



Annual Report 2019/20

Guided by you

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Healthwatch Gloucestershire is the county's independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We work with communities and organisations across the county to ensure local people are put at the heart of health and social care.

Message from our Chair

Positive actions and achievements

It gives me great pleasure to present the Healthwatch Gloucestershire Annual Report 2019/20. The extreme challenges faced recently due to the coronavirus could easily overshadow the work we have done earlier in the year. However, this report provides an opportunity to share and celebrate our positive actions and achievements, and it provides the basis from which we move forward.



Nikki Richardson,
Chair, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Board

“Healthwatch Gloucestershire has a key role in making sure those who buy, plan, and run health and social care services are listening and responding to the experiences and views of local people.”

Representing the needs of local people

Most people in Gloucestershire will, at some point, need to access health and social care and support. It is important that services meet the needs of everyone using them, so we aim to reach as many people as possible, including those who may not typically share their views.

Last year, we talked to a wide range of people from across the county, and we also focused on reaching people who use mental health services. We also heard from those providing services about some of the challenges they face in delivering care and support. We worked with partners across the health and social care system on the Fit for the Future programme, ensuring that local people are front and centre in any changes planned to urgent and hospital care in Gloucestershire.

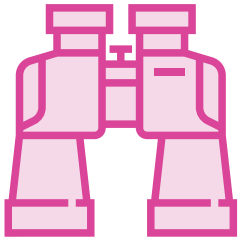
We are proud of what has been achieved, within Healthwatch Gloucestershire and across the whole health and care sector. Looking forward, we recognise that there will be lasting and far reaching impacts on services arising from the coronavirus.

We are grateful to our local Board members, volunteers and staff who will continue to support patients and the public to ensure their voices are heard and used to shape health and care across the county. We are also particularly grateful to Bob Lloyd-Smith for his outstanding work as Chair until March 2020.

Thank you for your continued support.

Nikki Richardson
Chair, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Board

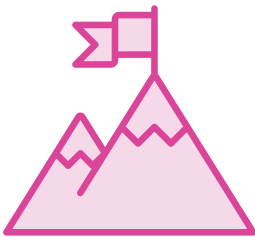
About us



Our vision is simple

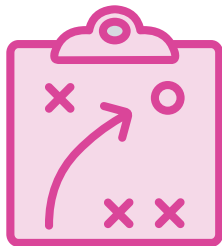
Health and care that works for you.

People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



Our approach

People's views come first - especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations.



Find out more about us and the work that we do

- 🌐 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk
- 📘 [HealthwatchGloucestershire](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchGloucestershire)
- 🐦 [@HealthwatchGlos](https://twitter.com/HealthwatchGlos)
- 📷 [healthwatch_gloucestershire](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatch_gloucestershire)

Our priorities

Last year, over 3,000 people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019/20. These were our priorities and projects for the year based on what you told us and national and local priorities in health and social care.

The needs of mental health patients

We gathered feedback from people who use mental health services, building a deeper understanding of their needs to help shape mental health services in the future (see p.9).



A carers view of mental health services

We investigated the experiences of local people who care for those who access mental health services and identified how to improve support for unpaid carers (see p.10).

Mental health and substance misuse

We explored how services support people who need access to both mental health care and substance misuse support, to find out what works well and what could be improved (see p.11).



Review of urgent and hospital care

A major review of urgent and hospital care in Gloucestershire got underway in 2019. We made sure the needs, views, and experiences of local people are at the heart of decision making about changes to services (see p.12).

NHS Special Care Dental Services

We gathered user feedback to help NHS England shape the future of NHS Special Care Dental Services in South West England (see p.13).

NHS Long Term Plan

We asked local people about the changes they would like to see to improve the NHS in Gloucestershire, as part of the NHS Long Term Plan (see p.14).

Highlights from our year



Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported people in 2019/20.

Health and care that works for you



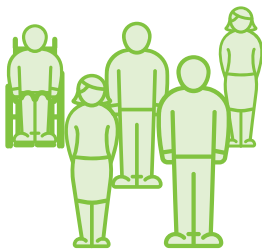
52 volunteers helped to carry out our work. In total, they gave up over **1,350 hours** of their time.

We expanded the Healthwatch Gloucestershire local Board; we now have **6 Board members** and **2 special advisors**.

We employed **4 staff**, including a new Manager and Volunteer Officer.

We received **£209,908** local authority funding.

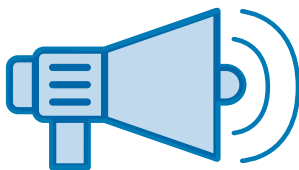
Providing support



Over **1,000** people shared their health and social care story with us.

4,466 people contacted us for information, advice and support over the phone, by email, online and at community events.

Reaching out



19,394 people engaged with us through our website.

We reached **74,748** people through social media.

We engaged with **4,066** people at **141** community events and venues.

Our e-bulletin was sent to over **320** people each month to share our news, information and feedback.

Making a difference to care



We published **4 reports** about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and we made **30 recommendations** for improvement.

How we've made a difference



Speaking up about your experience of health and social care services is the first step to change. Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Gloucestershire.

Understanding the needs of mental health patients

Mental health services continue to be a priority for patients, the public, community groups and voluntary organisations across Gloucestershire. We wanted to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by those who use mental health services to help inform positive change.

We heard from over 200 people through our online survey and at 30 engagement events. Feedback was generally positive about GP support, but there are common barriers when trying to access specialist services:

- Long waiting times
- Lack of flexibility in services
- Not enough support sessions
- Difficulties accessing information
- Conflicting information
- Difficulties getting help in a crisis.

Our findings and recommendations for improving the patient experience fed directly into decision making as the new Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust was formed.

“I rang (the crisis team) because I was feeling suicidal and they told me to make an appointment to see my GP.. I ended up ringing the Samaritans... it is only because of them that I am here today.”



“I was initially sent on a low mood course and then referred for CBT, but it has taken eight months to get an appointment. I was really upset by regular letters telling me that I was still on the waiting list but inviting me to take myself off if I no longer needed an appointment.”

For more information

Visit our website to read the full project report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/reports-publications/

A carers perspective of mental health services

We expanded our work on mental health to focus on the experiences and needs of local people who care for those who use mental health services. We gathered feedback from 136 people via our survey, and through speaking to people at carer support groups and events.

These are the main areas we identified to help improve support for unpaid carers:

- More professional support through specialist groups, including help for carers to maintain their own health and wellbeing.
- Greater focus on carer assessments, to help improve understanding of the carers role and support needs.
- Training to help professionals understand how to work better with carers, including by sharing information appropriately.
- Easier access to accurate and useful information.

“I have no idea of the path to take and where to go for help. I do believe it is there, but I just don’t know where to find it.”

“My husband had a stroke two years ago and although we have managed so far... I worry about who would look after him if I had to go into hospital or worse.”

“It is not until you have an assessment that you realise how much you are doing for your cared one.”



“Supporting carers and improving their experience is quite rightly established as a very important element of providing mental health services within an effective health and social care system. The report will be shared with our Trust colleagues and will also help to inform our refreshed plans to develop our new Trust’s combined approach for improving carers well-being and support.”

John Trevains, Director of Nursing, Therapies & Quality, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust

For more information

Visit our website to read the full project report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/reports-publications/



Co-existing conditions: mental health and substance misuse

We worked with the Gloucestershire Co-existing Substance Misuse & Mental Health Conditions Stakeholder Group. We looked at how people access both services simultaneously, to find out what works well and what could be improved.

We gathered feedback from 63 people through a survey, visits to drop-in sessions and support groups, focus groups and 1:1 interviews. Our findings led to the following recommendations for improvement:

- The approach used by national health and social care charity Change, Grow, Live is recommended as a model for good practice. Their recovery support programme focuses on the whole person, with quick referral and ongoing 1:1 support.
- Services should review their practices, with users if possible, and aim to deliver a consistent person-centred approach with a simplified triage process, removal of paperwork from the service user, and more groupwork and information.

- NICE guidelines for dealing with these co-existing conditions should be followed.
- As waiting lists for NHS 1:1 support are long, alternative support services should be identified and used.

“Mental health and substance misuse services need to be revamped, and that needs to start with what will help the individual, and not how many boxes we can tick and how quickly we can get someone through the system.”

“I have noticed a dramatic upsurge over the past couple of years, of people with very complex mental health issues coming to AA meetings and saying they are unable to get proper help elsewhere.”

For more information

The publication of this report has been delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic, but it will be available on our website later in the year.

Review of urgent and hospital care

During the year, we worked alongside our local NHS partners as they embarked on a far-reaching engagement project to review urgent and hospital care in Gloucestershire. Our aim was to make sure the needs, views and experiences of local people were placed at the heart of decision making about changes to services.

Our staff and volunteers were involved in meetings, consultations, interviews, and workshops. We made sure that the consultation information was easy to understand and that the needs of local communities were considered at every point. Towards the end of the year, volunteers took part in 'Solutions Appraisal' sessions, to scrutinise new service delivery models.

The outcome of the review has not yet been fully considered because of COVID-19, but we will follow the next steps carefully, continue to raise public awareness and champion the needs of local people.

For more information

Visit the One Gloucestershire website to read more about the Fit for the Future programme: onegloucestershire.net/yoursay/fit-for-the-future/



“Healthwatch Gloucestershire volunteers have participated this year in the Fit for the Future engagement focussing on specialist hospital services and urgent and emergency services. They enhanced the process and at the same time extended their own knowledge and understanding of the opportunities and challenges of sustaining local health and care services.”


Becky Parish, Associate Director, Engagement and Experience, NHS Gloucestershire CCG



Share your views with us

Tell us about a recent health or social care experience, or share your views about local services to help make care better. Get in touch. Healthwatch Gloucestershire is here for you.

 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

 0800 6525193

 info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

NHS Special Care Dental Services

Special care NHS dentistry is for people who have a health condition or other physical, social, or emotional circumstances which prevent them from using a high street dentist.

We worked in partnership with NHS England to capture the views of local people who use or who could use the service to inform service development in South West England. We gathered feedback from 78 people through an online survey promoted through our network of voluntary groups and social media.

We submitted our report to NHS England and NHS Improvement at the end of 2019. They are analysing feedback from all the local Healthwatch who took part in the project and will publish the findings and next steps.



For more information

Visit the NHS England and NHS Improvement consultation webpage:

engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/special-care-dental-services-in-south-west-england/

Accessing health and care in Gloucestershire

We were preparing to end the year with our #SpeakUpGlos public event, but this had to be put on hold due to coronavirus. Members of the public, local voluntary and community sector partners, and health and social care professionals were due to join us, to find out about our work, and to discuss and share feedback about primary care services in the county - what works well and how services might be improved.

Publicity for the event raised awareness of Healthwatch Gloucestershire, with more members of the public getting in touch. A targeted leaflet drop to rural areas of the county led to an increase in calls from key areas, helping us gain insight into the experiences of some of the communities that are rarely heard.



NHS Long Term Plan

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the **Long Term Plan** in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next 10 years. In the summer of 2019, Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

We asked people #WhatWouldYouDo to improve the NHS locally? Here is a summary of our work and what we found.

What do people want?

The top issues that people told us they wanted services to focus on were:

- Access to longer, better quality interactions with a named GP
- Easier and cheaper access to exercise classes, gyms and cycle ways to help them stay healthy
- Better quality, accessible and easy to read information about specific conditions and how to stay healthy

- Access to a Care Navigator for those with dementia and other complex and long-term conditions
- Better support for carers, in particular, community-based support
- Translation services that are consistent and meet the needs of individuals, in particular medication instructions and registration forms
- The needs of the LGBT+ community to be considered, in particular with mental health and support around transitioning.

What are we doing about it?

We have been working with Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to embed our findings into their future plans for local services.

For more information

Visit our website to read the full report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/reports-publications/

Highlights



More than **500** people shared their views with Healthwatch Gloucestershire.



We held **3** focus groups reaching seldom heard groups from across the county - the Chinese Community, the LGBT+ community, and young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETS).



We toured the county in a campervan, covered **400** miles and visited **13** locations, including GP surgeries, community and district hospitals, local markets and supermarkets.

“This year the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been working with Integrated Care System (ICS) partners and engaging with local communities on developing our local NHS Long Term Plan. As the NHS Long Term Plan has an impact across the whole of health and social care services, we asked local people and communities and staff: what matters to you? It was good to be able to work with Healthwatch on this, as it gave an independent way for local people to engage with the question as well as the more traditional routes the CCG facilitated.”

Becky Parish, Associate Director, Engagement and Experience,
NHS Gloucestershire CCG



Helping you find the answers

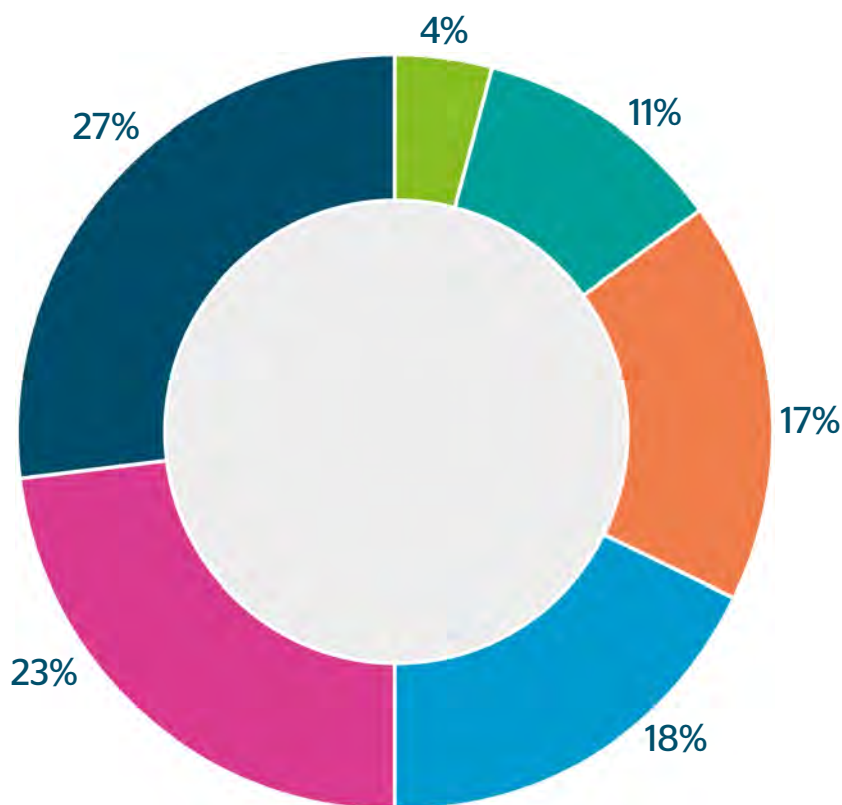


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped over 98,600 people get information and advice by:

- Answering 4,466 enquiries over the phone, by email, online, and at community events and venues
- Providing information and advice to 19,394 people via our website
- Promoting services and information that can help people through our social media, reaching 74,748 people.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about



- | | |
|--|--|
| Primary care services (eg GPs, dentists, opticians, pharmacists) | Dignity and respect |
| Hospital and emergency services | Care services |
| Transition between services | Community and mental health services |

Finding an NHS dentist

Many people do not know they are entitled to NHS dental care or how to get treatment if a dentist is not taking new patients. We explain and direct them to NHS England to find available dentists in their area.

“I have tried to access an NHS dentist, but it is really hard to find one that is still accepting patients.”



GP waiting times

This is one of our most common areas of enquiry, so we regularly advise people how to make a complaint about their surgery.

“You have to know you are going to be ill a number of weeks in advance - you cannot just get an appointment.”

Complaints and advocacy

Where there is concern about quality of care, we direct people to the correct advocacy or complaints service, such as the Patient Advisory Liaison Service.

“I feel I have to lodge a formal complaint into my father’s recent visit to the A&E department and their failure to provide correct care.”



Hospital transport

We receive many calls from people seeking transport to hospital appointments. We refer them to the county’s hospital transport service or, if they are not eligible, to community transport services.


“It costs me £10 each way in a taxi as I am not eligible for hospital transport, but I cannot get on a bus, so I have no other choice. I do not know how much longer I will be able to afford it.”



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Healthwatch Gloucestershire is here for you.

 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

 0800 6525193

 info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

Our volunteers



Kay, Healthwatch Gloucestershire volunteer

At Healthwatch Gloucestershire we are supported by 52 volunteers. They help us find out what people think is working well, and how people would like to improve services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of our work at events, in the community and with health and care services
- Visited services to make sure they are providing people with the right support
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on
- Helped support our day-to-day running.

Board members, who are also all volunteers, represented Healthwatch Gloucestershire at meetings with partner agencies.

Improving information for local people

Our Readers Panel proof-reads and edits information materials for Healthwatch Gloucestershire and health and social care commissioners, to make sure they are clear and easy to understand for patients and their families. This year, 17 volunteers read documents for the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Gloucestershire County Council.

“Being a member of the Readers Panel enables me to have a say in the way important healthcare information is presented. It also provides valuable insight into future plans for healthcare services and this allows me to respond more knowledgeably to enquiries and concerns from the public who I meet when out and about in the community with Healthwatch Gloucestershire.”

John, Healthwatch Gloucestershire volunteer



“Thank you to the members of the Healthwatch readers panel for their valuable feedback regarding the review and development of promotional material for Your Circle. The feedback provided was particularly helpful for the design and accessibility of our current and future promotions as well as our website as a whole.”

Your Circle

Spotlight on our volunteers

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and read what they get up to.

John

“I volunteer as a way of thanking the NHS for literally saving my life on two occasions when I had serious cardiac issues. I enjoy knowing that I am making a difference. My role is varied and can see me collecting people’s views at community events, attending strategic meetings for the NHS ‘Fit for the Future’ programme, or doing Enter & View visits to talk to people about the services they are using.”



Deb

“I was looking for some volunteering work to build my confidence. When I learnt of Healthwatch Gloucestershire, I knew it was something I would like to get involved in. I find the role varied, interesting, and also a bit of fun. The team are supportive, and I have met a lot of new people. My confidence has increased, and I have recently been involved with running focus groups which I found interesting and enjoyable.”



Martin

“I left full time employment three years ago, and almost immediately became a volunteer. I have been working with the local university, interviewing their physiotherapy students, and embedding patient involvement even before students have been accepted onto their degree course.”



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch with Healthwatch Gloucestershire.

 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

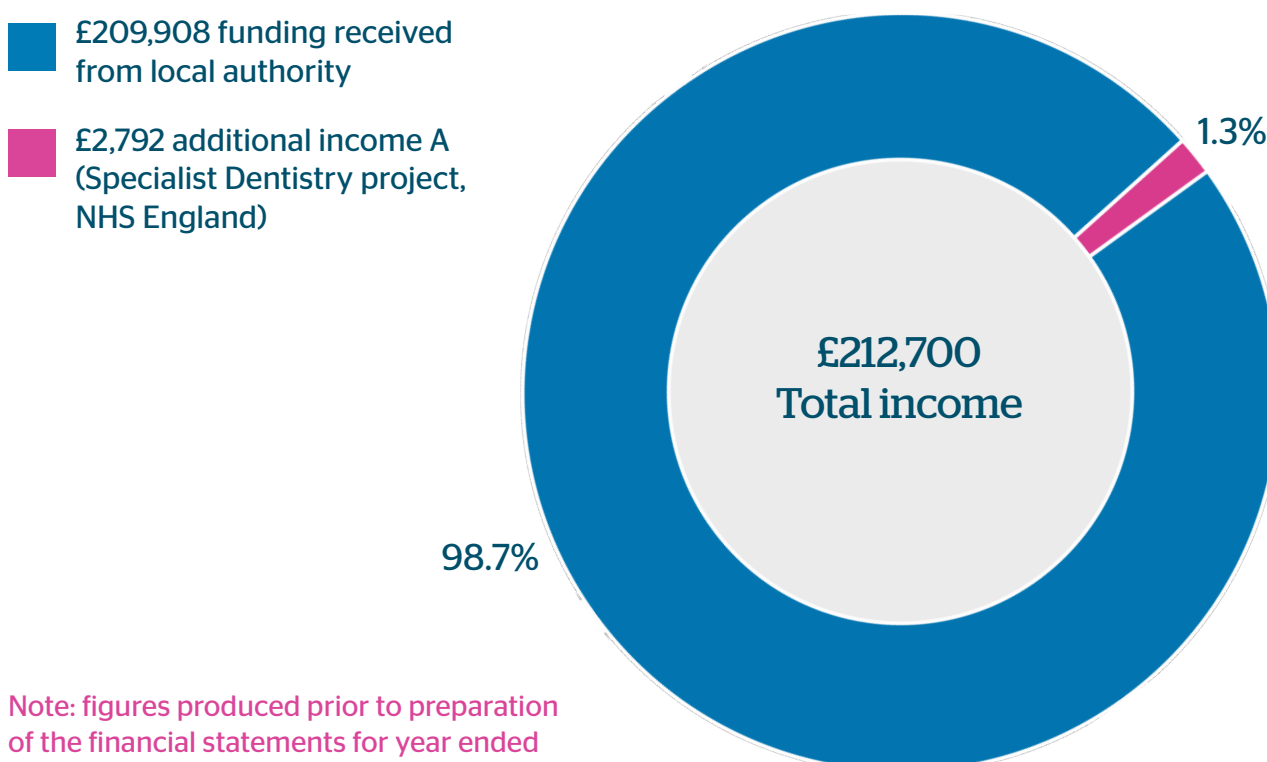
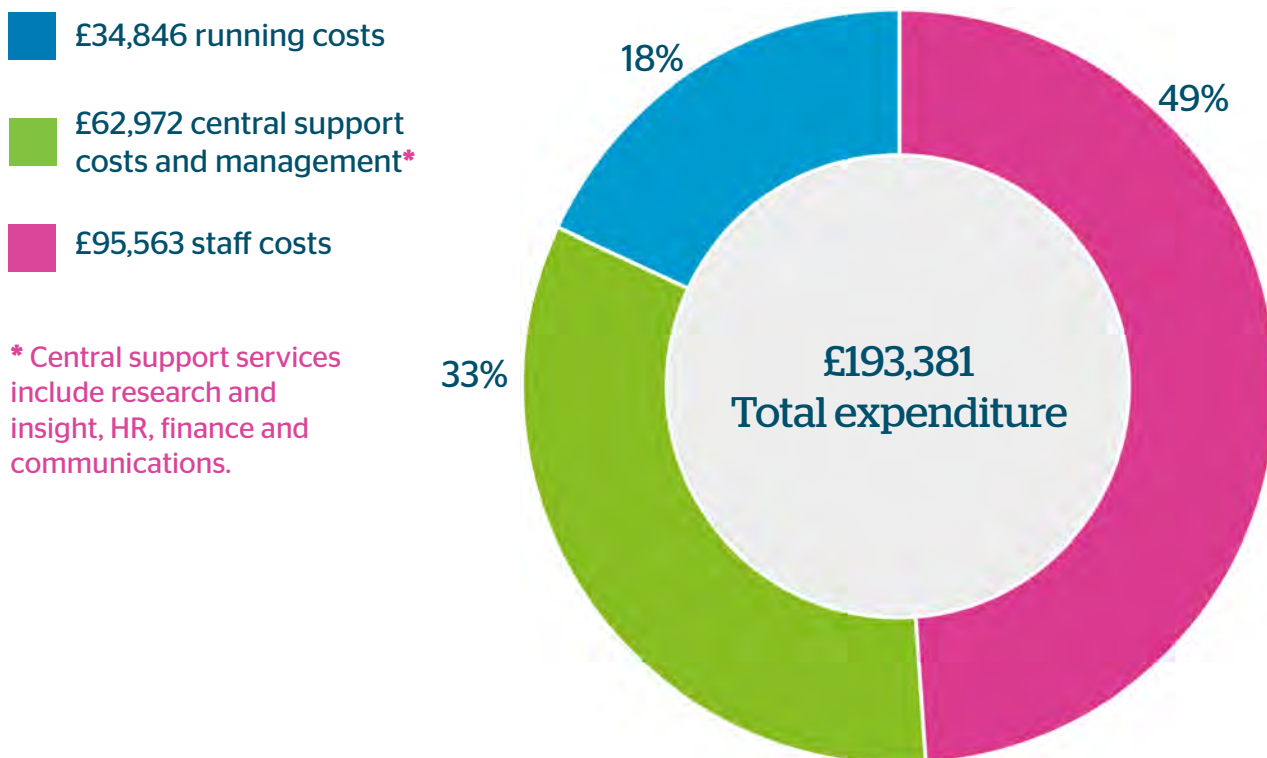
 0800 6525193

 volunteering@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

Our finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019/20 we received £209,908.



Note: figures produced prior to preparation of the financial statements for year ended 31 March 2020.

Our plans for next year



Message from our Manager

I joined Healthwatch Gloucestershire in December 2019, and began 2020 by meeting the many people, partners and organisations who work tirelessly to provide and improve health and social care in the county. Everything changed however, with the outbreak of coronavirus.

Supporting our communities during coronavirus

We have been adapting our current and future plans so that we continue to support local communities and services and make a real difference. We are keeping a close eye on the rapid changes in health and social care and ramping up our work to inform and guide people when they need to access services.

We are also recording people's experiences of accessing care during the virus, providing feedback to help services adapt and improve. We will continue this work to build a more in-depth picture over time, including seeking insight into what is happening in social care and to understand the impact on people needing regular care for existing conditions.

Longer term plans for 2020/21

Before coronavirus, we had identified some priority areas to work on from April 2020. These are based on common concerns raised by local people, while also reflecting national and local priorities:

- Improving access to GP care
- Smoother transition between health and social care services
- Tackling social isolation
- Representing young people's views through young listeners.

We will develop and adapt our plans during the year, as services begin to recover, to make sure our work is relevant and reflects people's needs.



Helen Webb, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager

“Your invaluable support helps us to connect with local communities so that we can ensure their voice is heard by those working at the highest levels in health and social care.”

Thank you

I would like to say a personal thank you to everyone who has shared their story with us - your feedback is vital to influence positive change in local services. I would also like to thank our amazing volunteers and the many groups we work with. Thank you for your continued support.

Helen Webb
Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager

About Healthwatch

Here to make care better

The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of Healthwatch in giving people who find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up.

The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review - sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

Sir Robert Francis, Healthwatch England Chair



“I've now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I'm extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people's views to decision makers at a national and local level.”

Thank you

Thank you to everyone helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- Our partners including Gloucestershire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group; Gloucestershire County Council; Gloucestershire Health & Wellbeing Board; Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Gloucestershire Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust.

“I had a bone marrow transplant and have to go to Gloucester Royal Hospital every three months for blood tests and then I have an appointment with the consultant to talk about the results. The whole process takes about two hours, but it is good to know they are keeping a regular eye on me.”

“I have had a hip and knee replacement over the past year in Cheltenham General and spent 6 weeks there. The nurses were lovely, and I now feel like a different person.”

Contact us

Tell us what you think of health and social care services in Gloucestershire and help make health and care better for everyone in our community.

☎ 01452 504989 or 0800 6525193 (freephone)

✉ info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

🌐 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

Healthwatch Gloucestershire
13 Wheatstone Court
Davy Way
Waterwells Business Park
Quedgeley
Gloucester
GL2 2AQ

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The registered office is at Unit 4, Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.

 01225 701 851

 info@evolvingcommunities.co.uk

 evolvingcommunities.co.uk

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