

# Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Doncaster  
Annual Report 2021-22



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# Message from our chair

Welcome to the annual report of Healthwatch Doncaster for 2021-2022. The last year has been dominated by the direct effect of the Covid-19 pandemic and the knock-on effects of the pandemic on health and social care. As we hopefully emerge from a period that has changed so many lives, Healthwatch Doncaster is determined to focus on the things that matter to the citizens of Doncaster about the way that health and social care is commissioned and delivered.

As I write this introduction, we are in the midst of a fundamental change in the way that healthcare is organised and we will be making sure that the voices of the people of Doncaster are heard and heeded in our city.

As always, I would like to thank my fellow board members, staff and volunteers for their commitment and effort and offer my very best wishes for those whose lives have taken them on new paths.



Steve Shore  
**Independent Chair – Healthwatch Doncaster**



“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.”

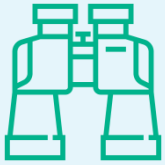
**Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England**



# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Doncaster is your local health and social care champion. From Mexborough to Moorends 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 better.



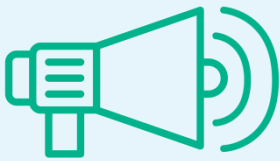
### Our values

- 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



**6,047 New users**

Accessed our website for support and information.

**Over 14,000 people**

Engaged with our Facebook, and website content.

## Making a difference to care



**We published 5 reports**

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

Our most popular report was our

**Support & Information for Mental and Emotional Wellbeing**

which highlights support for mental-wellbeing during the pandemic.

## Health and care which works for you



We're lucky to have

**31**

outstanding volunteers, who gave up over 360 hours to make care better for our community.

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

**£176,360**

Which is **5% less** than the previous year.

We also employ

**1 full & 5 part-time staff**

members of staff who help us carry out this work

## A flavour of the work we've been doing this year

These are the biggest projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



We reached out - Our volunteers supported people isolated by the pandemic.



We supported Ben to present his experience of accessing mental health support to the CCG. Making them view services from a patient perspective.

Summer



We created a podcast for the Partially Sighted Society. Users of their Audio Library Service were able to find out more about Healthwatch.



We engaged with care-homes to see how they adapted to providing care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Autumn



We contributed to the Covid 19 and Flu Vaccination Programme by providing the public with relevant and up to date information on the topic.



966 people took part in our online survey on drive-through phlebotomy services in Doncaster. The results showed the service was well received by patients.

Winter



Our access to support for mental wellbeing project highlighted the need for awareness raising around alternative delivery models due to Covid-19.



In response to a number of enquires regarding dental access, we undertook a survey on this topic. We produced a report based on our findings.

# 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



## Drive Through Phlebotomy and Pre-Op Testing

**During the Covid 19 Pandemic the Phlebotomy Service at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospital Trust (DBTHT) had to rise to the challenge of delivering a safe and efficient service for blood and pre-operation testing.**

In order to do this a drive through service was created at Eco-Power Stadium on the outskirts of Doncaster town centre. The service was initially set up as a temporary measure in response to the challenges posed by the Pandemic. However, what we heard was that the majority of patients using the service would be happy if it were available longer term.

In order to further explore this we created an online survey and with the help of DBTHT staff at the site, who promoted the survey on our behalf, we gathered people's views on the service.

**Main findings from the survey were that people found the service convenient, the reasons cited for this were:**

- The lack of availability for blood testing at GP Practices
- Accessibility – for patients with limited mobility, for parents who didn't need to arrange childcare in order to attend and for people with limited time
- Ease of access – patients liked the fact that there were no parking issues and that they could attend at a time convenient for them
- People felt more comfortable attending the drive through, rather than a surgery or hospital environment

**807 People**

told us they would definitely use the service again.  
Just over 87% rated the service excellent with just over 12% stating that it was good or very good

### What difference did this make

The report represented the patient voice and was presented to key stakeholders. The short-term nature of the service means that the Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group (DCCG) are looking at plans to discontinue the service as other provisions are now more readily available.

In light of public opinion DCCG are reviewing this service with input from key stakeholders. Healthwatch Doncaster is a part of this process.

Our findings will represent the views of those who have accessed the service, ensuring the patient voice is heard at commissioning level.



## Keeping Communities Informed

**Keeping members of the Learning Disability Community informed and engaged about things that are relevant to their wellbeing is important. This was even more important during the Covid 19 Pandemic when Day Centres and other opportunities for people to meet were limited.**

In response to this Choice For All Doncaster (ChAD) got creative and produced some information booklets. The group of adults with Learning Disabilities (LD) who represent the voice of the local LD community secured funding to produce a series of Easy Read booklets to be delivered to individuals across Doncaster.

**During the period covered by this report a total of 3 booklets were produced and distributed. Reaching over 850 members of the local Learning Disability Community**

The content of the booklets included topics like:

- Covid information
- Vaccinations
- Keeping Safe
- Scam Awareness
- Using ZOOM
- Health related topics
- Fun activities

The booklets were delivered directly to individuals by the ChAD Peer Support Worker and local SMILE Centre staff. The booklets were well received and provided much needed information and support in an accessible format.

### What difference did this make

As a result, going forward, the group will be working in partnership with The Ridge Employability College to produce regular editions of the booklet.



“The individuals at Cantley Smile would like to thank the ChAD committee for regular easy read newsletters and booklets. We have enjoyed keeping up to date on the fab things that you are all doing to help people with a learning disability. Thank you for keeping regular social distanced contact throughout the pandemic, we appreciate it”

**Cantley SMILE**



## Three ways we have made a difference for the community



### Health Ambassadors

The Health Ambassadors support people and communities who are often under represented to speak out on the issues that are important to them.

We work closely with local Trusts, statutory authorities and providers to ensure that the voices of these communities are heard and their concerns acted upon.



### Patient Participation Group Network (PPG)

Healthwatch supports the local Patient Participation Group Network, facilitating meetings that bring together representatives from a number of local PPG's.

The aim of the network is to share good practice, provide feedback on developments in Primary Care and help identify areas where improvements can be made.



### Making a difference to accessing information

Choice for All Doncaster (Learning Disability Group) have been consulted on the Easy Read versions of documents by Doncaster Clinical Commissioning group and Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber Trust to ensure that information provided is clear to the people who need to access it.

# Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Doncaster 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 how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

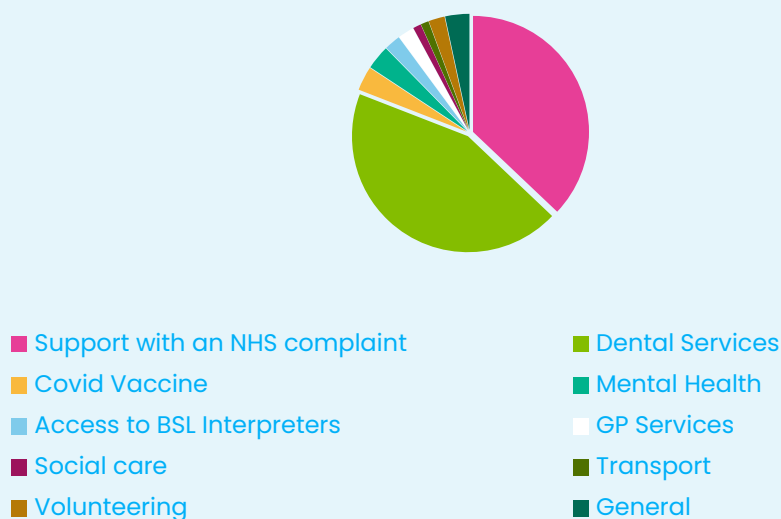
## **This year we helped people by:**

- **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**



## Signposting by Email and Telephone

Signposting by Email and Telephone 2021-2022



## Signposting

**Part of our role at Healthwatch Doncaster is to signpost people to health and social care services to meet their needs. Signposting can take many forms, for example interactions at engagement events, meetings, via our website, social media, email and telephone.**

**Enquiries can be wide ranging as the example above shows. The majority of our enquiries over the past year have been around access to NHS dental care, followed closely by people seeking support with making an NHS complaint.**

# Volunteers

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

## This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.
- Continued to help with the local volunteering efforts supporting those who were self-isolating and reaching out.





### Steve's Volunteer Experience

"I am proud of the work that my colleagues have done throughout the pandemic to contribute to wellbeing, for example through our Daily Dose sessions. I am now looking forward to the time when we can safely resume Enter and View in our care homes, to see the ways in which they reach and exceed the standards expected of them."



### Sue's Volunteer Experience

Sue loves helping engage with the public. In October 2021 she joined us at a community event, where she was able to talk to members of the public about health and social care and how the last 18 months had affected them.

February 2022 saw Sue back out in the community for an event. She told us "It was wonderful, I talked to 17 people and got feedback on our dental survey"



### Sharon's Volunteer Experience

"I was encouraged to join Healthwatch as a volunteer when I was struggling with anxiety, depression and stress. Initially, I was nervous and not at all sure that I would be 'good enough' but I needn't have worried. I was made to feel welcome and valued. Encouraged to volunteer at a pace that I was comfortable with, I soon felt part of the team."



### Do you feel inspired?

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



[www.healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk)



01302 965450



[info@healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdoncaster.org.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	£176,360	Staff costs	£143,877
Additional funding	£19,500	Operational costs	£30,252
Total income	£195,860	Support and administration	£34,335
		Total expenditure	£208,464

At the 31st July 2021, Doncaster Healthwatch CIC was carrying reserves of £82,856 (31/07/2020 £88,724).

Doncaster Healthwatch CIC operates a policy of maintaining a reserves figure of at least three months costs. With the deficit recorded in this period, we will continue to maintain at least three months reserves and intend to build this figure again in the coming 12 months.

## Top three priorities for 2022-23

1. Establishing what the people of Doncaster want to be our important topics.
2. Increasing face to face engagement across all sections of Doncaster.
3. Making sure that the voice of Doncaster place is heard at ICB level.

## 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 Doncaster, 8D Cavendish Court, South Parade, Doncaster, DN1 2DJ.

Healthwatch Doncaster 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 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 12 times and made decisions on matters such as creating a new role of Digital and Social Media within the team so that we could increase our reach and engagement on all platforms.

The decision to increase the diversity of the board members was taken and this is now in process. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. We use information from our engagement and signposting to direct our line of targeted work, examples of this is our report into Dentistry.

### **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, continuing our Health Ambassadors meetings on line so all can access this and share their needs and experiences. 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 and mail it to our stakeholders as well as making sure it is readily available to as many members of the public as possible.

### **Responses to recommendations and requests**

We had no 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.

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

## Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Doncaster is represented on the Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Board. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending meetings, sub-groups and ensuring that the voice of the people of Doncaster is heard at a strategic level and factored in to decision-making affecting health and social care.

### 2021-2022 Outcomes

Project / Activity Area	Actions
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)	The JSNA has been refreshed to take into account the effects of the pandemic and the extent that health inequalities had been exposed and exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19.
	A testbed project has been established to look at mental health inequalities
Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA)	A new PNA is in the process of preparation
Research	The Health and Wellbeing Board is the system sponsor for a research project into the health and wellbeing of children and families.
Substance Misuse	Five new short-term funded pilots have progressed.
Homelessness	The number of rough sleepers has been reduced.
Dementia	A new dementia collaborative has been formed.
Social Isolation	55 organisations are now members of the Social Isolation Alliance (SIA).
Doncaster Delivering Together	The Doncaster Delivering Together Strategy was agreed in September 2021 and sets out the strategic ambitions for Doncaster up to 2030. It sets out a bold ambition for Doncaster's future with a central mission for Thriving People, Places and Planet which balances the well-being of people and places with the planet.



# healthwatch Doncaster

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