

Championing what matters to you



**Annual Report
2021-22**

Contents

Message from our chair	3
About us	4
Our year in review	5
Key priorities	6
Listening to your experiences	9
Volunteers	18
Finances and future priorities	20
Statutory statements	21
Message from our Chief Executive Officer	23

If you require this report in another format please get in touch.

Message from our chair

It has been an incredible honour to continue leading Healthwatch Wakefield as Chair of the Board this year, a year which has continued to see massive changes to our lives.

Throughout the year our staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure we continue to be at the forefront of communities across the District, championing for improved health and social care for all, and while the landscape around us is continuing to change, we will continue to respond to the various challenges ahead. We will respond to changes in how health and social care services are delivered, at a district and neighbourhood level, while working closely with our colleagues across West Yorkshire and at a national level.

We have made a targeted effort to increase the diversity of the trustees, and have a more representative group leading the organisation. I am pleased to say these efforts are working, and while we acknowledge this, we will continue to increase diversity where possible.

This report showcases some of the work we achieved last year, all of which couldn't have been achieved without the hard work of many. Please let me express a big thank you to those who contributed to this, and as we outline our priorities for the upcoming year, the board and I want to reaffirm our determination to ensure we continue to make an impact for you, the people of Wakefield District.



Pam Hodgkins
Healthwatch Wakefield 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



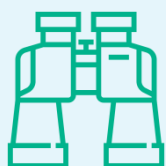
About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Wakefield is your local health and social care champion.

From Overton to Knottingley 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

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care services better.



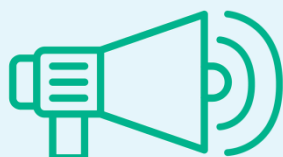
Our values

- 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 care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



833 people

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

509 people

contacted us directly for advice and information on topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

28,591 people

visited our website.

178 people

came to us for support from our Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service.

Making a difference to care



We published

39 reports

based on the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services, for example the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy Refresh, Individual Placement Support Service, and a report from engaging with our Boating Community.

We also provided monthly reports on feedback we received on all issues, primary care, mental health services and acute care, which go to 19 different groups of commissioners and providers.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

61

outstanding volunteers, who gave up over 75 days to make health and care services better for our community.

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

£261,532.14

the same as the previous year. £59,266.68 of this is to deliver the Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service.

We also currently employ

12 staff

who help us carry out our work.

Key priorities

In our last annual report we outlined six key priorities which were identified after carefully reviewing the evidence gathered from members of the public.

They were:

- The ongoing impact of Covid-19
- Health inequalities
- Community Mental Health Services
- Acute Mental Health Services at South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Care homes and nursing homes
- Adult Social Care



The ongoing impact of Covid-19

We continued to share critical information with the public through our website, volunteers, social media and engagement activities. Along with this we collected the challenges the public were facing and shared this intelligence directly with the Director of Public Health at the weekly Covid Community Champion meetings, or through her regular visits to volunteering sessions. In particular we were able to identify key barriers to the vaccine roll-out.



Health Inequalities

Health inequalities have been exacerbated further as a result of the pandemic. We targeted messages to seldom heard groups in an effort to challenge this. We provided information accessing a GP to the homeless and boating communities; collaborated on the Wakefield Gypsy and Traveller Health Needs Assessment; targeted information to local prisons. We also led the Health and Wellbeing Board strategy refresh engagement, ensuring a diverse population were consulted while the board redesigned this key local document.



Community Mental Health Services

We conducted an in-depth analysis of what support residents needed from a new community mental health service, the Individual Placement Support Service, delivered by the Wakefield Mental Health Alliance. We produced a report with six recommendations and have been continuing to support the Alliance in establishing the service, ensuring your voice remains at the heart of their plans. The service aims support people with mental health problems find and keep the right work opportunity.



Acute Mental Health Services

Throughout the year we worked closely with South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust on a number of projects. As a result of this, the work of our colleagues in other local Healthwatch, and the dedicated staff at the Trust, we have established a direct link for public feedback to be shared with their Executive Management Team, and Equality Inclusion and Involvement Committee on a regular basis. Any changes they make will now be published on their website as “You told us, We listened”.



Care homes and nursing homes

In partnership with Wakefield Council, we delivered the highly successful Caring through Covid awards to celebrate the efforts and achievements of adult social care staff and say thank you. The virtual awards ceremony had 10 categories in total, including The Unsung Hero Award, The Compassionate Care Award and The Outstanding Care in a Crisis Award and was hosted by local celebrity Christine Talbot. Local care homes and nursing homes put on parties to watch the awards with their residents. One staff member said: “Its nice to be finally recognised” about the event.



Adult Social Care

This year we agreed funding to start a two-year project, creating and supporting an Adult Social Care Citizen Panel to help shape local adult social care services. Nichola Esmond, Service Director for Adult Social Care said: “(There is) lots... to do to improve people’s experiences of accessing social care. Thanks so much to the panel members, we are looking forward to working with you!”. There are already 11 volunteers recruited onto the panel that have begun to review information from local services.



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.



Where your views and suggestions go

Each month we put together a report of all the feedback you have given us. We take out your personal details and share your experiences with the people who plan and run our local health and care services. We also send individual issues to other services, NHS England and Healthwatch England.

We send our monthly reports to:

- Care Quality Commission: Mental Health Directorate
- Care Quality Commission: Primary Care Directorate
- Care Quality Commission: Secondary Care Directorate
- Health Care Quality Intelligence Group
- Healthwatch Kirklees
- Healthwatch Wakefield Board, staff, and members
- Mental Health Alliance
- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust Director of Nursing and Quality
- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust Head of Patient Experience
- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust Patient Experience Sub Committee
- Social Care Quality Intelligence Group
- South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

What did you tell us?

Here are the top three health and care services people contacted us about.

GP Services



35% of queries

- We kept the public informed as guidance changed to accessing GP services.
- We regularly spoke to commissioners about the issues and feedback we were collecting.
- We delivered a targeted campaign to the homeless and boating communities across the district to ensure they were aware of how to access GP Services.



“The issues people are having with accessing their GP Practice was brought to our attention thanks to the work of Healthwatch Wakefield. Since then we have been doing everything within our power to remove obstacles so it is easier for people to see their practice. There is still lots of work to do and we will continue to work with Healthwatch every step of the way.”

Laura Elliot
Head of Quality, NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group



Dentists



17% of queries

- We regularly searched and phoned local dentists to see who was accepting new patients.
- We provided information to the public on how to access local dentists and emergency treatment.
- We championed this issue locally and ensured it was raised to be discussed nationally.
- Also see pages 12 and 13.

Pharmacy



5% of queries

- We made sure each piece of feedback was shared with local commissioners, the people who plan and buy services, and local pharmacy providers.
- We started to engage with the Pharmacy Needs Assessment Group to ensure Healthwatch representation on the upcoming assessment of local pharmacy needs.
- We made this a priority for the upcoming year.

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 empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for the NHS and care services to step back and see the bigger picture through hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives. This provides a deeper understanding than using data alone and can challenge assumptions.

We went to speak with our local Boating Community about accessing services provided to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. It became clear that many of them struggled to access general health and care services such as registering with a GP and mental health support. Through our joint efforts with Wakefield Council, the Canal and River Trust, and NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group, we were able to direct Boaters to the support they needed and inform them and services of their rights.



Sharing your stories with more services

We are now working with more services than ever before to make sure your experiences have the most impact possible.

We send monthly intelligence reports to the Quality Intelligence Group which consists of a growing number of key services and individuals across the system. This is something we have done for years, but we are now sending this report to an additional 12 places, listed at page 10, that influence health and care services. We will continue to develop communication channels where possible to ensure your voice is heard by as many decision makers as possible.



Improving care over time

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

We have known about dental problems for a long time. In 2016 we supported Healthwatch England to publish a report highlighting that people were struggling to access dental care. Over the past year, the level of feedback you shared with us dramatically increased so we published a review of this and encouraged Healthwatch England to pick up discussions nationally. As a result, along with other colleagues from the Network, we collectively called for reform of NHS dentistry, co-signing a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for NHS dentistry to be accessible and affordable for all.

Dentistry is not the standard you deserve!

Earlier in the year we published the “Review on Feedback: Dental services” report as we noticed a dramatic increase in the levels of feedback you were telling us about Dentistry. Since this report we have continued to monitor and raise the state of local dentistry to ensure your experiences were shared with decision makers.

The overall theme of what you have been telling us has been the lack of support. People have felt unable to access clear information about where to access dental care. We have received many comments about feeling unsupported by their previous practice, or registering for a new one, reaching out to NHS 111 and again feeling unsupported. People say they are paying for private dental care as they lack other options, which is not an option for many.

We acknowledge that the pandemic brought about a lot of change, but now that many dentists are offering more treatment, we are still hearing from people who aren't able to access care. We also acknowledge that local action is constrained by complex national challenges around commissioning and contracting of services. However, the impact on people trying to access dental care during Covid-19 has been significant, and we know that many people have been left distressed, confused and unsupported by the situation.



“My wife has been trying for last four weeks to find a dentist following severe toothache. Parts of her tooth are now falling out. We simply cannot find a dentist anywhere despite checking the NHS site and contacting numerous practices that are taking on NHS patients – we cannot afford to go private.”



What's next?

Due to our call for change, alongside others across the Healthwatch network joining the call, Healthwatch collectively called for reform of NHS dentistry, co-signing a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for NHS dentistry to be accessible and affordable for everyone.

As a result, dentistry has never before been on the national agenda as much as it is today. As there is widespread changes to the NHS system imminent, there will be changes to how dental systems operate as well. These changes should improve the issues we are hearing about people accessing their dentist, but they will take time to come into effect. This is why we will continue to focus on dentistry, support local people to get the dental care they need, and continue to champion your issues locally and ensure they are raised nationally.



“Perverse incentivisation is sustaining harm in the system. We will not rest until local NHS Dental Service provision is of the quality the public across our district deserve.”

Gary Jevon
Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Wakefield



Increasing chances for your voice to be heard

Over the year we have championed more of your voices in more places.

We amplify your personal experiences to help health and social care services gain a deeper understanding of what it is actually like to be someone using a service. Your experiences create a richer and deeper understanding than statistics and data alone can. This is why we are committed to developing more opportunities for you to share your stories directly with services through focused community panels, and delivering more focused work with those who historically have had less opportunities to share their voices.

One example of this is our activities supporting the boating and homeless communities across the district. In partnership with Public Health, NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group and the Canal and River Trust we distributed targeted information about accessing a GP.

We were able to facilitate conversations directly with key services which wouldn't have happened without our involvement. The result was a detailed report published with three recommendations to improve the experiences of these communities.



"It was an asset to have Healthwatch on board as an overtly independent organisation"

Tracy Leach
Public Health



We have established a new Adult Social Care Citizen Panel to create opportunities for your voices to be heard on social care with the people who run adult social care services. We also took on the Maternity Voices Partnership Chair role, recruiting into this post and developing the partnership. The initial work has been so successful that we have received additional funding for the coming year in order to double in size what it can provide.



"I am currently a full time unpaid carer for my Mum who has Mild Cognitive Impairment, my intention is to use my experience and knowledge within this field to assist and support those in a similar position"

Adult Social Care Citizen Panel Member



What's next?

Each piece of information you share with us is vital to understanding the key issues across the district. This is why our community panels will continue to recruit new volunteers and members who have experiences of using local services, be that adult social care or maternity services. Every effort will be made to make sure these groups represent everyone in the district and drive changes that will benefit us all. We will also deliver targeted activity to those who historically have had less opportunities to have their voices heard.

Accessible information, are we doing enough?

Not everyone has the same access to services or information. Many people struggle to understand information that can help them look after themselves.

Health inequalities show the differences in the status of people's health. But also, the care they receive and the opportunities they have. Many adults in the UK have low health literacy skills. This means they struggle to read and understand medical information.



- More than 4 in 10 adults struggle to understand health content written for the public.
- In the UK 7.1 million adults read at, or below, the level of an average 9 year old.
- Low health literacy has been linked to poor general health, increased hospital admissions, low vaccination uptake and reduced life expectancy.
- Groups at risk include communities with language barriers, people with learning disabilities, and people living with dementia.

What have we done?

We already use Sign Live and interpreters and continued to push health and care services to do the same. But were we doing enough?

In this last year we developed a new website, which gave us the opportunity to look at how we present our information.

- We now have a separate area on our website that includes easy read, British Sign Language, Sign Live, community languages, and large print.
- We have developed an accessibility policy and found services to produce audio files and other formats.
- We have produced our surveys in other community languages, for example our engagement on the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy refresh included a Polish version.
- We created easy read information on coronavirus testing, vaccines, shielding and all the rules and regulations.

Your care, your way

When Healthwatch England launched the 'Your Care, Your Way' campaign we jumped at the chance to be involved. Our first Healthwatch Wakefield report published ten years ago was created with our local Deaf User Partnership. It looked at problems with getting care and information in a way that Deaf people could understand. It also recognised that the Accessible Information Standard was only useful if it was implemented and used. These issues haven't gone away. We continued to hear from local people about the difficulties they were experiencing and passed this information to local health and care leaders. Our Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy colleagues were helping several people through the formal complaints process and similar issues were being raised again and again.

At the same time discussions on sensory impairment and access to services were taking place in the Third Sector Leaders Group, and with our Service Directors for Adult Social Care and Public Health Director.

As a result of these discussions, the Sensory Impairment Insight Group was established late last year. It's meetings are organised and facilitated by Healthwatch Wakefield and chaired by our Chief Executive Officer.

Participants include local voluntary organisations such as Wakefield and District Society for the Deaf, Wakefield District Sight Aid, and Second Chance. These meet alongside representatives from our local health and care services. The group allows everyone to work together to do as much as we possibly can to address any barriers people face when accessing health and care information and services.

What's next?

We were delighted when representatives from our local hospitals, Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, attended a meeting and said they had signed up to the national Healthwatch 'Your care, your way' campaign. Their plans are excellent including work on the Accessible Information Standard, health literacy, and their 'MY Purple Promise', which they are about to launch. We have also started discussing an event the Trust would like to organise on these changes.

We will continue to develop our own information and advice, making it as accessible as possible, sharing it in ways that people understand and can respond to.

We will continue organising through the Sensory Impairments Insight Group, collecting information and feeding this back with recommendations for change.

Are we doing enough? We've started but definitely not finished.

Special thanks

Everyone who takes the time to share their experiences, and partners including:

- Val Pratt, Wakefield and District Society for the Deaf
- Hayley Grocock, Wakefield District Sight Aid
- Louise Toth, Easy Read UK
- Heather Hayden and Brian Chiyesu, Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
- Dasa Farmer and Laura Elliott, NHS Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group
- Anna Hartley, Wakefield Public Health
- Nichola Esmond and Lisa Willcox, Adult Social Care Services, Wakefield Council
- Wakefield Council and the Live Well Grant Programme
- Healthwatch England



"Whenever Deaf friends grumble or are distressed about their GP or hospital, I tell them about my own experience and how Healthwatch have helped me. With their help I have enabled improvement with the way the hospital communicates with Deaf people."



Advice, information, and support

More than ever people need accurate, clear information and advice they can trust.

In this year over 28,500 people visited our website to get news, information, and advice. This was a 32% increase from the previous year. Often people visited our website for information relating to coronavirus testing and vaccines, but also for updates on local health and care services, especially our hospitals, the adult mental health services and the new Night OWLS mental health helpline for young people. We are pleased that people found information that was accurate, timely and useful.

509 people also contacted us directly for advice and information, mainly by telephone or email, but also people made contact through our website and social media channels. Our team responded to these queries providing help, offering advice and information, and signposting people to the services or support they need.

Our two NHS Complaints Advocates help take people through their options, and support people through the official complaints process, if that's what they decide they want to do.

Here is some feedback that shows how our advocates have made a difference.

"My Advocate has been absolutely amazing in terms of helping me with my complaint. I experienced discrimination and abuse from a service that almost made me lose faith in people. I was ready to give up because I felt so dejected. It was only because of her calmly and competently explaining the complaints process and encouraging me to make progress on my complaint that I was able to do so.

So much happened that it felt like an impossible task, and truly the situation had upset me to such an extent that I found it difficult to think back to it to formulate everything. She was patient with me, even though it took me a really long time to get back to her sometimes, and she didn't give up on me or get frustrated with my delays.

Seeing the amount of effort that she put into making sure my complaint was top standard really empowered me and made me feel like I had a voice when otherwise I felt so powerless due to what had happened. I thought I was eloquent, but she has really got a talent for identifying what I wanted to say and improving it while making it way more concise. I'm so impressed with the service and particularly her. I genuinely don't think I'd have got this far or even submitted a complaint if it wasn't for her. Her input has given me a lot more confidence and hopefully my complaint will not only make a difference for me, but for other people in the same position so they don't have to go through what I did."

"I have recommended your service to other people who have complaints regarding the hospital. I have felt supported and well informed throughout this process when I was at my lowest ebb.

My advocate showed compassion and understanding and pointed me in the right direction at all times.

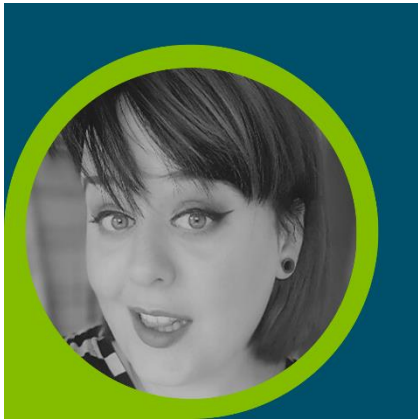
I can only say thank you as in the circumstances I found myself in, it is so comforting to know someone is in your corner. Once again, my heartfelt thanks to her, she was absolutely wonderful."

Volunteers

We are supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch. Thanks to their efforts, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in NHS and social care. This year they:

- Contributed to developing and improving adult social care services through our new Citizen Panel
- Helped improve local health and care services for pregnant women, their families, and babies, through our Maternity Voices Partnership
- Participated in project work through our Cancer Alliance Community Panel
- Supported each other through wellbeing coffee mornings, and
- Young Healthwatch helped our Director of Public Health with the ongoing response to the pandemic, and were instrumental in the design and development of the new Night OWLS mental health service.

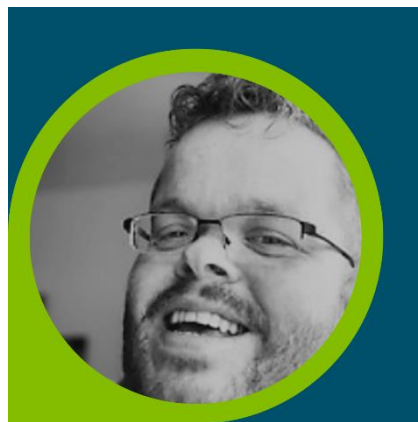




Sophie

"I've volunteered for the Maternity Voices Partnership this year largely due to my own experiences when I was pregnant. I've been able to contribute to projects about infant feeding, and induction of labour. Knowing I can listen to and make others' voices heard gives me faith that we can all improve maternity services and make better experiences for everyone in the future. It's also rewarding to see our suggestions having an impact on the service already."

[Wakefield District Maternity Voices Partnership](#)



Lee

"I volunteer with the Adult Social Care Citizen Panel. I would like to expand my knowledge regarding the healthcare sector; I love new challenges. Also, because I am disabled myself, I think it would be nice to see it from my own point of view and, if need be, make some suggestions of changes I'd make? Why do I want to volunteer? I'd love to make a huge positive impact to people's lives now and in the future."

[Adult Social Care Citizen Panel](#)



David

"Following removal of a kidney through cancer I offered to join the Cancer Patient Panel hoping that I could give something back. It has proved extremely interesting with a diverse range of subjects from lung checks, videos for new patients and non-surgical oncology. Seeing changes made after input from the panel has proven the value of being involved."

[Cancer Alliance Community Panel](#)



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchwakefield.co.uk



01924 787379



enquiries@healthwatchwakefield.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	
Funding received from local authority	£261,000
Additional funding	£164,000
Total income	£425,000

Expenditure	
Staff costs	£289,000
Operational costs	£55,000
Support and administration	£32,000
Total expenditure	£376,000

Top four priorities for 2022-23

After carefully analysing the information you told us last year, we are going to focus on the following four areas:

1. Adult social care, in particular the discharge processes from secondary care to the care sector.
2. Dentistry.
3. Health inequalities, in particular the impact on health inequalities when accessing primary care services such as GPs.
4. Community pharmacy services.

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, how much money you have, or any personal characteristics that make you who you are.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Wakefield, The Plex, 15 Margaret Street, Wakefield, WF1 2DQ

Young Healthwatch is managed by Young Lives Consortium, Lightwaves, Lower York Street, Wakefield WF1 3LJ

Healthwatch Wakefield 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 12 members who 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 in public four times and made decisions on matters such as our strategic priorities and our new premises.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. For example, we use insight from the information and signposting enquiries we receive, the feedback and experiences you share with us through our website, social media, and engagement activities, our panels and partnerships, the research we undertake, along with the public forums and discussions we participate in.

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 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, 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 by, for example, increasing the diversity of the board, creating information in easy read format, publishing surveys in other languages, and delivering targeted engagement with groups of people whose experiences aren't often heard, such as asylum seekers and refugees. For more information on any of these projects please get in touch with us.

We make sure this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website and will make available in different formats upon request.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had zero providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

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.

We escalated issues around dentistry to the Healthwatch England Committee. Otherwise, there were no special reviews or investigations undertaken.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Wakefield is represented on the Wakefield Health and Wellbeing Board by Gary Jevon, Chief Executive Officer.

Message from our CEO

Our fifth year of trading as an independent charitable company has been one of significant transition in a number of areas, both for Healthwatch Wakefield itself and for the wider health and care system.

The development of new integrated care systems, boards and partnerships across the country has led to a renewed focus not only on how provider organisations work together, but also how the views, experiences, and voices of service users, plus their families and carers, as well as the wider public in general, can be more effectively used to influence the way services are designed, delivered and monitored.

As a result, Healthwatch Wakefield's activities have never been in more demand. We have moved from producing a single monthly intelligence report, which details and themes everything we've heard from all our sources for the local partnership, to producing three monthly reports: a fully comprehensive version, one on mental health and one on secondary care. These are now delivered and discussed in 19 different forums which include the local Quality Intelligence Groups for both health and social care, Integrated Care Partnership board, NHS Trust Patient Experience Committees, Mental Health Alliance meetings, and the Care Quality Commission.

Our citizen panel type work has grown throughout the year, both in terms of the number of panels we run and the number of people involved with each panel. We have added two new projects to our portfolio, the Adult Social Care Citizen Panel and the Maternity Voices Partnership. The latter has been so successful through the year that we have received additional funding for the coming year in order to double the size and resources that go into delivering this project. These projects join our well established and award winning Cancer Alliance Community Panel, and our Young Healthwatch function.

The number of topics, projects and engagement activities that people have asked Healthwatch Wakefield to get involved with, or represent their voices on, has increased substantially throughout the year demonstrating that local people recognise the difference we make and the impact we have on the system.

We have worked with service users to ensure their voices are heard in relation to the care sector. For example, the 'Caring Through Covid' awards project and our adult social care work, younger people's services such as the 'Happy and Healthy' project and Wakefield's Children and Young People's Strategy, mental health services such as the Individual Placement Support and Suicide Prevention projects, public health initiatives such as the Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy refresh and the Big Conversation, and healthcare services such as 'My Right to Healthcare' work with the boating and homeless communities, and engagement around unplanned and emergency care.

Continued over

Message from our CEO (cont.)

In total, we have been involved with and contributed the public voice to over 70 projects and proposals over the year.

We continue to work to our agreed service delivery model:

Firstly, to **inform and advise** by keeping ourselves informed and share information about local health and care services with members of the public; helping people to understand their rights; and supporting individuals who have questions or concerns about local services.

We will **involve** and engage local people through our outreach activities, we will offer a variety of ways for people to access information, advice, and support, and we will continue to build and support a strong team of volunteers.

We will **investigate** by looking deeper into specific areas of concern raised by local people; and we will collect, analyse, and report on intelligence around people's experience of health and social care services.

We will share our intelligence and report findings widely to **influence and impact** the key decisions that are made about health and care services for local people, and support decision making with local people's voice in mind.

Through the Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service, we will continue to **advocate and support** as appropriate, to enable people to complain about NHS services when they need to.

And we will **govern** ourselves effectively in line with our statutory functions, managing our funding to support our sustainability.

We will continue to work with partners on a wider geographical footprint, such as with neighbouring local Healthwatch organisations, to ensure that people's voices remain heard across the evolving Integrated Care System in West Yorkshire. It will remain important to us that the public voice does not get lost amidst these important conversations and decisions.

I am confident that Healthwatch Wakefield continues to strengthen its position in the local health and care system, and we will continue to use our influence and impact to ensure the voice of the public remains both heard by, and important to, our district's decision makers and leaders across all health and social care services.

Gary Jevon
Healthwatch Wakefield Chief Executive Officer

“Thank you for helping and trying because you helped me more than any other professional has ever done in their life.”

Independent NHS Complaints
Advocacy Service client

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