

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Greenwich
Annual Report 2021-22



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Meet the board



Lynne Gilchrist
Chair of the board



Oluwatobi Aigbogun
Board member



Anu Massey
Board member



Dmytro Chupryna
Board member



Lola Kehinde,
Board member



David Thompson
Board member

Healthwatch Greenwich would like to thank former board members Karen Wint, Amanda Adegboye and Rob Lee for their valued contributions over a combined tenure of nearly 15 years. Karen, Amanda and Rob stood down in 2021-22.

Meet the staff team



Joy Beishon
Chief Executive



Sue Mohanty
Insight and Analytics
Officer



Kiki Bourcha
Community
Engagement
Manager



Penny Grosett
Communications and
Signposting Officer



Folake Segun
Director, South East
London Healthwatch



Jahan Foster
Social Research and
Administration officer

Message from our chair

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically increased the pressure that the NHS and health and care providers are under. Challenges in accessing GP services, long waiting times for care and deepened health inequalities are among the themes we have heard most over the past year. These issues will take time to fix, so at Healthwatch Greenwich we strive to work constructively with our local service providers, gathering feedback from residents and reflecting the voice of our communities, so that we can support continual service improvement.

We publish regular monthly feedback reports on our website, and share these with local health and care organisations, reviewing our recommendations together. For example, the pandemic has seen rapid adoption of online communications and virtual appointments, but while this approach has worked well for many, it has excluded others. This illustrates perfectly the challenges faced by our local providers as they endeavour to deliver the best care, in the most efficient way while accommodating the very disparate care, language and communications needs of our community.

The nature of Healthwatch is that much of the feedback we receive is when things have gone wrong. But we also seek to shine a light on examples of great care and to acknowledge the tireless work of everyone working in this most challenging of sectors, particularly over the past two years. We all want to achieve the same thing ... to enhance health and care services in our borough and I know that working together constructively as a community, we can achieve this.



Lynne Gilchrist
Healthwatch Greenwich Chair

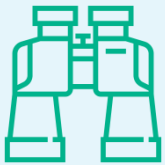
The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities.

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Greenwich is your local health and social care champion. From Abbey Wood to Greenwich West and Thamesmead to Eltham and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

We want a Greenwich with high quality services, consistent levels of public engagement and an excellent patient/service user experience.

To achieve our vision:

- We listen.
- We act.
- We influence.



Our mission

Our role is to listen to all those who use health and social care services in Greenwich, to share their needs and views with health and care organisations and to improve the services to local people.



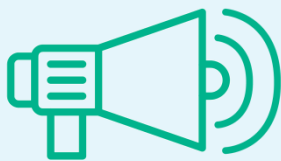
Our values

- Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Including everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- Analysing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- Acting on feedback and driving change.
- Partnering with health and care commissioners, providers, and the voluntary sector – serving as the consumer champion for all those that use health and care services in the borough.

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



4,663 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care

21,333

received advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

Making a difference to care



We published

18 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

Our most popular report was

July 2021 feedback report

which highlighted service user's issues with the NHS COVID-19 app and information about vaccination walk-in centres

Health and care that works for you



During 2021-22, we are lucky to have had:

42 volunteers

who gave up 190 days to make care better for our community. In London living wage terms, this is an equivalent donation of £16,796

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received:

£135,000

Which is **4.6% more** than the previous year.

We also currently employ

4.8* full-time equivalent staff

who help us carry out this work.

*our contract with Royal Borough of Greenwich supports 2.4FTE staff and additional income supports a further 2.4 FTE staff.

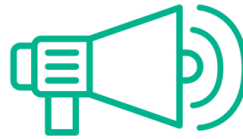
How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are a few of the projects we worked on during April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



We facilitated a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Advisory Group to address health inequalities.



We gave advice and information on COVID-19 vaccinations and addressed frequently asked questions.

Summer



Service users reported long waits at A&E. We worked with Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust to communicate with service users how busy A&E was and to signpost to 111.



The Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Advisory Group met with directors from Oxleas NHS Trust to discuss race and mental health issues and how our Advisory group can work with and support improvements to tackle health inequalities.

Autumn



Service users reported lengthy waits on the telephone when trying to get a GP appointment. As a result, we promoted clear information about how to get a GP appointment in different ways.



Many residents were finding it hard to get their second booster dose. We worked with South East London Clinical Commissioning Group to share key information on how and where local residents could get their booster jabs.

Winter



We conducted 'Mystery Shopping' on GP registration, automated messages and telephone waiting times for GP practices to better understand the barriers and difficulties service users face & to understand what is working well.



We heard about long delays for routine NHS dental treatment and a lack of dentists accepting new NHS patients. We supported Healthwatch England's national campaign to #FixNHS Dentistry

Making a difference in South East London



Folake Segun
Director, South East
London Healthwatch

South East London (SEL) Healthwatch, a grouping of six local Healthwatch hosted by Healthwatch Greenwich, continues to influence how health services respond to people’s experiences and views.

Our Director Folake works with the South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other stakeholders to represent all six Healthwatch, coordinating our collective intelligence and insight, informing decision making processes and adding value to a wide range of work programmes across our boroughs, as well as encouraging public involvement in the development and continued improvement of health and care services.



Working together as six local Healthwatch across South East London, our impact and influence includes:

- Helping to shape the SEL digital patient engagement plan.
- Participation in the South London Listens Programme to support signposting and early intervention.
- SEL Healthwatch involvement and collaboration in developing the ICS Working with People and Communities strategy.
- Engagement in the development of the SEL ICS constitution.
- Winning a Highly Commended Accolade at the 2021 Healthwatch Awards for our work with the CCG and system partners.
- Insight from Mystery Shopping utilised at ICS’s Digital Exclusion Workshop
- Healthwatch SEL used as a NHSEI (NHS England and improvement) and Healthwatch England Promising Practice Case Study as a tangible example of the benefits of Healthwatch and the ICS working together.

Listening to your experiences

The case for tackling health inequalities is clear and overwhelming and action is needed on both a national and local level. That's why we strive to hear from all service users, especially the seldom heard.



Susan's story

Improving access to mental health care

During the pandemic, Susan, a 62-year-old ex-charity worker was due for an operation to remove cancerous tissue.

A domestic abuse survivor, Susan says she found the attitude of some of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) team managing her care unsupportive and lacking empathy. After years in a detrimental relationship, being blamed for everything by her husband, Susan said the treatment by some hospital staff was triggering.



I was made to feel it was my fault, that I have brought this on myself



- Susan

Susan said that one nurse told her that the team's priority was younger women. Having been signed-off work, post diagnosis, and out of an abusive relationship, Susan requested psychological support. This was not offered by the team providing her care at QEH and nor did they tell Susan, as a cancer patient, where she could get psychological help.

Susan says she was not listened to. Susan had to proactively contact a charity for domestic abuse survivors to seek mental health support.

The difference Susan's story made

Susan's story was shared directly with the Macmillan Psychological Support (MAPS) Team. Leaflets, posters and information boards of the MAPS service are now available on all cancer units at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH).

Greater support and training is now being offered to health care professionals by the MAPS team.



We seek to build trusting relationships, to empower patients to make active choices, and to increase their sense of safety

- Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

Julia's story

Improving Greenwich maternity services

After more than two years Julia, a diabetic, is only now coming to terms with what happened to her. *"Unfortunately, I have been too emotionally scarred by this to have made a complaint. It is not something I like to think about at all".*

30 weeks pregnant and in pain, Julia went to A&E at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Anxious and surprised by the lack of urgency from staff – Julia waited to be seen. While waiting, Julia went into labour – in the public waiting area. Julia was terrified, in pain, in labour, in need of insulin, and worried about her baby.

"Nobody looked at me, spoke to me, checked my baby, asked me a question in 20 minutes. I was left in labour in a room full of men..."

Her husband, James, could not find a chair to sit on and was unable to comfort his wife. He asked staff for help but was dismissed. *"One nurse told my husband, "There's only one of me" and waved him away. I was obviously in a lot of pain and very upset".*

Concerned that no one was listening to them, in desperation, they left A&E and went straight to another hospital. Upon arrival (25 minutes later), Julia was fully dilated and rushed in for an emergency C-Section.

"Our treatment that night in Queen Elizabeth hospital was horrific. The lack of concern for me and dismissal of my pain and anguish is something that I hope no other woman experiences"

The difference Julia's story made

We facilitated a meeting between Julia and key decision makers at Lewisham and Greenwich (LGT) NHS trust. Julia was invited to an LGT board meeting.

As a result, LGT have taken action. They have reviewed:

- Maternity triage at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH)
- The escalation policy
- The seating arrangements in A&E



It felt very cathartic to tell our story and have the people who have the power to change things actually listen. The failings were recognised and apologies were made

- Julia



Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.



Creating greater understanding by sharing experiences

It's important that key decision makers hear personal experiences to understand the impact that policy and change can have on peoples' lives.

In our monthly feedback report, we highlighted the struggles a homeless service user had accessing a GP by being asked for proof of address to register. There is no requirement to provide documentation to register with a GP.

South east London Clinical Commissioning Group (SE London CCG) is now working with the rough sleeping outreach team and other partners to provide GP services to people without a fixed address in the community.



Improving communication

Relatives of people who live in care homes raised concerns about GP appointments, optical and dental care, and prescriptions for their loved ones.

We brought together relatives and the Royal Borough of Greenwich Adult Health and Care team to ensure action was taken where needed and reassurance given.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with health and care services to raise issues and push for changes.

Not all service users receive care in an accessible way. Our monthly feedback reports highlighted how improvements can be made for deaf service users.

South east London Clinical Commissioning group is now working with a local charity to deliver deaf awareness and British Sign Language (BSL) training for GP practice staff.

Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Greenwich is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options. Whether it's finding your nearest GP practice, local support service or how to keep yourself healthy.

This year we helped people by:

- Linking people to reliable information they can trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need





Help to find urgent dental care

We heard from lots of people who were finding it very difficult to access dental treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sarah was in a lot of pain as her wisdom tooth had become infected. She had spent hours phoning dental surgeries across the borough,

“I have phoned around so many dental surgeries in Greenwich to see if they were taking on NHS patients and I’ve had no luck”

We told Sarah about local dental emergency hubs and how to access them. We also told her about our national Healthwatch campaign to #FixNHSDentistry

Sarah followed our advice and was booked into an emergency dental hub and got the dental care she needed.



From borough to borough: finding continued support

Rachel, living with depression, had just moved into Greenwich and was worried about opening up about her mental health to a new GP and receiving continued mental health support.

We gave Rachel information on:

- Registering with a GP in Greenwich.
- Healthwatch England tips on talking to her new GP about mental health.
- How to access Time to Talk (Oxleas NHS Trust).
- How she could get mental health support from other organisations in the borough.

Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch Greenwich. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs to be improved in the NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say, carrying out surveys face to face and on the telephone.
- Created blogs for our website and social media.
- Raised awareness in local libraries with residents on how we can help them.
- Hand delivered Healthwatch information to thousands of households in the borough
- Carried out reviews of local services on the information they provide and their accessibility.
- Shared our information with GP practices, pharmacies, dentists and opticians across the borough.





Megan, University of Greenwich student

“I’ve not always been confident in speaking to strangers, but I’ve enjoyed getting the opportunity to speak to service users about their experiences with social and health services and can see that my confidence has grown as a result”.



Toby, Board member

“I’m passionate about making the world a better place. Being on the board of Healthwatch Greenwich has given me the opportunity to make sure that we address the critical issues that the residents of Greenwich face when it comes to good health and wellbeing”.



Sarah, University of Greenwich Student

“As a Library Outreach volunteer, I’ve been listening to Greenwich residents’ experiences of health and care. I’ve heard that looking for an NHS dentist is really hard and the waiting times to register are long. I’ve learnt that listening with compassion and patience goes a long way”.



Do you feel inspired?

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.



www.healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk



020 8301 8340



Info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk

Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

| Income | | Expenditure | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Funding received from local authority | £135,000 | Staff costs | £188,789 |
| Additional funding | £149,848 | Operational costs | £47,244 |
| | | Support and administration | £25,356 |
| Total income | £284,848 | Total expenditure | £261,389 |

Top three priorities for 2022-23

1. Post-pandemic improvement in access to health and care services
2. Supporting system-wide programmes to reduce health inequalities
3. Primary care: amplifying the voice and experience of marginalised communities



Thank you for giving me, and others, a voice

- Laura, Healthwatch Greenwich service user

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making.

In 2021-22, we had 8 members on our board. Our board members are volunteers who provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. In 2021/22 the board met 5 times.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities through collecting feedback: speaking to service users and advocates, online reviews and engagement activities.

Tackling health inequalities

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.



It is vital that we work with Healthwatch Greenwich to tackle health inequalities often faced by refugee and migrant women

- Lewisham Refugee and Migrant network



Collaborating with Healthwatch Greenwich will allow us to achieve greater impact and strengthen the voices of those who are often not heard

- London Vision

Our approach

We use *a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience* of health and care services. During 2021-22, we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, attended meetings of community groups and forums, delivered our own activities and engaged with the public through social media.

South East London Patient Group

The Group consists of people from each South East London borough, who are affiliated to their local Healthwatch. The members from Healthwatch Greenwich are Medhi Mahbaz, Pamela Winters, Elizabeth Muncey.

This year, the group has taken part in:

- Integrated Care System Population Health and Equalities Strategy
- Developing the Integrated Care System approach to Engagement
- Working with People and Communities strategy
- Home First development and promotion.



As a team supporting the development of the Integrated Care System (ICS), where all health and care professionals, partners and the voluntary sector work together, we need and value the involvement of Healthwatch and its public representatives.

- Dean Holliday, Head of Digital Programmes Population Health and Care Digital and Information Sharing, Our Healthier South East London ICS

Reflections

A word from our Chief Officer, Joy Beishon



More people than ever before are waiting for hospital treatment. Lengthy A&E and ambulance waits regularly hit the headlines, and the wholesale shift to digital means that many find it difficult to access face-to-face appointments. While these are national as well as local issues, it's important to remember that behind these system and organisational challenges are people living with pain or discomfort, unable to get the care they need, when they need it. We see this on a daily basis.

Access is not equitable. Marginalised groups face more barriers to access health and care services, receive less care relative to their needs, or more sub-optimal care than others - ending up with poorer experiences, and health outcomes.

While the switch to digital in many health and care areas has been a boon for most, it has not been accompanied by wide-spread access to low cost equipment or support to build on-line skills and confidence. As a result the 'new normal' - *digital access as standard, has doubly marginalised some of the most disadvantaged within our communities. Including those with sensory disabilities or cognitive limitations, those who are not fluent English speakers or have low literacy,* and those who simply don't have access to a smart phone or a laptop. Moreover, we hear from local people who are not convinced that on-line or telephone appointments from health and care providers are as safe as physical, in person appointments.

Greenwich residents often contact us after all other avenues have failed them and much of what we hear could have been better managed with the use of good communication, listening to service user experience, and using it to ensure services meet the needs of all that use it. *We would like to see greater use of service user experience by health and care organisations, particularly the experience of marginalised communities, in the development and design of services and better provision of clear and timely information to enable patients and the public to use services effectively and appropriately.*

While it may take years, or even decades, for the health and care system to completely recover from the impact of the pandemic, service user experience must be central to how post-pandemic plans are implemented and how our local health and care system continues to develop and visualise the future.

2021-2022 Addressing our priority areas for 21-22

| Priority area | Action taken |
|---------------------|--|
| Access to services | <p>In our monthly feedback reports, highlighted access issues across a range of services. GP services have been a priority.</p> <p>Impact Refresher information circulated to GP front desk staff to remind them that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not all service users are able to access the internet, so paper forms should be offered. - Support to complete paper and online registration forms should be offered to patients. - NHS England guidelines state that patients are not required to provide proof of ID or address or immigration status to register as a new patient. |
| COVID-19 | <p>We supported the COVID-19 vaccination programme and public health messaging throughout 2021-22, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The COVID Pass. - Vaccination walk-in centres. - How to find trustworthy information. <p>We supported the families and friends of those living in care homes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing updated Government guidance on visiting - Bringing together relatives and the Royal Borough of Greenwich Adult Health and Care team to ensure action was taken where needed and reassurance given. |
| Quality of services | <p>We highlighted concerns about dignified care for older people on ward 18 of Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH).</p> <p>Impact Since raising these concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of applicable staff have received frailty training. - Health care assistants and domiciliary care staff have received level one dementia training. - Staff gave positive feedback about how the training helped provide a better understanding of the needs of elderly patients. |
| Health inequalities | <p>This year, we have worked with refugee and migrant service users, women who have been victims of domestic violence and Somali community groups to tackle health inequalities and champion the voices of those that are often unheard.</p> |

2021-2022 Key outcomes: Highlights from our year

| Healthwatch Greenwich Recommendations to the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust | Impact |
|--|---|
| Review support available on post-natal wards | LGT are increasing the number of volunteers engaging with patients and supporting staff. |
| Review noise on post-natal wards | <p>Since concerns were raised, LGT have taken the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handover between shifts for midwives is now done in a closed side room. • Designated protected time for patients when intervention will be minimised. • Visiting will be minimised where possible between midnight until 6am. • Lights are dimmed at night and doors closed in the four bedded bays. • Patients are reminded to keep their mobile phones on silent and use earplugs if at all possible. • Staff, where possible, will avoid transferring women from labour ward to Ward 7 at night. |
| <p>Improve access to remote interpreting services and review quality of internet connection</p> <p>Raise awareness of access to interpreting services amongst staff and patients</p> | <p>LGT is improving its WiFi which will improve access to online interpreting services.</p> <p>The Patient Experience team have introduced an education bus to raise staff awareness of interpreting services amongst staff and patients.</p> |
| Review support available to autistic/neurodiverse service users | LGT have introduced a specific eLearning module on reasonable adjustments and an awareness trolley to highlight the NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS) requirements. |



What our partners have to say

“We would like to thank Healthwatch Greenwich for their ongoing support in championing the service user voice and for their strength of partnership working alongside us all to ensure that we deliver the very best outcomes and experiences for patients”

– Jeni Mwebaze, Associate Director of Quality and Governance at Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust

“We are really grateful to Healthwatch Greenwich for their support sharing key public health information during the pandemic and with the COVID-19 vaccination campaign”

– Russell Cartwright, Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement at NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group

“Healthwatch Greenwich plays an important role in collating feedback from service users. This has helped us to better understand patient experiences and needs, and by working together we hope to improve the patient experience, where we can, through constructive feedback”

– Tuan Tran, Local Medical Committee (LMC) Chair

Statutory statements

Healthwatch Greenwich uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement: Healthwatch England, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, E20 1JQ

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England.


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