

## Walk-In Centre faces funding crisis

GPs at the Pinn Medical Centre (PMC) have called for NHS England urgently to rethink proposed cuts to its Walk-in Centre, otherwise 40,000 patients a year will be left with no other choice but A&E.

- The Pinn Medical Centre is rated Outstanding - the highest rating possible - by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which regulates GP practices nationally.
- However, the Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) now finds itself having to propose a cut of £500,000 to The Pinn's budget. That's half the funding for The Pinn's Walk-in-Centre.
- If it loses half the funding for this service, The Pinn can't simply reduce the service by half. Instead, there would be a significant decline in the quality of medical care that The Pinn currently offers to all patients - and will lead to some being turned away.

Senior GPs at The Pinn - Amol Kelshiker, Isobel Bleehen Mehul Lakhani and Jonathan Rudolph - highlight the real threat to the Pinn's Walk-in Centre:

*"We see 40,000 patients each year; no one needs to book or to be a registered patient at the Practice. If you're ill and can make it to our Centre, we are ready to see you, 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year. No other Medical Centre in Harrow opens its doors in this way in order to serve such a large volume of patients, or offers them such an extensive range of enhanced health services.*

*Our colleagues in A&E do a truly excellent job in the most challenging of circumstances, but if you are a new mother with an ill baby or someone in the early stages of dementia, it can be an overwhelming place. And many patients develop conditions, often chronic, that are more appropriately assessed by a GP rather than in a hectic and overstretched A&E unit.*

*The Pinn provides a more suitable service for many problems and takes the strain off A&E. It gets paid an average of £17 per patient it sees, yet for A&E to see the same patient costs the NHS over £120. The Pinn's Walk-In Centre therefore saves the NHS an enormous amount of money every year. So it makes no sense whatsoever to cut this service at a time when A&E is struggling and other local walk-in centres have reduced the services they are now able to offer.*

*We genuinely fear that patients' lives could be at risk if this service at The Pinn were to be restricted to a pre-bookable GP one, as Alexandra Avenue now is. There are also growing concerns about plans to change Belmont Health Centre's Walk In to a pre-bookable service. Indeed, senior medical colleagues at Northwick Park have raised grave concerns with us about the consequences on A&E of any potential closure of the Walk-in facility at The Pinn, as have local MPs."*

The Pinn Medical Centre Patients Association (PMCPA) now calls on all 20,000+ registered Pinn patients along with those from other parts of Harrow who regularly use the Walk-In Centre, to support the campaign to safeguard its future.

Over 11,000 patients have already signed the SAVE THE WALK-IN CENTRE petition by now, either online or at The Pinn's reception desk. A sample of their concerns - representing the responses of less than 0.1% of the total number of signatories - is included on pages 2 & 3.

Page 4 of this Emergency Pinn Piper shows how you can access the Petition online. If you have already signed it, you can also find some ways to support the PMCPA's campaign further at this critical stage by helping to mobilise wider public and political support.

Emergency  
Edition



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### PMCPA vision and values

**Our vision** We are a patient community working in partnership with the Pinn Medical Centre to achieve the best possible care for the patients we serve.

**Our values** We represent Pinn Medical Centre patients. We have a culture of consultation and collaboration. We recognise diversity of need. We take account of and influence wider local and national health care provision.

## Patient comments on the Petition highlight how cutting funding impacts The Pinn's Walk-In Centre:

100 comments selected from Petition signed by over 2,000 patients at Reception Desk (10,000+ others have signed the Petition online)

### IT REMOVES A CRUCIAL PILLAR THAT SUPPORTS SEVERELY OVERSTRETCHED A&E DEPARTMENTS

1. "This move is outrageous and will put extra pressure on NP A&E"
2. "This remarkable service is so cost effective & saves A&E time and money"
3. "Not only is this Walk-In Centre needed but the staff make you feel safer than A&E"
4. "Very important facility. Relieves pressure on A&E"
5. "Keep this service going, will save millions on A&E"
6. "Where are we supposed to go in an emergency? A&E is always full"
7. "It is an amazing service and avoids a 3-4 hour wait in A&E"
8. "Closest A&E minor injuries 8-hour wait times"
9. "Very convenient surgery as A&E fully booked. Easy to get to out of hours"
10. "A&E is too crowded"
11. "Saves money in the long run. I am elderly & use this service to avoid need to go to A&E"
12. "You've helped our entire family with weekend emergencies and taken pressure off A&E"
13. "If this service goes everyone will have to go to A&E, which is bursting at the seams"
14. "Essential to save now that Alex Ave Clinic no longer accepts Walk-In patients"
15. "Essential esp with more residential buildings going up in area: too much pressure on A&E"
16. "Without this service NWP will be inundated"
17. "A lifeline for those with chronic conditions and acute flare-ups. Better than A&E"
18. "We [have] 4 kids in [our family]. Please save for my children"
19. "A weekend is a long time when one is ill. Keep open"
20. "A vital safety net for prompt treatment"

**"If this service goes everyone will have to go to A&E, which is bursting at the seams"**

### IT'S COMPLETELY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE

1. "Madness to close it"
2. "Dreadful shame to do this"
3. "How shortsighted to do this"
4. "Population expanding = More of these facilities please"
5. "Terrible decision to close Walk-In service"
6. "Why remove something so good?"
7. "Ridiculous to change"
8. "The most stupid idea I have come across"
9. "What else will we all do? Disgusting"
10. "Waiting times at A&E horrific. Where are we expected to go?"
11. "How could you want to shut this down - so helpful to be able to Walk-In"
12. "Why destroy an amazing facility? Think of others eg homeless"
13. "Very upset if [this closure] goes ahead"
14. "Shocking"
15. "It's evil [to close it]"
16. "Terrible to lose this service"
17. "[Closing] it would be a disaster. Please don't shut!!"
18. "Absolutely out of question [to close it]. It is vital we keep this service. It's the best!!"
19. "NHS needs to do more to protect essential services such as the Walk-In"
20. "Dangerous to my health management [to close WIC]"

**"Is completely counterproductive, especially when the NHS is searching for new solutions to manage growing public demands on it; and saves NHS funds of £100+ per patient seen when compared to A&E"**

## IT SQUANDERS THE PROGRESS OF A FIRST CLASS 21ST CENTURY PUBLIC MEDICAL SERVICE

1. "Excellent service adapts to modern working life."
2. "Brilliant & fast service. Highly recommended"
3. "Highly accessible for chronic illnesses"
4. "Always efficient & courteous"
5. "Excellent service. Great to be seen at short notice"
6. "Wonderful treatment, so kind & professional"
7. "Superb surgery & doctors. Invaluable to the community. Please keep it open"
8. "It's been the most reliable medical service for years"
9. "Very fast efficient service - please don't close"
10. "Very helpful when own surgery is unable to see you in emergencies"
11. "Clean. Everything organised. Helpful staff: caring, trustworthy, efficient, Invaluable for urgent infections"
12. "Excellent facility for residents & visitors alike. Please keep it open"
13. "Great service. Great reception. Great Doctors"
14. "Brilliant service nothing else available. Do not shut down!"
15. "Walk-In clinic is very helpful & reassuring for the elderly"
16. "Fantastic service. Keep it open"
17. "As two working parents we really need this"
18. "Families require access to care 24/7"
19. "Essential & vital at many times for emergency for myself & 4 children"
20. "Service is vital to fit around work and young family"
21. "Essential - used for child and myself when I had a serious medical condition"
22. "Essential for disabled & heart patients"
23. "Virtually saved my life. Referred me immediately to hospital"
24. "Brilliant service nothing else available. Do not shut down!"
25. "Not everyone can make the doctors during 9-5"
26. "The Walk-In centre is superb. Please do not close it"
27. "You can't choose when you're ill and need to see a GP"
28. "Brilliant surgery. Crucial service"
29. "The Pinn is an invaluable resource & should be kept open"
30. "The loss of this service would have a serious impact on NHS services in Harrow"
31. "So hard to get appts with own GP"
32. "Keep it doing a grand job"
33. "Absolutely imperative it be kept open"
34. "So brilliant. Literally a life-saver"
35. "Please don't undo all the progress with the Health Centre provision"

**"Squanders the hard-earned progress made over the last 10 years by an outstanding 21st century medical centre, thereby depriving other centres of the fruits of its experience and know-how"**

## IT BLIGHTS A CHERISHED COMMUNITY ASSET

1. "Couldn't be without it in the area"
2. "Amazing team. Crucial for the community"
3. "The Walk-in Centre is a vital community resource"
4. "We would be totally lost without it. It is my godsend"
5. "A support system for local people at a desperate time"
6. "Lifeblood of the community. Priceless."
7. "Please: we only have one Pinn Med in our area. Keep it open"
8. "You're always there for us. Thank you"
9. "Walk-In is a lifeline for the community"
10. "We need our Centre"
11. "We really need this Walk-in Centre. It's wonderfully useful"
12. "Need it badly because normal appointment takes weeks"
13. "Older people cannot survive without this life-saving Centre. We need all the support possible"
14. "An essential requirement for the community's health"
15. "Needed. Pretty well always fully used"
16. "Must be kept as it is"
17. "Save Pinn Walk-In. Would be a travesty to shut it down"
18. "Needed by whole area"
19. "We would be lost with it: the Walk-In Centre is a life saver"
20. "Essential service for my kids. Alternatives already closed"
21. "Great facilities fast service for a Walk-In"
22. "I am a Uni student so can't be registered here. When I come home the Walk-In is my only choice"
23. "Cannot manage without this service"
24. "So beneficial to local community"
25. "This surgery is a life saver. Please never close it"

**"Causes irreparable harm to a precious and much loved community asset"**

It is clear from the cross-section of comments selected for this Emergency Edition of the Pinn Piper, just how much Patients value the Walk-In facility and depend upon it day-in, day-out; how strenuously they challenge official proposals to cut its funding; how deeply disturbed and fearful they are about its potential loss; and how determined they are to protect it for the future.

NHS England's (NHSE) Long Term 10 Year Plan (2019-29) envisages all UK GP practices eventually being able to offer their patients a suite of enhanced medical services, over and above access to a GP. The great irony here is that the Pinn has long provided to its patients precisely the spread of enhanced services that NHSE ideally wants all medical centres to offer to their patients before the end of the coming decade.

Senior GPs at The Pinn have, therefore, recently proposed that Harrow CCG delays any planned cuts to The Pinn's Walk-In Centre's for at least 3 years - preferably 5 - to allow The Pinn to act as an experienced and knowledgeable mentor to other medical centres locally over that period, with the aim of helping those centres build their own capacity so that they too can provide enhanced services to their patients in future.

It took The Pinn 10 years of pioneering effort and risk-taking, involving much trial and error - not to mention selfless dedication and sheer hard work - to achieve the extended and integrated public health services it offers today - and are officially rated as Outstanding.

The lessons from the Pinn's journey are invaluable to other GP practices that NHSE wishes to see grow in similar fashion. Local MPs are very sympathetic indeed to this mentoring proposal by The Pinn and have agreed in principle to raise it at the highest levels of Government.

It is crucial in the meantime that the proposal - and the PMCPA's campaign to save the Walk-In Centre in general - gains wider public and political approval and momentum. If you are opposed to the Walk-In Centre's funding being cut, please support our campaign. You can do so by writing to your MP, local Councillors - and the CCG - stating in your own words why it is important to you for it to retain its current level of funding.

You could also contact local, regional and/or national press & broadcast media to highlight the serious threat to the Walk-In Centre's future and the PMCPA's determined campaign to prevent the cuts, which are proposed by the CCG to come into effect from early 2020 onwards. The PMCPA website - [www.pinnpatients.org](http://www.pinnpatients.org) - provides full details for all these key contacts.

Should you get in touch with any of these contacts as part of the PMCPA's campaign, please do send us a copy of what you write. It makes a much more compelling case to senior officials to see evidence of the human dimension of such cuts. We'd therefore be most grateful if you'd consent to the PMCPA using any extract(s) of what you've written, should we believe that this could strengthen the campaign further, and allow us to attribute it to you by name (or, if you'd prefer, simply by your initials).

A collection of letters from ordinary people like all of us to the powers-that-be, whether in politics and/or in the media, can be extraordinarily effective catalysts for change.

Our individual voices really do matter.

*Prakash Daswani* (Campaign Organiser:  
**Save the Pinn Walk-In Centre**)



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**Our friendly team look forward to seeing you soon!**

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