

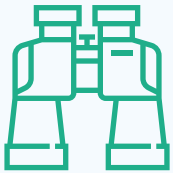
What people have told us about health and social care

A review of Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and
Torbay's impact and outcomes - April to June 2022

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are your independent health and social care champion for local people. Our role is to 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 on all your health and social care needs.



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 quarter in review

Find out which services people are telling Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay about this quarter.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, public feedback about services reduced but during the last 6 months we have seen an increase in what the public are telling us about the health and social care services they access. This report covers the period 1 April to 30 June 2022.

Reaching out

318 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us: 190 comments were about **Primary Care Services** and 60% of those responses were **negative**.

86 people

were given advice and information on health and social care services, with the top 3 services for information being **NHS Dentists**, **Hospital Services** and **GP practices**.

Making a difference to care



Healthwatch published

3 reports

about patient experience and the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. (see p.11)

Our latest report is

Access to Children's and Young People's Services during Covid-19, highlighting struggles with **access**, **long waiting times** and **communication**. (see p.11)

Health and care that works for you



27 escalations of which 14 were referred to our Healthwatch Champions or Local Healthwatch Advisor; while 13 were referred to NHS Advocacy, NHS England, Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) or the relevant service provider.

28 responses

to public feedback from Health and Social Care providers.

12 formal requests for information

responding to issues raised by the public. Healthwatch requested information/Freedom of Information to service providers.

Listening to people's experiences

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay has a Feedback Centre on their local website. We use this feedback to inform local NHS leaders and Care providers to improve services for everyone. We're completely independent and impartial and any experiences shared are confidential.



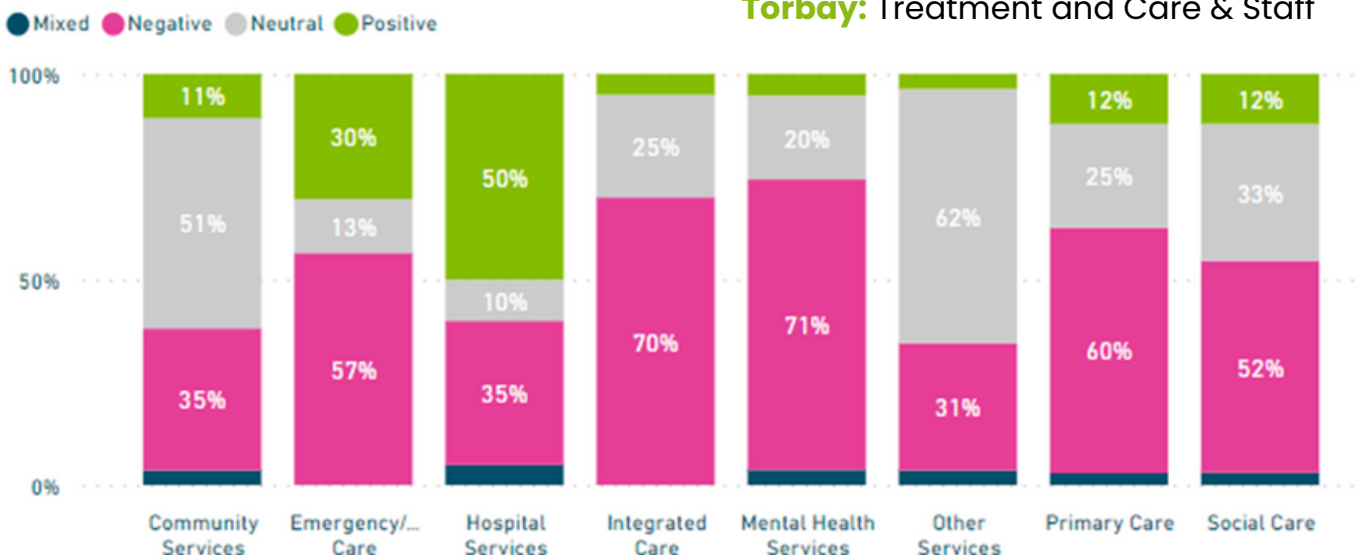
318 people

contacted us between 01 April and 30 June to share their experience of health and care services

Number of escalations: **27** of which **14** were referred to our Healthwatch Champions or Local Healthwatch Advisor.

Number of Provider responses to public feedback from Health and Social Care providers : **28**

How people feel about services



Most frequently reviewed service by the public

60% of comments were about "primary care" which includes feedback about GP services, NHS Dental, Pharmacy and Opticians.

Of this 60%, over **58%** were comments about "access to services" and "administration of GP Services"

We **signposted** people **86** times, most of which were about "dental access".

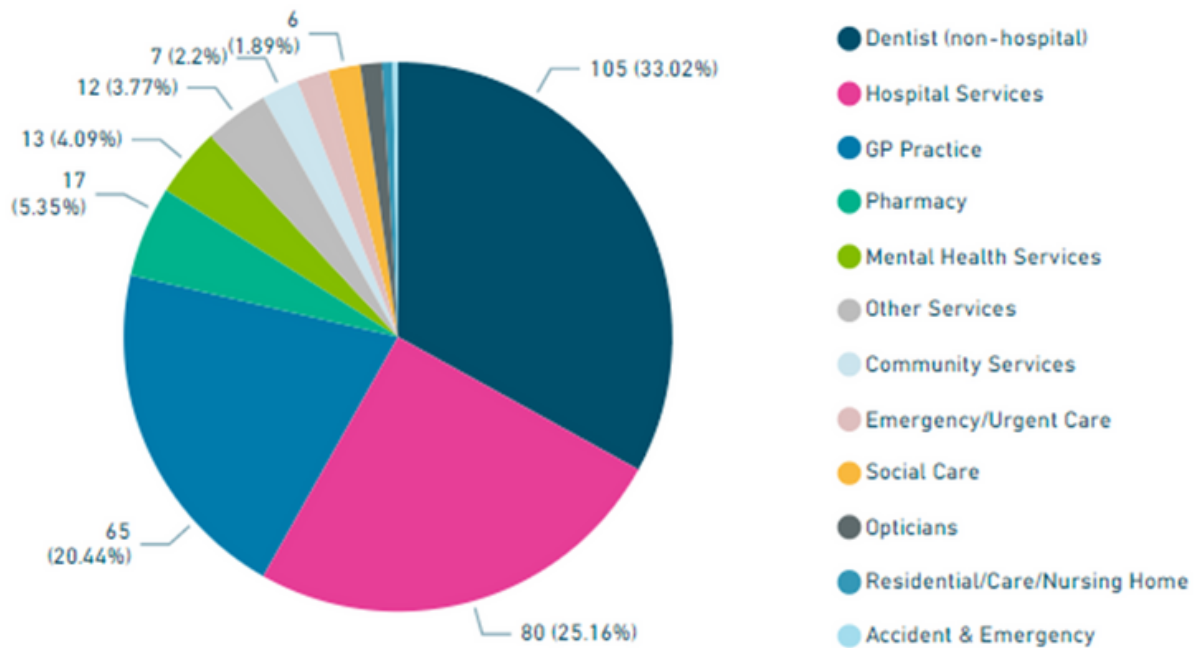
Themes most commented on

Devon: Treatment and Care & Access to Services

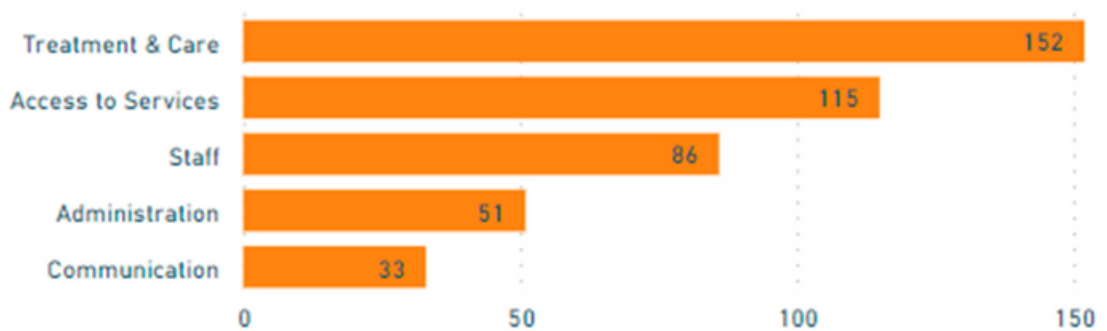
Plymouth: Treatment and Care & Access to Services

Torbay: Treatment and Care & Staff

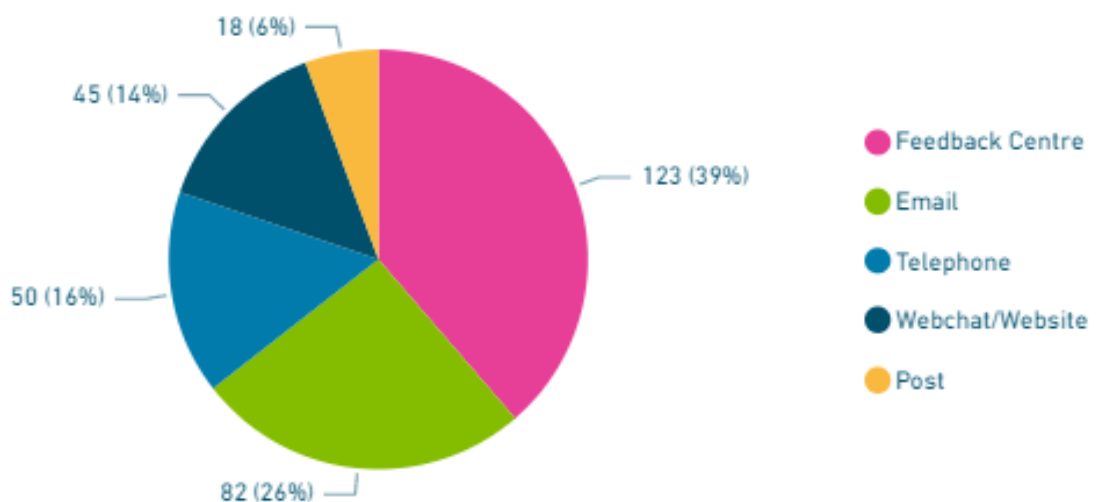
Which services people are telling us about



Top 5 themes



How people contact us



Feedback centre reviews

Real life experiences people are sharing with Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay using our website feedback centres.

Please note: any feedback, service ratings or comments included here are taken from public voices and are NOT the view of Healthwatch.

Waited for up to 30 hours without no bed

healthwatch
Devon



"I phoned up an ambulance because I was having chest pain I waited 3 1/2 hours for the ambulance. When the ambulance got here they took me to Derriford Hospital. I was told that they would take some bloods and to wait to see a doctor.

After they admitted me to hospital, they told me to sit in the waiting room and wait for a bed to become available. I did ask a nurse if they could get me a cup of tea and a sandwich she said yes but it never materialised. Over 30 hours went by of me sitting in casualty, with a bad back

Nurses did not come to see if I was okay because my blood pressure was quite low when I first got there. I did not have another blood pressure test after they admitted me. I wasn't happy whatsoever."



Healthwatch Devon passed this feedback to the Patient Experience Manager at Derriford Hospital.

Care and treatment at multiple hospitals

healthwatch
Torbay



"I was not looked after properly while in the care of Royal Devon University Healthcare (RD&E) and Torbay hospital.

I had a seizure which resulted in me dying for 15 minutes before being brought back.

There were lots of issues with staff and belongings going missing and medication that was given hours too late."



Healthwatch passed the information and contact details on to The Advocacy People who have made contact with the client.

Pensioner put on 2 year waiting list for NHS Dental services



"Just prior to Covid I had to cancel a dental appointment because I had flu. Covid came along and once deemed safe and with a broken tooth, not painful but annoying, I phoned for an appointment to be told that as I had cancelled my appointment I had been removed from the NHS register BUT could go privately !!! When I said I was a pensioner and not prepared to do that, especially as I had worked all my life and paid NI, I was given a phone number to call. On calling, I was told there was at least a two year waiting list to be ALLOCATED a dentist (No Choice!). I was also told that in an Emergency there would probably be someone who I could see. I am 73 and still waiting to be given a practice. The way things are going, I will be dead before then! British Trained Dentists were trained at our expense they should be obliged to give so many hours a week to the NHS. This should also apply to Hospital Consultants. They are well paid for the work they do!"



Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are closely monitoring issues in accessing dental services and continue to report to the NHS.

Excellent treatment for prostate cancer

"The whole oncology team are wonderful. Nothing is too much trouble, and they always reply to any telephone or email enquiry within the same day.

Cannot fault my treatment which has resulted in remission and hopefully a cure. Could not have got better treatment if I had been a private patient.

Any concerns I had odd symptoms etc were handled swiftly and tests and scans ordered.

The whole team nurses, radiographers, consultants are hardworking and deserve recognition for the wonderful work they do."



Reply from Derriford Hospital



"Many thanks for your wonderful compliment that has given the team a huge boost, especially so at a time when we are working so hard to deliver the care and treatment our patients deserve, and that we would wish to deliver."

Andy Crocker

Oncology Quality Manager, Derriford Hospital



Advice and Information

Find out how Healthwatch Devon Champions, part of Citizens Advice, are helping people in Devon.

healthwatch
Devon



50 people

called our freephone number 0800 520 0640 to speak with a Healthwatch Advisor.

Struggling to get a diagnosis

A lady who has been struggling for years to get a diagnosis and effective treatment for a head/neck injury, as a result of historic domestic violence, contacted a Healthwatch Champion for advice.

The lady explained she wanted effective treatment and diagnosis, but has struggled to get this over the years. She said she felt alone with low mood and found everyday daily living activities difficult and how a diagnosis would help her get a befriender from 'Headway' (a charity that supports people with brain/ head injuries).



What difference did this make

A Healthwatch Champion wrote to the Client's GP on her behalf requesting a referral to a neurosurgeon and letter from GP confirming that Client had a brain/ head injury. Client needed this letter to evidence to Headway that she has such an injury. While waiting for GP letter, the Champion called Headway who advised the Client could phone their helpline for a chat if she needed to and an online support group was suggested that the lady was keen to join.

Two months later the Client reported that the GP has referred her to a neurosurgeon for diagnosis/ treatment. The GP sent a letter as proof of injury and she was able to contact Headway with this evidence to arrange a befriender. Client will now be able to receive practical support at home and this will alleviate stress and worry.

Case study

Find out how your feedback can lead to improvements in services for all.

Loop hole in hearing aids and supportive equipment

Thanks to this lady, NHS England are considering the cost to people when prescribing technology-based assistance devices that rely on expensive gadgets.

"I was awarded some new NHS digital Signia hearing aids on 14 February which are brilliant with my mobile phone as I could never hear the ringing tone before. They also have a really good app to enable the user to adjust the hearing aids from the app instead of on the aids themselves.

However, I previously had Phonic hearing aids and to enable me to hear in groups, speakers, TV, various microphones and recorded messages I had to purchase both a Roger pen and a mini Roger clip together with shoes for my aids, which I constantly use.

This additional equipment purchased at great expense is not compatible with my new Signia hearing aids and apart from a loop which I have also had to purchase for £150 there is apparently nothing compatible which will give me the same quality of hearing as the Roger pens do.

The loop gives me an extremely inferior hearing compared to the Roger pens."



"...we don't want to inadvertently exacerbate health inequalities whereby folks on low incomes can't afford the things needed to use the devices we prescribe."

NHS England



What difference did this make

NHS England response

"...this lady makes an important point that commissioners need to consider as we increasingly rely on technology-based assistive devices if we don't want to inadvertently exacerbate health inequalities whereby folks on low incomes can't afford the things needed to use the devices we prescribe."

NHSE referred us to...

Care Direct (Sensory Impairment Team) response

"We have contacted the lady concerned and have discussed the issues raised and are assisting her with trying to resolve this. It highlights a wider issue that we are acutely aware of around new digital technology utilising Bluetooth and incompatibility with older systems especially those systems that are analogue such as hearing loops and the impact that this may have on patients accessing health (and other) services."

Case study

Find out how your feedback leads to improvements in services for all.

Delay in diagnosing cancer

Thanks to people sharing their experiences of health services, we are able to support them in getting the advice and information they need.

A woman aged 32 reported she has been unable to work for 2 years due to complex medical conditions one of which is colon cancer. She believes that the delay in diagnosing cancer has impacted her emotionally and financially and she would like to seek financial compensation.

Our client told us that that between May and November 2021 she visited her GP 32 times and the Emergency Department 3 times. She said she was misdiagnosed with a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) when she was subsequently diagnosed with colon cancer that had spread to her bladder. Our client believes that her symptoms were dismissed by medical professionals as psychosomatic. She told us, "this led to a delay in my cancer diagnosis of around 9 months." She had surgery to remove the cancer in January 2022.

Our client states she is very happy with her GP but says that she feels let down by two male medical professionals at Torbay hospital who could have found the cancer sooner.

We are currently running a local (Teignbridge) survey regarding 'female symptoms being dismissed as psychosomatic' at present. Our client consented to being contacted at a later date about this and I completed the survey with her over the telephone.

After advice from Healthwatch, our client is now fully aware of the NHS complaints process and the relevant time limits. She has been sent details on how to find free or affordable legal help and to find a legal adviser via the Law Society. We have also sent her details about where to get practical and emotional support via Cancer Support UK.

What difference did this make

Our client now knows what next steps she can take to progress her issue and has been empowered to take action. She feels less stressed as she has a clear path to follow to try to obtain both financial compensation and emotional support from Cancer Support UK.

Our client was pleased to take part in the survey as she feels that she can help with positive change. She was happy that Healthwatch Champions and Citizens Advice Client happy that are trying to do something about female symptoms being dismissed as she believes she is not alone. Our client has the Healthwatch project phone number and can return for help if needed.

3 ways Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay have made a difference for the community

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

Using tech to monitor your health at home



We value the insight that's gained from analysing many different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.

People with high blood pressure are increasingly being asked to monitor their condition at home. Working with NHS Digital, we asked people what they think of using technology to keep tabs on their health and how they think the NHS can improve support.

More details in the full report - download [here](#)

Patient Experience - Pharmacy Services across Devon

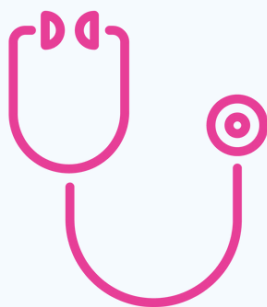


We act on feedback and drive change. Listening has to positively affect outcomes and influence important decisions about people's care.

As Pharmacies are asked to do more under the Community Pharmacy Framework and where patients are being signposted to Pharmacies before seeing their GP, there is a concern that demand is outstripping capacity. By doing this without ensuring suitable resource is available are we not just kicking the problem down the street?

Read our findings and recommendations in the full report - download [here](#)

Access to Children's and Young People's Services during Covid-19 in Plymouth



We recognise the value of listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.

Healthwatch were consistently receiving feedback from people around access to CAMHS services during the Covid pandemic, most of it negative. To better understand the issues being raised, the Healthwatch Plymouth Steering Group decided to ask parents about their experiences.

Read what we heard in the full report - download [here](#)

All our reports are available to read on our websites at Healthwatch in [Devon](#), [Plymouth](#) and [Torbay](#).

Our year in review

Find out how Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay have engaged and supported people during 2021-22. Read our full Annual Report [here](#)

Reaching out



1491 people

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

1.9 million people

Were able to access clear advice and information about topics such as COVID-19 using our social media channels.

Making a difference to care



We published

11 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Think 111 first

which asked if the NHS campaign was reaching key groups in Devon, including the Deaf community

healthwatch



“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



Leave a review

Share your experiences of using local health and social care with Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

Together we can help make care better for everyone

Join the hundreds of people in your community who share their experience of local Health and social care services. No matter how big or small the issue, we want to hear about it.

Call us on FREEPHONE 0800 520 0640

or leave a review online using the QR code below or visiting your local Healthwatch online.

Visit your local Healthwatch WEBSITE

[Healthwatch Devon](#) | [Healthwatch Plymouth](#) | [Healthwatch Torbay](#)

<p>healthwatch Devon</p> <p>info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk healthwatchdevon.co.uk</p> <p> @HWDevon @healthwatchdevon @hwdevon </p> <p>Scan to find health and social care services in Devon to leave</p> 	<p>healthwatch Plymouth</p> <p>info@healthwatchplymouth.co.uk healthwatchplymouth.co.uk</p> <p> @HealthwatchPlym @HealthwatchPlymouth @healthwatchplym </p> <p>Scan to find health and social care services in Plymouth to leave</p> 	<p>healthwatch Torbay</p> <p>info@healthwatchtorbay.org.uk healthwatchtorbay.org.uk</p> <p> @HWTorbay @HealthwatchTorbay @healthwatchtorbay </p> <p>Scan to find health and social care services in Torbay to leave</p> 
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Request to service providers

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay serve as the public's independent advocate and want to build stronger alliances with our local health and care providers. Together we can better understand health and care issues affecting our audiences.

3 ways we can achieve more together:

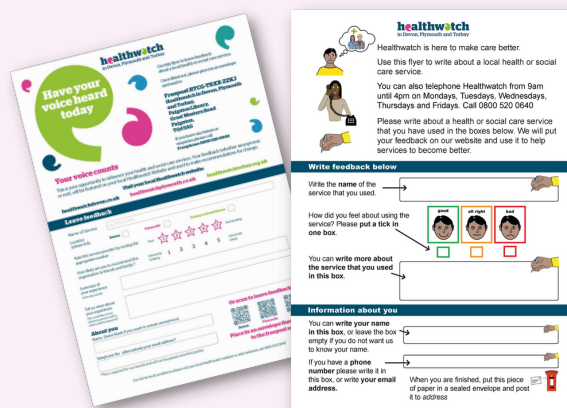
#1 Posters

We are happy to email over a digital file, or post printed (and laminated) A4 posters for you to display on your notice boards.



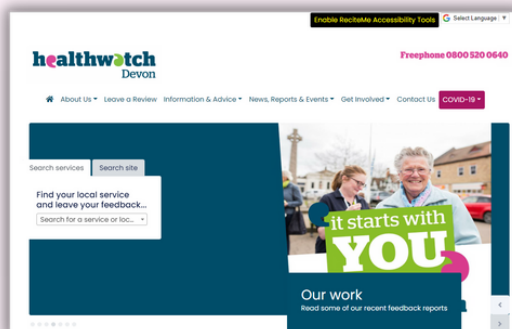
#2 Feedback forms

We have standard and Easy Read feedback forms printed that we are happy to post or deliver to you for display in your waiting area.



#3 Website links

Our IT expert is happy to set up reciprocal links to our active, content rich websites.



Please email us: communications@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org



healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

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r/o Engage Plymouth
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St Levan Rd
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e: enquiries@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org

Visit your local Healthwatch website:

[Healthwatch Devon](#)

[Healthwatch Plymouth](#)

[Healthwatch Torbay](#)