

Championing what matters to you

Annual Report 2021-22



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Message from our chairman

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all residents, patients, their family and friends, our team and the ever-dedicated volunteer members, for sharing their concerns, local issues and stories about health and social care in our borough.

This report records some of the many things that people have shared with us. Although people come to us with their concerns, some of which are in our report below, we also hear about some very caring and supportive initiatives that make us proud to be in the Borough of Havering.

I very much hope you find this report helpful and informative and please do contact us if you would like to know more about our work.



Anne-Marie Dean
Chairman,
Healthwatch Havering

Below is a comment from Sir Robert Francis QC, who is soon to retire as Chair of Healthwatch England. Sir Robert has been inspirational in developing Healthwatch and we are grateful to him for his dedication to ensuring the patient voice is heard.



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.

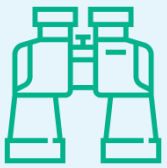
Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England



About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Havering is your local health and social care champion. From Rainham & Wennington to Havering atte Bower and everywhere in between, we make sure Council and 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

That Havering is the Place where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To ensure our residents experiences help make health and care better in our borough for everyone.



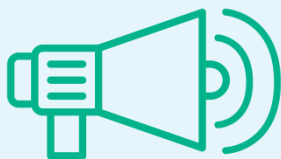
Our values

- 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



635 people

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

140 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as NHS dentistry, accessing a GP and problems with hospital care

Making a difference to care



We published

6 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Community Insights on disabled residents and the Covid vaccine in North East London

which highlighted how the vaccine impacted disabled residents

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

20

outstanding volunteers, who freely give up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by Havering Council. In 2021-22 we received:

£117,359

Which is the same amount that we received for the previous year.

We also currently employ

6 staff, all part time

who help us carry out this work.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are the sort of thing we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



Supporting vaccination programmes, providing support to older people and carers to attend the centres



We supported a family in their discussions with BHRUT regarding the protocol of Do Not Resuscitate DNR

Summer



We supported a disabled mum with a young baby to get transport support to specialist hospital appointments



We continued to raise concerns regarding the signage and long queues experience by patients waiting for the Urgent Treatment centre

Autumn



Teaming up with the British Red Cross, we called for improvements to make leaving hospital safer during the pandemic.



We continued our campaign to increase the access to residents for dental care. The issues was raised and acknowledged at the Health and Wellbeing Board

Winter



When people struggled to see their GP face-to-face we asked the NHS to confirm this right for all patients, resulting in updated guidance to practices.



To support the COVID-19 vaccination programme we talked to different communities to understand their hesitancy towards the vaccine and published guidance to improve trust.

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



Long Covid – Project – Post Covid 19 Clinic

Thanks to people sharing their experience of symptoms

For some people, coronavirus (COVID-19) can cause symptoms that last weeks or months after the infection has gone. This is sometimes called post-COVID-19 syndrome or “Long COVID”

In partnership with neighbouring Healthwatch and the North East London Foundation Health Trust (NELFT) we carried out a survey into Long COVID



169 people responded, of whom 96 were Havering residents. 84% had tested positive for Covid – 41% diagnosed with Long Covid – 20% identified as carers – 77% were women – 13% were health care workers

People told us:

- **they were unsure where to access support**

‘I HAVE NOWHERE TO GO FOR HELP’

‘There’s absolutely no support, it’s like people with long covid are invisible’

- **they were in fear of being disbelieved**

‘I haven’t looked for help at the doctors in case I’m not believed.’

- **of the impact on their quality of life**

‘I’ve had no support from anyone I have gone into debt and struggling to work and feel tired all the time’

What difference did this make

- Evaluate GP diagnostic codes and simplify referral
- Widen in-person GP access to assess impact

Recommendations



- To be recognised and acknowledged
- ‘Let me know a little bit more’ – information for peace of mind
- Time limits for when to seek advice regarding loss of function



Digital – emerging and vital

One of the most important roles that a Healthwatch has is to support emerging pieces of work from all organisations across the borough which will enhance and support those people who are most vulnerable in our Havering borough.

One such emerging piece of work is how services in Havering respond and support those residents that need help and support to be able to access services in the new digital environment we all have to live in.

We are supporting the Borough's Discovery programme and have and will be using our Friends Network to help all residents to learn about the importance of having connectivity and accessibility to the internet. At our recent Away Day for our Volunteer Members we had a presentation from the Digital Portfolio team and were able to influence and discuss the issues that will improve the service for all.



'With the internet you lose personal contact with people, you do even with your family because they email you or text you and you think it would be nice to hear your voice.'

Life Offline qualitative research, female 75+



How we will build on this years work in 2022-2023

- It will help to identify training and on-going support needs
- Ensuring that people worries about security and scamming are addressed and supported
- Ensure that all young people have the ability to learn from home using digital technology
- Increasing the opportunity for positive outcomes – on-line shopping, paying bills, keeping in touch with friends and family

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 Social and Home 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.

We have undertaken an annual independent survey of residents who are receiving care home packages of support provided by LBH. Our experienced team of volunteers use a range of over 20 questions to provide residents with every opportunity to share their experience and influence the care that they and others are receiving



Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

This year we have been working to help re-engage patients with their GP practices. The experience of GP services has not always been positive due to Covid 19. There is lot of work being developed to help to improve the service models for both the Patient, Carers and GP practice staff. We are working with the CCG to reintroduce and support Patient Participating Groups (PPG)



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.

Access to NHS dental care has been and remains a serious concern in the Borough. In 2020 we published our first report on Dental Services in Havering. The Healthwatch campaign is for accessibility and affordability for everyone. With the new NHS reforms Dental care and its funding will be part of the local Integrated Care Systems (ICS)

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 needing to know more about how to live with Long Covid – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Being members of a detailed clinical study on the impact of 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 to support their recovery



Supporting the public health campaign – to get our jobs



Playing our part in helping at the vaccinations centres

For Havering, the vaccination programme was a vital part of the fight against Covid. As a borough we have one of the highest number of care home beds in London and a large number of our population are older people.

Our members helped at the vaccination centres, with providing transport, and importantly networking with often hard to reach communities to ensure that they had every opportunity to visit the vaccination centres

We used our Healthwatch Friends Network to publish often twice weekly information which was flowing down from the NHS and the public health team at Havering Borough Council

We worked in partnership with the local voluntary organisations to support residents and carers needs.

Volunteers

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

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.
- Carried out website and telephone reviews for local services on the information they provide and assessing their accessibility.
- Continued to help with the local volunteering efforts supporting those who were self-isolating.

Become a

healthwatch

Community Champion!





Vivien

“For me I am particularly passionate about dementia care. Unless you have experience of dementia you can not imagine how unsettling and distressing it is for people who have dementia and the enormous challenges that their carers face. I regularly provide updates to our weekly meeting on the key issues that friends and neighbours affected share with me.



Dianne

“I have a background in Care Home management and this is still my passion. For me to be able to support local homes to deliver the best possible care is important. I have a role in the Enter and View visits to care homes. To ensure that I keep up to date with CQC requirements etc. I attend the Boroughs Quality and Safety meeting and the tri-borough meeting on quality and safety.



Jenny

“Like my two colleagues above I have been a Volunteer member of Healthwatch since it was created 2012. I have a schools background and I am passionate about volunteering. I have been volunteering at our local hospital for many years – for me the opportunity to make a positive contribution to a persons life – young or old – is the best feeling in the world



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchhavering.co.uk



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Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of Havering Healthwatch C.I.C., a community interest company limited by guarantee, whose registered office is at Queen's Court, 2-17 Eastern Road, Romford RM1 3NH

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



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	£117,359	Staff costs	£82,766
Additional funding	£2,540	Operational costs	£2,743
Taken from reserves	£565	Support and administration	£34,955
Total income	£120,464	Total expenditure	£120,464

Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Helping GP practice Patient Experience Groups to become re-established
2. Maternity – improving local services
3. Mental Health – supporting development of street and pastoral 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, income or race.

The way we work

Involving volunteer members in our governance and decision-making

Our Healthwatch board consists of eleven members (two Executive Directors, two Non-Executive Directors, two staff members and five volunteers) who provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Through 2021/22 the board met eleven times and made decisions on matters such as our finances, resuming Enter & View visits, the HWE Quality Framework and internal policies and procedures.

Every quarter, all of our volunteer members meet in a formal Members' Meeting as the ultimate decision-making body. Additional meetings are occasionally held.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. During the year, we joined the prize winning North East London Healthwatch Community Insights System and now access a much broader range of opinions.

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 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..

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, developing links with a local voluntary organisation that represents people of Eastern European heritage.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website, send it to our Friends' Network and circulate it by email to a wide range of stakeholders.

Responses to recommendations and requests

No provider failed to 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 are planning to reintroduce visits during 2022/23.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to the Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Havering is represented on the Havering Health and Wellbeing Board Anne-Marie Dean, Chair. During 2021/22 our representative has effectively carried out this role by discussion, sharing of information and attending the Health and Wellbeing Board and Havering Borough Partnership.

2021-2022 Outcomes

Project / Activity Area

Opportunities / Changes made to services

St George’s Wellbeing Centre project

Members of the development working group; Outline Business Case for the project submitted

Dementia

Widening our involvement with local groups

St John Ambulance

Working to support and widen the work of the Community First Responder team

North East London (NEL) Healthwatch Community Insights programme

Improving our ability to use digital information to provide evidence of concerns for residents and patients

Post Covid Syndrome (Long Covid) programme

Continuing to support the work of the research team

NEL Home Care Survey on Designated Enhanced Service (GP cover for care homes)

Working jointly with Healthwatch and the ICS – 1st stage of planning completed

Recommencing the Enter and View of Care Homes

New model for E & V designed using NHS guidance and working with the Care Homes

Pharmacy Needs Assessment

Work completed on the assessment; to be presented at Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Working with individual GP practices

Keeping in Touch with GP practices that are currently receiving local GP support

Maternity

Working with BHRUT following the CQC report on services and combining this with a wider survey with Healthwatch across NEL

Working with Havering COMPACT

Working and developing our role within the COMPACT and identifying areas for development and support



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