



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

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Message from our Chair



David N Jones
Healthwatch
Northamptonshire
Chair

The past year has witnessed the continuing process of local government and health service reorganisation in Northamptonshire, the national paralysis resulting from the politics of Brexit and the General Election, and the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. They have continued to affect the future of health and social care in our county and Healthwatch Northamptonshire. We have contributed to these developments as an increasingly influential critical friend in turbulent times.

The **county council reorganisation** and the two new unitary authorities will have significant implications for Northamptonshire people alongside the new county-wide **Clinical Commissioning Group**, the planned county-wide **Children's Trust** and the newly integrated management structure for **Kettering and Northampton General Hospitals**. We keep politicians and officers informed about the wishes and experiences of local people, including through our membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health and Care Partnership, as shown by our joint work to ensure people's views contribute to how the NHS Long Term Plan is implemented locally. We are also regularly seen and heard in local media.

We have opened discussions with the county council about the future of the **Healthwatch Northamptonshire contract** and welcomed the extension until 2021. Given the county-wide structure of the health service, it makes sense for the local Healthwatch to mirror that structure.

We have welcomed the development of **social prescribing** and have had discussions about the challenges associated with engaging with the informal social support networks as well as more formal voluntary organisations. We are also involved in discussions about the future of **Patient Participation Groups** in GP practices and the implications of the development of **Primary Care Networks**.

The national and local health and social care agenda remains active and volatile. The pandemic has demonstrated the value of both health and social care to community wellbeing. I am grateful to the Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteers and staff, including Young Healthwatch, for the hard work and commitment evident in this annual report. We assure the Northamptonshire public that we will listen and make sure that your concerns are heard.

“We assure the Northamptonshire public that we will listen and make sure that your concerns are heard”

Our Board

The Healthwatch Board represents the public and takes decisions about how Healthwatch Northamptonshire should work to improve the health and social care outcomes of the County's population.



David N Jones - Chair



Ric Barnard



Simon Barter



Sandra Bell



Judith Glashen



Caroline Gooch



Susan Hills



Roger Knight



Vikki Lynes



John Rawlings



Rashmi Shah



Dora Shergold



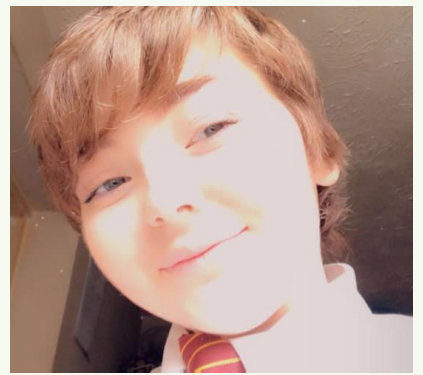
Jill Spiby



Helen Statham



Morcea Walker
Vice Chair



Hayley-Jade
Young
Healthwatch Co-
Chair



Darcy
Young
Healthwatch Co-
Chair

The Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board is currently made up of 17 members.

The Healthwatch Board meetings are held in public and members of the public and the Healthwatch Northamptonshire community are welcome to attend the meetings and contribute to the discussions. On occasions, there may be issues of a confidential nature (such as information about individual patients or service users) and the Board will go into a closed session, i.e. closed to press and public.

Our Staff



Kate Holt
CEO



Jo Spenceley, PhD, CMRS
Research and
Communications Manager



Esther Stimpson
Project Manager and
Young Healthwatch Lead



Katie Bayliss
Healthwatch Officer



Natasha Mansukhani, MSc
Research, Reporting and
Intelligence Assistant



Julie Curtis
Personal Assistant



Penny McDermott
Project Intern



Lauren Gibbons
Communications Assistant

Our priorities

During 2018-19, around 1,500 gave us feedback about their health and care experiences. Based on those voices and the insight gained by our volunteers and staff the following priority areas were chosen for 2019-20.



- Mental Health – focusing on local mental health crisis support and provision.



- Children and Young People – ensuring they have a voice in decision making through our Young Healthwatch group and projects.



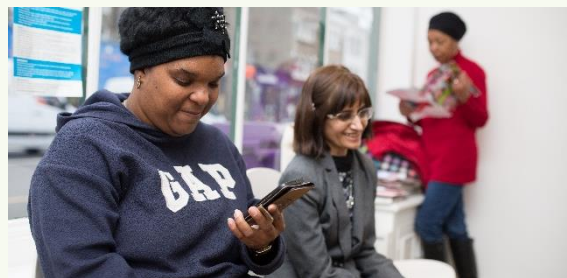
- Adult Social Care – working with Northamptonshire Adult Social Services (NASS) to review the services provided to their customers.



- Primary Care – keeping abreast of changes to the way primary care is organised and how the public are involved.



- Engaging with people about the NHS Long Term Plan and continuing to contribute to the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership.



- Continuing to provide high quality and accessible information and working in partnership with others to have the most influences and impact.

“It is good to see that the tremendous hard work of Young Healthwatch has been recognised and commended. Congratulations!”
 - Northamptonshire County Council Commissioning Manager

About us

Here to make care better

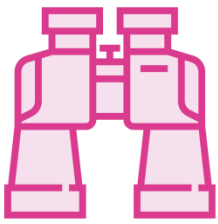
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan 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.

 "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."

Sir Robert Francis,
Healthwatch England Chair





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 we do

Website: www.healthwatcnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Twitter: [@HWatchNorthants](https://twitter.com/HWatchNorthants)

Facebook: [@Healthwatchnorthamptonshire](https://www.facebook.com/Healthwatchnorthamptonshire)

Highlights from our year

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



Health and care that works for you



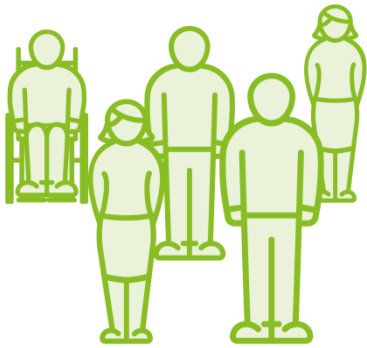
52 volunteers

are helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up over **2,000 hours**

£195,000 in funding

received from our local authority in 2019-20, the same as the previous year

Listening to you and providing support



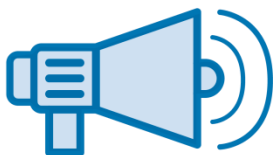
Over 1,600 people

shared their health and social care views with us, through conversations, surveys, service visits and events

462 people

accessed Healthwatch Northamptonshire's online complaints guide (333) or contacted us with questions about local support (129), 30% more than last year

Reaching out



Over 10,000 people

visited our website, 6,700 people engaged with us through social media, and 1,789 people engaged with us at community events

Making a difference to care



11 reports

published about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 58 recommendations for improvement

How we've made a difference



Speaking up about your experiences 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 Northamptonshire.

Listening to and supporting involvement of young carers

Thanks to a Takeover Challenge grant from NHS England, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Young Carers Service were able to work together with young carers to explore the needs and experiences of young people under the age of 20 who care for someone and help them to make their voices heard.

Together the two groups conducted a survey to gather the views and experiences from young carers about their emotional wellbeing and needs. They heard from 85 young carers between the ages of 11 and 19.

Almost two-thirds of young carers felt their caring role affected their emotional wellbeing or mental health. Over half had experienced the challenge of long waiting times when accessing a service and around a third felt they had not been given enough support or that the services did not know about their issues.

Whilst many young carers and non-carers experience mental health and emotional wellbeing difficulties, being a young carer can have an additional impact on mental health, which requires understanding from professionals and support services. Many young carers are far more resilient due to being carers from a young age and naturally developing coping strategies beyond their years.

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/youngcarersreport



Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Young Carers Service meeting

Our main recommendations included:

- Design emotional wellbeing and mental health services that provide extra support for young carers.
- Use young carers' experiences and insight so they recognise the different support needs young carers have.
- Put in place ways to identify young carers, as the caring responsibility of young people can often be missed.

“The opportunity to be part of Young Healthwatch has positively impacted the young carers' confidence and given them the chance to develop new skills and take part in new experiences.”
- Philip Mayes, Senior Young Carer Worker, Northamptonshire Young Carers Service

As well as finding out the needs of young carers, the joint working has recruited more young carers to Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire, bringing a new dimension to the meetings. It has made everyone who interacts with the group, including commissioners, consider how services could work better for young carers and their families.



Northamptonshire Adult Social Services User Survey

Last year Northamptonshire County Council asked us to carry out a survey of adult social care service users to find out what changes are needed in the way they provide adult social care. The survey looked at people's experiences of contacting adult social services and getting help, their experiences of the support they received as well as their overall satisfaction with that support.

The responses to the survey were mixed, with some people having good experiences and others highlighting areas where improvement is needed. 30% of people rated their overall satisfaction of their care as excellent or good, whereas 44% rated it as very poor or poor.

People often described experiencing delays in getting care, support or responses and other aspects of

communication, such as being able to speak to the right people. Other people wanted more care or particular services and carers in particular seemed to find communication poor and wanted more respite care.

The report recommendations included:

- Listen to people and ensure care is personalised and person-centred, based on their needs.
- Improve the process for people to follow when contacting adult social care, such as giving people a designated person to contact, and communicate with people in accessible ways, such as British Sign Language.
- Involve and support carers by listening to them, communicating better with them and supporting them with services such as respite.

These views are helping inform the Council's transformation plans for adult social services.

By hearing about people's real experiences of navigating adult social care services in the county we have been able to get an accurate picture of where things aren't working as well as they should be, and where people want to see change." - *Councillor Ian Morris, County Council cabinet member for Adult Social Care*

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/NASSsurveyreport



A Young Healthwatch meeting with Toby Sanders, Chief Executive of Northamptonshire CCG

Working in partnership with others

During 2019-20 we have continued to work in partnership with local health and care organisations. The staff team, board and volunteers attend a wide range of meetings with commissioners and service providers to ensure that the voice of the public is heard in the planning and delivery of health and care services. Our partnership working has gone from strength to strength, including the joint event held with Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership about local implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan (see next page) and the valuable feedback our young volunteers people have given Northampton and Kettering General Hospitals (see Young Healthwatch section).

We have continued to share the feedback we gather with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), all three NHS trusts in the county (Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospital and Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation

Trust), St Andrew's Healthcare and social care commissioners (care homes and home care). Our feedback also informs Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections.

Additionally, we worked with Nene and Corby CCGs to engage with people on their plans to transition to one CCG and undertook a piece of work reviewing the county's seven Health and Wellbeing Fora.

Our Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board and Planning Group continue to ensure we respond to consultations and raise issues of concern. In 2019 we responded to county-wide consultations about proposed changes to the amount people contribute towards their social care, the transition to one CCG for the county, and the formation of a new Children's Trust. We also raised concern about other issues, such as the closure of King's Heath GP surgery, and are actively scrutinising arrangements for the local government reorganisation and formation of a new children's trust, mindful of any potential impacts on local people.



Share your views with us

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 002 0010

Email: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



Nearly 300 people shared their views with us (and 40,000 with all Healthwatch nationally).



People shared their views through a joint community engagement event with NHCP, our two #WhatWouldYouDo surveys and a group for carers.



All this led to our 'Big Ideas' for the future of local health and care – priorities that NHCP has incorporated into their work to plan and deliver improvements to local services.

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. Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

In Northamptonshire we ran two surveys, including one that looked at the experiences of people with long-term conditions, to encourage people to tell us what matters most to them when they use health and care services. We also worked jointly with Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership (NHCP) to host a public engagement event where members of the public, healthcare professionals and other people working in the county came together to discuss their 'Big Ideas' for the future of local health and care.

The top five things people would like to see improved were:

- Information and communication
- Access to services (including community support and services closer to home)
- Personalised care

- Support for carers and people with long-term conditions.

We also found that people want better communication between services and with patients/the public, including a directory of services and shared patient records, to make it easier for people to access the right care in the right place at the right time. The value of communities, local initiatives and having care and support close to home was highlighted, particularly to help people choose well, stay well and live well – the local priorities.

This feedback and the 'Big Ideas' are being used to help shape the Northamptonshire Health, Care and Wellbeing Plan and the development of local health and care services.



"By sharing their Big Ideas with us, local people are playing a key role in helping to shape the future of health and care. We thank them for their valuable contribution and will be continuing these important conversations as we develop our plans and put them into action."
- Toby Sanders, NHCP lead and Chief Executive of Northamptonshire CCG

Helping you find the answers



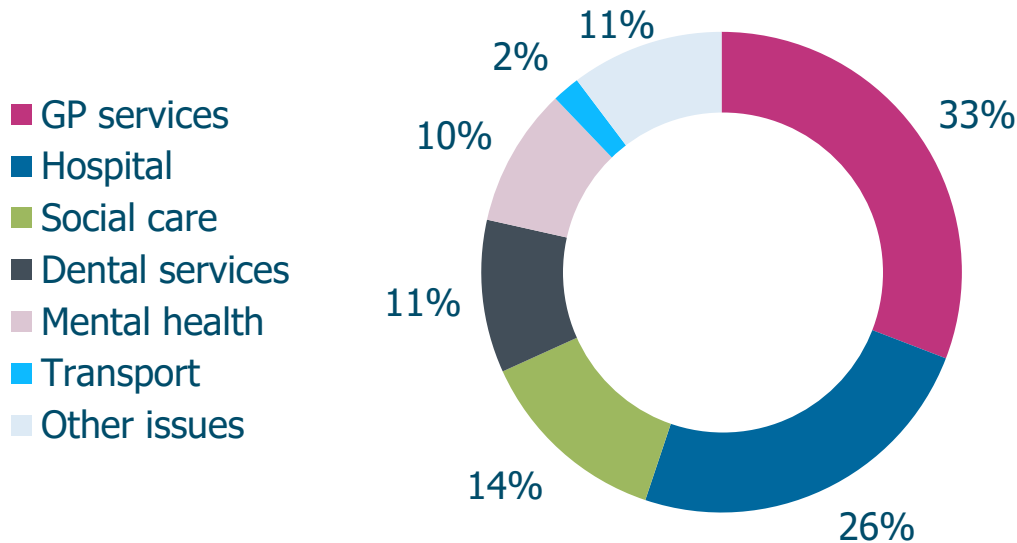
Finding the best place to go for health and care support can be worrying when you don't know where to look for it. Healthwatch can play an important role in providing this advice and signposting people to the correct service.

During the year we helped 129 people who contacted us by phone, email or online to get the advice and information they needed (a further 110 gave us feedback but did not need signposting).

We also:

- Provided advice and information articles on our website.
- Talked to people at community events.
- Promoted services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about:



We signposted people to organisations that would further support them to access the advice and information they need. Most people asked for information about how to make a complaint about a health or care service they have used and were signposted to VoiceAbility for NHS Complaints Advocacy support, local NHS Trust Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) and NHS England customer contact centre.

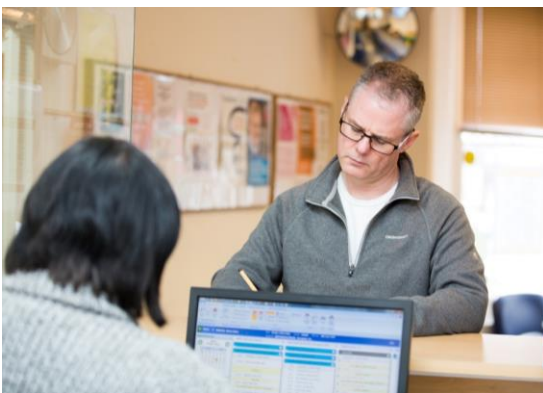
We have also signposted people to services they can self-refer to and organisations such as the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Northampton County Council Adult Social Care, Mind and Crisis Cafés, Citizen’s Advice, Community Law, Young Minds, Age UK, Northamptonshire Carers, Maternity Voice Partnership, Macmillan Cancer Care, Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service, Alzheimer’s Society, the General Dental Council, the General Medical Council, the General Pharmaceutical Council, and local community transport schemes.

This year we also made one safeguarding referral to the County’s Safeguarding Team with the enquirer’s permission, and contacted the team about two other cases.

Here are some examples of how we have helped individuals access information or supported them to share their concerns.

Helping a patient having difficulty with their GP practice

We were contacted by someone who was unhappy with how their GP practice had dealt with them, feeling they were not spoken to professionally, making them feel uncomfortable. They had complained to the surgery but felt that did not resolve the issue and they had nowhere to turn. We signposted them to VoiceAbility for NHS Complaints Advocacy and they were happy with this advice.



Signposting to support services

Sometimes we receive enquiries from people with multiple issues. One person contacted us concerned about their elderly parent who was a carer for someone with palliative needs. The parent was struggling with mental health issues themselves and the caller was concerned the care requirements were becoming overwhelming. We gave the caller details of various organisations, including Northamptonshire Carers, Macmillan Cancer Support, and Mind.

Raising issues of poor care

An individual contacted us concerned about the poor care their elderly mother received from a care home, including late referral for medical treatment, possible dehydration and the resident being left alone in A&E. We helped share this feedback with the Care Quality Commission, County Council Adult Social Care team and the Clinical Commissioning Group quality team with permission. The individual also made a safeguarding referral based on our suggestion and advice.



“Thank you so much for your advice and support during this difficult time - I cannot tell you how much I appreciate 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. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 002 0010

Email: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Young Healthwatch

Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire is vital to ensure that children's and young people's voices are heard too



What another amazingly busy year it has been for Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire. We have seen some of our fantastic volunteers head off to university to study medicine and have welcomed some new volunteers.

Our volunteers now range from 11-19 years old. We have forged great partnerships with local services such as Northamptonshire’s Young Carers Service to make sure that young carers are included in the conversations around health and social care locally and nationally, and have built on our valued relationships with local service providers across Northamptonshire, including both Northampton General Hospital and Kettering General Hospital. We have also continued to upskill our volunteers and offer them new experiences, but most importantly we have continued to make a difference to health and social care for young people in Northamptonshire while having fun and making friends.

Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE) in Northamptonshire

In the summer Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire was commissioned by Public Health Northamptonshire to carry out a review of Personal, Social, Health and Education in Northamptonshire schools. They designed a survey that was shared throughout the county’s schools, youth clubs and other youth services to find out young people’s experiences of PSHE lessons. The survey covered how useful the lessons were, the topics that had been taught and what they wanted to learn more about.

We collected the views of 823 people aged 13 to 15 and also held four focus groups with 100 young people. The young people told us they preferred to have PSHE delivered through specific lessons on their timetable and that to improve

their PSHE lessons, they would like more interaction and group work with up to date, relevant content. They valued the topics that had been covered already, but many wanted to know more about topics that would prepare them for adult life, such as money and finances. Overall, young people were fairly satisfied with their PSHE lessons, with over half rating their usefulness as four or five out of five.

Young Healthwatch made a video reporting the findings of the project. Read the report and watch the video at: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/news/PHSEreport



Join us

If you are interested in being part of Young Healthwatch or working with them, please get in touch.

Website: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/get-involved-young-healthwatch

Telephone: 0300 002 0010 or 07376 130329

Email: estherstimpson@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



Screening of our short film at Cineworld Northampton - April 2019

Working with our hospitals

This past year has seen us continue to work with Kettering General Hospital (KGH) and Northampton General Hospital (NGH).

NHS England awarded a Celebrating Participation in Healthcare grant to Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire to showcase their work as an example of good practice in involving young people in healthcare. Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Shooting Stars (a participation group for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities) teamed up to create a short film about their visit to Kettering General Hospital.

The film was premiered in April at Cineworld Northampton for the young people and professionals involved, parents and local health and care organisations.

The video showed the improvements KGH had made following the visit by Young Healthwatch and Shooting Stars,

highlighting the importance of feedback from young people in creating a better experience for patients at the hospital.

During the visit young people spent time in the Paediatric Emergency Department, Paediatric Outpatients and on Skylark Children's Ward. They spoke to patients and staff and were very impressed with the facilities the hospital had for children and young people.



"The perspective, energy and enthusiasm that Young Healthwatch continue to bring to KGH always amazes me. Every time we meet I learn something new and they always have fresh ideas on how we can improve."
- James Gillespie-Allan, Head of Patient Experience and Involvement at KGH

Takeover Day

In November our young volunteers took part in Takeover Day at both hospital trusts. Takeover Day allows children and young people to gain an insight into the adult world and organisations open their doors to benefit from a fresh perspective on their work.

After a meet and greet with the Head of Patient Experience and Engagement at NGH and attending a board meeting with the CEO and board members at KGH, the young volunteers talked about feedback that the hospitals receive from patients and how patient experience can be improved, especially for young people.

At NGH, the team had the opportunity to hop aboard the Children’s Train, driven by its amazing volunteers. The train allows for young patients to have fun while being transported around the hospital for treatments and procedures. Meanwhile, at KGH, Young Healthwatch members met the communications team and had an insight into how they keep the public updated with new and exciting developments. In both hospitals, they

also had the chance to try out a range of food, from sandwiches to a Sunday dinner, that is served to young patients, and to provide feedback.

At NGH Young Healthwatch then dressed up in scrubs, caps and masks and were shown the state of the art simulation suite, which allows simulated learning scenarios to provide invaluable opportunities to observe, develop and test how healthcare professionals work together and interact with their environment and equipment. KGH showed the young volunteers the radiology department, where they learnt about how radiology works and is used to treat patients. They were also shown fascinating images made by the MRI scanner.

This work was recognised by the Patient Experience Network (PEN) and we have been shortlisted for a Patient Experience Network National Award in the Engaging and championing the public category. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the awards ceremony has been postponed so we are still waiting to see if we have won.

Young Healthwatch during Takeover Day





In February at our meeting we were joined by the patient experience leads from both NGH and KGH who asked us for input and help in designing the new friends and family test cards for children and their families as well as a patient experience board. These have now been produced with the suggested changes made.



Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire were invited to take part in NHS England's Youth Voice Summit which took place in London. The day was organised by the NHS Youth forum and gave young people the opportunity to take part in workshops and a question and answer session with Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of the National Health Service, and other senior leaders.



In September we facilitated training about NHS England's 15 Step Challenge for young people from local Healthwatch across the country. 25 young people from four different local Healthwatch took part and this is the first time that young people that volunteer for their local Healthwatch have been brought together in this way to share a training opportunity.



This year we have been reaccredited with our Investing in Children Membership award! The award evidences that children and young people are at the heart of decision making in our organisation. This was a huge achievement for everyone involved.



In October one of our members took part in the Patient-Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) assessment at KGH. "The best part of being a YHW volunteer has been doing the PLACE assessment at KGH. It was a good experience and I was treated as a grown up and I was encouraged to share my ideas and thoughts. The day was fantastic"



“Having Young Healthwatch with us was incredibly exciting and inspiring. Seeing their enthusiasm for how the hospital works and receiving their feedback on potential ways in which we can improve was fantastic.”

- Rachel Lovesy, Head of Patient Experience and Engagement at Northampton General Hospital

Volunteers



Healthwatch Northamptonshire currently has 52 volunteers, including those involved in Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire. This year they gave over 2,000 hours of their time and we are very grateful for all their continued hard work and commitment.

Our volunteers are local people who are dedicated to support and improve health and social care services in Northamptonshire. Volunteers represent us at nearly **50 different meetings** across the county and are the foundation of our organisation. They are involved at every level of our work, including the planning and decision making. This year they carried out **46 visits**, including to hospital wards, a mental health inpatient service, crisis houses and crisis cafés. Our volunteers have also assisted with the designing and distribution of surveys and have attended **17 engagement and outreach events**.

Volunteers look at mental health services locally

As one of our priorities this year we wanted to understand more about people's experiences of mental health crisis support, so volunteers visited services provided by Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) and the mental health charity Mind (www.northamptonmind.org.uk, www.nhft.nhs.uk/crisis-cafe), the main providers of mental health crisis support in the county (Mind Crisis Cafés are run by the charity in conjunction with NHFT).

We visited the two NHFT Crisis Houses in the county (The Warren in Northampton and the Martins in Rushden) and a Crisis Café at Wellingborough Mind and observed the good care that was centred around the needs of the service users. The service users also commended the support they were given and both services were clearly beneficial to those that used them and necessary to support people experiencing a mental health crisis.



A room inside The Martins Crisis House

The feedback from the visits with recommendations was shared with the NHFT Head of Crisis Pathway

Read the report at www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/MentalHealthCrisisServicesReport

“[The crisis house]...has been a massive literal lifeline and you are all truly amazing in all you do. The other services could learn so much from you lovely people. To new service users staying here, your faith will be restored.”
- A service user



Volunteer with us

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

Website: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

Telephone: 0300 002 0010

Email: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



The Healthwatch Northamptonshire staff and volunteer team outside St. Andrew's Healthcare carers centre

We also visited St. Andrew's Healthcare, a service provider based in Northampton that offer specialist mental health care for approximately six hundred patients for around the country. During our visit Stowe Ward (Women's medium secure ward) appeared well-organised, calm, and generally positive with regards to patient care and safety. Some aspects of good practice were observed and commended, and some other minor advisories noted.

The report had four recommendations:

- Review the activities offered and encourage more patient participation
- Display more recent examples of patients work
- More effective and timely maintenance of equipment

- Develop and share the good practice of Peer Support and Experts by Experience.

St. Andrew's Healthcare responded to the recommendations. Part of their response said:

“We very much appreciate the feedback and encourage this as it contributes to our continuing improvement and commitment to provide the best service possible to every person in our care.”

We plan to revisit the recommendations and are already looking to conduct another visit to St. Andrew's Healthcare.

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/sahvisit2019

15 Steps at Kettering General Hospital

Two of our volunteers, Wendy Patel and Sheila White, carried out 43 visits to Kettering General Hospital using the 15 Steps Challenge tool. (The 15 Steps Challenge focuses on seeing care through a patient or carer's eyes, and exploring their first impressions, www.england.nhs.uk/participation/resources/15-steps-challenge/.) They share their findings with the hospital after each visit, resulting in an 'action plan' from each ward outlining how they will address the issues raised. We will be publishing a summary report of all the visits and the changes the hospital has made in response in summer 2020 to demonstrate the impact they have made on the hospital's services and their patients.

Our volunteers

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



Vikki Lynes

"Having worked for and closely with the NHS for a number of years, I am a big supporter of the UK health service. I wanted to find a way to give something back to this community whilst adding to my own knowledge of the health and social care sector. When searching for opportunities online, I came upon the openings at Healthwatch and decided to apply.

Healthwatch have been flexible and encouraged me to get involved as much or as little as suits me, which has been appreciated as I'm a full-time working mum (currently juggling the demands that home-schooling brings). There's a real sense of team within the Healthwatch group, who genuinely want to help make a difference to people's lives. It's very rewarding knowing that I am part of a team that helps to improve health and care outcomes in Northamptonshire."



Darcie, co-chair of Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire

"I'm excited to be working with everyone again and new people, but also being able to push my self further and do things I've not done before! I have been volunteering with Young Healthwatch for nearly 5 years now. All the events I've done with YHW have been so good and have encouraged me to continue to be with them. I originally joined when my mum suggested it to me, I felt welcome and valued so I continued to be part of YHW. I can't wait to see what we do in the future.

Overall I think we make a big impact on health and social care for young people as we provide them an insight which the adults and health care professionals can't get as they are no longer young and healthcare is different to how it was when they were younger. We have been recognised for our work through different awards. However the work we do impacts us as well, it helps us to gain skills and binds with others."

Carers' Voice Northamptonshire





Carers' Voice meeting - held on the second Thursday of each month

Carers' Voice is a county-wide organisation, working with Healthwatch Northamptonshire to seek carers' views and opinions, making sure they get heard so they can influence the planning and provision of carers support services for the future.

Carers' Voice believes good practice needs to be praised and its value acknowledged. They also believe that when a carer feels let down by the system, it may be the system that needs changing. Any carers can tell Carers' Voice about their

experience of carers support and what could be improved.

You can find out more about Carers' Voice and read their annual review at www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/carersvoice



**The louder
our voice
the further
it carries**



Want to find out more about Carers' Voice?

Carers' Voice are always on the lookout for new members. Find out more:

Website: healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/carersvoice

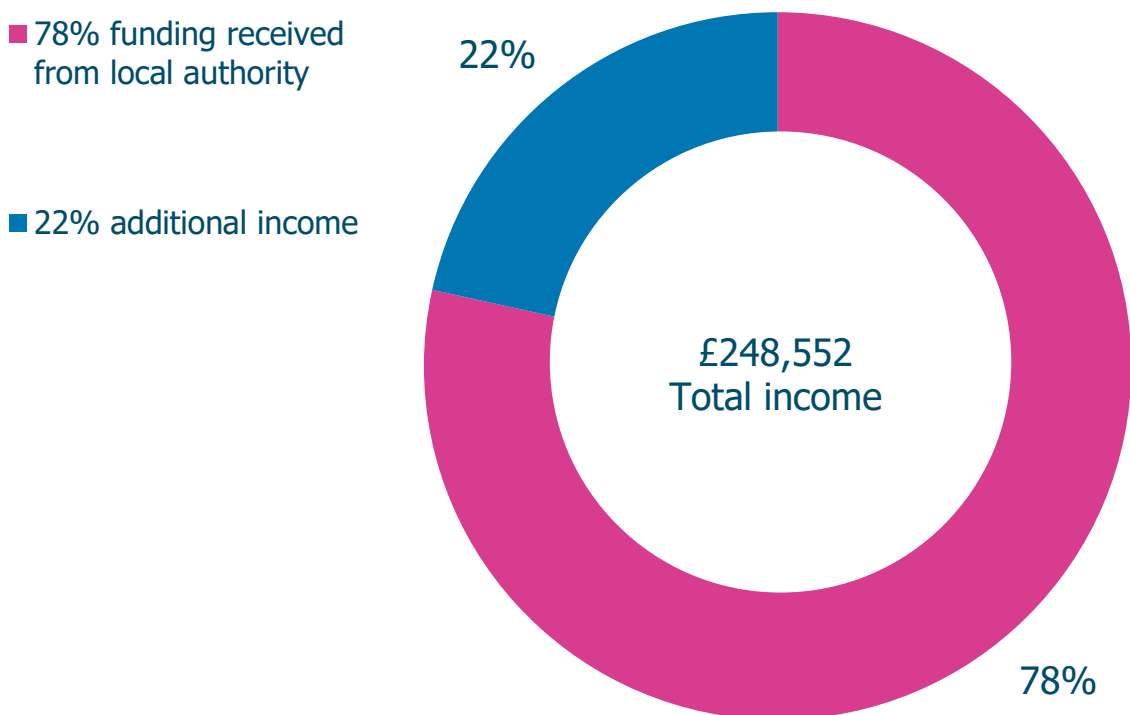
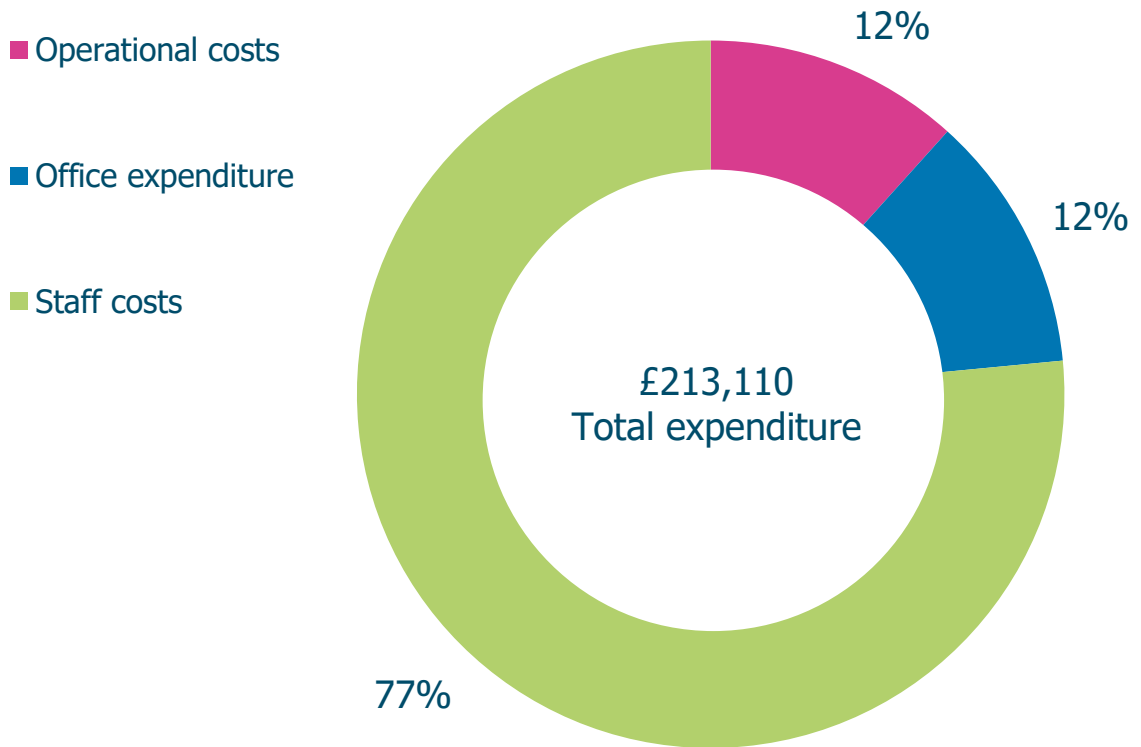
Email: carersvoice@connectedtogether.co.uk

Phone: 07856 875132

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £213,110.



Looking ahead



I think 2019/20 was our best year yet, despite ending in Covid-19 lockdown!

As this report has highlighted, we ran some exciting projects and talked to a lot of people. Our public workshop and survey in May 2019, in partnership with the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership (NHCP), was a great success and people's views are being used to inform how the priorities in the NHS Long Term Plan are being implemented in Northamptonshire, as well as being part of the 40,000 responses to Healthwatch England's national survey.

We continued our programme of ward visits to Kettering General Hospital (KGH), visited the local crisis care cafés and crisis houses to see what mental health support is available in an emergency, and our Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire went from strength to strength and were nominated for another PENNA award (see page 24) for the work they did with KGH and NGH. Healthwatch Northamptonshire was also highly commended for our work finding out about the health and care needs of the Armed Forces community at the Healthwatch Network Awards in the autumn.

It was also a more successful year financially as our partners commissioned additional work from us above our core statutory duties to enable us to do things we wouldn't have been able to do otherwise, such as an independent review of the local health and wellbeing fora unique to Northamptonshire.

Looking forward to 2020/21 we started setting our priorities and work plan for the year ahead in February. Because of the pandemic lots of projects will now have to be put on hold, although we will continue to carry out our statutory duties as best



Kate Holt, Healthwatch Northamptonshire CEO

we can and respond to the public and the local health and social care economy as necessary.

Our current actions (June 2020) already include a public survey to inform commissioners and providers about people's health and social care needs and experiences during the pandemic and working with them we will continue to ensure public engagement throughout the crisis and beyond.

None of this work would be possible without the passion of my small team of staff and the commitment and dedication of our wonderful volunteers. Thank you.

Stay safe and well.

Kate Holt
CEO, Healthwatch Northamptonshire

Thank you

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

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us.
- All our amazing volunteers.
- The health and care and voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work.



Some of our dedicated volunteers in discussion

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First for Community Engagement

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