

# Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Herefordshire  
Annual Report 2021-22



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# Message from Chief Officer



Throughout 2021-22, Healthwatch Herefordshire has needed to evolve and adapt, responding to challenges and changes in our health and care services. The need for the voice of Herefordshire residents has never been more important and we have seen a very sharp focus on recognising and reducing health inequalities in Herefordshire.

The impact of the pandemic on services continues to be increasingly evident in access to primary and secondary care services. One of the top areas of concern has been access to dental services.

The Healthwatch network have collaborated with Healthwatch England to raise concerns, enabling a stronger voice nationally to lobby for longer term reform. We have been an integral part of Herefordshire's Oral Health Improvement Group and have also undertaken engagement work to assist NHS England in looking at a local solution to improve access based on your views.

The passing of the Health & Care Bill this year has been a huge catalyst for change. The changes encourage a collaborative approach to delivering services for our population. We have invested time into being a part of the plans for these changes locally, putting your voice at the heart of this new integrated care system. In September 2021 and in partnership with Talk Community and hvoss, we created the Herefordshire Community Partnership. This ongoing forum brings together the community, statutory and third sector, finding solutions collectively to ensure that the integration of services will meet the needs of the population as effectively as possible at a local level. We have developed this model further, with the introduction of local Talk Community networks, focusing on building community resilience and action based on the views of the public. Hearing what matters to the communities of Herefordshire alongside the data that statutory services have, will ensure that the right solutions to Herefordshire issues can be found.

This year has been a challenging time for local children's services who received an inadequate Ofsted rating, which has required Herefordshire Council to work closely with the department for Education on an improvement plan. Healthwatch have ensured we are at the table for this improvement process, to do all we can to support the improvement journey and put the views of children and families at the forefront.

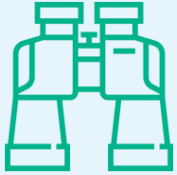
I am hugely grateful to all the people of Herefordshire who continue to tell us their views, it enables us to make change happen. I also wish to thank all our staff, volunteers, partners and board of directors for their hard work.

As we move forward into 2022-23 our focus will be on hearing the voices of those people who experience inequalities in Herefordshire, and ensuring local services use that insight to reduce the disparities that local people experience.

# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Herefordshire is your local health and social care champion. 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

A world where we can all get the health and care we need. In the way that we need it.



### Our mission

To:

- Help make people's experiences of health and care better
- Listen to the people who live and work in Herefordshire
- Work in partnership to build a strong community voice
- Champion the involvement of the public in shaping health and care services
- Contribute to the development of an Integrated Care System
- Support Healthwatch England to shape national policy



### Our values

**Independent** – working on behalf of all consumers to challenge those in power to design and deliver better health and social care services.

**Inclusive** – working for everyone, not just those who shout the loudest.

**Influential** – working with other local Healthwatch and Healthwatch England to make an impact locally and nationally.

**Credible** – holding ourselves to the highest standards and gathering authentic experiences.

**Transparent** – reporting our findings and the difference we have made back to the public.

**Collaborative** – working with the public, health, social care and the voluntary and community sector.

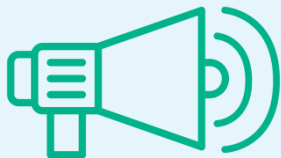
# Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

## Reaching out

### 35 people used our Feedback Centre

Shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.



### 188 people

Came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as Dentistry, access to general practice, mental health and social care.

## Making a difference to care

We published

### 4 reports

About the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. These were Increasing Diversity, Sexual Health, Planning for Future Care and Dental Services.

Our most popular report was

### Dental Services Engagement

Which highlighted the current picture of dental access in Herefordshire from 675 people.



## Health and care that works for you

We're lucky to have

### 18 volunteers who gave up 32 days to make care better for our community.

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

### £140,000

Which is the same as the previous year.



We also currently employ

### 7 staff

who help us carry out our work

**Social Media** We have increased our social media following by 1,452 in the past year. Followers across all social media channels: 5,328 **Total reach: 252,900**

### Live Facebook Q&As

We helped the public better understand what was happening locally by hosting 5 live Facebook Q&A webinars with local experts.

#### Webinar topics were

- Community Spirit and Resilience
- Dementia Week
- Carers Week
- General Practice
- Women's Health

### Awareness Campaigns

Through our social media channels and eBulletins we supported a variety of National Awareness Campaigns such as NHS 111, Cervical Screening Awareness Week, Bowel Cancer Awareness Week, Dementia Action Week, Carers Week, Volunteers Week, Prostate Cancer Week and Healthwatch England's #YourCareYourWay

### Local Sharing

We've shared news, initiatives and engagement surveys for many local organisations, to promote joint working and increase reach. We have had a focus on sharing details of local vaccination opportunities.

### Videos

**GP Access** To acknowledge GP access challenges, inform people about additional general practice roles & the alternative routes to access help, we worked with system partners to produce a video for the #Help Us Help You campaign.

**Health Professionals** To highlight the range of health professionals accessible through GP practices, we worked with local partners to produce 3 videos detailing the roles of Care Co-ordinators, Physiotherapists and Pharmacists.

**Herefordshire All Cancers Support Group** To promote the new All Cancers Support Group, we attended and filmed the launch event.

**NHSE Dentistry Video** To help explain why a new approach to commissioning a dental service, we interviewed figures from NHS England and NHS Improvement.

**Integrated Care System Video** To help inform the public about the change the ICS will bring and the important role the voluntary and community sector will play, we interviewed partners and launched at the Herefordshire Community Partnership.



Healthwatch has been proactive in sharing our communications on covid vaccination clinic availability in our county. Their support has undoubtedly helped Herefordshire to deliver one of the most successful campaigns in the country, with obvious benefits for the health of our patients, communities and staff.

**Jan Bailey, Communications Lead, Taurus Healthcare**



### Schools Mental Health Forum

- We distributed 3 Schools Mental Health Forum eBulletins.
- We hosted an online webinar for schools with the Schools Nursing Service and CAMHS on Schools Nursing Service and Eating Disorders.
- To better inform educational professionals and those who work with children in other capacities, we held a training event on Trauma Informed Care in partnership with our local mental health trust. The event had 77 attendees and 7 local organisations held information stands.



## Increasing Diversity

This project aimed to improve the way Healthwatch work to become as fully inclusive as possible through our culture, communications and outreach. Much of the work was developing approaches across the Healthwatch England network to best practice engagement with communities of interest. We set up two network groups, for those engaging with Gypsy, Roma Travellers and Eastern Europeans.

### Recommendations included

- being mindful of the language we use and challenging language in meetings.
- using a wider range of images on social media and in reports.
- identifying and targeting diversity at the planning stage of every project to improve equality and inclusion.
- Collecting and recording ethnicity details of people who contact us to ensure we are reaching a wider range of ethnicities.

## Other key work

We have been involved in the following: urgent care workshops, out of hours redesign of specification, children's transition in diabetes care, personalised care workshops, shared care record user testing, Integrated Care System and the Working Better Together project.


## Learning Disability Board

Healthwatch continues to be an active, challenging expert member of the board. We have taken part in a citizenship choice and control working group creating monthly user-friendly surveys/polls to encourage ongoing conversations between people with a learning disability, their families and carers, and the Learning Disability Partnership Board. Healthwatch create and distribute the surveys/polls and present the findings and board actions. Seven have been created so far.

Healthwatch Herefordshire has commented on the engagement plan and equality impact assessment and timeframes, requesting public feedback of resulting changes. We are also offering expertise, support and a catalyst to Shared Lives to increase user involvement.

### SEND (Special Educational Needs and disability) Strategy Group

Healthwatch encourages greater service user voice or perspective and we contributed to the Green paper response from Herefordshire.

 The last 12 months has seen the relationship between Healthwatch and PCNs, including supporting their development, grow hugely. From leading the way on establishing the Community Partnership with evolving links to inform PCN priorities, to being members of PCN Board meetings, Healthwatch are leading the way on building a One Herefordshire approach to working together to tackle inequalities and building communities. Healthwatch has worked with PCNs to capture the voice of the patient on themes such as diabetes, frailty and patient access, to start to understand barriers for patients to manage their own health & wellbeing and access of services to inform service redesign and improve patient outcomes. A trusted relationship between Healthwatch and PCNs has been built where information is shared, and joint plans are made to underpin development and become a key part of PCNs ensuring that the patient voice is at the heart of all Herefordshire PCNs.

Gillian Pearson

PCN Development Manager for North & West Herefordshire PCN



# Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feedback to services to help them improve





## Herefordshire Dental Service Engagement

Thanks to people sharing their experience of Herefordshire’s dental services, we’ve helped NHS England and NHS Improvement understand people’s current experiences of accessing dental care in Herefordshire and their thoughts about future commissioning plans.

NHS England and NHS Improvement cited that recruitment of a dental workforce to Herefordshire has proven difficult, mainly due to the rurality and viability of a business in smaller communities. Therefore, they are looking at the alternative approach of commissioning a larger, more central practice.

Working with NHS England and NHS Improvement, we wanted to find out whether this new approach was viable to residents and identify the issues and future needs from a dental service. We ran 6 focus groups which took place in 6 different locations around Herefordshire. We also did targeted work with communities that were most likely to be digitally excluded. This included distributing a hard copy survey. The survey was also available online. **675 people responded to the survey**



**85.4%**

**said that they would use a car to travel to get dental care**

### Other significant findings:

- There is a serious concern about the general state of people’s oral health, the length of time it has been since people last saw a dentist and concerns over the cost of treatment.
- Regarding the new plan, most people feel that something would be better than nothing.
- The option of having earlier or later appointments is necessary to cater for people who are working or in education in the day.

### Suggested solutions

- Dental mobile scheme.
- Designated appointment days for market towns to coincide with increased transport on those days through public transport or community transport.

### What difference did this make

Our findings were highly commended by NHS England and NHS Improvement and will have significant influence over the design of the procurement offer.



Since moving back to Herefordshire in 2020, I have been unable to get a dentist who is taking on NHS patients. I have been having toothache on and off for a year but as a non-emergency, no one will help. I am at the point of borrowing money off family to pay privately just to be seen. As with any medical care, the longer you leave it, the worse it gets. I am in the fortunate position to have a car and be able to drive but this is of no use when no surgery will accept new patients.



## Our Current Projects

### Herefordshire's Recovery Service

We are gathering independent feedback from service users to help Herefordshire's Recovery Service identify ways to improve. We are engaging with users face-to-face through focus groups and surveys. We will be working with the service to listen and act together.

### Community Pharmacy Consultation Service

NHS England commissioned us to carry out an evaluation of this service at Hereford Medical group. We are conducting 30 interviews with pharmacists, patients and GP practice professionals about their experiences of using this referral service into community pharmacy.

Alongside the report, we are also creating a video.

### Digital Inclusion project



Our Digital Inclusion project aims to find out what it takes to become digitally enabled, and to demonstrate how it can impact people's lives, empowering them to be part of the ever-evolving digital world. Understanding how to use online services can help people manage their own physical and mental health, encourage independence, and reduce anxiety or isolation.

We are supporting people in a 1 to 1 environment on their digital journey from being digitally excluded to being digitally connected. Participants have been identified by local organisations and we are working with them to help reduce health inequalities through digital inclusion.

### Heart Failure

In partnership with Wye Valley Trust, we are gathering views and experiences of people who have experienced heart failure, looking at their ongoing self-management and engagement in their heart failure care.

### Diabetes

Through 1-2-1 conversations, we are discovering how people are self-managing their Type 2 diabetes. Based on our findings, we will be making recommendations to services on how to empower people to manage it better.

### Ageing Well

We are gathering experiences from people growing older in Herefordshire. We are conducting surveys to understand such things as what people need help with, what services they are aware of and what their concerns are.



It is very exciting for me to be given this tablet as I have never had one before. I have emailed my sister and my cousin. I had never used email before. I hope to learn to Skype my family soon as it will be nice to see them rather than just speak to them on the phone.'

**Andrew – Digital Inclusion Project Participant**



## The Herefordshire Community Partnership

To ensure that the voluntary and community sector (VCSE) are best placed to understand what the move to an Integrated Care System means for them, we worked in partnership with hvoss and Talk Community to set up the Herefordshire Community Partnership. Launching in September 2021, with events held every 2 months, the Herefordshire Community Partnership aims is to start conversations about how the VCSE can work collaboratively with each other and the statutory sector, ensuring that we know what matters to communities and that services are delivered in the best way possible.



By establishing the Herefordshire Community Partnership, that is a way for us to work with Healthwatch and other partners so that we can engage with the community, with our population, the people who live in Herefordshire in a much more meaningful way.

Jane Ives, Managing Director, Wye Valley Trust



### HEREFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Your community update:



#### Work so far

Over 80 organisations  
& groups

Bimonthly hybrid events

- Established how the Community Partnership will work together and developed a Memorandum of Understanding
- Reviewed the State of the Sector Report
- Identified areas of improvement within prevention & early intervention
- Introduced Quality Improvement Training for the sector
- Creating a combined voluntary and community sector voice for representation
- Developing community plans to reduce health inequalities
- Ukrainian refugee response planning



Myself and Rachael found it (the Community Partnership event) very useful indeed and we very much enjoyed learning and understanding more about the needs of the local community and how our services could plug some gaps.

Andrew Prince-Burns  
Community Partnerships  
Manager, YSS



As community partners, we all know about each other's services through this forum. It's an opportunity to reflect, connect and collaborate with others.

Community Partnership Members



## 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.



### Talk Community Network Meetings

These new local networks enable community, third sector and statutory services to connect with peers to share ideas and experiences within the local area. This enables them to collectively identify and prioritise local challenges and develop community led solutions. The meetings identify gaps in provision and through working together, increase awareness of the realities faced by residents and communities in their specific area. Healthwatch staff have been allocated to each of the 4 geographic areas, encouraging those conversations and helping to feedback.



### Integrated Care System

Over the last two years we have worked tirelessly to ensure that we are in the right places to influence how the health and care legislation is reflected locally, which comes into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. This is an opportunity to create a more seamless patient journey for Herefordshire residents, who have often told us that care just isn't as joined up as it needs to be.

Key highlights for us this year have been:

- Shaping the Engagement Strategy which will determine how the local government and NHS locally listens and involves the public in the planning and delivery of health and care services.
- Implemented the Herefordshire Engagement Network to work in a coordinated way with the new NHS body, the Hospital Trust, Mental Health Trust, General Practice and Local Authority
- The launch of the Herefordshire Community Partnership (p11).
- Co-produced a memorandum of understanding with voluntary sector and the ICS partners.



### Improving Children's Services

We have lobbied for the reinstating of a children and young people's partnership board to have oversight and drive improvements across a broader range of services for children & young people. We are also part of the children's improvement board which is being monitored by the department for education, and numerous aspects of children's safeguarding. Hearing the views of children and families remains a top priority for us and to ensure that the changes in service delivery are influenced by the voice of children in Herefordshire.

# Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped **188** people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need



# Volunteers



Toni is a Human Nutrition student at Worcestershire University and studied diabetes as part of her degree. She has been working on our diabetes project and has enjoyed sharing her knowledge and ideas. She has found the results interesting so far and is looking forward to collating the data to identify trends. Toni was eager to work with Healthwatch as she liked the fact that we gain views of the public and then suggest ways to continue to improve or sustain services.



The interviews conducted during the project were supposed to be face to face but due to covid restrictions we had to conduct interviews via telephone and email. I was a little nervous at first but with support from Sam I was confident to complete my first telephone interview and every one since has boosted my confidence. I am grateful for the opportunity to volunteer with Healthwatch and wish to continue to in the future. Volunteering has had a positive effect on my wellness and has made me feel that I have a better connection to my community.



We have 18 volunteers, 4 of which were specifically recruited this year to sit on our Reading Panel.

We promoted improved communication with the public by using the expertise of our volunteers to comment on patient facing information developed by services. Our volunteers have fed back on and influenced the following:

- Shared Care Record patient materials
- Bladder Care in Labour leaflet
- Now We're Talking Website
- Healthwatch's Digital Inclusion Project advert for local Parish Magazines
- Healthwatch's Ageing Well questionnaire

## Patient Lead Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE)

4 of our volunteers helped with a trial run of patient led assessments of the care environment at St Michael's Hospice.



Thank you for your support in arranging of the PLACE assessment carried out at St Michael's (Hospice). The experiences of the Healthwatch volunteers was helpful in ensuring the day went smoothly.

Simon Licence, Facilities Volunteer, St Michael's Hospice



# Youthwatch

## Herefordshire College of Arts (HCA)

To understand the perceptions young people had of Covid's Impact, we gave students a live brief entitled The Impact of Covid. 35 students submitted work.



## HCA's Freshers Fair

To introduce young people to Healthwatch and help signpost them to services, we attended Herefordshire's College of Arts' Freshers Fair.



## Walford Primary School

We unveiled our new, life-sized mascot at Walford Primary School which was designed by one of its pupil's Ottilia Carver last year. We also held an assembly about the different types of health services available to them.

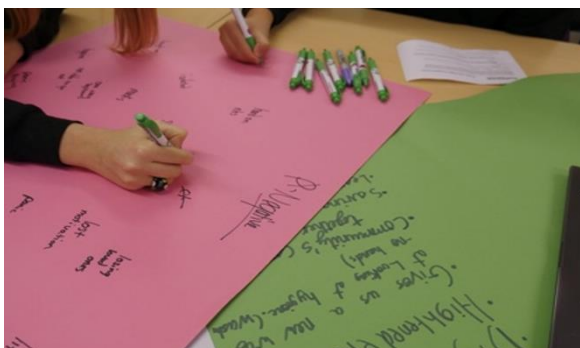


## Crucial Crew

We produced an online workshop based on our Ask the Doctor videos which were used in a Crucial Crew safety programme for all primary schools.

## John Kyle High School

We held two discussion sessions with students about the impact of Covid on themselves, their families and friends.



# 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	£140,000	Staff costs	£118,157
Additional funding	£20,000	Operational costs	£11,157
Digital Inclusion Project	£13,000	Digital inclusion Project	£16,722
		Support and administration	£15,469
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£173,000</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£161,505</b>

## Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Hearing the voice of those who experience inequalities in Herefordshire
2. Hearing the voice of children and families
3. Developing the Herefordshire community partnership and talk community networks

## Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race.



# Statutory statements

## About us

Healthwatch England, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, E20 1JQ

Healthwatch Herefordshire uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.



## The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch board consists of 6 members. 3 of these work on a voluntary basis to 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. Through 2020/21 the board met quarterly and made decisions on matters such as increase of staffing capacity to undertake increasing workload, how to use the resources Healthwatch has and the recruitment of the new non-executive chair.

### We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities by:

- Live Q&A sessions online
- Reviewing the information, advice and feedback received from the public throughout the year
- Community Partnership and talk community network feedback
- Emerging priorities from other organisations public feedback in our local health and care system

### Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

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 feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

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. This year we have done this for example, by visiting groups of particular interest with printed materials to have 1-2-1 conversations such as Gypsy Roma Traveller sites, workplaces for agricultural workers for whom English is a second language and Learning disability day opportunity provision.

We will ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website and can make a printed copy available should anyone request it.

We would like to thank the public for continuing to talk to us about health and care in Herefordshire. Your voice counts and it enables us to act on your behalf to make a difference.

# healthwatch

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