

Writing a blog for *the hub*: Everything you need to know

Who can write a blog for *the hub*?

Anyone who has an interest or involvement in health or social care can write a blog for *the hub*, including:

- patients
- family members and carers
- healthcare professionals
- people working for health charities
- researchers and academics
- people working for organisations that commission or regulate healthcare.

You can be based anywhere in the world and your experience can relate to public or private health or social care.

We want to share a broad range of health and social care experiences and perspectives on patient safety. If you can't find anything already on *the hub* about the subject you want to write about, it doesn't mean your blog won't be relevant, so please [get in touch](#) with us to discuss your idea.

What can I write about?

Patient safety is a broad topic that touches on every aspect of health and social care. NHS England defines patient safety as “the avoidance of unintended or unexpected harm to people during the provision of health care.”[1]

As long as what you want to write relates in some way to patient safety, you can share it on *the hub*. Here are some ideas of blog formats you could use:

- Tell a personal story, such as a positive or negative experience you or your family have had of health or social care.
- Share an innovation or intervention designed to improve patient safety (for example, a smartphone app, a piece of equipment or a clinical process).
- Share how a specific patient safety approach works in practice (for example, safety huddles, checklists or IT systems).
- Reflect on how specific roles in health or social care contribute to patient safety (for example, nurses, allied health professionals, non-clinical staff).
- Share an experience of speaking up or whistleblowing.
- Share your thoughts about patient safety in relation to specific health conditions or specialties (for example, cancer or diabetes).

Here are just a few examples of specific themes that you might want to write about:

- Experiences of being in hospital, visiting the GP or any other health or care setting
- Accessing care and getting the healthcare information you need

- Accountability in health and care systems
- Complications and side effects of surgery
- Medication safety, error traps and problems with medication labelling
- The relationship between different parts of the healthcare system
- Health inequalities and how race, sex and other factors affect access to and experiences of health and social care
- New safety tools and approaches and how they work in practice
- Health literacy and public health
- Workforce issues and staff wellbeing
- How you have implemented a quality improvement initiative
- Different approaches to incident investigation
- Organisational culture, whistleblowing and speaking up
- Medical education and ongoing safety training for staff

Here are some examples of blogs written by patients, their family members, and healthcare professionals:

- [A child left waiting for 'urgent' surgery, a blog by Clare Rayner](#)
Retired Occupational Health Doctor, Clare Rayner draws on personal experience to illustrate the impact delayed surgery can have on a patient.
- [Mother knows best – a blog by Dr Abha Agrawal](#)
A doctor shares a family member's experience of going into hospital and demonstrates how patients and families can be partners in patient safety.
- [Visiting restrictions and the impact on patients and their families: a relative's perspective](#)
A family member describes how visiting restrictions can result in worse outcomes for patients and their families.
- [Yellow kits - an innovation to reduce the risk of falls in Accident and Emergency departments](#)
A Falls Prevention Practitioner describes how her team introduced and evaluated 'yellow kits' to help patients at high risk of falls in A&E.

How long should my blog be?

As a general rule, aim to make your blog no more than 750 words long, with a 150-word summary to introduce it. If you go over this, don't worry—*the hub* team can help you edit and refine your blog.

In some cases, it might work better to publish your idea as a series of blogs, rather than in one piece. We can advise on how to break the information up into sections that would work as separate blogs.

Does my blog have to be in written text format?

Although most of our content is written, we are happy to share content in other formats, such as videos and infographics. If you want to discuss presenting your blog or idea in an alternative format, [get in touch](#) with *the hub* team.

If you want to submit an image with your blog, for example, a high resolution, colour headshot of yourself, you can add this as an attachment and the *hub* team will make sure this is displayed in the right place when editing your post. You can attach images, graphics and photos as jpg, tiff or png files.

Can my blog be anonymous?

We are happy for you to publish content anonymously if you prefer, as we understand that you might be sharing difficult or sensitive experiences. If you are concerned about being identified by your writing, we can help make sure your blog is fully anonymised and can't be traced back to you.

What style should I use for my blog?

It's always best to write in your own voice and make it as easy to read and understand as possible. It's worth reading some of our existing original blogs to get a feel for the style we are looking for.

Here are a few style tips:

- Where possible, write in the active voice. For example, "I introduced a new approach" (active) rather than "A new approach was introduced" (passive).
- Where it's appropriate, include headings to break up your blog. Headings help readers understand the focus of your blog and can also help search engines pick up your blog in searches.
- Try to conclude your blog with a way forward. What would you like to see happen next? Is there a call to action?
- If you are including data or quotes, include links to the original sources as references.
- Make sure you have permission to use individuals' names, quotes and stories if this information isn't already in the public domain.

What support can *the hub* team offer?

Whether you are a confident writer or have never written a blog before, we can help you produce a high quality blog. The support we provide ranges from helping shape and draft a blog, to light editing and proofreading. If you have an idea but aren't sure how to write it down, [get in touch](#) with us.

What can't we publish?

- **Anything that defames individuals or organisations.** In some instances, we might need to edit your blog to make sure any information that could be used to identify a person or service is anonymised.
- **Posts that advertise particular products or services.** We are able to publish blogs that name or look objectively at specific patient safety tools or innovations, but we can't promote their use.

For further guidance on what we can and can't publish, see *the hub's* [Acceptable use policy](#) and [Moderation of content guidelines](#).

The purpose of *the hub* is to share learning for patient safety—we can't deal with or escalate concerns or complaints.

How do I submit my blog?

The first step is to [sign up for the hub](#)—it's free to join and you'll have access to over 10,000 resources and articles related to patient safety. Once you are a member, follow *the hub* guide on [How to share content](#). All content is moderated by *the hub* team before it is published, and if we have any concerns or questions we will private message you through *the hub* to discuss them.

If you want to include a picture, please attach it when submitting your blog. You should also include a short biography of yourself in the 'About the author' section. If you want your blog to be anonymous, you could include some generic details here, for example, "This blog was written by a family carer living in England," or leave this section blank.

If you are having problems uploading your blog, [email the hub team](#) and we will respond as soon as we are able.

[1] [Patient safety](#). NHS England website, accessed 21 November 2022.