

# Northern Care Alliance - response to Healthwatch Bury's Clearer Patient Communications Project Report

Response received 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Just wanted to update you on progress at the Northern Care Alliance (including Bury Care Organisation) in relation to the Healthwatch Bury report shared with us this month.

- The report has now been shared at the NCA Outpatient Excellence Programme Steering Group (OPex) and I can advise that your recommendations will be taken into account as we continue to enhance our services.
- I can share an update that NCA recently undertook a project to reduce and standardise the number of letter templates we were using across Bury, Rochdale and Oldham. This resulted in new templates going live autumn/winter 2024. The aims of the letters project were to:
  - I. Reduce DNAs, as clearer communication leads to better patient understanding, helping to reduce missed appointments.
  - II. Eliminate unwanted variation: Consistency in letters ensures uniformity and prevents confusion.
  - III. Enhance patient experience: Streamlined, clear letters provide a better patient journey from start to finish.
  - IV. Improve communication: More precise and comprehensive letters improve overall patient and staff communication.
  - V. Reduce health inequalities for patients: Signposting them to better communication tools where required.

The report will also be shared at both care organisation and NCA quality assurance committees.