technologies is paramount to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable citizens. So is citizen activism to ensure disabilities are not ignored.





See [HERE](#) a telegraph article. **Have you a spare room?**

“I moved in with a pensioner for cheap rent – I didn’t bargain on the social benefits”

**Intergenerational house shares are on the rise amid worsening rent and care crises**

I like this idea if you have the spare room and are paying bedroom tax. Why should it be a problem to rent it out if you are on benefits? It helps the isolated and gives needed accommodation for some. Perhaps something for our politicians to think about!

## What you can do about Air Pollution...

Asthma+Lung UK ran a survey last year showing that 81% of Londoners are worried about the impact of air pollution on their children’s health, compared with an average of 48% in the rest of the country.

At least a new development in Westminster, the [Air Quality Data Platform](#) [AQDP] now provides all those who live, work in and visit London with near-real time readings of pollutant levels so we can make informed decisions when interacting with health care providers, employers and local communities.

It is not easy to remember all the pollutants plays havoc with our health and not just our lungs and heart. Research has shown that a fifth of type 2 diabetes is attributable to chronic fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) exposure. The inclusion of schools in the [AQDP resource](#) is a proactive step towards safeguarding the health of future generations. Worried about air pollution? use AQDP to see today’s levels near where you are!

See our video on **indoor pollution** [HERE](#), password: t355Ja1r and about the new Yuki’s indoor monitor, [Ambient Works](#) (we were involved in its patient research) See launch video [HERE](#).



## Rambling



Now the weather is improving, is the time to take the opportunity to improve our activity levels. It is proved again and again that exercise improves our lung condition. Simon Lloyd, a highly experienced, kind, and supportive leader, conducts small groups for gentle rambles. The Tuesday health walk for the Breathe Easy group happens every week at 11.55, beginning at St James’s Park.

Contact: [simontlloyd65@gmail.com](mailto:simontlloyd65@gmail.com) 07949 316279.

## Exercise

Kapil is a specialised trainer who runs [Open Age's Healthy Lungs](#) exercise program in Westminster and RBKC and who aims to improve chronic respiratory health, helping to manage COPD, Asthma and other respiratory conditions. If waiting for rehabilitation from your respiratory team or just completed one, this is an excellent course to maintain your fitness. Contact [kyagi@openage.org.uk](mailto:kyagi@openage.org.uk) or you can call: 020 4516 9973.



## Breathing

Quite a lot of us with a lung condition say you suffer from a blocked nose or sneezing, see this link explaining how important this can be, especially if you are relying on a nasal canula for your oxygen. [One airway - one disease? | Primary Care Respiratory Society \(pcrs-uk.org\)](#)

Blocked Nose:- This study compared nose surgery (septoplasty) with nasal sprays for people whose septum blocks their airways [HERE](#).



**EUFOREA** EUROPEAN FORUM FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION  
IN ALLERGY AND AIRWAY DISEASES

EUFOREA is thrilled to announce the release of its new **patient guide** on Chronic Rhinosinusitis (including CRSwNP/Nasal Polyp

Syndrome)! Developed by EUFOREA, this comprehensive guide provides patients with essential information to navigate their CRSwNP journey effectively.

*Meanwhile I have been told that humming helps release blocked sinus!*

**myCOPD** is the **complete app for patients living with COPD**.

Perfect your inhaler technique with our easy-to-follow inhaler videos and learn how to manage your COPD from world experts. Complete online pulmonary rehabilitation classes from the comfort of your home and get the very best in COPD care.

# NHS, Patient Involvement, Research

## European respiratory information (ERS + ELF)



**ERS** EUROPEAN  
RESPIRATORY  
SOCIETY  
every breath counts

The European Lung Foundation (ELF) offers grants to [support organisers of lung health awareness events](#) that meet one or more of the Healthy Lungs for Life campaign themes. Not-for-profit organisations, patient groups and healthcare professionals can apply for a grant of up to

€1,000 to support events and activities that meet one or more of the aims of the Healthy Lungs for Life campaign:

Welcome to this week's **ERS 20<sup>th</sup> June Newsletter**. In this issue: [ERS Congress news](#), [latest ERS news](#), [updates from ERS Publications](#), [E-learning latest](#), and [key dates and deadlines](#).

European Respiratory Society [Clinical Practice Guideline on symptom management](#) for adults with serious respiratory illness

ELF recently set up the [ELF Youth Group](#) for people aged 16 to 24 who care about lung conditions to make sure that we pay attention to the needs of young people with a lung condition.

The latest *European Respiratory Journal* podcast is out now on the ERS Respiratory Channel. In this episode, Deputy Chief Editor Don Sin interviews Nick Hopkinson about his study which shows consumption of nitrate-rich beetroot juice reduces cardiovascular risk factors in people living with COPD. ▶ [Listen now](#).

ELF talks about how we rely on a type of medicine known as antimicrobials to treat many common diseases, including TB (tuberculosis) and chest infections. The overuse and misuse of these treatments is making them less effective. [This is known as antimicrobial resistance](#). It is one of the biggest challenges the world currently faces.



**European Patient Ambassadors Program**, EPAP, is a free, online, self-learning programme that introduces patients and carers to some of the basic skills and knowledge needed to represent yourself and others successfully. See introduction [HERE](#).

## WHO Special Envoy appointed for Chronic Respiratory Disease.



The World Health Organization (WHO) has announced the appointment of a WHO Director-General Special Envoy for Chronic Respiratory Diseases. ERS welcomes this development, which acknowledges the enormous impact that respiratory disease has globally, and the need to prioritise related developments.

▶ [Read the article in full](#) ▶ [Read the news release on the WHO website](#)

## Research & Invitations

**RB&H** Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals undertakes pioneering and world-class research into heart and lung disease. See [HERE](#). Through their research, they develop new treatments, improve care for patients and help to inform decision-making and policy across the NHS and beyond. Read their [latest news](#).

**European Respiratory Society (ERS)** are looking for patient speakers fitting any of the below descriptions for their major conference in September. They are willing to work with you to develop a video, particularly as travel to the conference is difficult. If you would like to get involved, contact [clare.williams@ersnet.org](mailto:clare.williams@ersnet.org)

#### Patient speaker requests

- A patient who smokes and has an obstructive airway disease
- Someone who was diagnosed with early-stage lung cancer through a screening programme
- Someone under medical surveillance for multiple lung nodules
- A patient who has undergone Pulmonary Rehabilitation that has been adapted for their cultural needs
- A patient with a rheumatic disease that affects the lungs
- A parent of a child with asthma



### Do you use technology to help you manage your health?

Has your healthcare team ever invited you to use remote monitoring technology to support your care? If the answer to either of these is yes, we'd like to speak to you!

The **DECIDE Rapid Evaluation Centre** at the University of Oxford, together with RAND Europe, wants to understand people's experiences of using **remote monitoring technologies**. Share your experiences in a brief phone call with our researchers, receive a £20 voucher in thanks for your time, and help us improve future care.

Please contact Dr Nikki Newhouse for more information: [nicola.newhouse@phc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:nicola.newhouse@phc.ox.ac.uk)

### About Fungal diseases

Fungal diseases and antifungal resistance are both increasing worldwide. Misdiagnosis is common. <https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/index.html>



#### Researching new methods of diagnosing lung fungal infections [HERE](#)

Fungal diseases affect over one billion people globally and lead to the deaths of more than 1.6 million individuals annually.

Allergic and chronic fungal airway diseases (ACFAD) are very common fungal diseases that affect patients with respiratory allergies, like asthmatics, and those with structural airway disease including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchiectasis, interstitial lung disease, and cystic fibrosis. An example of an AFCAD is aspergillosis, a condition caused by aspergillus mould which can cause shortness of breath, cough and wheezing.



**The Aspergillosis Trust** saw 5 of our leaflets translated into 30 different languages and put on our website. These leaflets can now be accessed and downloaded directly at [www.aspergillosistrust.org](http://www.aspergillosistrust.org)



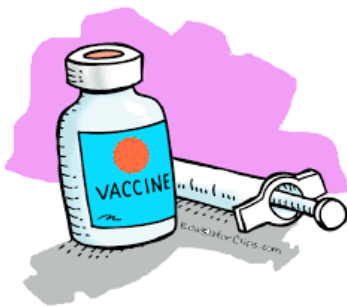
The International Primary Care respiratory group has produced a **desk top helper**. A practical guide in breathlessness in adults for primary care for clinicians. See [HERE](#).

Also they involved in the planning of a new important World Health Organisation (WHO) webinar on tobacco cessation for people with chronic respiratory diseases on 11 July. [HERE](#) is the WHO original publication on tobacco's impact on asthma and COPD.

## **Cardiovascular disease and risk in COPD:** a state of the art review [HERE](#)

The prospective identification of co-morbid COPD in CVD patients and of CVD and CV risk in people with COPD is crucial for optimizing clinical outcomes. This includes the identification of novel treatment targets and the design of clinical trials specifically designed to reduce the cardiovascular burden and mortality associated with COPD.

The success of the **COVID-19 vaccination programme** has meant that the **requirement for shielding and identifying people as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) is no longer necessary.**



Most people who were part of this CEV patient cohort are no longer at substantially greater risk than the general population and are advised to follow [the same guidance](#) as everyone else on staying safe and preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, as well as any further advice received from their healthcare professional.

However, there remains a **smaller number of people whose weakened immune system means they may be at higher risk** of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination. Enhanced protection measures, such as those offered by specific treatments or additional vaccinations alongside other protective behaviours, may benefit these individuals. This guidance [HERE](#) is for those individuals who remain at higher risk.



During the [2024 general election](#) campaign we'll be examining the key debates and exploring the big issues in health and care. We'll also be answering your listener questions and highlighting some of the important issues that are missing from the national debate. Follow to get new episodes for free as soon as they're available on [Apple Podcasts](#) or [Spotify](#).

## **Antibiotic resistance**

Sign up to receive the latest news including upcoming events, programmes, AMR educational and advocacy resources and fundraising opportunities.

[The AMR Narrative - Voices together for Antimicrobial Resistance](#)



(Zephyr) Endobronchial Valves for Severe COPD / Emphysema Patients. See further [HERE](#)

Appropriate patient selection is critical to the success of Zephyr Valve treatment. Over time, clinical trial data have helped define the successful patient profile.



[Improving infectious disease prevention in schools – lessons from the COVID pandemic \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Developing better understanding of hygiene is key to developing effective hygiene behaviour. Dr Sally Bloomfield, International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene. recording available [HERE](#) (needs winding to the start!)

Their [June newsletter](#) has information on designing healthy interiors with lessons learnt from the pandemic. It informs about shaping healthy interiors to understand :-

- how infectious respiratory particles are transmitted from the body,
- how far particles travel, pathways into respiratory systems,
- infectious surfaces known as fomites,
- how to protect the individual and community,
- and steps that can be taken to mitigate transmission.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI)



[The London Medical Imaging & AI Centre](#) for Value Based Healthcare, has launched AIDE (AI Deployment Engine) at its first NHS Trust, supported by AI Centre technology partner. Following its official launch in 2019, the AI Centre was established as part of the UK Government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. The first solution,

AIDE, has gone live at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, and will now be rolled out to nine further Trusts by 2023

And [HERE](#) Dr Ameera Patel, CEO of TidalSense, explains how AI could completely change diagnostics in respiratory care.

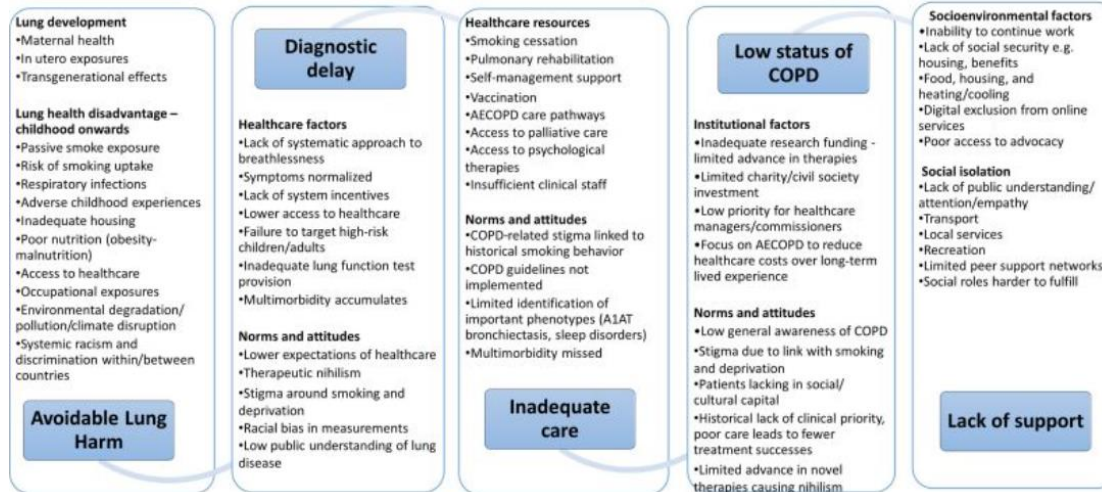
Early and accurate diagnosis is critical to easing the mounting pressure on our health service, eliminating unnecessary patient appointments while enabling earlier interventions for those who urgently need them.





Nick Hopkinson posts on lung disease and social justice and contains five domains:

- 1) Avoidable lung harms
- 2) Diagnostic Delay
- 3) Inadequate COPD Care
- 4) Low status of COPD
- 5) Lack of Support: factors that make living with COPD more difficult than it should be.



## Local Information



### Worried about your Gambling?

Gambling impacts over a million people in the Greater London area. Gamcare being the leading national provider of free information, advice and support for anyone affected by problem gambling provides this quickly when someone accesses our services.

Gambling effects all aspects of community, causing relationship breakdown and hardship, at GamCare they aim to alleviate these issues with treatment, signposting, focus groups and peer support. They also operate the [National Helpline](#), providing structured support for anyone in Greater London who is harmed by gambling. Contact: **Judith Daniels**, London Coordinator, M: 07947 922358.



[Listening Books](#) are a registered UK charity who have been working to widen access to literature for people of all ages since 1959. Their service caters to a vast range of disabilities which may provide a barrier to reading, such as glaucoma, anxiety, multiple sclerosis and dyslexia, for example. There's something for everyone in the Listening Books collection! They will be giving a talk in our zoom meeting in November 2024/





Have you heard about the Cultural Events opportunities for older people, offered through the Westminster Libraries? See [HERE](#). It gives information on [Out and About](#) offers for complimentary tickets to older Westminster residents to attend cultural events such as concerts, University of the Third Age, The Second Half Foundation and Silver Sunday.

## london plus

**London Plus champions London's civil society through insight, influence and powerful connections.** Are very excited to share with you their new '[Commitments from the NHS to Engage with Communities](#)' document. Hot off the press! I have spent many months talking to you about this and it has been a real labour of love, but finally it is here!

In it you will find information about:

- Who your engagement leads are
- Roles that support the two sectors to 'speak to' each other
- What health inequalities projects are happening in your area
- Where your local Citizens Panels are, how to get involved
- What commitments there are to engage with you
- What governance structures are in place for you to get involved in

[Healthcare Central London](#) (HCL) is a Federation of 32 General Practices in Westminster caring for more than 275,000 registered patients. They provide Community and Primary Care services to our local residents in addition to a wide range of staffing, management and administrative support to our member Practices. They work closely with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and other key partners, including the Local Authority and community organisations. <https://healthcarecentrallondon.co.uk/who-we-are/>

[Health Share](#) Is an independent healthcare provider, with established roots in muscular-skeletal health and diagnostics, founded by expert NHS clinicians. See [MSK](#) for self-referral.



## Independent Age

Helpline 0800 319 6789  
helpline@independentage.org  
Find out more about:

- Your state pension order resources or ask questions [HERE](#)
- Home adaptations and planning ahead [HERE](#)
- Cost of living support [HERE](#)
- Housing Support [HERE](#)
- Attendance Allowance [HERE](#)







Might be getting warmer but you might still need [Home Energy Advice Service Westminster City Council](#). It is available in other languages, so please do share.

And read about their delivery plan [HERE](#)

Defending and **protecting women from violence** in the home and in the wider community. Do save and use [THIS](#) link for MEWSO's latest June newsletter.



**In-Deep Community** Taskforce are a charity aiming to combat loneliness and isolation by promoting friendship. They offer a range of opportunities for the over 50's to connect with others in their local community, including a weekly lunch club, a community choir and a dance fitness class. <http://in-deep.org.uk/>

The amazing **Carers Network** is still around to offer support to carers and to help unpaid carers. See the self-referral form [HERE](#) for help and advice.

Lots of us will care for someone at some point in our lives. You might not see yourself as a carer, but you could get extra money if you regularly spend at least 35 hours a week looking after someone who is ill or has a disability.



The magnificent [Age UK Westminster](#) goes from strength to strength with their services, which go from help with [digital inclusion](#) to a [visual impairment advocacy service](#), amongst much else.

The Penfold Hub for Westminster residents over 50, is near Church Street, they have great activity programmes. Contact [denis.kane@housing21.org.uk](mailto:denis.kane@housing21.org.uk) for more information.

### Penfold Community Hub

All sessions are open to Westminster residents over 50 years old and carers.

ACTIVITY PROGRAMME



### ABBEY CENTRE ACTIVITIES

Read [HERE](#) the Abbey Centre partners newsletter and also the bulletin [HERE](#). It really is useful to keep in touch with what they are doing if you live in South Westminster and also [their café](#) is worth visiting.

### [Abbey Centre's Community Pantry.](#)

For a small weekly subscription of £4.50, members of the Community Pantry can choose a number of food items and other household essentials each week, with a typical retail value totalling over £40! See [HERE](#) to read more about it and how to join up.



**Westminster Councils'** March newsletter [HERE](#)  
[HERE](#) the link for Westminster food support.  
And [HERE](#) for their Spring environmental news.

Do explore [People First](#) in case I have missed something, they support independent living and health in K&C and Westminster, including about our Breathe Easy Group!



[Groundwork](#) has released the results of their annual survey of Green Doctors – energy efficiency advisers working for the charity – which paints a troubling picture of the realities for people trapped in fuel poverty across the UK. See [HERE](#)



*\*Also they will be giving us a talk at Ada Court on our October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.*

## Our Planet & Random Things

### Hot, hot and hotter!

**Cooling machines** are part of a vicious heating cycle. Airconditioning is exacerbating the climate crisis. Europeans rely less on air conditioning than many other citizens around the world.



But figures show that its use has steadily increased on the continent as temperatures have risen due to human-caused climate change. Read more [HERE](#).

**What is a heat dome?** Heatwaves caused by trapped hot air are becoming more common. Across the world, heatwaves are happening more often, lasting for longer and the temperatures are becoming more dangerous with each year, especially for vulnerable people.

Now, heatwaves are happening in Europe even earlier than in previous years. Greece has already had their first heatwave of the year, leading to the **deaths of tourists. Italy, Hungary** and **Türkiye** are also baking in extreme weather.

### How much does it cost to run an oven?

While ovens are a staple in British households, not everyone knows how much it costs to run one. We look at how much it currently costs to run an oven and how you can slash costs. [Cost of running an oven](#)

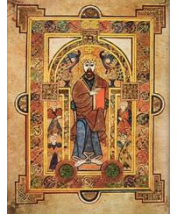


*When I wake in the middle of the night, I go data exploring!*

See the grassroots [conservationists who've brought species back from the brink](#). The one in Cameroon and the manatee is really interesting.

This marvellous artwork by monks was done in 800 AD!!, imagine, no electricity light, no paper, just vellum (*Vellum refers specifically to calf skin, and parchment to sheep and goat skin*) and having to make natural inks.

See the [Book of Kells](#). See more Positive News [HERE](#)



**“The UK government’s climate action plan is unlawful”** the high court has ruled, as there is not enough evidence that there are sufficient policies in place to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



The energy secretary will now be expected to draw up a revised plan. This must ensure that the UK achieves its legally binding carbon budgets and its pledge to cut emissions by more than two-thirds by 2030, both of which the government is off track to meet.

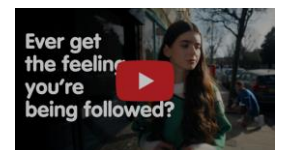
The environmental charities [Friends of the Earth](#) and [ClientEarth](#) (one of the best environmental charities in the UK) took joint legal action with the Good Law Project against the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

In this episode of our podcast by the **Kings Fund**, Dr Waheed Arian shares his journey – from growing up in war-torn Afghanistan to arriving in the UK as a refugee and becoming an NHS doctor. Hear more about his story and the value he places on hope and compassion.

[\*\*HERE\*\*](#).

Westminster Council has set up an event where asylum seekers can volunteer to help local support organisations. We are looking forward to having a stall there on the 9<sup>th</sup> July and will keep you informed.

See this video on the way in which you are monitored on networks and the dangers



Yes, most of us realise that **water** is going to be rationed in the future. The sewage in our rivers and the drought in Spain are just a samples of the problems we face.



Some of the biggest financial hikes this year could be from your water company, meaning your water bills may rise by an eye-watering 70% over the next five years. Your diet, perhaps surprisingly, is one of the biggest drains on water. Eating foods that need large amounts of water to produce – particularly meat from animals that have been fed on grain – massively increases your hidden water footprint.

See information [HERE](#) from the **British Heart Foundation**. It includes details on the many types of fitness trackers on the market today. But should you get one, and can they detect heart problems?



And when it comes to a sweet treat, it's hard to beat a lovely slice of cake with your cuppa. But are some cakes healthier than others? Test your cake knowledge in our fun quiz. [Take the quiz](#)

## Zoe does it again with great nutritional information.



Beans are nutrient-dense, delicious, diverse, filling, cost-effective and easy to store. They're also linked to a reduced risk of some diseases – and your gut



bacteria love them. So, why not eat more? In [this article](#), one of ZOE's nutrition coaches, Zainab Abbas, outlines why beans are so wonderful. She also provides simple recipes and other tips and tricks to help boost your bean intake.

- [Inflammation drives the leading cause of death: Here's how to reverse it](#)
- [Inflammation, ageing and disease: What's food got to do with it?](#)
- [Do you really need to take omega-3 supplements?](#)

And [listen](#) or [watch](#) to answer the following questions

- Are most meat alternatives ultra-processed?
- Do meat alternatives contain good-quality protein?
- Why is reducing your meat intake better for your health?
- Does grass-fed beef have more omega-3s

## I have to put this article in again as it is so important!

### [The link between toxic air and food](#)

Air pollution [doesn't just damage health](#). – Food has enormous cultural importance and longstanding traditions, meaning changing diets in rich nations away from meat and dairy and towards plants is challenging. The fightback from vested interests in industry is still ongoing! We know we can't [beat the climate crisis](#) without cutting meat consumption, we know cattle production is a big factor in [destroying biodiversity](#), and we know many already [eat more red meat](#) than is healthy for them. We also know the meat industry [is heavily subsidised](#).

For centuries, [herbs and supplements](#) like vitamin D have been used to help alleviate symptoms related to COPD. Fewer exacerbations and better lung function are just some of their potential benefits. Thyme, tumeric, liquorice, and ginseng are all some examples. Niacin found in beetroot is also good.





Good news. Study finds harmful gases destroying ozone layer falling faster than expected. Scientists say atmospheric levels of damaging gases peaked five years ahead of projections, as substances phased out. The HCFC chemicals that replaced them are expected to be eliminated by

2040. Read Guardian article [HERE](#)

## What is the triple lock?

**The triple lock** dictates that the **state pension** rises each year in line with [inflation](#), average earnings or by 2.5% - whichever is higher. In other words, if earnings and inflation are below 2.5%, pensioners will get a 2.5% increase in their pension; if either measure is higher, they'll get more. The government confirmed in its [Autumn Statement](#) that it would honour the triple lock pledge, therefore [uprating the state pension by 8.5%](#) in April 2024.

Lastly, I must mention my friend, Alana, who runs Geomantica, which is dedicated to Earth harmony, geomancy, dowsing, esoteric farming and gardening, and eco-sensitive living, since 1998. See what she is doing, way ahead of her time! [www.geomantica.com](http://www.geomantica.com).

Geomantica News June 2024 is available to read [HERE](#).

*Finally, as always,*

*my best wishes to all*

*Tess Jelen,*

*June 2024*

