

Doctor struck off where police found insufficient evidence

15 December 2023



A Surrey doctor who used his position to gain the trust of a woman before choking and sexually assaulting her has been struck off. Former Royal Surrey County Hospital doctor Adnan Sadiq texted the woman saying “I’m a doctor, I save lives”, “You can trust me”, “I’m a nice guy” and “you don’t have to worry” before meeting with the woman during lockdown and assaulting her.

The Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service found that he placed both hands on the woman’s neck, anonymised as Ms A, and applied pressure. He also pushed Ms A’s head towards his exposed penis, before asking if he could ‘put it in’ or words to that effect during the November 2020 predatory attack.

When questioned Ms A told the tribunal: “I genuinely feared for my life and was glad to escape... it took me a while to realise that what had happened was not ok.”

Dr Sadiq initially denied choking was his kink, but later accepted he liked it in a sexual context, according to the tribunal report. Allegations he sent explicit images over snapchat were not proven but overall his behaviour was so egregious that he was struck off as a doctor.

The report read: “Dr Sadiq’s actions would undermine public trust and confidence in him, as well as in the medical profession.” Dr Sadiq qualified in 2020 from University of Szeged, Hungary, and moved to Britain to take up his first medical post in October 2020. A month later he began texting the woman before going on to sexually assault her. During evidence he gave answers that were “too implausible to be truthful”.

He also contradicted himself in relation to his predilections and other topics. For example, when asked about kissing Ms A, he said: “We both kissed at the same time... because her face was coming towards me and I didn’t want her to feel awkward.”

The report added: “The tribunal considered Dr Sadiq’s actions to amount to sexual assault, with an element of violence. The tribunal was concerned as to his apparent continued lack of insight into the seriousness of his actions and their consequences for (the woman) and public confidence in doctors.

“Erasure is the only appropriate and proportionate sanction sufficient to maintain public confidence in the medical profession and to uphold standards of conduct for doctors.”

The tribunal determined that Dr Sadiq’s name should be erased from the medical register.

The General Medical Council suspended Dr Sadiq in September 2023 and he was immediately stopped from working at Royal Surrey. The full tribunal process concluded in November and he was erased from the medical register.

A spokesperson for the hospital trust said: “In May 2021 the General Medical Council informed the Royal Surrey County Hospital that an allegation had been made against Dr Sadiq regarding inappropriate sexual conduct outside of the trust. Since then we have followed clear and robust processes in a timely way, appropriately reflecting the investigations and decisions taken by the GMC and Surrey Police at each stage. While this incident occurred outside of our work place, we expect anyone employed by our trust to uphold the highest moral standards and would like to express sympathy for the distress caused to the complainant in this case.”

A spokesperson for Surrey Police said they received a sexual assault report in February 2021 and later arrested a 30-year-old man. The spokesperson said: “Following our investigation, officers concluded there was not sufficient evidence to proceed with the case. The victim was kept informed throughout and supported by officers. The man arrested was a medical professional at Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust and Surrey Police provided information to the General Medical Council about the investigation.”

Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (image Google)

Local HIV testing proves its worth

15 December 2023



Tens of thousands of patients going to St George’s, **Epsom** and St Helier’s emergency departments (EDs) have been tested for HIV in the past year, thanks to a pioneering scheme that helps people with the virus start treatment more quickly.

All three hospitals offer the opt-out testing - and carried out nearly 130,000 checks between April 2022 and September 2023. As a result, 33 people were diagnosed with HIV and able to receive effective early treatment and reduce onward transmission, and a further 19 previously diagnosed patients were re-engaged in care.

It also means people were able to access other support they may need, such as appointments with health advisors or psychologists who can help them come to terms with the diagnosis.

The figures have been released to mark World Aids Day, a global movement to unite people in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and comes as St George’s, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group sign up to become a founding organisation for the HIV Charter Mark. The charter has been established by the National Aids Trust to address HIV stigma and poor knowledge of HIV within healthcare settings.

Dr Richard Jennings, Group Chief Medical Officer at St George’s, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group, said: “HIV is a long-term manageable condition and people living with HIV have full healthy lives, but the earlier someone with HIV is diagnosed the better. An early diagnosis means effective treatment can be started, and effective treatment means a person cannot transmit HIV to other people and can stay well themselves.

“We have put a lot of work into routinely offering HIV testing to people who attend our emergency departments, and we are committed to increasing awareness, reducing stigma and training up our staff. It doesn’t stop there, however - we are on hand to deliver results to any patients who test positive and to talk through the developments in HIV care and the improved outcomes with treatment. We also offer free routine care and treatment to people who are living with HIV, and we offer psychological support.”

St Helier Hospital has been offering testing since 2019, though it had to pause it at points during the pandemic.

It has one of the highest testing uptakes in South London, with 90% of eligible patients having a blood test that can detect the virus - compared to just 11% in April 2022. In the six months alone between April and September 2023, 11,785 tests were carried out at the hospital.

Dr Olubanke Davies, a GUM/HIV Consultant based at Sutton Health and Care’s Rosehill Clinic, which is based at St Helier Hospital, said: “The earlier someone with HIV is diagnosed, the better. An early diagnosis means that they can start treatment and reduce the risk of developing severe illness.

“With the help of our colleagues in the emergency department, we’ve put a lot of work into routinely testing patients, increasing awareness and training up staff.”

To find out more about HIV - including getting tested, the symptoms, and living with the virus - visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hiv-and-aids/>

St George’s, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group

Image cc Unicef

East Surrey Hospital Inspection

15 December 2023



Maternity services at East Surrey Hospital have been downgraded after inspectors flagged six key areas for improvement. A report following an inspection of the unit raised concerns with infection control, checks on emergency equipment and medicine management.

These areas were listed as steps that must be taken in order for the service to improve along with actions relating to audits, completing documents and safeguarding training for junior doctors.

The Redhill hospital, run by Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, maintains its overall outstanding rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), but an inspection of its maternity service took place in September.

'Safety of women, birthing people and babies put at risk': In a report published on November 15, inspectors said they visited the hospital as part of the CQC's national maternity inspection programme.

The service was downgraded to requires improvement with inspectors saying medicines were "not always managed well", care records were not always completed and leaders did not always implement improvements in a timely way.

Inspectors said: "Staffing levels did not always match the planned numbers, which put the safety of women, birthing people and babies at risk. The service was not always visibly clean, and there were times when equipment checks were not completed."

As well as this, "adverse incidents" may have been contributed to by out-of-date policies and guidelines. How has the hospital responded?

Tina Hetherington, chief nurse of Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "Delivering safe, quality care to our patients is our absolute priority. I want to apologise for where we haven't got it right and the effect this may have on patient confidence in our maternity services. Rest assured that we are taking immediate action to address the issues raised by inspectors to ensure our patients receive the high-quality care they rightly expect."

Inspectors said feedback from patients as part of the inspection showed there were "mixed views" about experiences of the service. The report said: "Feedback included about concerns about delays, poor communication, and support needing to improve. For example, being spoken to unkindly, short staffing, and not being listened to. Positive feedback commented on the reassurance and care given by staff, especially on delivery suite."

Some areas 'not always visibly free of dust, dirt, and bodily fluids': Under the area of cleanliness, infection control and hygiene, inspectors said: "Staff did not always use equipment and control measures to protect women and birthing people, themselves, and others from infection. They did not always keep equipment and the premises visibly clean, and we saw some staff were not in-line with uniform policy to minimise risk of infection. This included "several staff members" not routinely using gloves when they should, creating an infection risk and bed spaces that were "not always visibly free of dust, dirt, and bodily fluids".

Inspectors also said delays to discharge on the postnatal ward were negatively impacting on patient and staff experience, with delayed inductions and transfers to delivery suites in evidence.

The service had a rate "well below" the national rate of stillbirths, of between one and two stillbirths per 1,000 births, compares to 4 per 1000 births nationally.

Inspectors were also told by staff there were not enough midwives and managers to mitigate risks of short staffing, leading to "exhaustion and low morale".

'Robust improvement plan' in place: Ms Hetherington said the trust recognised that the national shortfall across maternity had affected services. She said a recruitment drive had been launched this year and since the inspection 13 new midwives had started jobs, with a further five due to start in the coming weeks.

The chief nurse also said a "robust improvement plan" had been put in place since the inspection, which included tougher infection control measures, more frequent cleanliness checks, and more thorough daily safety checks of medicines and specialist emergency care equipment. She added: "We are clear there is more work to do, but our maternity team are passionate about patient care. While the CQC highlighted many examples of good practice such as timely access to services and quick action on any identified patient risks, this report will help us focus our efforts and engage with our patients through forums such as our maternity voices partnership, on making the immediate and long-term improvements that will deliver for our patients and their families year after year."

Inspectors also raised examples of "outstanding practice" in the report, highlighting an inclusion midwife with a specific focus on promoting equality and diversity for staff and patients, and tackling health inequalities.

Leaders monitored incidents and outcomes for health inequalities and ethnicity to ensure no one was put at additional risk because of their ethnicity or personal circumstances, the report said.

Local NHS Trust slow to respond to complaint

15 December 2023



A complaint lodged against **Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust** regarding the care provided to the

late **Doreen Pepper**, a Parkinson's patient, has raised concerns about medication management and now delayed complaint response times, leaving her family in distress.

Mrs. Pepper, a former Head Teacher at Merland Rise First School, Banstead, Surrey, lived an active, independent life despite battling Parkinson's for approximately 16 years. However, her experience at St Helier Hospital took a distressing turn after a fall resulted in a broken hip and subsequent admission.

The family's complaint, submitted on April 26, 2023, outlines a series of lapses in medication administration during Mrs. Pepper's five-week stay. Despite the hospital's policy allowing Parkinson's patients to self-administer their medication, A & E staff allegedly denied Mrs. Pepper access to her medication upon admission.

The hospital reportedly lacked an accurate record of Mrs. Pepper's medication until October 27, 2022, causing considerable concern for the family. Instances of incorrect medication administration persisted, despite interventions from senior staff members and the family's visual aids.

The family created an A4 poster with medication times, but Mrs. Pepper was still given medication at inappropriate hours, impacting her ability to participate in crucial physiotherapy sessions for her recovery.

The hospital deemed Mrs. Pepper fit for discharge, intending to send her home with carer visits four times a day. The family questioned the adequacy of supervision between visits and the absence of overnight support, receiving little guidance from the hospital regarding future care options.

Furthermore, a delayed referral for physiotherapy post-discharge resulted in a significant setback to Mrs. Pepper's mobility, exacerbating her condition.

In response to the family's complaint, a spokesperson for Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust expressed regret over the extended response time. They assured a thorough investigation, led by senior clinical and management staff, and pledged to keep the family updated as they work towards a resolution.

The family, while acknowledging the strain on the NHS, urges hospitals to enhance complaint-handling processes to prevent prolonged distress for patients and their families awaiting answers on critical matters of care and accountability.

Staying in bed problems for local NHS

15 December 2023



Hospitals in **Epsom And St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust** unable to discharge almost two thirds of patients. This is according to a national data collection exercise conducted by the BBC. There are variations in the data collection criteria between different NHS Trusts.

In Epsom And St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust between July 1 2022 and June 30 2023 on an average night 64.1% patients who had been identified as ready to be discharged that day were still occupying a bed at midnight.

This is 6.3 percentage points higher than the average figure for trusts across England (57.8%).

On 2 days 100% of patients classed as "no longer meeting the criteria" to be in hospital were still occupying beds at midnight. This means that on 1% of days for which data was provided, not a single patient was discharged.

The day when the most patients were left in hospital was Saturday October 22 2022 when 99 who could have been discharged were still in the hospital at the end of the day.

The proportion of patients ready to be discharged but still occupying beds was worst on Sundays, when 72.9% of patients identified as ready to be discharged that day were still occupying a bed at midnight.

A spokesperson for Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust said:

"We do all we can to discharge medically-fit patients swiftly and safely, but unfortunately there are sometimes delays. Our hospitals are facing significant pressures and we are working hard to ease these - from providing more beds this winter, to continuing to work with our partners to find solutions."

The Trust added further background information:

There are a number of reasons why patients who are medically fit remain in hospital. These could include, but are not limited to, needing a care package in place before returning home; waiting for a bed or space in another facility or nursing home; or needing additional therapy, such as physio, before being mobile enough to leave hospital.

We have received £4.5m of national funding to provide more beds in our hospitals this winter

Improving hospital discharge is one of our priorities. We have discharge wards to free up bed space, and employ people in

dedicated roles that focus on discharging patients and improving patient flow earlier on in the day

We work with our community partners, Sutton Health and Care and Surrey Downs Health and Care. This includes identifying patients for their virtual wards, which allow patients to get the care they need at home safely and conveniently, rather than being in hospital.

We also work closely with other partners, such as mental health and social care providers, to ensure people are being cared for in the most appropriate setting

Photo by RDNE Stock project

Surrey Borough flushed with pride

15 December 2023



Toilets in Waverley have reclaimed their thrones as some of the country's best bogs after inspectors released their results from unannounced lavatory visits.

Two watering closets in Waverley Borough Council's parks have achieved Loo of the Year status.

Broadwater Park, in Farncombe and Frensham Great Pond and Common have been awarded platinum status - honours they held from 2017 and 2019 respectively. The Waverley washrooms were the only in Surrey to have secured nominations.

Councillor Steve Williams, Waverley Borough Council's portfolio holder for environment and sustainability, said: "Clean, well-managed toilets are very important for those visiting our sites and I would like to say a big thank you to our contractors and staff who do such a great job keeping them up to such a high standard."

According to Loo of the Year organisers, the awards encourage the highest possible standards in all 'away from home' washrooms and inspectors make unannounced visits to toilets across the UK and Ireland to judge them.

Acceptable toilets are graded silver, gold, platinum or diamond and are held up against a number of criteria, including décor, cleanliness, hand washing equipment and accessibility.

The awards have run since 1987 and are considered the 'washroom standard' with overall winners across the 61 categories announced on Thursday, January 18.

Related reports:

The Cost of Spending a Penny: a review of Epsom and Ewell's public toilet provision.

Bourne Hall Ewell celebrates LGBTQ+

15 December 2023



Mental health is still quite a taboo subject and breaking down those barriers to talking openly remains quite a challenge but one group in Surrey is hoping to get those conversations going this weekend. **End Stigma Surrey** is a campaign to raise awareness and reduce stigma around mental health. As well as providing support, training, and raising awareness, End Stigma Surrey are launching an event called **Love Without Labels** to celebrate and support LGBTQ+ people in the community. It's a free event of music and presentation hosted by drag queen **Tiana Biscuit** and a headline performance by **Surrey Rainbow Choir**, Surrey's only dedicated LGBTQ+ choir, all taking place this Saturday 4th November afternoon at **Bourne Hall in Ewell**.

More details on Epsom and Ewell Times event page [HERE](#)

Organiser **Joe Stroud** said "isolation can be a problem for a lot of people who may be intimidated to approach groups and

organisations trying to look for support. We're hoping this event will give people confidence and boost our collective sense of community spirit".

The aim is to create an environment to spotlight LGBTQ+ groups in the community and celebrate this with an uplifting day of pop tunes from David Bowie, Madonna, Billie Eilish and more. A strong focus on the day will be the wellbeing and the mental health of our community with the relaunch of Outline, an LGBTQ+ listening service, but it's also a great opportunity to meet people and socialise with several Surrey community groups who are taking part.

Oscar Hoyle from Blossom LGBT says, "we are predominantly focused on empowering LGBTQ+ people to live meaningful empowered lives where they don't face discrimination or the fear of discrimination".

End Stigma Surrey is commissioned by Surrey County Council Public Health and delivered by three well established not for profit organisations in Surrey, Catalyst, Mary Frances Trust (both of whom run Community Connections in Surrey) and Acting Out Productions which provides drama-based training and awareness raising.

Love Without Labels, a day of celebration and community in support of LGBTQ+ Mental Health! This project is part-funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and supported by Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. Free tickets can be applied for here



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lgbtq-celebration-and-wellbeing-day-tickets-738080788507?aff=oddtcreator>

You are invited to commemorate the 9000 souls in Epsom's forgotten cemetery

15 December 2023



9000 patients of Epsom's cluster of now closed psychiatric hospitals were buried between 1899 and 1955 in a now abandoned Cemetery. The Friends of Horton Cemetery are writing their life stories and seeking to reclaim the five neglected acres from a property speculator.

The **Horton Cemetery** is located between Horton Lane and Hook Road, **Epsom**.

On **10th October 2023** from 1.00pm The **Mayor Cllr Robert Geleit** (Labour Court Ward) and Mayoress of **Epsom and Ewell** will lead councillors, Aldermen of the Borough and the public in commemorating the lives of the 9000.

Baroness Sheila Hollins, a Patron of the Friends of Horton Cemetery will be in attendance and Alderman **Alan Carlson** will address the gathering. **St Josephs Primary** School pupils will sing and others will recite poetry. A "committal prayer" will be spoken on behalf of faith leaders of Epsom and Ewell. The ceremony will end with a Scots Piper leading the gathering to the former Horton Chapel that is now the Horton Arts Centre in Haven Way.

This venue will be host to further performances and speeches and the opening of a **Memorial Garden** in tribute to the 9000.

900 ceramic flowers painted by many people across the Borough over the last year will be planted.

This is the culmination of a year long project of the Friends of Horton Cemetery known as "**Out of Sight, Out of Mind**", led by the charity's history consultant, **Dr Alana Harris**, local resident and Reader in Modern British Social, Cultural and Gender History at **Kings College**. The Project is supported by **Historic England**.

Lionel Blackman, founder and director of The Friends of Horton Cemetery, said "All are welcome to this significant event taking place on **World Mental Health Day**. Demonstrating widespread public support for the return of the Horton Cemetery for the public and relatives of the deceased, is essential in correcting an unconscionable decision of the NHS in 1983 to sell the land to a property speculator".

If you intend to attend the event you are requested to complete this simple online RSVP form.

If you are attending you should read the advice of The Friends of Horton Cemetery on the ground conditions and lengths of walks involved. Click [HERE](#).

Related reports:

Friends of Horton Cemetery workshop

Another Horton Cemetery Life Story

Grace Jones - Horton Cemetery Stories

Emily Elizabeth Campbell - Horton Cemetery Stories

Bringing to life the dead in Epsom's forgotten cemetery - Historic England awards local charity.

Council: Horton CPO debate shelved

Local NHS Doctors and Consultants striking

15 December 2023



As tensions mount within the UK healthcare sector, doctors across the country are gearing up for strike action. The looming industrial action has sent ripples of concern through the local Epsom healthcare system and the wider public, sparking a heated debate about the grievances motivating these medical professionals to take such measures.

In a week that promises to bring a fresh wave of challenges, hospitals across the UK brace themselves as a new round of strikes is set to commence. On Wednesday, consultants and junior doctors are set to unite in a day of industrial action, marking the first instance of such joint protest. The impact of this combined strike action is expected to weigh heavily on healthcare facilities, with St George's, **Epsom** and St Helier hospitals particularly vulnerable, having recently grappled with the added strain of a heatwave.

Amid this turbulence, healthcare authorities call upon the public to exercise discretion in their use of NHS services. It's emphasized that individuals should continue to seek medical care during emergencies or when they have scheduled appointments.

Dr. **Richard Jennings**, the Group Chief Medical Officer for St George's, **Epsom**, and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group, acknowledges the upcoming challenges: "While we do everything we can to minimize the impact strikes have on our patients, there is no denying this week will be very challenging for us. There's been little respite this year, with several rounds of industrial action already taking place, not to mention our emergency departments becoming busier with the hotter weather. And with further industrial action planned for this autumn, and winter on the way, we would expect these extreme pressures to continue for some time."

The joint strike is scheduled for Wednesday, September 20, with consultants and junior doctors ensuring emergency care remains available. However, elective surgeries and non-emergency appointments will be rescheduled. On Tuesday, September 19, some consultants will also strike while providing Christmas Day cover, and junior doctors will stage a complete walkout on Thursday, September 21, and Friday, September 22.

During this period, the public is urged to use NHS services judiciously to ensure that the most critical cases receive timely attention. It's essential to bear in mind that visiting an emergency department for non-life-threatening issues may not result in quicker service.

Dr. Jennings advises, "We must prioritize our sickest and most seriously ill patients. That means if you attend our emergency departments and it's not life-threatening, you may be redirected to a more appropriate service. You can help us by using NHS 111 online, which is a 24/7 service and can direct you to where you need to go when your healthcare need is less urgent. But when it's an emergency or life-threatening, you should always call 999 or visit an emergency department."

Numerous inpatient and outpatient appointments have already been rescheduled due to this year's strike action, with more disruptions expected this time around. However, those with scheduled appointments are encouraged to attend unless notified otherwise. Alternative options, such as GP surgeries and pharmacies, remain largely unaffected by the strikes and can assist with common ailments like tonsillitis, coughs, colds, and earaches. Minor injuries like sprains and strains can be managed at home, or a pharmacist can provide guidance on the appropriate treatment.

For individuals in need of mental health support during a crisis in Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton, or Wandsworth, the South West London 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line is available at 0800 028 8000. More information can be found at <https://www.swlstg.nhs.uk/patients-carers/crisis-support/mental-health-support-line>. Similarly, in Surrey and North East Hampshire, support is accessible 24/7 for adults, young people, and children by calling 0800 915 4644. Additional information can be found at <https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services>.

The dates for strike action are as follows:

- Consultants: Christmas Day cover from 7 am on Tuesday, September 19, to 8 am on Thursday, September 21.
- Junior doctors: Christmas Day cover from 7 am on Wednesday, September 20; full walkout from 7 am on Thursday, September 21, to 7 am on Saturday, September 23.
- Both consultants and junior doctors will be striking on Monday, October 2, Tuesday, October 3, and Wednesday, October 4, providing Christmas Day cover.

To understand the situation better, The Epsom and Ewell Times has delved into the arguments put forth by UK doctors explaining their reasons for considering a strike.

1. **Pay and Working Conditions:** One of the primary concerns voiced by doctors is the state of their pay and working conditions. Many doctors argue that their wages have not kept pace with the cost of living, and they face long working hours that often stretch them to the limit. Some argue that these conditions not only affect their own well-being but also put patient safety at risk.
2. **Staff Shortages:** The shortage of medical staff, including doctors and nurses, is another major concern. Doctors are often working in understaffed hospitals and clinics, leading to burnout and suboptimal patient care. They argue that without adequate staffing levels, patient safety is compromised, and they are unable to provide the level of care they would like to deliver.
3. **Patient Care:** Doctors frequently emphasize their commitment to providing high-quality patient care. However, they argue that the current conditions make it increasingly challenging to maintain the level of care patients deserve. Overcrowded emergency rooms, lengthy waiting times, and limited resources all contribute to a deteriorating quality of care.
4. **Mental Health:** The toll on doctors' mental health is a pressing issue. The immense stress and emotional burden of their work can lead to burnout, anxiety, and depression. Doctors argue that addressing these mental health challenges is essential to ensure they can continue to provide effective care to patients.
5. **NHS Funding:** Doctors are also concerned about the overall funding of the National Health Service (NHS). They argue that the NHS needs increased funding to address the aforementioned issues adequately. Insufficient funding, they claim, hampers efforts to improve working conditions and patient care.
6. **Privatization Concerns:** Some doctors express worries about the gradual privatization of healthcare services in the UK. They fear that privatization could lead to a two-tier healthcare system, where those who can afford private care receive better services, leaving the public healthcare system further strained.

The doctors' strike is viewed by many as a last resort, taken only after exhausting negotiations with government officials and healthcare administrators. While the potential strike has raised concerns about the impact on patients, it also serves as a stark reminder of the challenges faced by medical professionals in the UK.

As the situation continues to develop, the nation watches closely, hoping for a resolution that can address the doctors' concerns while safeguarding the healthcare needs of the population. The outcome of this ongoing debate will undoubtedly have significant implications for the future of healthcare in the United Kingdom.

Epsom fair for health and well-being

15 December 2023



On Saturday, September 23rd, the local charity **Age Concern Epsom & Ewell** will be hosting a Health & Wellbeing Fair at **Rosebery Park** in **Epsom**. The event is scheduled to run from 10 am to 3 pm and is open to attendees of all ages.

This community event aims to provide a diverse range of informative talks and demonstrations by local groups, charities, and small businesses, all focused on promoting and encouraging a healthy and well-balanced lifestyle. Visitors can expect insights from health practitioners on topics such as maintaining good posture, enhancing flexibility, foot care, the benefits of deep breathing, and mindfulness, among others.

The Rainbow Leisure Centre will be showcasing their activities suitable for individuals of all ages, while children can engage in rhythmic fun with Drumz Epsom. A fascinating tree trail will also be a part of the day's offerings, providing an opportunity for attendees to learn intriguing facts about the local park's trees. A small entry fee of £3 is required for the tree trail, and participants are encouraged to uncover hidden clues to unveil a special surprise, with all entries receiving a unique prize.

Further details about the tree trail can be found at <https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/roseberyparktreetrail>.

Throughout the event, there will be informative displays and talks by organizations such as the Epsom & Ewell Countryside Team, Epsom Common Association, Sustainable Epsom, and Ewell, and the Surrey Wildflowering Trust. Attendees can also take advantage of free bike checks, courtesy of Dr. Bike, available from 10 am to 3 pm.

The fair will also feature acclaimed author **Sarah Tucker**, who will deliver talks on the art of storytelling and the benefits of writing. Those interested in reducing waste can bring their own containers to shop with The Floating Refillery, a vendor offering a variety of quality household goods, cereals, and spices. Paper bags will also be available for use.

For those looking to satisfy their taste buds, Bake 88 will be on hand with delicious and healthy light bites, including award-winning bagels. Attendees can even bring a jam jar to create a sourdough starter to take home and nurture.

Age Concern Epsom & Ewell will be sharing information about the services they offer for the older generation within the borough. They will also discuss the various volunteering opportunities available and how both clients and volunteers can benefit from giving a little of their time each week.

The organizers are excited to present this event, which promises a wide array of engaging activities and informative sessions. They hope that attendees will take a leisurely stroll to explore the offerings and show their support for this inaugural event. It is anticipated that attendees will leave with newfound knowledge and perhaps even be inspired to try something new.

Healthy future for Epsom's restored White House

15 December 2023



The **White House**, located at 16 Waterloo Road, **Epsom**, nestled between Blacks Burgers and Nandos, is a Grade II listed building that dates back to the early 1700s. Recently, it has undergone a beautiful restoration in preparation for an exciting new phase in its rich history.



The new owner has successfully preserved the building's charm and character, while modernizing its internal features to create comfortable and contemporary treatment and therapy spaces. The White House is transformed into a Health and Wellness Centre, where professionals with various skills can utilize rooms once occupied by two historically significant individuals, as confirmed by the plaque on the building's front, visible from the pathway.

Around 1800, Prince George and Mrs. Fitzherbert resided in the same building now known as The White House. However, the question arises: What became of Princess Caroline, the woman Prince George married just five years earlier, and why is her name absent from the plaque?

While King George III led a scandal-free life, the same cannot be said for his son, Prince George, who lived an extravagant lifestyle characterized by heavy drinking and entertaining mistresses. Burdened by mounting debts, Prince George sought financial assistance from his father, who agreed to help him under the condition that Prince George marry his cousin, Princess Caroline of Brunswick.



Although Prince George had previously secretly married the twice-widowed Maria Anne Fitzherbert, this marriage was invalid because King George III had not consented to it. On April 8, 1795, Prince George married Princess Caroline at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace. However, the couple proved incompatible despite Caroline giving birth to Princess Charlotte, George's only legitimate child, just nine months after their wedding ceremony.

Upon their first meeting, Prince George called for a glass of brandy, while Princess Caroline commented on how much thinner and more handsome George appeared in the portrait she had seen of him. Prince George found his wife unattractive and "unhygienic" and could not bear to have intimate relations with her (he ensured he was drunk on the night of their wedding). Princess Caroline, on the other hand, was beloved by the public, who generally despised her husband, "the Prince of Pleasure," due to his continuous overindulgence and accumulating debts.

On January 29, 1820, George ascended to the throne as King of the United Kingdom and Hanover, with Caroline becoming Queen Consort in name. George sought a divorce from Caroline but couldn't obtain one due to the weak evidence against her. This was partly because Caroline was held in high regard by the public, who viewed George's conduct as immoral.

Caroline was barred from attending King George IV's coronation on July 19, 1821, and subsequently fell ill in London. Tragically, she passed away three weeks after the coronation she had not been allowed to attend. Her funeral procession moved slowly through London en route to Brunswick, where she was laid to rest. This allowed George to continue his romantic attachment to Maria Fitzherbert and entertain other mistresses.



The brass medallion, which I purchased a few years ago at **Oxfam in Epsom High Street**, likely belonged to one of Queen Caroline's supporters before her death. It resembles a miniature portrait, much like the one of Prince George shown above. "Caroline Queen of England" is inscribed around the perimeter of the medallion, featuring a bust of King George IV's lawful wife.

The brass medallion serves as a poignant reminder of how poorly Queen Caroline was treated by her husband, King George IV, and underscores the ongoing need to ensure that women from all cultures and walks of life are shown respect and treated fairly in today's modern society.

Plea ahead of doctors' strikes round 5

15 December 2023



The number of postponed appointments on strike days has now topped 10,000 at one hospital group - and with a fresh

wave of industrial action on the horizon, that figure is set to rise further.

Junior doctors at St George's, **Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals** and Health Group will join colleagues across the country on strike from **7am on Friday** until **7am on Tuesday**.

It is the fifth time they have done so this year and - coupled with a consultants' strike last month - has resulted in 10,051 appointments, procedures, and operations being rescheduled to ensure emergency care can be prioritised.

The **British Medical Association** explains the reasons for the strikes: "While workload and waiting lists are at record highs, junior doctors' pay has been cut by more than a quarter since 2008/9. Junior doctors and their patients need change now.

A crippling cost-of-living crisis, burnout and well below inflation pay rises are driving hard working doctors out of their profession, at a time when we need them more than ever.

In 2022, junior doctors were offered an insulting and well below inflation pay rise of 2%.

No-one can be expected to stay in a high pressured job where your earnings are being eroded year on year. That's why we are calling on the Government for full pay restoration."

This makes it all the more important that people who do have an appointment continue to attend, unless they have been asked not to. Patients whose appointments have been rescheduled will be contacted directly.

Dr **Luci Etheridge**, Chief Medical Officer for St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Our message remains the same as it always has: if you need care, please continue to come forward. That means if you have an appointment and you haven't heard from us you should still come in, and if it's life-threatening you should visit an emergency department or call 999.

"But if you have an appointment and you can no longer make it, please let us know so our frontline doctors and nurses can use their time more effectively to treat other patients and work to reduce our waiting lists."

The hospital group saw extraordinary demand earlier this summer - including the busiest day ever in its emergency departments and a busier-than-usual June.

NHS 111 online should always be the first port of call when you have a health need that's not an emergency, as it will direct you to the best place to get help for your symptoms.

Pharmacies, meanwhile, can offer advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, and aches and pains. Some pharmacies will be open at weekends, and you can find your nearest one here: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy>

In a life-threatening emergency, you should always call 999 or go to an emergency department.

Dr **Beccy Suckling**, Chief Medical Officer for **Epsom and St Helier** University Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "Earlier this summer it was very busy, and more recently we saw an increase in very unwell people coming to hospital. This, as you would expect, has put a strain on our services.

"We always prioritise our sickest and most seriously ill patients - and that means that those coming to our emergency departments when it is not as urgent will experience longer waits, and may be redirected elsewhere. Please help us when it is not an emergency by using NHS 111 online first."

If you need mental health support in a crisis, and live in Kingston, Merton, Richmond, Sutton or Wandsworth you can call South West London's 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line on 0800 028 8000. There's more information about this service here: <https://www.swlstg.nhs.uk/patients-carers/crisis-support/mental-health-support-line>

For adults, young people, and children in Surrey and North East Hampshire, 24-hour support is available by calling: 0800 915 4644. There's more information here: <https://www.sabp.nhs.uk/our-services>

Epsom's child-play hobbled by e-coli

15 December 2023



The popular adventure park off Horton Lane in Epsom known as **Hobbledown** has temporarily closed. This follows reports by the UK Health and Security Agency that three children who had visited the park had developed symptoms consistent with STEC (Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli)

Most E. coli strains do not cause disease, naturally living in the gut, but virulent strains can cause gastroenteritis, urinary tract infections, neonatal meningitis and other conditions.

Nick De Candole, the owner, published a statement on the business's website as follows:

"We have been informed by health authorities of a very small number of cases of an E. coli infection in individuals who recently visited the Park. After learning of this we immediately and voluntarily closed the Park as a precaution.

We are in close contact with Epsom & Ewell District Council Environmental Health team and also the UK Health Security Agency and co-operating fully with both on their respective investigations.

I have written to everyone who visited between 11 and 27 July to inform them of the situation and included with this a letter from the UKHSA with further information and guidance.

We are offering those who have booked to visit while we're closed options to reschedule or a full refund, plus 50% off next visit.

I can assure everyone that the wellbeing of visitors to Hobbledown is our absolute priority and we do everything in our power to keep guests safe. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon."

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council advises "The symptoms of STEC , which include diarrhoea and stomach cramps, usually resolve themselves over a few days, but can occasionally lead to more serious outcomes. If you or someone in your family are showing symptoms of STEC, including bloody diarrhoea, and have visited the farm since 12 July, please contact NHS 111."

Personal injury adviser Claire Glasgow of law firm Field Fisher explains why E.coli must be taken seriously. "Several children involved in past claims for damages for negligent exposure to the E.Coli O157 bacteria subsequently developed HUS (haemolytic uraemic syndrome). HUS can lead to very serious complications including high blood pressure, heart failure, kidney failure, diabetes, seizures, neurological damages, coma, and, in severe cases, brain damage.

"An additional concern for the families involved is the uncertainty of the impact of the infection on their children as they grow up. At the very least, they face regular and ongoing hospital tests and live under the stress of potential long-term health problems."

Less disability by independent living in Surrey

15 December 2023



Purpose-built housing to support people with learning disabilities or autism to lead active and fulfilling lives in the community has been given the go-ahead at three Surrey sites.

Backed by investment of £24million, the three developments - planned for Horley, Byfleet and Cobham - will between them provide housing for 44 residents who will be supported to gain independence and daily living skills.

Planning permission has been granted for the three sites and with Morgan Sindall Construction now lined up to build them, construction is expected to get underway early next year.

The three supported independent living developments - at the site of the former Manor School in Byfleet, the former Coveham Hostel in Cobham and the former Horley Library - are expected to be ready in 2025 for tenants to move in.

The county council is aiming to reduce reliance on traditional residential care for residents with learning disabilities or autism, or both, and is also considering other potential locations for supported independent living. As well as earmarking sites on its own land, the council is working with independent care providers to further boost available specialist housing.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: "With a building contractor and planning approvals now secured, we've reached a significant milestone on our way to developing the first three of our planned new housing schemes for people with support needs so they can enjoy a better quality of life.

"With support from trained staff, residents will be able to take control, make choices in their everyday lives, access more opportunities and play an active part in their communities, whether through volunteering, paid work or other activity of their choosing."

Guy Hannell, Area Director for Morgan Sindall Construction in the Southern Home Counties, said: *“We’re looking forward to continuing our collaborative relationship with Surrey County Council by delivering this batch of three supported independent living developments. Having recently completed several education projects alongside the county council, I know we share a strong commitment to sustainability and achieving high-quality environments that enhance local communities. This is illustrated by the use of our digital carbon assessment tool Carbonica, which allows us to carefully analyse a project’s carbon emissions and ensure that we’re creating an efficient building design that will provide accessible, futureproof spaces.*

“Not only will we be bringing our experience of delivering award-winning residential developments in the South East to this project, but the innovation and insights gained from creating these facilities will inform Surrey’s future programme of supported independent living housing.”

Architects’ images show how the three housing developments could look. They will be homely rather than institutional and include shared spaces such as landscaped gardens. Support workers will provide care and support tailored to people’s needs.

Each development will comprise self-contained one-bedroom apartments. Two developments, in Horley and Byfleet, will also include, for those who would prefer a group living environment, five-bedroom shared houses. Tenants will be able to make choices about their living arrangements.

The accommodation is part of a wider Surrey County Council programme to enable older people and others with care and support needs to live independently in the community knowing that care is close at hand. It includes:

- **Extra care housing** - plans for 725 new homes across a number of Surrey sites which will give older people the freedom and independence of their own front door and the reassurance that care is on hand if they need it
- **New short breaks accommodation** - two new purpose-built short breaks centres to give adults with learning disabilities or autism, or both, a change from their daily routine and their families a break from their caring roles
- **Mental health needs** - new supported independent living accommodation for people with mental health needs which for some would be a permanent base and for others a shorter stay, to avoid a hospital admission or until they recover

About women’s dignity. Period.

15 December 2023



Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have launched an initiative aimed at fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for women and girls across Surrey.

Following a recent menstrual health education session, the SFRS Community Safety Partnership team is now equipped to provide support and period products to women and girls who need them when they are on duty in local communities.

The initiative is a joint collaboration between SFRS and **Binti** - a charity that provides menstrual dignity to girls and women worldwide.

Bernie Beckett, SFRS Chief of Staff, said: *“Addressing the topic of periods and menstruation can be challenging. However, by launching this initiative we aim to break the stigma and, most importantly, provide period products to those who face challenges in accessing them.*

“We know that many women and girls lack access to the necessary support and education surrounding menstrual health. Surrey Fire and Rescue Service can provide a vital role in ensuring that women and girls in our communities have access to period products when they need them. We’re delighted to be playing our part in Binti’s menstrual dignity mission, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive environment for women and girls in Surrey.”

Manjit K. Gill, CEO and founder of Binti said: *“Manjit K. Gill MBE CEO and Founder of Binti said: “Working with a forward-thinking organisation like Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, especially in a traditionally male-dominated sector, is truly inspiring.*

“Their commitment to inclusion for their workforce and their willingness to tackle the issue of period dignity head-on sets a remarkable example for others to follow. By breaking down barriers and fostering a more inclusive environment, we are not only empowering women and girls but also challenging societal norms. It is a privilege to collaborate with such a visionary organisation and collectively drive positive change in the pursuit of gender equality.”

The service will be storing period products on some of its Community and Partnership vehicles. An ‘Ask me for period products’ magnet will indicate to members of the public that period products are available when out in the community or

attending events.

Related reports:

Lighting up for menstrual dignity

Surrey supports mental health projects

15 December 2023



The Surrey All Age Mental Health Investment Fund (MHIF) has awarded funding to 10 projects providing innovative, community-focused programmes to support the prevention of mental ill health and improvement of emotional well-being across the county.

Established in 2022, the MHIF is an integrated funding programme with a total budget of £10.5m. This allocation consists of a £6.5m contribution from Surrey County Council from the specific **1% precept on Council Tax collected from 2022/2023** and £4m from Surrey Heartlands Integrated Care Board. Additionally, the Council has partnered with the Community Foundation for Surrey and secured just under £1m via a match funding arrangement.

Funding is used to support services which are non-statutory; developed by local, community-based groups. The MHIF is aligned to meeting the outcomes of Priority 2 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which focuses on prevention, removing barriers, and supporting people to become proactive in improving their emotional health and wellbeing.

Round 1 of applications took place in December 2022. There were 55 bids submitted of which 10 were successfully awarded funding totally approximately £530,000.

The projects awarded funding include a gardening space to increase access to nature-based therapy, providing support to life-limited children and their families and expanding the provision of a hub that uses drama to support people with mental health challenges.

All bids were assessed by a panel which represents the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Surrey County Council, Cabinet members, the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE), integrated commissioning representatives and Public Health.

Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, said: *“I’m delighted that the first round of funding has been allocated to a range of different organisations, all working to tackle mental ill-health with innovative, community-focused projects.*

“The successful bids cover a broad age range and are spread across the 11 districts and boroughs of Surrey. We have also approved funding a large bid investing in primary schools across Surrey as part of Round 1, and I’m pleased to say we have already had significant interest in Round 2 of the fund after going live at the beginning of June.”

Round 2 of funding has just closed and bids are currently being evaluated. Information regarding any future rounds of funding will be communicated via our webpage.

Find out more about the MHIF: **Surrey Mental Health Investment Fund - Surrey County Council** (surreycc.gov.uk)

Round 1 Awards:

- **Merstham Community Facility Trust** - support groups for adults, and for children in Merstham, as well as supporting the recruitment and training of 16 further Health and Wellbeing Community Champions in the local community
- **The Lucy Rayner Foundation** - Counselling service to reach people (14-39 years) preventing them from reaching crisis.
- **Catalyst Wellbeing Garden** - Providing a project co-ordinator and a project assistant to develop the gardening space; establish, programme, and run nature-based therapy sessions, providing time and space for holistic support.
- **Prospero Theatre Community Wellbeing Company** - Prospero is an inclusive theatre company, that uses drama to improve the quality of life for adults and young people with disabilities and mental health challenges.
- **Shooting Star Children’s Hospice** - Aiding the provision of mental health support for life-limited children, their family members (including parents and siblings)
- **Emerge Advocacy** - Community-based support following an A&E attendance to catch young people who have recently been in emotional or mental health crisis.

- **Peer Production** - Two full tours of each of Peer Production's mental health plays (Masking and The Space Between).
- **A2 Dominion** - Provision of 'Mind My Home' an online solutions-based therapy project, targeted at low income/social housing tenants.
- **Appeer Community Interest Company** - A project which aims to address the social isolation of young autistic girls, provide early help and resources and support parents and care givers of autistic daughters.

Further information about the awards: <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/news/community-projects-500k-mental-health-investment-fund>

Image: Appeer Community Interest, Peer Productions, Prospero Friday Club.