



Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Annual Impact Report 2019-20

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Message from our Chair



Tracey Rees
Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Chair

We can, and do, hold the local health and social care commissioners and providers to account through the reports we produce, based on what we hear from you, as users of local services

Usually it is quite straightforward for the Healthwatch Oxfordshire Chair to write the introduction for the organisation's Annual Impact Report. This has not been a usual year, though. We are ending this year, like so many, with a team, board and volunteer supporters unable to meet in person.

The Healthwatch Oxfordshire team has risen to meet the challenge of working under lockdown by focusing on what is needed by our communities. Therefore, I thank them for acknowledging the need not only to continue to deal with the tasks and responsibilities required to keep us going, but also to try to reach out to key community groups to help in their work supporting people during lockdown.

This experience has already provided us with an opportunity to report locally to the Health and Wellbeing Board problems we have seen, including issues communities have been facing regarding accessing food and essential COVID-19 information.

The current situation should not detract from the excellent work that Healthwatch Oxfordshire has achieved during the year.

The team's work during 2019-2020 has had a major focus on people's experience of mental health services. Talking with patients, carers and service providers during Enter and View visits, through surveys and via our website, we will present our findings and recommendations to the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership in July 2020. Then the focus will be, as ever, on ensuring these recommendations are acted upon. This is an important part of our statutory powers. We can, and do, hold the local health and social care commissioners and providers to account through the reports we produce, based on what we hear from you, as users of local services.

An ongoing priority for Healthwatch Oxfordshire is to reach out to seldom-heard communities to understand their experiences of health and social care services. Our most recent report in support of this work was about the local boater community. Often an unseen community, our work revealed the problems about accessing urgent healthcare. Boaters often moor in places where it is difficult to get to using transport and this can provide real difficulties for emergency services. As part of our aim in getting clear messages out to those who need to hear them we produced a short video about this project.



2019-2020 saw the setting up of the Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network. This is an open network for all community and voluntary organisations in Oxfordshire, and Healthwatch Oxfordshire coordinates the network. The initial meeting had representatives from 75 local groups and issues raised, including ongoing problems accessing services and public transport, have been communicated to decision makers on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Oxfordshire Growth Board. We will continue to press these Boards to incorporate the Wellbeing Network's advice into their local planning.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is a small team with a big reach. We are always looking at new ways to communicate with people and we have seen how powerful our video reports are in reaching new audiences with our messages. We want to continue to develop clear messages using your voices and experiences on video and this will form a focus for reporting in 2020-2021.

We can't do our job unless we hear from you! Your views and experiences can help develop local services that are more responsive to community needs

We can't do our job unless we hear from you! Your views and experiences can help develop local services that are more responsive to community needs. Please do visit our website where you can leave feedback on GPs, hospitals, pharmacies, dentists and care homes in the county.

Thank you for your support.

Tracey Rees
Healthwatch Oxfordshire Chair

Our priorities

In 2018-19 **4,275** people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019-20. These are our priorities for the year based on what you told us.



- We want to know more about people's experiences of mental health services



- We will work with patient groups to identify improvements to services



- We will ensure people can have a say on Government plans to reform social care



- We will listen and give a voice to the voluntary sector



- We will continue to reach out to those communities that are seldom heard



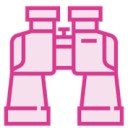
- We will seek to raise public awareness of what we do and the results of our work

About us

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved and then share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.



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
- Analysing the service reviews left on our Feedback Centre

Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Twitter: @HealthwatchOxon

Facebook: @HealthwatchOxfordshire



Highlights from our year



How we work



9 volunteers gave up their time to help support our work

6 members of staff were employed, two on a full-time basis, which is the same as last year

We received **£243,047** in funding from our local authority - a 2% increase on 2018-19

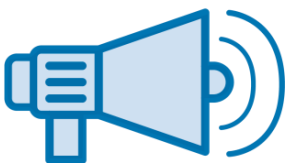
Providing support



4,435 people shared their health and social care story with us

134 people contacted us to request information and advice about health and social care services

Reaching out



We attended **18** community events and visited **16** community or voluntary groups

We sent fortnightly news briefings to **1,099** supporters, partners and stakeholders

We had **25,966** hits on our website and **103,834** engagements through social media

Making a difference



298 people shared their experience of using health and social care services by posting a review on our Feedback Centre. **107** different services were reviewed in total

We published **34** reports, based on our research and engagement, which set out the improvements people would like to see to health and social care

How we've made a difference



How we've made an impact in 2019-20

- ✓ **Boater's better access to health care** - Healthwatch Oxfordshire boater's access to health card is being distributed across the country by the Canal and Rivers Trust and Gypsy and Travellers Association.
- ✓ **OX4 on the spot** – the Chair of Clinical Commissioning Group uses our OX4 research to support their Report on Deprivation and Health Inequalities.
- ✓ **Smiling matters** - Care Quality Commission (CQC) report supports Healthwatch Oxfordshire's findings and recommendations including oral health checks for care home residents along with improved access to dentists.
- ✓ **Dental training in demand** - Oxfordshire Community Dental Service experienced increased demand for its oral health care training for care home staff since our report into Oral Health in Care Homes.
- ✓ **Greening the garden** - Healthwatch Oxfordshire visits to Vaughn Thomas Ward, Warneford Hospital in Headington, gave voice to patients' pleas for more plants and furniture in their garden. Staff on Vaughan Thomas Ward did the 5K Gung ho and raised £2,700 and will invest in the garden.
- ✓ **What happened to my idea?** - Listening to people at the Witney Adult Mental Health Service they wanted to know what happened to their suggestions. We told the staff this and so did the Service User Involvement workshops and now there is a 'You said, we responded' notice boards at each of the three hubs.
- ✓ **Night-time care** - An Enter and View visit recommendation from Healthwatch Oxfordshire to a care home to 'carry out a review of how care is provided during the night' led to training and support for all staff provided by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Team; enhanced rates of pay for night shift to attract applicants and management presence at the start and end of the night shift. The result - staff are better supported and residents better cared for.
- ✓ **64** recommendations were made following **19** Enter and View visits to mental health services, of which **26** were implemented within three months.

How we've made a difference

LISTENING TO COMMUNITIES: Better access for boaters

A study of the difficulties that people living on river and canal boats have accessing health services in Oxfordshire led to the creation of a working group to look at establishing a mobile service for boaters.

Having heard how some people in the boating community were struggling to get access to health care and GP services, members of the Healthwatch Oxfordshire team took to their bikes to distribute more than 400 questionnaires to boaters living along the Oxford Canal and River Thames.



The survey found that 60 per cent of boaters experienced difficulties in accessing health care in the county, with more than half of those surveyed having problems registering with a GP.

It revealed that access to health and social care was harder for those with no fixed address and it was felt that there was limited understanding of the issues facing boaters.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire brought together health commissioning bodies, boaters and boater support groups to identify ways to improve access.



Our Know Your Rights health card for boaters

Following a meeting in the museum at Tooley's Boat Yard, Banbury, the following actions were taken:

- A policy was produced for GP surgeries on registering boaters, Travellers and homeless people
- A working group was established to explore the development of a mobile information and support service along rivers and canals.

It was also agreed that The Canal and River Trust would improve information on its website for boaters looking to access health care, which will benefit boaters across the country.

Rosalind Pearce, Executive Director of Healthwatch Oxfordshire, said: "Listening to boaters about their experiences of accessing health services and bringing together organisations that can make a difference has already made a difference.

"We believe that the commitment from services and the boating community to work together will lead to more tangible improvements in the way services are delivered to the boating community."

I think there is definitely a need for more education for surgeries so they can understand our lifestyle
Narrowboat resident



A FORCE FOR CHANGE: Talking to Oxfordshire military families about their experiences of health services

The recommendations in our report on the experiences that forces families had of accessing and using health services in the county had an immediate impact.

With so many Army, Royal Air Force and other service personnel stationed in Oxfordshire, we heard from families of serving personnel about their experiences of accessing health services when they moved into the county.


We visited groups, attended the Brizefest, and ran an online survey and heard that forces families largely reported positive

experiences of health care in Oxfordshire.

Families asked for better information about GP, dental, pharmacy and hospital services to be made available when they first moved to the county. We recommended that having this information, along with details on how to register with GPs and dentists, would help reduce the stress of redeployment.

Our recommendation was acted on quickly, with RAF Brize Norton producing a welcome email and leaflet for all serving personnel registering with the Medical Centre that included information about local health services.

This was shared with other local bases so that they could produce similar information for their own personnel.

 Had the correct information been given to us on moving to the location, it would have taken a lot less time to register



Your feedback counts

The Feedback Centre on our website allows you to leave reviews of health and social care services in the county

Tell us what your experience was like at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/share-your-experience

A KEY FOCUS: Let's talk about mental health

A key focus for our work throughout 2019-20 was finding out about people's experiences of using mental health support services in the county.

Over the year we heard the views and experiences of more than 2,000 people across Oxfordshire of which more than 400 spoke in detail about their experiences of accessing mental health services in the county. Staff and service users were open about the challenges to delivering a service that meets the needs of all.

Our Enter and View visits to mental health services – 19 in total – have already achieved improvement in services through positive action by staff and organisations in response to recommendations made.

We heard that:

- People value caring, supportive, non-judgmental mental health professionals
- Most health sector staff provide outstanding care despite working with constrained resources.

But...

- Access to services is restricted by limited eligibility thresholds, long waiting times, unequal geographic availability, and travel issues

- It can be difficult to access specialised services and Complex Needs Service
- There is limited support when 'discharged' from services
- Some IT equipment and systems used by staff can hinder efficient working, and impact on partnership working
- The physical environment in some services has a negative impact on people's experience of services as told to us during Enter and View visits.

The full report including recommendations for improvement and change will be published in July 2020 and presented to the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership.

We acknowledge that the voices of the Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are not reflected in this report. We are currently working with representatives of recently settled and new and emerging communities to understand their experiences of mental health services.

 **You do not choose
to be unwell**



Enter and View

Enter and View is a visit to a health or care setting that lasts approximately three to four hours which allows us to make observations of the environment and staff, and patient interactions, as well as talk with service users, staff and relatives.

These visits allow us to get a snapshot of life within a setting to help make recommendations and highlight areas of good practice.

In total over the year we completed and reported on 19 Enter and View reports on visits to mental health services delivered by the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership.

We wanted to hear what is working well and what could be improved. We visited a range of providers, starting with inpatient acute care, moving on to community-based care and then looking at voluntary sector provision. Five mental health day services, seven Acute Mental Health services, two Restore sites and five Mind centres were visited as part of the project.

The majority of issues raised in the acute mental health wards were related to practical issues regarding the environment for service users and staff, such as access and signage as well as life quality, for example the quality and access to outdoor space. There was also a strong representation of voice of the staff, who



were able to champion the quality of their setting as well as bring into the spotlight comfort, wellbeing and management of the settings.

At the voluntary sector services visited, the main theme was service users and staff wanting 'more' than was possible to provide within existing funding constraints.

Some service users deemed the care they had received to be 'life saving', and 'life changing'. Suggestions for improvements were aligned to making the space more comfortable, for example more quiet private space.

The mental health day services visits reflected a heavily oversubscribed service with underfunded core aspects such as IT systems and training to support multiple complex needs as presented. Frustrations with waiting times and accessing services were also noted. However, once access was achieved, the praise for staff working in challenging environments was a strong feature throughout the project visits.



International screening for Oxfordshire health film

A short film produced in 2018 was the culmination of work between Healthwatch Oxfordshire and East Oxford United Football Club focusing on men's health.

This film was screened at the 2019 Global Public Health Film Festival - part of the American Public Health Association's 2019 Annual Meeting and Expo in Philadelphia. This event is the largest and most influential gathering of public health practitioners and policy makers.

The four-minute video 'Men's Health - Oxford' was showcased as an example of work engaging men from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities in raising awareness of the importance of NHS Health Checks. Some 200 men from the diverse communities of East Oxford gave their views as part of this community led project.

Members of East Oxford United and Healthwatch Oxfordshire also showcased the work and film at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust's 'Gender Equality' Annual Staff Conference in Aylesbury, Thames Valley Working Together event on Diversity and Inclusion, and Diabetes UK engaging BAME communities webinar.



The voices of people from Oxfordshire are being heard around the world! It is amazing how a four-minute video made by local people, supported by Healthwatch Oxfordshire, will now influence public health activity internationally

Rosalind Pearce

*Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Executive Director*

NHS England showcases Oxford film

A film we produced last year highlighting how the Luther Street Surgery in East Oxford is working to help homeless people in the city has featured in the NHS England Bitesize guide to increasing participation in different types of communities.

'Patient Voices... Our Story' was made in conjunction with film maker Nicola Josse, the Patient Participation Group at the Luther Street Surgery, and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.



Both films can be watched at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Influencing decisions



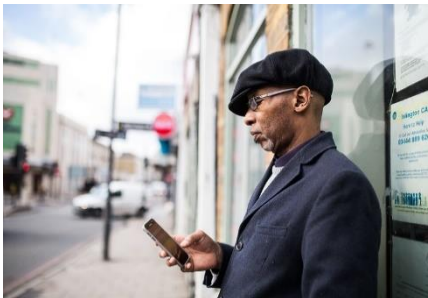
Access to dentists

We contributed to a Parliamentary select committee inquiry into NHS Dentistry, sharing our findings from our research on access to NHS Dentists and dentistry in care homes. Following our two 2018 reports on dentistry in the county and care homes the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee called the NHS England Commissioner for Dental Services to attend and report to the Committee in September 2019.



Addressing patient concerns

We reported regularly to Oxfordshire's Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) about concerns raised by patients about the community physio service delivered by Healthshare Ltd. In March 2020 we agreed to support Healthshare Ltd to set up a patient reference group to improve communication and patient participation. This has been put on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic.



Secret shopper task for Safeguarding Board

We carried out a secret shopper exercise for Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board (OSAB) to find out how easy it was for the public to raise a concern. The Board acted on our recommendation that the 0345 0507 666 number for the public to report a concern should be more prominent on its website. We also advised that the online reporting form should be simplified. This has not yet been carried out so we will continue to monitor this.



Roundtable event for young carers

Following research with Be Free Young Carers we staged a roundtable event on young carers in Oxford that brought together representatives from schools, youth agencies and local government to focus on the findings of the 2018 Healthwatch Oxfordshire Project Fund report on young carers in Oxford. This led to the Oxfordshire Youth Annual Conference running a workshop on young carers.



Public Health Oxfordshire annual report

Two of our community engagement projects were highlighted as good practice in the Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire's annual report 2019-20. Our work with East Oxford United to hear from men in Oxford's Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities about their views on keeping healthy, and a project to enable Rose Hill Primary School pupils, parents and teachers to share their views on healthy eating, were cited as examples of how working in partnership with communities can identify local needs and spotlight action to address issues raised.

A better way of working with communities?

A new approach to finding out what the health and care needs and resources are in local communities was tried out by commissioners and providers of health and care services in the Wallingford area, known as OX12.

This Framework approach is designed to find out what services are already in the area, understand the community needs and use of existing services and so identify and design new services together with local community organisations.

The OX12 Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) representing community and voluntary organisations contributed to the process and we attended their meetings to seek assurance that this approach would deliver what it promised – the system working with the community.

Reporting to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2020 we said that:

- Lessons had been learned by the health and social care system about the importance of good, clear, and timely communication with stakeholders
- Trust between commissioners and community takes time to build and can be broken quickly
- To replicate this approach in other

areas the capacity of volunteers must be considered

- That one size does not fit all – each area will require a tailor-made approach with the community involved in the design of the process.

Thinking about future use of the Framework approach Healthwatch Oxfordshire posed the following questions:

- Given the amount of resources and length of time put into the OX12 approach, can the system really afford to replicate this elsewhere?
- Where are the financial and human resources coming from to continue the development of services in the OX12 area?
- As county-wide services cannot be addressed in a local exercise can the future of, for example, community hospitals be addressed using the Framework approach?

We will continue to pursue answers to these questions.



You can stay in touch with our news via our fortnightly bulletin

Sign up to receive this by emailing hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Our ongoing work



Good to chat about how PPGs work at other practices

Promoting patient participation

Healthwatch Oxfordshire staged two forums in 2019-20 for Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) – bodies made up of patients and health professionals that work to improve the service provided by individual GP surgeries.

The forums looked at how PPGs can work together within Primary Care Networks (PCNs) as the provision of health and social care becomes more coordinated.

The meetings were attended by 100 PPG representatives, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and several directors of PCNs and practice managers.

Following these meetings several PPGs started to work together across their PCN, and others developed their working relationships with the PCN – all for the benefit of patients having their voice heard at their PCN.



Coming together is a start, working together is progress, empowerment is success
OWN Networker

Working on wellbeing

One hundred people from 75 different organisations attended the inaugural meeting of the Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network (OWN) in November.

The Network, which is open to community and voluntary organisations, was also attended by members of the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board which includes Healthwatch Oxfordshire and representatives from local government and the NHS.

The meeting identified that isolation, access to services and transport, and effective communication were the main issues affecting wellbeing in Oxfordshire communities.

In response to this Healthwatch Oxfordshire sent an open letter on behalf of OWN to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Growth Board asking what they are doing to address these factors.

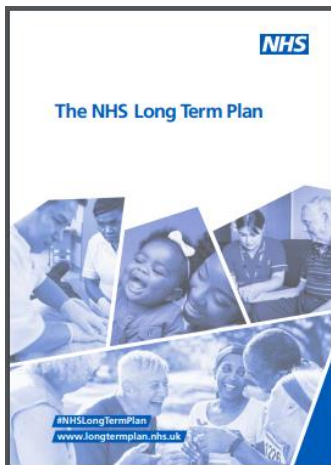
Again, the coronavirus pandemic has delayed a response, but we will continue to push for answers. The next OWN meeting will be in autumn 2020.

Working with other Healthwatch organisations

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is one of five Healthwatch organisations that operate within the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS).

Together we sought and received funding to appoint a Healthwatch BOB ICS Officer to work across the area, support Healthwatch involvement in BOB and promote the voice of people living in the area. This is not the first time we have worked together. Other joint working included NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Maternity Review – both activities seeking the experiences and opinions of local people.

Due to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic the appointment to this post has been postponed until September 2020.



NHS Long Term Plan

The NHS published its 'Long Term Plan' in January 2019, setting out key ambitions for the next ten years.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire worked with BOB Healthwatch organisations as part of a national campaign to give people a say in how this plan should be implemented locally

Healthwatch Oxfordshire gathered the views of 155 people. The top priority identified was that people wanted to be able to access healthcare when needed, without delay. Local concerns included rapid housing and population expansion and a need for services and infrastructure to keep up with this, plus waiting times for mental health support.

Local NHS providers and commissioners have used our report to help inform their plans for local health services as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.



Delivering better births

We also worked with five local Healthwatch organisations to ask women about personalised care plans during pregnancy.

More than 1,400 women across the Thames Valley took part, sharing their experiences of making choices about maternity care and giving feedback on improvements.

The consultation was carried out following the publication of the NHS's Better Births strategy, which recommended that all women should be offered a personalised care plan during pregnancy.

The results of the study were fed back to local maternity services and hospital trusts.

Out and about



Out and about

We continue to get 'out and about' across the county and have visited a range of groups including coffee mornings, garrisons and bases, town market stalls and other community-based groups, in order to listen to people's experiences of health and social care.

Over the year we have visited 21 groups, 16 towns and villages, attended 22 community events and heard from 2,311 people. Groups and places we have visited include:

- Abingdon Station Homestart, RAF Dalton Barracks
- Age UK Wallingford Group
- Asian Women's Voice
- Bicester Garrison Macmillan coffee morning (MOD Bicester)
- Bicester Market Stall
- Brize Norton Families Club
- BrizeFest (RAF Brize Norton)
- Cancer Wellness Day
- Carers Coffee morning Didcot
- Carers group Age UK Didcot
- Carers Group Sonning Common
- Carers Group Thame
- Cowley Road Carnival
- Community Information Network meetings (Vale Partnership, South Oxfordshire Partnership, Cherwell Partnership)
- Diabetes UK / NHS England
- Didcot Xmas Fair
- East Oxford Action Group
- Eid Extravaganza Oxford
- Elmore members association
- Health Walks Bloxham
- Let's Talk Loneliness – partnership event
- Life expectancy gap event – bureau of investigative journalism
- Mind Health Walk Oxford
- My Life Festival - Didcot
- NHS Maternity Review – stakeholder events
- Oxford Brookes University – presentations to health and social care students
- Oxford Community Action – focus groups
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (AGM, Annual Event, Carers Conference)
- Oxford Health NHS Linking Leaders: Gender Equality Conference
- Oxford Hindu Temple and Community Project
- Oxford Mela
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (stands at John Radcliffe, Nuffield Orthopaedic Hospital, Churchill Hospital, Horton General Hospital)
- Oxford Youth Forum Event
- OX12 Stakeholder Reference Group
- Patient Participation Groups Forum – Wallingford
- Shrivenham Defence Academy - base coffee morning
- Sunshine Centre, Banbury
- Wallingford Patient Participation Group
- Wallingford St Marys Church
- Witney Market Stall
- YMCA Young People Group Henley-on-Thames
- Youth in Mind Conference – Oxford



Healthwatch Oxfordshire's influencing service development and change activity in 2019-20

Reports published April 2019 – March 2020

- Be Free Young Carer April 2019
- BOB STP ICS Maternity Survey
- BOB STP ICS Long Term Plan report
- Asian Women's Focus Group report
- NHS Long Term Plan Focus Group report
- Talking With Thame report
- PPG Event Reports (x2)
- Enter and View Summary 2018-19 Report
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Annual Report
- NHS Long Term Plan Report Oxfordshire Findings August 2019
- "I just want to talk to someone" – Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board secret shopper exercise September 2019
- Thank you for asking – Boaters' experience of accessing health and social care services February 2020
- Oxfordshire Military Families: Our experiences of health services in Oxfordshire
- Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network November 2019

Enter and View Reports as part of our mental health theme:

- Wintle Ward, Warneford Hospital June 2019
- Vaughan Thomas Ward, Warneford Hospital Oxford June and July 2019
- Cotswold House, Warneford Hospital Oxford July 2019
- Restore, Fleet Meadow Project Didcot October 2019
- Mind Abingdon – The Charter, Abingdon November 2019
- Didcot Adult Mental Health Team November 2019
- Oxfordshire Mind Banbury October 2019
- Oxfordshire Mind Bicester November 2019
- Oxfordshire Mind Witney October 2019
- Older Adults Mental Health Team Abingdon October 2019
- Restore Banbury November 2019
- The Elms Day Hospital, Banbury November 2019
- Adult Mental Health Team, Wallingford October 2019
- Oxford Safe Haven, Oxford November 2019
- City Adult Mental Health Team, Oxford December 2019
- Day Hospital, Warneford Hospital, Oxford October 2019
- Highfield Unit, Warneford Hospital, Oxford September 2019

These reports are all on our website www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Please get in touch if you would like a hard copy or translation of a report by calling 01865 520 520 or emailing hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

External reports and meetings

- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) – Communications & Engagement Network, NHS Long Term Plan – Delivery Oversight Group & Finance Oversight Group: Joint Chair & CEO meetings
- Care Quality Commission
- Cherwell Partnership Network
- Connection Support
- Elmore Community Services
- Government Enquiry into Dentistry July 2019
- Healthwatch England - Annual Conference / Regional meetings
- Locality Forum meetings / Chairs Group
- NHS / Social Care / Voluntary Sector – Bridging the Discharge Gap Group
- OX12 Stakeholder Reference Group
- Oxford City Council – boaters, access to services
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust – meetings with Chair and CEO
- Oxford University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust – meetings with Chair and CEO, Council of Governors
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust - Bridging the discharge gap group
- Oxfordshire Civilian Military Partnership
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group - Primary Care Commissioning Committee and Quality Committee
- Oxfordshire County Council Performance Scrutiny Committee
- Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board – member and reports
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Ambassadors who sit on the Children’s Trust and Health Improvement Board
- Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Commission
- Oxfordshire Horton HOSC
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee – OX12 Task and Finish Group
- Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership
- Oxfordshire Mind
- Oxfordshire Prevention Concordat for Mental Health
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board - Engagement Group Joint Chair with Age UK Oxon
- PoWher – advocacy support
- Response
- Restore
- Thames Valley Quality Surveillance Group
- West Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Helping you find the answers

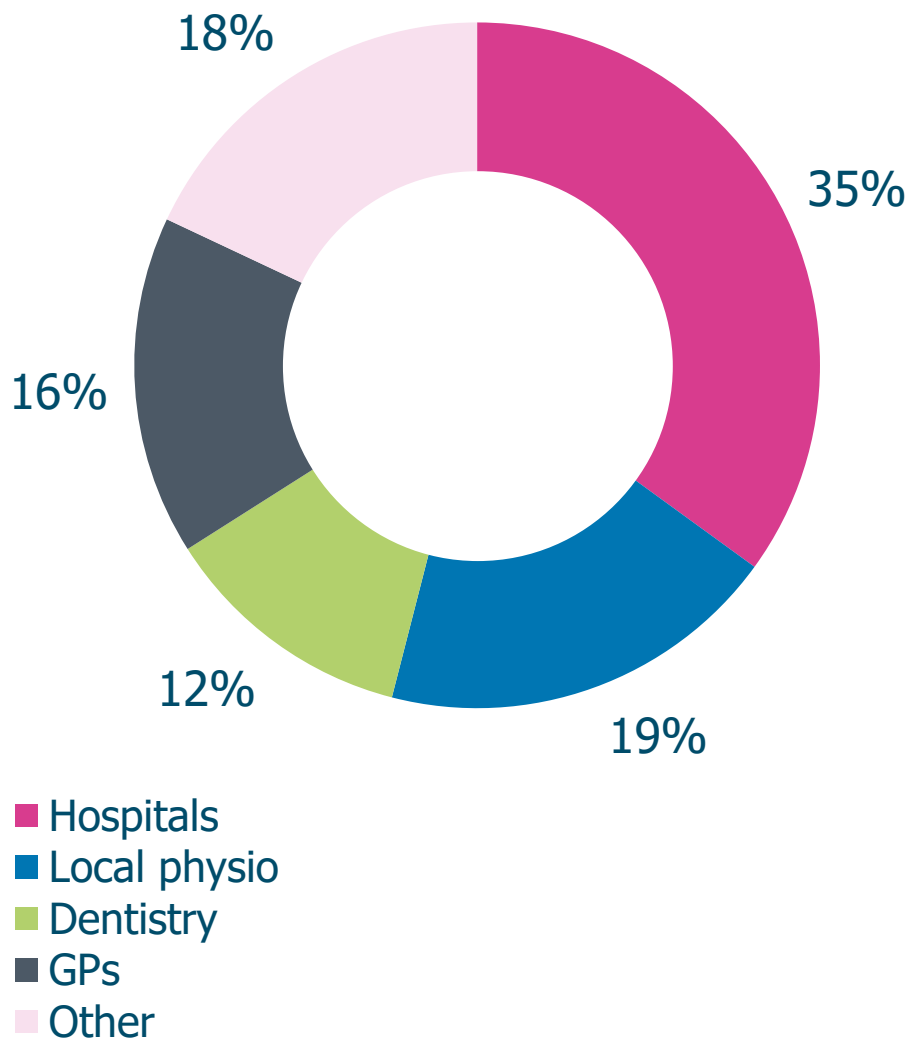


Providing information and advice

This year we helped **134** people get the advice and information they need by:

- Answering people's queries about services over the phone, by email and by letter.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about:





Signposting mental health advocacy

We received a call from a relative of an inpatient at a mental health unit. They were worried their relative was not being allowed home leave. We listened to their concerns and gave them details of the local mental health advocacy service which would be able to act on behalf of their relative. We also provided details of other local organisations that could offer the relative support.



Advising on access to NHS dentistry

A student who had recently moved into the area emailed to say they had broken a tooth and didn't know how to find an NHS dentist. They had approached a local dentist who was only taking on children as NHS patients. The student was in pain and needed help quickly, but they were unable to afford private treatment. We sent details of the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group webpage which gives information about finding dentists and on out-of-hours provision for dentistry.



Supporting the digitally excluded

In March 2020, just before the start of coronavirus lockdown, we had a call from a concerned member of the public whose adult son cannot be left alone. They were worried how they would cope if they could not get out in the event of day centres closing. The caller did not have access to the internet or own a mobile telephone. We sourced relevant and local organisations for the caller, checked what these were offering and relayed the contact details.



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or social care service please get in touch.


Website: www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk


Telephone: 01865 520 520

Email: hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Volunteers

A focus on our Trustees

 **It's great to see feedback from members of the public about the health and social care services they have experience of being used to recommend improvements directly to managers within those services**

 **I feel privileged to be part of Healthwatch Oxfordshire's highly motivated team and proud of what the organisation is achieving every day on behalf of the public, particularly with our efforts to throw light upon the stories of those communities that are often forgotten by our health and care institutions**

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is supported by a Board of Trustees, six volunteers who give up their time to share their experience and expertise to help determine the charity's strategy and provide valuable oversight and support. They bring a variety of skills to the role, from research to finance and HR. But the one thing they all share is passion and commitment to improving health and care across the county.

Here, two of our Trustees share their motivation for taking on this role and what they get out of it.

Martin Tarran-Jones

Healthwatch Oxfordshire Trustee

I joined the Board of Healthwatch Oxfordshire in March 2017, just as the organisation was finalising its transition to charitable status.

Retiring from a 55-year career in business in April 2016, I was keen to put my experience and skills to good use. In anticipation of so doing, from 2012 I joined and acted as the Chair of our local surgery Patient Participation Group. I soon became involved in the embryonic Locality Forums set up by the Clinical Commissioning Group, becoming the first lay chair of the one in South West Oxfordshire.

In this capacity I first became aware of, and involved with, Healthwatch people and got an understanding of what they were trying to do. Feeling that I could contribute towards Healthwatch Oxfordshire's effectiveness was my motivation for applying to become a Trustee.

Since then I have been elected as Treasurer, and I have acted as Chair of the Board's Governance and Finance Group.

These roles have allowed me to work to support the management and staff in a thought-provoking and proactive manner.



Healthwatch Oxfordshire's management and Trustees are focused on getting the best possible value for money from our annual budget and are always trying to improve the quality of what we do.

I feel privileged to be part of Healthwatch Oxfordshire's highly motivated team and proud of what the organisation is achieving every day on behalf of the public, particularly with our efforts to throw light upon the stories of those communities that are often forgotten by our health and care institutions

Don O'Neal Healthwatch Oxfordshire Trustee

I decided to become a Trustee in July 2018 because I thought my experience of being a health and social care service user for 37 years would be useful in helping the charity make decisions about which services to focus on and to offer service user input into discussions about services.

I wanted to help the effort to improve local health and social services and thought being part of the 'watchdog' would be a good place for me to have an impact on this.

Trustees help guide the charity's direction, oversee the work of the staff and help develop the charity's strategy or plan to carry out its duties.

I am particularly pleased that Healthwatch Oxford decided to make adult social care one of its main focus areas for 2020.

I believe that adult social care users are some of the most vulnerable people in the county and that their voices are not heard enough. Adult social care users generally rely on other people to help them with the most basic of needs – washing, dressing, eating and help to get outside. People who do not have enough care may become isolated as they cannot get past their front door. This alone is a barrier to being heard and to letting other people know about the problems they face in getting their care needs met.



They are a hard-to-reach group, often stuck behind a front door. So, for Healthwatch Oxfordshire to focus on hearing adult social care users' voices was a great relief.

I am hoping that this will help overcome the barriers some adult social care users face in being heard and improve their day-to-day care provision and life. I hope also that some of the problems within the administration of adult social care are resolved. I am very keen that people in need of care get that care and that they receive the best care possible.

It's great to see feedback from members of the public about the health and social care services they have experience of being used to recommend improvements directly to managers within those services



Could you become a Healthwatch Oxfordshire Trustee?

We are always keen to hear from anyone who would be interested in becoming a Trustee. If you have a passion for making things better and would like to make a positive contribution to how health and care services are delivered, please do get in touch.

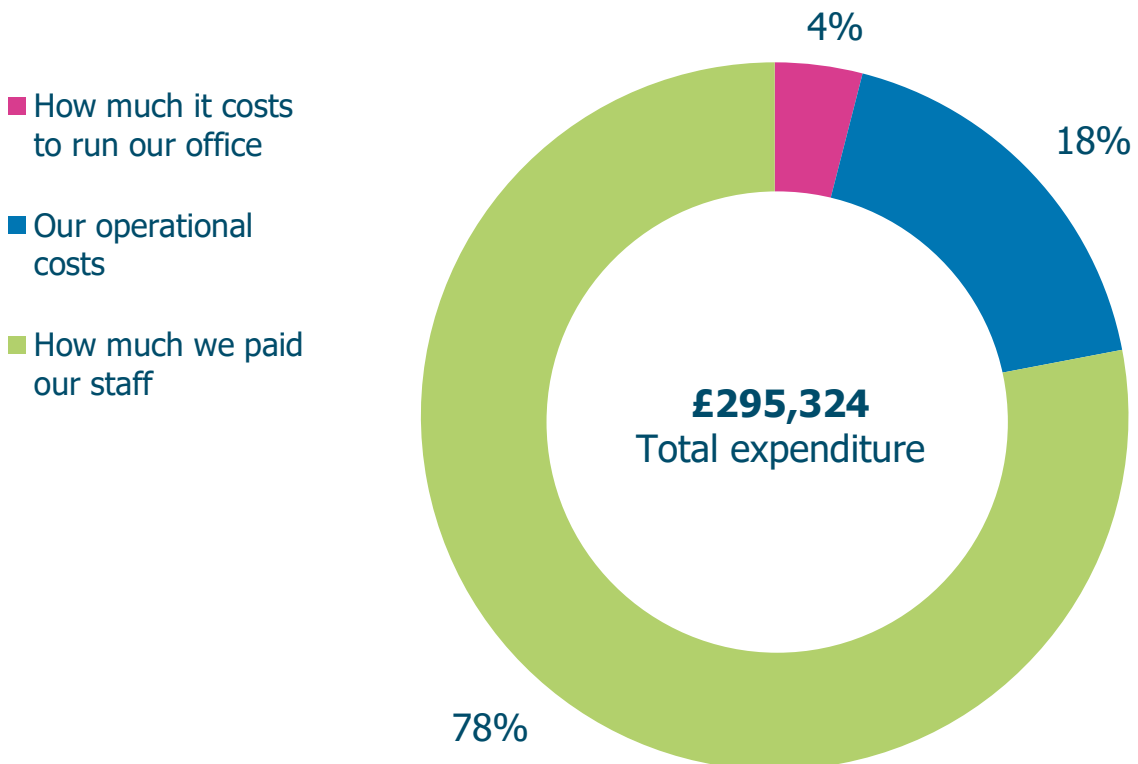
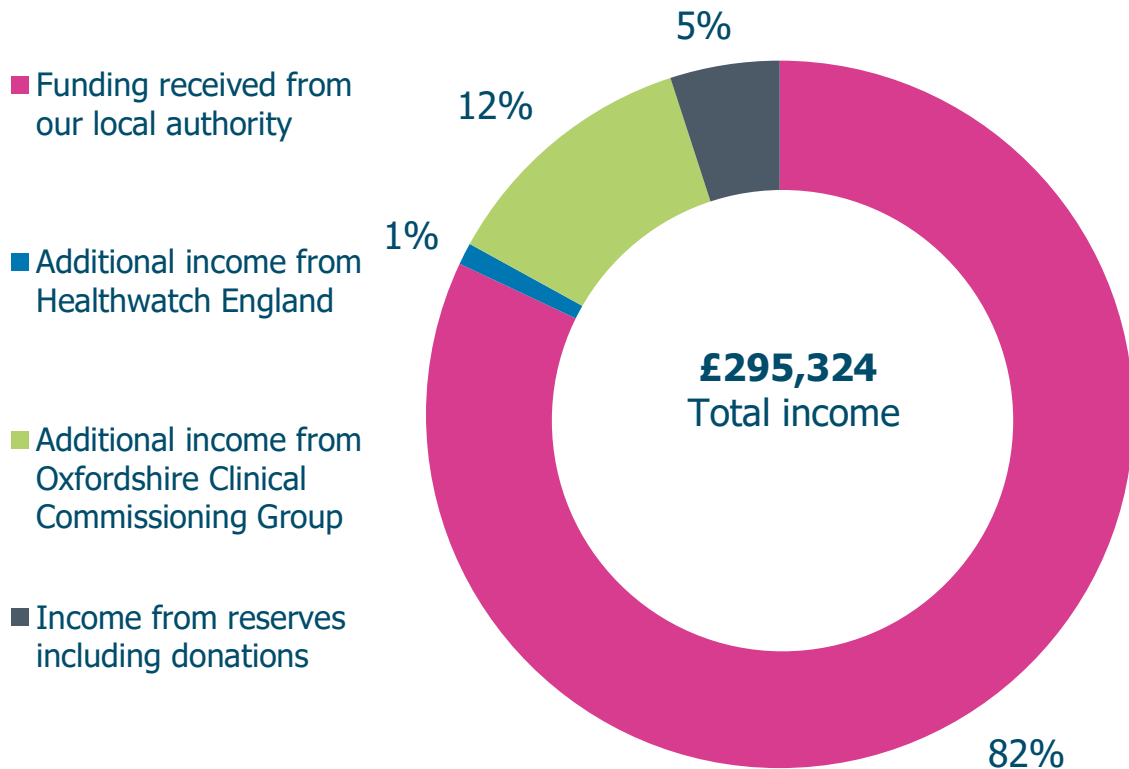
Telephone: 01865 520 520

Email: hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Finances



Oxfordshire County Council provide our core funding under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we also received grants from Healthwatch England and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.



Our plans for next year



Message from our Executive Director

The Trustees agreed our strategy and operational plan for 2020-21 in February. This sets out our plans for the coming year, which are shaped, as always, by our analysis of the public's major concerns. In 2020-21 there will be a particular focus on social care.

The Government's proposals for reforming social care are yet to be published and are now promised by the end of 2020. We will play our part in ensuring the public is properly and effectively represented and involved in consultations and the development of new plans, as well as in evaluating the effectiveness of those plans.

After asking what people and organisations think are the three top priorities in social care, we are now focusing on understanding how care at home affects the person receiving the care, their carers – both paid and unpaid – and service providers.

Listening and hearing

We will adopt research methods that empower and enable local communities to be heard. This will involve going to where people live and meet, talking face to face, building trust in communities and working side by side with those communities.

GP surgeries have come together as Primary Care Networks (PCNs) serving 30-50,000 patients, with the intention of improving and expanding services to the community. We will look for proposals that address the common frustrations expressed to us by patients, including



Rosalind Pearce
Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Executive Director

poor communication, long waits for appointments and lack of consistency. Working with Patient Participation Groups around the county, we will research whether the networks are delivering what they promise.

Working together

A major theme of the NHS Plan is to bring primary (GP services), community health, social care and secondary care services (hospital, specialist) closer together through the Integrated Care Systems.

Over the past year we have worked with fellow Healthwatch bodies across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) and secured funding for a Healthwatch BOB ICS Officer. We will continue to engage with the public to shape how the ICS works.

Then the coronavirus pandemic hit...

As most our work is in communities, we have had to put much activity on hold, including projects that were postponed from early 2020 and planned work for later in the year. We will continue to review our plans, taking into account the impact the coronavirus pandemic has on our operational capacity.

We continue to keep in touch with local networks and communities. Issues such as digital exclusion, access to support, and access to accessible information about guidance relating to the pandemic – plain English, other languages – will be a focus for our work.

We will seek out people's experiences of accessing services during the pandemic, particularly how GP and hospital use of technology was received, and access to pharmacy. We will continue to work alongside communities affected by health inequalities.

Enter and View is particularly challenging in the 'new world' of social distancing, isolation and shielding. We are determined to find ways of continuing our Enter and View programme and will have more to say about this later in the year.

Once on the 'other side'

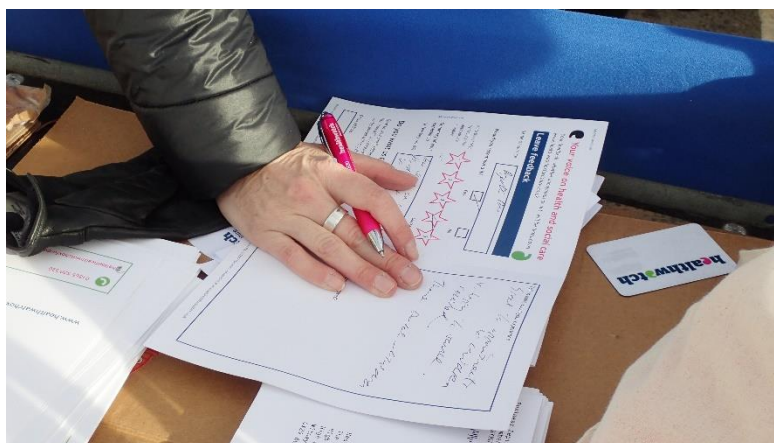
Throughout the pandemic and as we come out the 'other side', Healthwatch Oxfordshire will work hard to have people's experiences and opinions heard. Our reports will influence the process of services returning to normal and aid the learning from changes that may have had to be implemented at speed and without patient voice.

Thank you team and Trustees for hanging in there, being creative and not defeated by the coronavirus pandemic.

Things are different, we are listening, we are learning – and we are determined that we will continue to be your voice on health and care in the year ahead.

Rosalind Pearce
Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Executive Director

Things are different, we are listening, we are learning - and we are determined that we will continue to be your voice on health and care in the year ahead



Thank you

Thank you to everyone who is 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, Trustees and volunteers, including our Enter and View and outreach volunteers for their hard work
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- The providers and commissioners of health and social care in the county.

Please get in touch if you would like to find out how to get involved as a Healthwatch Oxfordshire Trustee or volunteer by calling 01865 520 520 or emailing hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk



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