

Healthwatch Luton's Annual Report

2019



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Something Changed

In March 2020, Healthwatch Luton began working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United Kingdom went into a form of 'lock down', and our entire workplan and focus changed.



Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID 19)

On 16th March, Healthwatch Luton began working from home. In spite of having their workplan for the year confirmed, having spoken to residents in Luton and analysing feedback from the last year, the pandemic hit the UK. By 20th March, our Prime Minister Boris Johnson went on to close schools, pubs, restaurants and asked people to stay in their homes during the pandemic.

What was our focus going to be?

After analysing the feedback from over 11,000 engagements and over 2500 feedbacks on over 200 services in Luton, Healthwatch Luton published their workplan for 2020, focusing on:

- GP Access
- Mental Health in the community
- Older people, young carers and those living in poverty

What did we do instead?

As like most of the world, Healthwatch Luton have had to shift their workplan to respond to the pandemic and system needs. Initially we helped the local health and care system set up structures, like the local authority HUB for people to access care and facilities. We have also spent a lot of time supporting the integration of health and care and voluntary sector organisations, ensuring the vulnerable and hard to reach groups are not 'slipping' through various structures and set ups to support people. We are now focusing on gathering feedback from people in Luton on their experiences of the pandemic, of accessing services through the pandemic, and helping services develop in this 'new' way of working.

HM Government

**CORONAVIRUS
STAY AT HOME
SAVE LIVES**

The only reasons to leave home are to:

- ✓ shop for basic necessities, pick up medicine, travel to work when you absolutely cannot work from home and exercise once a day – alone or with members of your household.
- ✗ Do not meet others, even friends or family.

NHS

**CORONAVIRUS
STAY HOME
PROTECT
THE NHS
SAVE LIVES**

HWL: COVID 19 Project

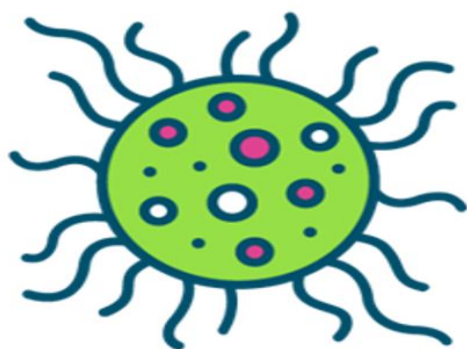
Our main aim now is to gather feedback from people in Luton on how they are coping during and how they want to see services improved during and after the pandemic.

1. Gather Feedback

We have already provided over 100 people (between March – May) signposting information and advice around COVID 19. We are now going to try to speak to as many people as possible in Luton, and provide as many avenues as possible for which people can feed their experiences to us. We will eventually aim to target the hard to reach and seldom heard voices, to ensure people can have their experiences help inform and shape the service delivery. Our approach will be to simply ask people how they are doing, what is working well and what could be improved.

2. Inform

We will use this anonymous feedback, from both professionals and people in Luton to inform the local health and care system, as well as provide Healthwatch England with local concerns from people in Luton. We are working in partnership with many organisations in many sectors to enhance how we gather the feedback, and we have made the project adaptable and flexible to ensure we can respond to the need of the system, and to people in Luton. We will be incorporating aspects of our initial workplan into this project, with a focus on GP Access and Mental Health provision in Luton.



healthwatch
Luton

How are you doing?

Let us know how you are feeling about COVID-19: What works well, what doesn't and how do you think it could be improved?

covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk

01582 817 060



Twitter: @hwluton



Facebook: HealthwatchLuton



Instagram: healthwatchluton

**STAY
ALERT** 

**CONTROL
THE VIRUS**

 **SAVE
LIVES**

Message from our chair



Phil Turner – Chair Healthwatch Luton

This past year has presented some challenging times. We started the year with staff vacancies that took a couple of months to fill. This put an extra strain on the existing workforce who stepped up brilliantly. I am pleased to say, that situation did not last too long and very soon we had taken on the additional staff who have proved to be dedicated and enthusiastic members of the team. We now have a team that are able to cover the full range of services and activity that we are required to provide.

We continue to represent the public of Luton at a large number of meetings, teams and projects in a variety of organisations. Our aim, as always is to present to health and social care providers the various views of the public, both positive and negative with the aim to have an input that helps to continually improve the services available. Working in collaboration with Health and Social Care providers at all levels means that we are listened to and that in turn means that we are able to act and influence the quality of care. Additionally, we have an input where there are proposed changes in service and so can influence at early stages.

The national NHS changes in the structure of Clinical Commissioning Groups to integrate into regional organisations, locally encompassing Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) known as an Integrated Care System (ICS) is also something that we have been heavily involved with. We continue to focus on the Luton area to ensure that the Luton public voice is represented.

This year we have also been recognised both locally and nationally. Our Chief Executive Officer, Lucy won an award as Community Business Person of the Year within Luton. Healthwatch England also chose Healthwatch Luton as the winner of the national award for public engagement ahead of the other 150 odd Healthwatch organisations across the country. We are very proud of these awards which recognise the hard work of all at the organisation.

 We continue to focus on the Luton area, to ensure that the Luton public voice is represented

Message from our chair



The volunteers and Board members continue to add exceptional value to Healthwatch Luton. By dedicating their time to support the activity in engaging with the public, as well as sitting on many boards and project teams, they are an invaluable resource. Many of these volunteers have been involved in Healthwatch Luton from the outset. Their contribution and views are highly recognised and appreciated. We end the year with the most significant event seen affecting health and social care for centuries. The Coronavirus pandemic has meant that we cannot engage face to face with the public or providers. We are all now working from home but continue to collect views of the public by phone and via our web site. We also continue to work with Health and Social care at all levels to provide input where we can.

A big thank you to all involved with Healthwatch Luton and we look forward to the future with a renewed sense of purpose.



Many of these volunteers have been involved in Healthwatch Luton from the outset


About us

Here to make care better

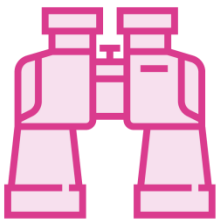
We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people, and help make sure your views shape the support you need.

We listen to what people like about services, and what could be improved, and we share these views with those with the power to make change happen. We also help people find the information they need about services in their area.

Nationally and locally, we have the power to make sure that those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

 Without Healthwatch I am unsure if anything would have changed for me. They were professional, helpful and they truly helped me find my way





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 that 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
- Interviews and forums
- Talking to people on the phone, email, via our website and through social media engagement



Find out more about us and the work we do

Phone: 01582 817 060

Website: www.healthwatchluton.co.uk

Twitter: @hwluton

Facebook: HealthwatchLuton

Highlights from our year

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



Our priorities for 2019

For 2019, our priorities were analysed from over 6000 engagements from 2018 with Luton residents, and helped us shape our priorities for the year. We had two main focus priorities which we concentrated on in a more impactful way than ever before, working in partnership with the providers and commissioners.



Mental Health: 'It's all about perspective'

Mental Health was one of our larger feedbacks over the year, with people contacting us from inpatient wards in Luton, as well as from the community. Many felt that they did not understand their condition, or the support they were receiving. We spoke to over 300 people in Luton who were either using mental health services, or worked for the mental health provider, or were friends or family of people using the mental health service provider. We ran a full researched report on all mental health provisions in Luton to ascertain the offering for Luton residents. Our full year long report: It's all about Perspective is available on our website and highlights are further in this report.

Learning Disability: 'Champions and Challenges'

Throughout the year we gathered anecdotal feedback from parents with children with learning disabilities, and a significant lack of general feedback from the learning disability community in Luton made it our focus for 2019. We spoke to over 100 people in Luton who either had a family member or cared for someone with a learning disability, or worked in the learning disability community. We asked them a range of questions around the service provision and what could be improved, and have helped shape the Neurodiversity strategy people implemented. Our Champions and Challenges Report is available online with further highlights throughout the report.

Without Healthwatch, I would not be heard, I would not feel like I have a space to say how I really feel. More people should know they have a Healthwatch



PHYLLIS PRODUCTION

In early 2019 we joined a few Healthwatch in the network to support running a theatre production on adult social care, inviting health and care system leaders and workers to view a play, written and produced by Women in Theatre, to express the difficulties in adult social care. After the production, we ran a question and answer session, inviting leaders in Luton to open up and discuss the complexities of health and care integration. Most leaders found it 'highly insightful'.



Roma Traveller Review

In early 2019 we also worked on reviewing the Roma Traveller community and their engagement with health and care services in Luton. We spoke with 10 Travellers in Luton, reviewing how they perceived and engaged with services, and provided this information to services to help improve their care. We are in touch with neighbouring Healthwatch who have progressed this work with Roma Travellers, and will look to review this focus in 2020.



Enter and View - Hospital

In 2019 we ran three Enter and View's at Luton and Dunstable Hospital. We reviewed an Enter and View from 2018 to assess improvements (Ward 15), and then visited two new wards, Ward 17 (Hyperacute Stroke ward) and Ward 23 (Trauma and Orthopaedics). All of our full reports are on our website, and we have worked closely with the hospital to ensure our recommendations have been taken forward to improve care for people in Luton.



Contact us to get the information you need

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 Luton is here for you.

w: www.healthwatchluton.co.uk

t: 01582 817 060

e: info@healthwatchluton.co.uk



Mental Health Reviews

Over 2019 we wrote over 4 reports on the mental health provision in Luton. We conducted an Inpatient Review, a Baseline survey and a Professionals Forum – as well as our Enter and Views in the inpatient wards at the acute settings for mental health in Luton. All these reports compiled our overall year long focus on mental health. Our impact in this work has been to improve care for people in Luton with mental health, and our full reports can be found on our website.



Learning Disability Reviews

Our other focus for 2019 was learning disability. We ran a series of events capturing feedback from over 100 people in Luton who either used learning disability services or had a learning disability. We conducted a review of the Learning Disability Partnership Board, a Public Forum for people to express their experiences, and a Baseline Line survey to capture general views. Our impact in this work has been to use these experiences in shaping learning disability services going forward.



Long Term plan

Further details of our long term plan work can be found on our website, and further in this report. The Healthwatch network was funded by NHS England and Improvement to carry out engagement with communities across the country to establish how the Long Term Plan (LTP) for NHSE would be implemented at a local level. In Luton we spoke to over 170 people on their general health and care as well as on specific conditions such as Mental Health and Cancer care.



Our full reports are on our website

Visit www.healthwatchluton.co.uk for all our full reports on all the services we have reviewed. All our summary reports hold recommendations for providers, and outcomes from our reviews. Our summary reports outline the individual aspects of our larger focus work on learning disability and mental health.



New staff

We now have a full team of staff on board the Healthwatch Luton family. We have **Karen Cockfield** who is our Engagement Officer, **Abbyramy Nesarasa**, our Research and Signposting Administrator and **Moonmoon Nath**, our office administrator. **Sudha Auro** developed into our Volunteer Officer role, and **Lisa Herrick** continued working hard as our Project Officer. **Lucy Nicholson** continued leading the Healthwatch team as our CEO, but we are delighted to have a full team on board.



Internal Development

Each year we also focus on our internal development, and we progressed this in our volunteer development this year, with Sudha leading our dedicated volunteers. We completed various internal training as a team and have worked with the network on our Research Governance Framework. We are also approaching Healthwatch England's Quality Framework to ensure we are completing all our work to a high standard.



Award Winning Healthwatch

In 2019, Healthwatch Luton were delighted to win the national Healthwatch England's 'Helping More People Have Their Say' award for engaging with people on our Young Person's Event in 2018. We were delighted to win this award for all the hard work we conducted in speaking to over 400 young people in Luton on how they engaged with health and care services. Our CEO also won a local award from Luton's Best as Community Businessperson of the Year 2019. Our Champions also received a 'highly commended' from the High Sherriff.



You can now get in touch with us in more ways than ever

Our staff will be returning to the office in September 2020, but for now, you can contact us by:

Letter – 110 Great Marling, Luton, LU2 8DL

Phone – 01582 817 060

Enquiries about COVID 19: covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk

General Information: info@healthwatchluton.co.uk

Health and care that works for you



9 volunteers

Help to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 1058 number of hours through the year to support our work.

We employed

6 staff

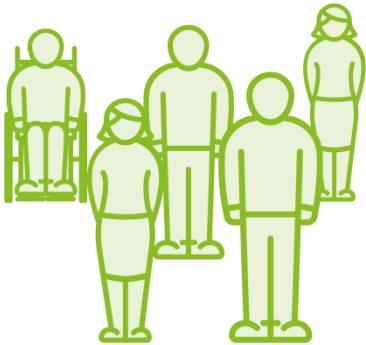
Bar the CEO, all staff are part time in varying hours, equating to 3.5 full time equivalents.

We received

£119, 236 in funding

from our local authority in 2019 the same as the year prior and should continue until 2022.

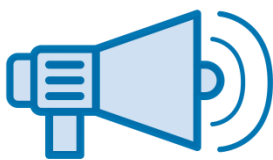
Supporting people



1,184 people

shared their health and social care story with us, with over 200 more seldom heard voices than 2018, and accessed Healthwatch Luton advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.

Reaching out



11, 184 people

engaged with us overall through our website, social media or at community events, an increase of 4000 residents in the year from 2018.

Making a difference to care

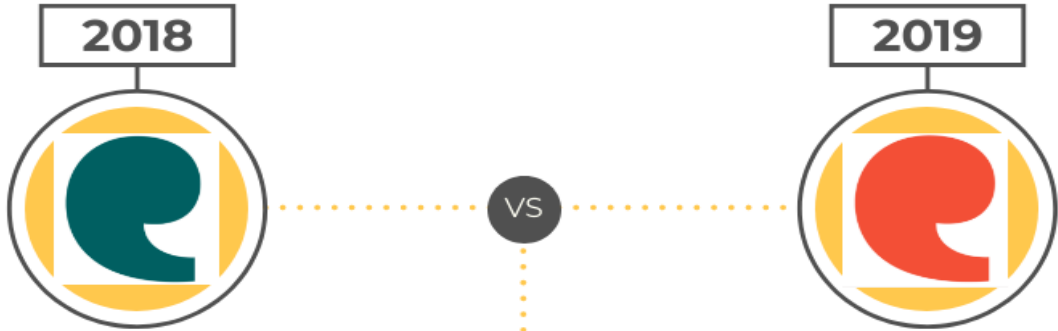


We published

15 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made over 50 recommendations for improvement.

healthwatch Luton



998 people

We spoke to directly in targeted engagement or through surveys and forums nearly 1000 people, including 250 seldom heard

6000 Residents

We provided signposting, information and advice to over 6000 Lutonians via engagement, online or through Forums and surveys

2700 online

Through our social media channels and social media engagement we reached over 2000 people online



Targeted Engagement

Overall Engagement

Online Engagement



1,184 people

We increased our targeted engagement by nearly 200 people, including 400 seldom heard

11,184 Residents

Overall we engaged with over 4000 Lutonians more than last year, including increase on social media, website and Forums

10,806 online

Due to development in online engagement tools, platforms and response rates we have grown our online engagement



How we've made a difference





'It's all about perspective!'



Mental Health Report Findings

Throughout 2018, Healthwatch Luton spoke to over 250 people in Luton who either had a mental health condition and used the mental health provider. We also spoke to people who worked with the Luton mental health provider, friends, family members and carers of people either in acute mental health services, the general public or other mental health services in Luton, such as Voluntary organisations.

The main findings of the report show there is some great work happening within Luton and the mental health system. There are some overarching themes that our report highlights in more detail.

The report outlines general mental health provision for people in Luton, from many providers including statutory and

commissioned services as well as voluntary sector providers. We also researched how people access those services and why, and how services are working, what was not working for people in Luton, and what could be improved.

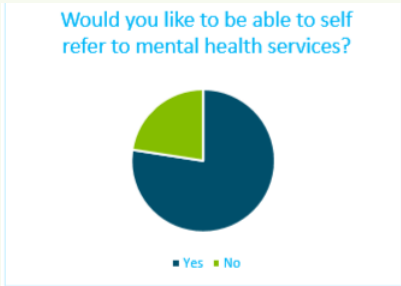
For the first time, Healthwatch Luton approached this project with the main mental health provider, informing them from the start of the project objectives and working with them in partnership to understand their service delivery for people in Luton.

ELFT (East London Foundation Trust) is the local NHS Provider for mental health in Luton, and were welcoming and supportive to Healthwatch Luton's approach in spending a year understanding their service provision.

I see a different person every time I have an appointment. Healthwatch have really helped'



Most of the people we spoke to in Luton during the project wanted to be able **to self refer into the mental health** services themselves or for their families and carers.





'It's all about perspective!'




Mental Health Report Findings

The themes of the report, which are outlined in much more detail in the full report were, from all the feedback we gathered were:

- Communications
- Personality Disorders
- Aftercare
- Integrated Approach
- Perceptions
- Admissions to wards: Expectations
- Access to CMHTs
- Safeguarding Alerts
- Autonomy on wards

Our work on mental health provision in Luton covered many organisations and many provisions, but our key outcomes from the year long project were clear:

- **NHS England** And Quality Surveillance involvement; based on findings from our Enter and View reports on patient care
- **Bi-monthly safeguarding meetings** for mental health patients involving Healthwatch and the patient voice
- **Review of inpatient admissions packs** – ELFT will work with their patients to develop this
- **Discharge packs standardised** and reviewed with patients
- **Review of therapeutic activities**
- **Replacement of toilet seats** on inpatient wards
- **Redecoration of inpatient wards**
- **Access to the right to vote** – during the election in 2019 some staff were unsure how patients could vote

 I am extremely thankful for helping me. You truly did give me my voice back'



Healthwatch produced an internal document through their Research Governance Framework – called a RAR – **Recommendations, Action and Review** table. We shared this with our mental health provider and jointly agreed actions following our recommendations, which we will review through 2020. This RAR has been agreed and supported by the provider and commissioner to ensure improvements.



'Champions and challenges'



Learning Disability Report Findings

In 2018-2019 figures, it was estimated there were around 4 people per 1000 with a learning disability and/or autism in Luton. This is above the national average for England.

Luton reported lower than average Section 42 enquiries of vulnerable adults with learning disabilities (LBC Living a Good Life, Luton Strategy 2019-2024), and this along with feedback from parents of people with learning disabilities as well as a continued lack of engagement from the learning disability community prompted Healthwatch Luton to look into Learning Disabilities throughout the 2019 year.

As of 2016, around 5% of adults with a learning disability in Luton have been part of the support placement scheme, 'Shared Lives'. Nationally there is a desire to

reduce inpatient bed capacity (of those with learning disability) Luton and Dunstable Hospital have a strategy in place for those with a learning disability and they also have learning disability nurses available to assist both inpatients and outpatients during hospital attendance (Learning Disability Strategy, 2019-2020 L&D).

Some of the key findings from the themes of speaking to people with, families of and professionals working with those with a learning disability (over 100 in Luton) – were:

- Support when accessing services, in particular more time around waiting times
- Increased lengths of appointment times
- Awareness of Annual Health Checks
 - Having quieter rooms or areas during appointment times
 - More sexual health resources





Annual Health Checks

Everyone over the age of 14 who has been diagnosed as having a learning disability is entitled to an Annual Health Check. The report found as of February 2020 in Luton, only 51% of individuals over 25 had a completed AHC, and only 14% if 14-25 year olds.



'Champions and challenges'

Learning Disability Report Findings

The report highlights all the provisions available for people with a learning disability and a review of their provision for people in Luton. We have worked in partnership with many organisations to understand what worked well for people, what did not, and what and how it could be improved. Our report highlights many recommendations for the health and care system to consider and we continue to ensure people's voices are at the heart of decision making across Luton for the neurodiverse community.


Some of the outcomes of the project have been highly impactful:

- **Dedicated project on transitions** based on people feeling this area needed more focus



- **Neurodiversity strategy** developed with Healthwatch Luton as a partner
- **Easy Read Leaflets** created by Healthwatch Luton on our role and used at Boards
- **Trained LeDeR** reviewer to be positioned in Healthwatch Luton to understand and support the system
- **Annual Health Checks** to be reviewed, pulling on best practice from local surgeries
- Review of **Health Action Plans** for people with Learning Disabilities
- Discussion locally on **employment** opportunities for those with a learning disability
- **Information packs prior to diagnosis** to be provided to parents or carers

I am so grateful to be able to help shape the service I need'



2020 Neurodiversity Strategy in Luton

Healthwatch Luton are one of the partnership organisations working the Luton Clinical Commissioning Groups and Luton Borough Council on their joint Neurodiversity Strategy for Luton, to ensure all people affected in a neurodiverse way are supported within the town.



What did Healthwatch Luton do?

- Roma Travellers
- Enter and View – Hospital Reports (Ward 15, 17, 23)
- NHS Long Term Plan reports – PLACE and SCALE
- Phyllis report
- Baseline Surveys
- Professional Forums
- Public Forum
- AGM

I am so glad Healthwatch used my experience to open a wider conversation on care'

Summary Findings 2019

Over 2019 we focused on two main areas, Mental Health (mainly in an inpatient focus) and Learning Disability.

Alongside this work we ran various other projects, and wrote a series of Summary Findings Reports which can be found on our website:

<https://www.healthwatchluton.co.uk/reports-hidden/reports/>

All these reports were shared with the relevant providers and commissioners:



Share your views with us

What would you like us to look at next year in our focus? Do you feel you would like to share your views?

Call us on -1582 817 060 or email us at info@healthwatchluton.co.uk

You could consider also joining our team as a volunteer at: <https://www.healthwatchluton.co.uk/contact/>

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 Luton.

Andrew Bennett

I would love to share my experience so far with Healthwatch Luton – and to say they have been a revelation to me and my family during my on-going battle with Prostate Cancer.

Firstly, they provided me with advice and support after I was misdiagnosed with cancer, as I wanted to ensure I could help other people in not having the same experience as myself.

Healthwatch Luton guided me on how I could do this by getting all the relevant GP's around the table and seeking some assurances that this would not happen to other patients, and Healthwatch Luton were amazing in providing this support and guidance, in a world which obviously is unknown to the man in the street.

Healthwatch Luton also provided me with a platform in sharing my journey – with a film crew paid for by the NHS, in getting the message out there for all men of a certain age to get tested for Prostate Cancer, and more importantly

to challenge your GP if you feel you are not receiving the correct treatment.

More recently again Healthwatch Luton came to my rescue when my oncologist left me in pain with no plan in place to combat these issues, and Healthwatch Luton guided us on how to reach the right personnel in breaking this trend and receive a plan of treatment.

Healthwatch Luton also came to the rescue again when we wanted a second opinion at the Royal Marsden Hospital in London, and helped us cut through the red tape that was holding this process up.

Healthwatch Luton are a brilliant asset to the world of health and surprisingly they are not known by the majority of the public, and also people in the health service. Any support I can provide in making people aware of their services would be a pleasure.

Healthwatch Luton are a brilliant asset to the world of health'



'Doctors and surgeries are under increasing pressure and oversights can be attributed to any type of medical problem'
Andrew

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



More than 40,000 people shared their views with Healthwatch over England



Our network held over 500 focus groups reaching different communities across England.



Healthwatch attended almost 1,000 community events, including festivals, carers cafes, shopping centres and NHS services to speak to the public about their experiences.



Luton Findings

The Healthwatch Network was funded by NHS England and NHS Improvement to carry out engagement with communities across the country to establish how the NHS 'Long Term Plan' should be implemented at a local level. The views gathered would feed into the development of the NHS Local Plans – which as of June 2020 are still to be released to the public.

Overall, two-fifths (40%) of people in Luton said that 'access to the help and treatment I need when I want it' was the most important of the five statements shown in the chart in helping them to live a healthy life.

The second most frequently chosen statement was 'professionals that listen to

me when I speak to them about my concerns' (29%).

There was some variation by ethnic group. For people from Asian ethnic groups (Asian British, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi), 'easy access to the information I need to help me make decisions about my health and care' was the second most important option – 5 of the 15 respondents (33%) chose this, which was three times the proportion for people from the White British group.

People with more than one long-term health condition and those with a disability viewed 'professionals that listen to me when I speak to them about my concerns' as the most important option (50% and 55% respectively).

Helping you find the answers

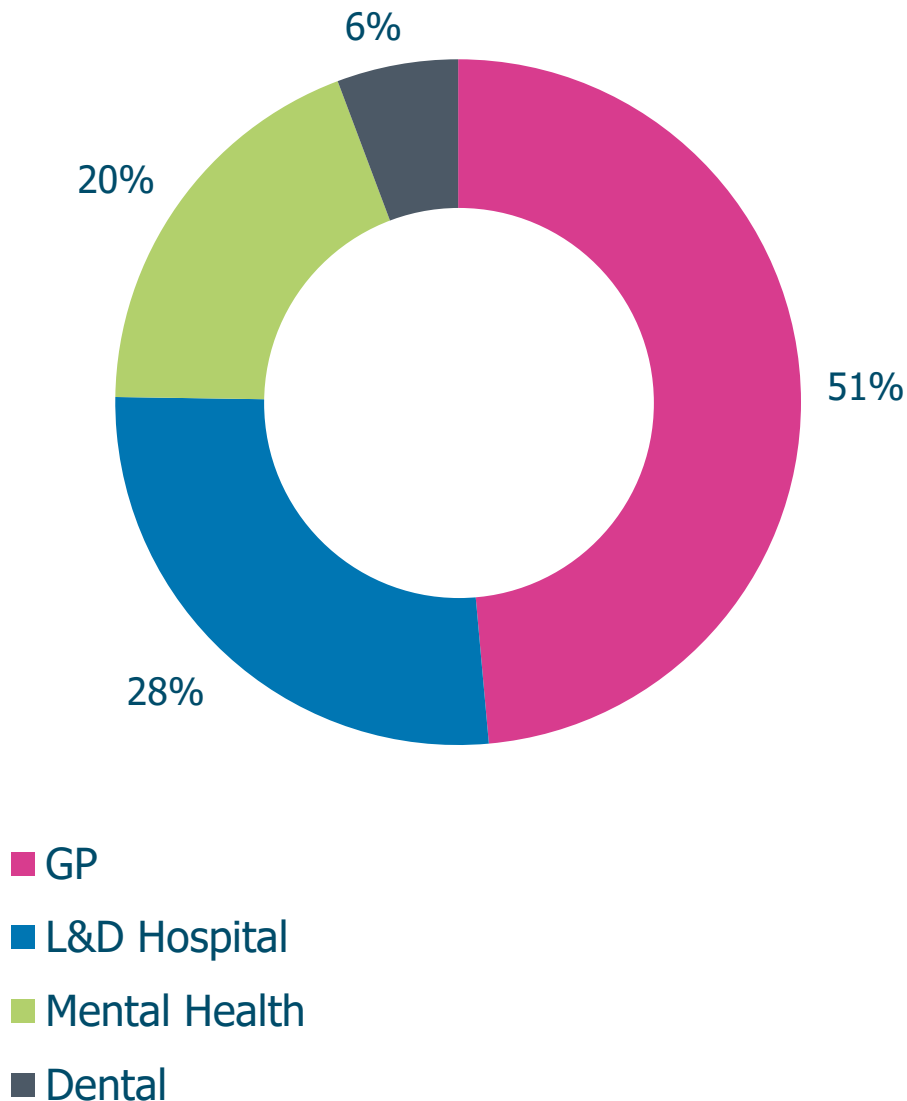


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch Luton plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

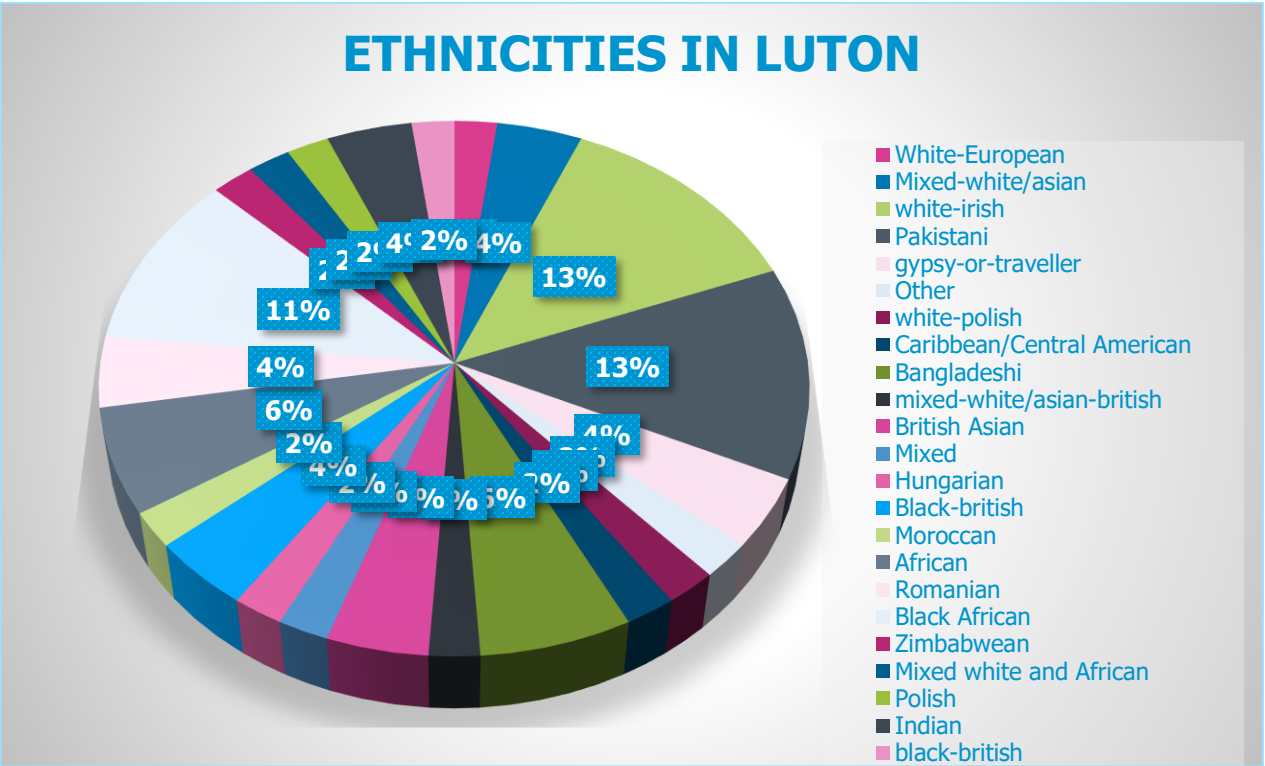
This year we helped 1,184 people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people's queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.
- Engaging with over 11,000 people in Luton either online, at community events, forums, surveys or professionals.

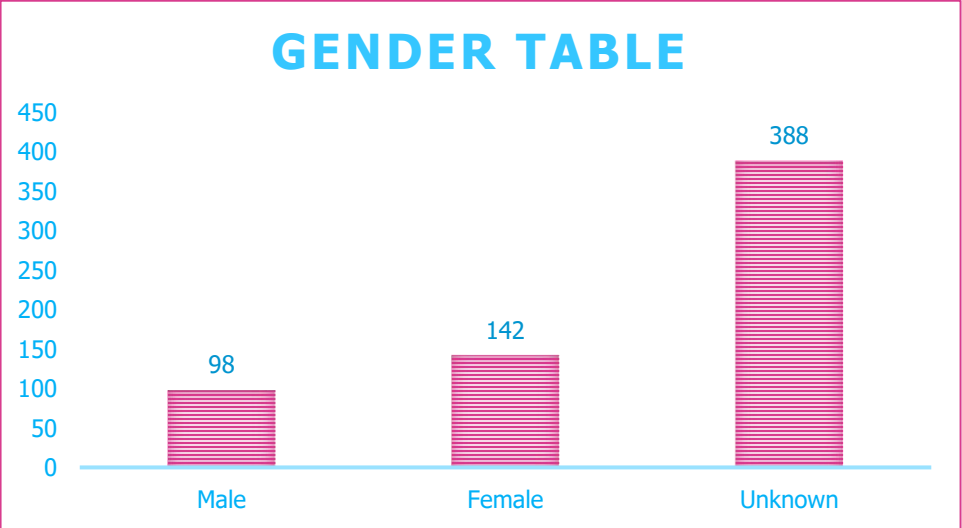
The top four areas people in Luton gave us feedback on were:



Through our targeted feedback, we ensure we capture more voices than ever before, as well as providing a range of media and pathways for people to inform us about their care. We continue to strive to capture those voices seldom heard in service provision, reflecting the demographic of Luton



Our eclectic mix of demographic feedback highlights the need to ensure those who are not white British also have the opportunities to help shape the services that provide them and their families with health and care. Luton has a vast range of cultures and communities, and whilst we still speak to more white British people on average, we are continuously striving to speak to those black and minority ethnic communities to ensure their voices are heard.




We have consistently gathered more feedback from females than males, but in 2019 this gap lessened with more males reporting feedback to us than ever before, particularly online through social media or through our website or surveys. We will continue to develop our online facilities

Case study: Shining a light on Personality Disorders

Throughout 2019 we focused on mental health and the provision in Luton. This culminated in our 2019 mental health report 'Its All About Perspective' (available on our website). Throughout the project there were areas that became highlighted themes, and one of these was the provision of service for people with Personality Disorders.

In the UK, a 2006 rigorous research project outlined by the Royal College of Psychiatrists found that 1 in 20 people had a personality disorder.

 In Luton, there was limited evidence to support any provision for people with personality disorders directly. Healthwatch Luton were contacted by 5 individuals directly throughout 2019-2020 who had a personality disorder, and thematically across all 5 felt unsupported in their care.

Healthwatch Luton focused on this area within their larger report, and wrote a summary finding report 'Themes of Personality Disorders in Luton' (available on our website). The report concluded that most people with personality disorders felt unsupported in their care, it also highlighted themes of increased safeguarding's raised for people with personality disorders, a theme of non-engagement with the mental health provider and an overall theme of confusion on their continued support, and responsibility for their care.

Discussions with the commissioners and mental health provider continues, but the report recommends a further commitment to discussions on contract arrangements in Luton for people with personality disorders, when the same provider has a section of their contract to provide a specific service for PD in the county, but not in Luton directly.

Healthwatch Luton will continue to review this provision in 2020.





GP Access

GP access in Luton has been our highest feedback theme for many years. We had a robust plan to focus on this area in 2020, which we will amend during the pandemic. For one person in Luton, they contacted us about accessing their GP. With our signposting and information provision, we were able to inform them of their pathway rights and ensured that they understood how to access GP's ongoing with their surgeries support.



Opticians

Healthwatch Luton were contacted by one Luton resident who informed us they were struggling to receive their prescription glasses from their opticians. Healthwatch Luton outline and signposted support to them, but the patient wanted to make a formal complaint. Healthwatch Luton then signposted them to POhWER who run the NHS Complaints service as well as provide support on how to write a complaint.



Luton and Dunstable Hospital

Healthwatch Luton continue to have a good relationship with our hospital, running a series of Enter and Views and reviews each year, as well as continued engagement with their Patient Liaison Department to ensure patients receive the best care. We had one gentleman contact us who had a poor experience via oncology and Healthwatch Luton promptly supported by using our contacts and ensuring the patient understood his ability to raise his concerns.



'Healthwatch Luton were helpful, positive, prompt, responsive, considerate and supportive at all stages.'



Dental

Healthwatch Luton were contacted by one Luton resident who had a poor experience with their dental practice, and were unsure on how to proceed in completing their care. Healthwatch Luton supported them through their options, as well as supporting them whilst they escalated issues within the health system, resulting in the patient and dental surgery discussing the concerns raised. The patient felt informed and supported by Healthwatch Luton throughout their process.



Mental Health Inpatient

Healthwatch Luton were contacted by an inpatient of one of the mental health units, where the patient felt they were not being treated fairly whilst on the ward. Healthwatch Luton supported the patient, outlining their right and signposting them to support. We also got consent from the patient and spoke to the mental health provider on the patients behalf, ensuring the provider was aware of the concerns being raised by people using their services.



Social Care

Healthwatch Luton were contacted by a Luton resident who was struggling to move forward with their care after a social care assessment. No matter how hard they tried, they could not continue their plan of support due to lack of contact from the adult social care team. Healthwatch Luton signposted them to the right department to initiate support, as well as informed the local adult social care managers to highlight concerns raised by Luton residents.



Contact us to get the information you need

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 Luton is here for you.

w: www.healthwatchluton.co.uk

t: 01582 817 060

e: info@healthwatchluton.co.uk

Volunteers



At Healthwatch Luton we are supported by nine volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, to services in their communities. This year our volunteers:

- Received highly commended award for their commitment to Healthwatch Luton, and to the community in health and wellbeing by the High Sheriff’s office.
- Generously gave us **1058** hours of their time to help support us at targeted engagements, conduct enter and views, hold information sessions, run forums, represent us at various boards and meetings along with participating in various workstreams and reviewing reports.
- Helped Healthwatch Luton win an award for ‘Helping People Have their Say’ at the Healthwatch Network Awards 2019 by supporting us at Luton’s first ever Young Person’s event.
- Represented Healthwatch Luton at **53** different meetings and boards over the course of the year, which helps us understand the views of the community and work in collaboration with everyone.

Case study

Last year in April 2019, Healthwatch Luton held a mental health forum as part of the NHS Long Term Plan engagement.

Deb saw an advertisement on Facebook about this forum and decided to attend and find out what it was all about.

At the forum, she learned some facts about mental health that she had no idea about, she also found that Healthwatch could signpost people where to go when they really had given up hope. By the end of the forum, Deb had spoken to Healthwatch Luton staff about volunteering as she was so passionate about this subject.

Deb is now a volunteer with Healthwatch Luton and supported us with feedback on services, contributed to volunteer discussion groups, helped formulate Healthwatch Luton’s focus for the workplan and supported the

engagement officer at targeted engagement and networking event.



Volunteer with us

We are always looking for volunteers to join our team. If you have an interest in shaping the health and social care services in Luton and would like to find out more, please contact us on info@healthwatchluton.co.uk

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.



Alan

After retirement Alan started volunteering to stay active and joined a group dealing with local health and social issues and then continued with Healthwatch. He continues to have an interest in all subjects and his main interest is in learning disability. He was involved in our yearlong learning disability project, along with actively supporting us at targeted engagements, information and networking events and forums.



Maureen

Maureen has been with Healthwatch Luton since the beginning and helped us with recruitment, created a handbook and actively engages with individuals at targeted engagements besides supporting and promoting us at various events and representing us at meetings. She was involved with our mental health project last year, conducted Enter and Views at the hospital along with attending community meetings at the mental health wards to gather feedback.



Pat

Pat has a nursing background and teaches Health and Social Care. She enjoys volunteering for us and understands the valuable role we play in engaging with the people of Luton and listening to people's views of local services. Pat is a board member and vice chair. Along with gathering views at targeted engagements, conducting Enter and Views, contributing to mental health project, she represented us at numerous boards and meetings.

Our volunteers

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Andy

Andy has lived in Luton and has two grown up daughters one of which has special needs. Andy previously worked as a project manager of health and social care project. She has a good understanding of local issues and believes she can make a difference as a member of the Healthwatch Luton Board. She represents us at various meetings and was involved with the learning disabilities project.



Steph

Steph became a Board member for Healthwatch Luton because she has a passion for health care and she wanted patients to be listened to, as she feels that they are the ones who know what needs to change. Despite her own health challenges she is very active and represents us at numerous meetings, information sessions, targeted engagements and was part of our year long learning disabilities and mental health projects.



Phil

Phil is the chair of Healthwatch Luton and started his career with the RAF and then moved on to providing management consultancy. Now retired, Phil enjoys volunteering for Healthwatch Luton to give back to society and finds it very rewarding. Phil works very hard as a chair and represents us at meetings and various boards in order to influence the health and care service.

Our volunteers

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Angela

Angela is from a nursing and midwifery background and joined us in 2013. She enjoys being a champion volunteer and has actively engaged with lots of groups of people that we had not engaged with before like Headway, switch café, Recovery college, Older people's festival and Belview care homes. She was involved with the learning disabilities project and enjoyed carol singing at Christmas time at the Mall.



Cass

Cass volunteers to keep up with what is going on in Luton regarding the health and social care and to make sure we are asking the questions no one else wants to ask. Cass has become more confident in asking questions and making sure everyone considers young people and minorities that we may not speak to. Along with managing a full time job she helps us at engagement events and events at the university and sixth form colleges.



Deb

Deb is a single parent to two young men who mean the world to her. Sadly, she has some health problems which means she doesn't work but she is passionate about volunteering. She is the newest member of our team of volunteers and has a special interest in mental health. She can't wait to get back out in the community and guide people to help they need and deserve.

We couldn't wish for a more suitable person to be our Volunteer Officer, than Sudha Auro. Sudha is a people person in every way; she listens, cares and is totally supportive to our volunteers in every way.'

Phil Turner, Chair



Our plans for next year – 2020



2020 FOCUS

Before the COVID 19 pandemic, Healthwatch Luton had set forward their workplan for the year. Now the pandemic has affected all walks of health and care, both nationally and locally in Luton, we have re-focused our workplan to reflect this:

healthwatch
Luton

How are you doing?

Let us know how you are feeling about COVID-19: What works well, what doesn't and how do you think it could be improved?

covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk

01582 817 060

Twitter: @hwluton

Facebook: HealthwatchLuton

Instagram: healthwatchluton

How are you doing?

Our main focus, since March 2020 (and we captured 20 feedbacks on COVID 19 prior to March) was to focus our activity on gathering people’s overall views of health and social care during the pandemic. In a sensitive way, we wanted to capture both professional and Luton resident views on how they felt their care had been affected, so when the system was ready to review the processes, we could provide people’s experiences to help shape the service provision.

System Support

Our main aim will also be to support the health and social care system wide, ensuring people’s voices who have experienced the pandemic can help shape the way services are provided in the future. Digital technology has provided an enormous opportunity for people in Luton to engage with their health and care providers – but what of those who cannot or never did access technology? We hope to explore all views including hard to reach communities who may have struggled more.

Health and Care Communications

On the first week of lockdown we created a new webpage with information from all NHSE, Government and Public Health organisation communication, and were one of the first Healthwatch to translate information into other languages. We hope to assist the health and care system further by supporting them by addressing what works well and what doesn't when communicating messages out to the public.



Our priorities for 2020


Our engagements with people over 2019 – over 11,000 Luton residents either in surveys, emails, conversations, interviews, forums or online, allowed us to shape our initial focus for 2020. The pandemic has altered this workplan – but we will integrate aspects of GP access and MH in the community into our ‘How are you doing?’ campaign over 2020.

2020 Workplan

Outline of our 2020 Workplan Focus




Primary Care: GP Access
Access to doctor's surgeries has been the largest negative feedback for Healthwatch Luton over four years. We will be focusing on reviewing access for people in Luton



Mental Health: Community Focus
Last year we focused on inpatient wards, and this year we will be following patients once they are discharged into the community mental health teams.

Older People: Lost Voices
After focusing on younger voices in 2018, in 2020 we will focus on older people; those ageing well and those with general ageing concerns



Seldom Heard: Poverty Focus
We will re-visit our seldom heard focus, reaching those hard to reach or seldom heard voices in Luton; with a particular focus on poverty

It is an absolute honour to work in an organisation of independent mind and culture, with a solid focus on the Healthwatch activities – allowing us to reach more people in Luton than ever before.

Looking back

- It has been a wonderful and peculiar year, with more staff and more activity and reach than ever before, ending in one of the strangest situations most of us have ever found ourselves in.
- Prior to the pandemic, our team at Healthwatch Luton was growing strong and working in smart and systematic ways, ensuring our research and information gathering was becoming more robust and analytical. We hope to continue this development.
- We became an Award Winning Healthwatch in 2019 and it was an exceptional honour to be recognised on many levels for all the hard work our staff and volunteers contribute to ensure people's voices are heard in Luton.

Looking ahead

- In spite of COVID-19 – we continue to seek ways to engage with and gather feedback from as many residents in Luton as possible. Possibly now more than ever it is imperative to have the patients voice at the heart of service provision and delivery, and we will continue to strive, in new ways to engage people with the health and care conversation.

Thank you

- I get to thank my team and volunteers, and the Healthwatch Luton family continuously for all they do for us – and it is never enough. Without our whole team, we would really struggle to have as much impact as we have begun to have, to have the diversified reach we currently do, and to gather as much feedback as is currently

possible.

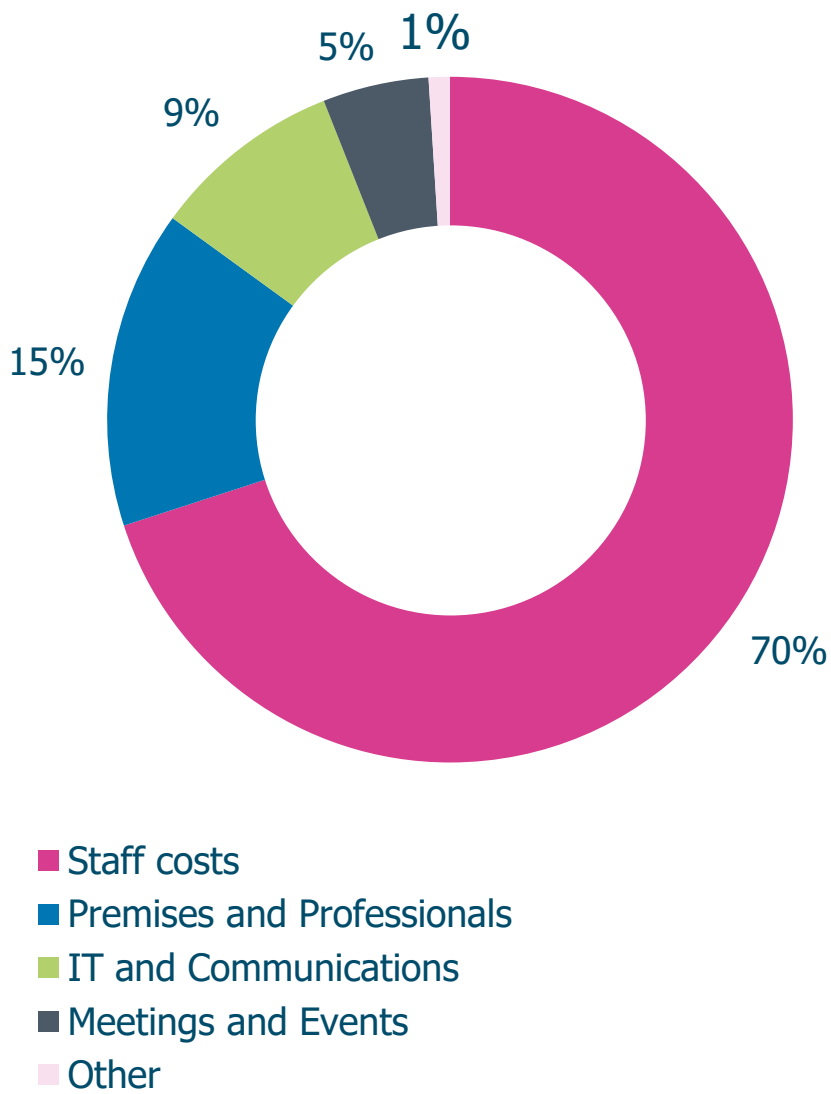
- All of our work is focused on ensuring people in Luton have their voice heard, and now, just as it has been since I have been involved in health and care, it seems more important than ever to find ways in which to reach those seldom heard or hard to reach communities, and ensure they are empowered to understand choices available to them. I am ever so grateful for all those residents who have taken the time to give us their feedback, and hope that we have made a difference to their lives, as well as help shape how services are delivered ongoing.
- If you would like any further information on how to be involved in health and care services, in supporting us more to support you, or any other information, please do contact us and we will ensure your voice is heard.



Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £136,000.

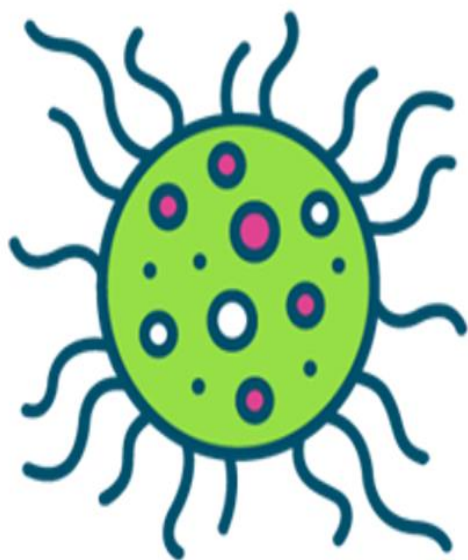


Thank you

Thank you to everyone that 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 and volunteers.
- The voluntary and community organisations that have contributed to our work.
- Luton Clinical Commissioning group staff, and BCCG across BLMK
- Luton Borough Council
- ELFT – Mental Health Trust
- Luton and Dunstable Hospital
- All statutory and non-statutory organisations in Luton who have supported and worked with us over the last year to ensure people's experiences influence health and care provision

If you have read this far, you may consider taking part now and telling us how you are doing with general health and care in Luton. Please follow the contact details below to ensure we can use your experience to help shape service provision going forward.



healthwatch
Luton

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Instagram: healthwatchluton

Contact us

Contact number **01582 817 060**

Email address **info@healthwatchluton.co.uk**

Website **www.healthwatchluton.co.uk**



Address and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2020:

Healthwatch Luton, 110 Great Marling's, Luton, LU2 8DL

Contact number **01582 817 060**

Email address **info@healthwatchluton.co.uk**

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.

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