

Together

we're making health
and social care better

Annual Report
2022–23



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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our Chair

Healthwatch Hounslow remains your local health and social care champion at a time of huge challenges for everyone.

Listening to your views, hearing your experiences is a vital part of our work, so your voice is heard. But listening is not enough. To be an independent advocate on your behalf we also work closely in partnership with care providers, statutory agencies and the voluntary sector to help guide the essential changes and improvements we all seek.



Peter Goulding
Healthwatch Hounslow Chair

This report gives you a small insight into the amazing work of our staff and volunteers. For example:

- Reaching out to those with visual and hearing impairments
- Listening to our community who are frail, have physical disabilities or learning disabilities
- Helping everyone, whatever their status or background, to get health and social care support
- And providing advice and information so you can receive the help you need

We can do this because of the amazingly dedicated staff and volunteers – thank you to everyone in our team – your work really is making a difference and all our communities benefit.”

About us

Healthwatch Hounslow is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and 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.

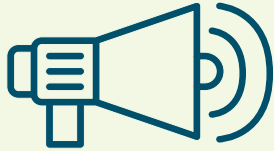


Our values are:

- **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.

Year in review

Reaching out



5,365 people

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

85 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as accessing dental services and registering with GPs

Making a difference to care

We published

8 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Young People's Sexual Health Services in Hounslow

which highlighted opportunities around sex education and the use of pharmacies to provide some sexual health services.



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

14

outstanding volunteers on average each month who gave up **289 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£84,000

which is **the same as** the previous year.

We currently employ

1 x full-time and 2 x part-time staff who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We engaged with residents to understand their health and nutrition needs which fed into a new service from the council.



We shared best practice from the results of our Audit of GP websites with a variety of local decision-makers .

Summer



With online appointments becoming the norm, our top tips helped professionals and patients get the most out of digital appointments.



We listened to clients of a local authority Floating Support service. This has helped form part of the new service specification.

Autumn



We overhauled our website so that it has improved accessibility and functionality. We also began regularly posting community health and social care events.



We started piloting a new questionnaire to improve ease and quality of collecting patient data for both residents and our team of volunteers.

Winter



We participated in a London-wide exercise to better understand the patient experience of those using London Ambulance Services such as 999 and 111 and fed into their new strategy.

Holding the **North West London Integrated Care Board** to account remains a challenge because of its size and the area is covered by 8 local Healthwatch groups. However, we are working closely with other Healthwatch groups in NWL to ensure we have proper representation. Within Hounslow, ICS Healthwatch is well represented on all key committees.

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Mental health



Our research exploring children and young people's mental health services provided vital lessons for the local Transformation Board expressing positive changes. .



Extra care

Over the years we have supported residents in extra care schemes to amplify their voices for positive change.

Coping during Covid



We surveyed over 3,000 residents on their views about the coronavirus pandemic as well as about the vaccination and shared this with key decision makers..



Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) inequalities

We conducted extensive community outreach with our BAME communities to further understand health inequalities.

NHS dentistry



We continued to voice public concerns that improvements to NHS dentistry are too slow, leaving thousands of people in pain.



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 feed this back to services and help them improve.

Investigating Young People's Sexual Health Services

This case study took a two-pronged approach to better understand young people's experience of sexual health services in the borough of Hounslow.

Firstly, we wanted to review *What are young people's experiences, knowledge, barriers to access and needs of sexual health services.* Secondly we wanted to look at *How good is the quality of pharmacies delivering sexual health services for young people.*

The study revealed issues in several areas, from awareness of sexual health services to an inconsistent approach from participating pharmacies in their delivery of sexual health services.

Young People's Sexual Health Services in Hounslow

Healthwatch Hounslow Report
March 2023



The full report can be found on our [website](#).

Top Findings and Recommendations

General Promotion of Sexual Health Services

Awareness by young people of some existing services was low. Often they simply had not heard of the free condom scheme or STI test-kits and so were not using them.

Recommendation: Share information of what services are available through advertising on social media (Instagram and TikTok) and through schools.

Support for PHSE Teachers on Sexual Health Services Teachers were keen to share information on sexual health services with students but had limited resources and time to research local sexual health services themselves.

Recommendation: Package up information on sexual health services in neat PowerPoint presentations or videos which require minimal input from teachers but allows them to share up to date and accurate information.

Rethink the provision of sexual health services by pharmacies

The majority of pharmacies were not able to offer young people core sexual health services they had signed up to provide. As a result, young people have lost a key venue for accessing services.

Recommendation: If young people are going to be directed to pharmacies then the service needs to function properly. It needs to be well-set up, pharmacy staff (including counter staff) trained, and vitally, regularly monitored to ensure it is fit for purpose.

What difference will this make?

This report has only very recently been published but early indications are that it will inform key performance indicators and monitoring of upcoming commissioning of sexual health services for young people. Furthermore, the Healthwatch Hounslow team will be working with the Sexual Health team to share findings and lessons learned across the borough and North West London Integrated Care System.

Patient Experience

At Healthwatch Hounslow we operate a comprehensive Patient Experience data collection programme as part of our duty around gathering and representing the views of patients and service users in the borough.

The implementation of the data collection programme and the Digital Feedback Centre will normally yield 4,800 patient experiences per annum all of which will be presented as they are received and considered as valid community opinion.



Patient Experience Programme

2022/23 Summary of Patient Experience Data Collection



4,997 Reviews

From patients sharing their experiences of health and social care services with us through the patient experience programme, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.



74% Positive

Of reviews by patients were overall, positive but leaving sizable room for improvement.

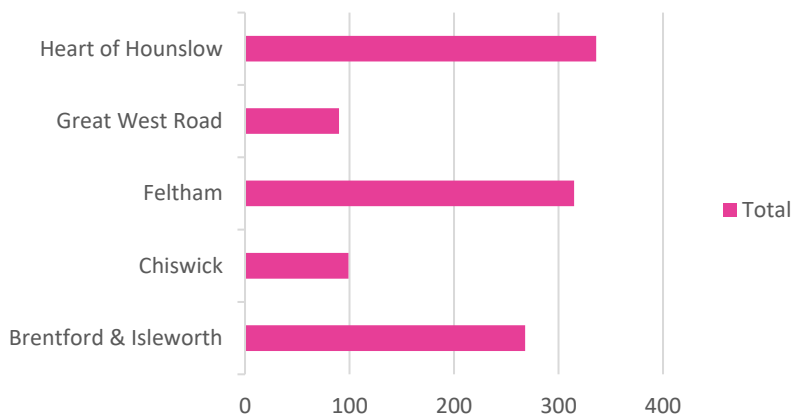


Presented at Board Meetings

At Borough Executive meetings, Health & Wellbeing Board Meetings and other local and North West London meetings to inform and advise decision makers on patient experience.

Demographics

We actively seek to be representative of the population of Hounslow, ensuring that we cover the length and breadth of Hounslow whilst also reaching for those who are often seldom heard. The chart on the right shows a representation of the geographic coverage of the reviews.



GPS: Top Most Positive & Negative Themes Identified by Patients in Q3

Positive

- Quality of Staff – Health Professionals
- Quality of Treatment
- Management of Service
- Staff Attitude
- Staff Suitability

Negative

- Getting Through on the Phone
- Patient Choice
- Staff Attitudes – Admin Staff
- Quality of Telephone Consultation
- Appointment Availability

Three ways we have developed our Patient Experience Programme

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

Launching a New Website

It is important for local people to be able to share their experience of services back to Healthwatch and access clear and up to date information and signposting about health and care services.



Healthwatch Hounslow updated its website in 2022/23, reviewing and refreshing content and benefitting from the most up to date knowledge on design and accessibility. Our new website contains health advice and guidance on changes across the system, as well as practical information like how to register with a GP when you have no fixed address. You can find all our news and reports on the website, feedback your experience of care and more!

Refreshing our Patient Feedback Form

Our Patient Experience Programme gathers 1200 experiences of health and care services each quarter. It is a cornerstone of our work enabling us to understand the real time challenges local people experience when accessing health and care services.



During 2022/23 we revamped our feedback form, updating it with questions that really matter to patients and service users. We aligned some questions with the national GP Survey so in future we will be able to do direct comparisons of results. We have also ensured our data can link easily to Healthwatch England's national database, enabling the voice of people from Hounslow to have a stronger profile in their national work.

New Patient Experience Report

Our quarterly Patient Experience Report has been redesigned this year, making it more accessible and easier to use. What was once a 50+ page document with charts and detailed narrative has now been broken down into snapshot data and key overview information.



Trends from quarter to quarter are clearly highlighted and service specific recommendations will help our staff and committee members champion the changes needed across the system, in the many meetings they attend!



Enter and Views

Enter and View is a statutory power of a local Healthwatch, mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2013. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but equally they can occur when services have a good reputation.

During these visits we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families and carers. We also engage with management and staff. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced. Following 'the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlines what has worked well, and gives recommendations on what could have worked better.

Enter and View Ashgrove Care Home, Hounslow

As part of our statutory duties, we carried out an 'Enter and View' to Ashgrove Care Home, a care home service in Hounslow.

Ashgrove is a purpose-built care home with 49 beds, offering accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care, treatment for disease or injury, caring for the over 65yrs and those requiring nursing dementia care. On 20th July 2022 we visited the home and spoke to residents, family and staff. From our visit, we made 10 recommendations, the top ones are listed below.

Enter & View Report Ashgrove Care Home

Healthwatch Hounslow
July 2022



Our recommendations included:

1. **Resume day trips.** Day trips as an activity appeared to have been halted during the pandemic. With proper risk assessments, investigating suitable outdoor activities would be appropriate as part of residents' wellbeing and enrichment
2. **Increase staff numbers.** There is a universal shortage of staff working in care homes, so it is understandable that this care home might be struggling. However, to prevent nurses from missing breaks and ensuring all those in need are tended to, we advocate an increase in staff numbers.
3. **Improve Garden & Garden Projects for residents.** We could see that work had started on the garden. There is space for more flowers, plants and perhaps a path and vegetable patch. We would encourage involving dementia residents in the project to improve the garden as a form of therapy
4. **Improve staff involvement and communication.** While the management team are bringing in new policies and procedures, these may be better accepted and taken on by staff if they are involved in the process from the beginning and understand the whys and how's of change and to improve 'buy-in'.

What difference will this make?

HC-One, the care home provider, were fast to act; bringing in new management to tackle some of the concerns raised. The manager also helped identify how they would achieve the recommendations listed. [This report can be found on our website.](#)



Thank you for the Ashgrove Enter and View report in 2022. The report identified issues that were subsequently evidenced by HC One or by staff members. At a difficult time the report helped us to validate a way forward and build a relationship with the provider. **Joint Commissioning Manager – Domiciliary & Residential**

Enter and View Bristol Court Extra Care Housing Scheme, Feltham

As part of our statutory duties, we carried out an 'Enter and View' to Bristol Court Extra Care Housing Scheme in Feltham.

Bristol Court is a purpose-built extra care housing scheme with 94 beds, where residents have their own self-contained flat and front door with personal care and support services available (depending on their care package). On 11th October 2022 we visited the housing scheme and spoke to residents, family and staff following a previous visit in July 2021. From our visit, we made 7 recommendations, the top ones are listed below.

Enter & View Report

Bristol Court Revisit

Healthwatch Hounslow
October 2022



Our recommendations included:

- 1. Increase and Widen Range of Events.** While activities do take place, there is room to improve the range of activities to accommodate the range of interests and abilities of residents. Activities should include Physical, Creative, Social and Mental topics. Recommendations from friends and family included: evening activities for younger residents, yoga, gardening, technology activities and day trips.
- 2. Increase and Improve Resident / Staff Relationships.** Where there is not regular continuity of care staff, it would be helpful if residents had opportunities to get to know staff better. A 'Meet the Staff' booklet and/or social events (e.g. coffee mornings) introducing staff by name, interests and languages spoken may help break down barriers.
- 3. Increase Council's Maintenance Response & Consider In-House Handyman** Maintenance and repair delays remain an issue and we recommend greater advocacy of residents being prioritised and an in-house handyman.

What difference will this make?

Two managers from the scheme provided a thorough response as to how they will enact the recommendations made, provided at the end of the report. Furthermore, commissioners reported that the findings from the report informed key performance indicators for future contracts. [This report can be found on our website.](#)



I wanted to repeat my thanks to you and your team for carrying this out. This will help inform our performance targets for the provider for 2023/24.
Joint Commissioning Manager – Preventative Services and Supported Housing.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Reaching those with visual and hearing impairments
- Reaching those with learning difficulties, frailty and physical disabilities
- Sharing our findings with local NHS leaders, council leaders and ICS.

Better access for Sensory Impaired

Visual and/or Hearing Impairment raises a range of challenges for many accessing health and social care services. We visited a social group for blind and visually impaired people as well as organising a focus group for those who were deaf or hard of hearing.

Patients from both groups had suffered incidents where they had not either heard or seen their name called out in GP waiting rooms when their appointments were due.

We spoke to the Primary Care lead at the ICS about this and they raised the issue throughout the Primary Care Network that GP waiting rooms and announcements should be accessible to all.



Empowering those with Learning Disabilities

Following our visit to an extra-care housing scheme, we realised that we needed to increase the voice of those with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and other vulnerabilities. We also found that our interactions with people in this group also served as a social activity and empowered them to voice their concerns more.

We now try to incorporate those with learning disabilities regularly in our programmes so that we can ensure their voice is heard.

Recent insights which we have shared with various decision-makers include: The repetitive nature of 111 calls being difficult, challenges in family/carers being included in care plans, going to and being discharged from A&E without support.



“I read your report and highlighted it – there were some good points that I want to show to the managers.”

Local resident at an extra-care housing scheme



Advice and information

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

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access NHS dentistry
- Helped newcomers to the borough to navigate the NHS system
- Directing patients to the appropriate complaint channels

Help to new residents accessing services

With the growing number of residents in Hounslow, as well as an increasing number of asylum seekers and refugees due to our proximity to Heathrow airport, some new arrivals to the borough faced challenges accessing services.

Anyone in England can register and consult with a GP without charge. GP practices are not required to ask for proof of identity, address or immigration status from patients wishing to register. Throughout the year, we received a small number of enquiries where patients struggled to access GPs.



"I've come here from Ukraine on the Family Scheme and got turned away from the registering with the doctor because I don't have an NHS number."

New resident from Ukraine



"I need to register with the GP but have been told I need a proof of address. I'm here legally, have a spousal visa and a paid Immigration Health Surcharge."

New resident

As well as supporting these enquiries with their legal rights on GP access and how to access them, we've fed this feedback back to the primary care teams who have reminded practices on access to services.

Common Enquiries

Making a complaint or escalating a complaint.



There are variations in routes to making a complaint between GPs, hospitals and social care services. We endeavour to keep our website updated with the best procedure for making a complaint and signposting residents to the relevant support and advocacy groups.



Unable to access an NHS Dentist

An increasing complaint is residents who are unable to access an NHS dentist. We support residents with lists of dentists in their areas and beyond.



Enquiries around Social Care & Mental Health

We have been supporting more and more residents and service providers with information on social care services and mental health services.



Volunteering

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

This year our volunteers:

- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Ran our social media and website's events and news pages
- Carried out enter and view visits to local services to help them improve
- Conducted mystery shopper exercises to investigate the standard of young people's sexual health services
- Collected the most up-to-date information on changes to services, such as the quality of remote consultations

Ruchi

"Working with Healthwatch has been a rewarding experience. I recently immigrated to the UK, and Healthwatch is the first organisation that I worked for. The supervisors are very welcoming, supportive, and encouraging. Volunteering here has immensely improved my communication skills and self-confidence."



Ambimbola

"Volunteering is an opportunity for acquiring new knowledge, understanding different perspectives, and building meaningful connections with people from diverse backgrounds. My experience with Healthwatch is not one to be forgotten quickly because it gave me platform to not only give back but also discover potentials within myself, learn and serve others. I personally enjoy the sense of purpose and fulfilment that comes with serving others."



Yves

"My volunteering experience with Healthwatch has been totally awesome so far, thanks to each task I have been given, like patient experience inputting, updating the Hounslow website and looking after the social media for Hounslow. Overall, a very rich experience with all the lovely and caring people who work for the organisation, and other volunteers as well.

I have gained a very beneficial work experience that should help with paid employment when the time is right."



Do you feel inspired?

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

 www.healthwatchhounslow.co.uk/volunteer

 **07944 391 223**

 vip@yvhsc.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.

Our income and expenditure (unaudited)

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from Local Authority	£84,000	Expenditure on pay	£74,000
Additional income	£20,000	Non-pay expenditure	£8,000
		Office and management fee	£15,000
Total income	£104,000	Total expenditure	£97,000

Additional income is supporting other projects is broken down by:

- **£5,000 funding** received from London Ambulance Service
- **£10,000 funding** received from London Borough of Hounslow: Public Health
- **£5,000 funding** received from North West London Clinical Commissioning Group (NWL CCG)

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work to tackling inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless whether that is because of where you live, income or race.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. Improving our understanding of Asylum Seekers' access to healthcare
2. Continue to build on listening to those receiving social care
3. Incorporating experiences from those with Learning Disabilities into our projects.



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Hounslow, 45 St Mary's Road, Ealing W5 5RG

Company holding the local Healthwatch contract:

Your Voice in Health and Social Care, 45 St Mary's Road, Ealing W5 5RG

Healthwatch Hounslow 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 six 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. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met four times and made decisions on matters such as identifying our strategic direction and priorities.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

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 using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, social media and provided printed copies to those who do not have digital access.

Responses to recommendations

All providers responded to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example we take information to a range departments including to commissioners, social services, public health teams and housing and community teams.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in North West London Integrated Care System. For example, we submit reports, attend meetings and give presentations at Borough based and North West London level meetings, including Health and Wellbeing Boards. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Enter and view

This year, we made **two** Enter and View visits to larger schemes. We made a range of recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Ashgrove Care Home	Patients raised safety concerns	Wrote a report with recommendations – the provider was fast to act on key concerns relating to management relationships.
Bristol Court Extra Care Housing Scheme	A follow-up visit to a relatively new scheme that opened just prior to Covid-19.	Wrote a report with recommendations – the provider responded with a list of remedial actions and the commissioner is integrating recommendations into KPIs.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Hounslow is represented on the Hounslow Health and Wellbeing Board by Peter Goulding, Chair of Healthwatch Hounslow. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by providing challenge where necessary and providing patient voice.

Healthwatch Hounslow is represented on Hounslow Borough Based Partnership Board, Hounslow Safeguarding Adults Board and Hounslow ICP Recovery Board by Viviane Walker, Operations Manager of Healthwatch Hounslow.

Representation at NWL Integrated Care Board is currently being developed by local Healthwatches in the region with the Board.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
Hounslow Safeguarding Adults Forum	We have been building developing a platform to recruit lived-experience of adult safeguarding. We have created videos, Easy Read materials and been working with local teams to develop the forum.
Floating Support Services	In June and July, we engaged with over 50 service-users to better understand their experiences of a service. The findings are feeding into the re-commissioning of services with a greater inclusion of volunteers.



healthwatch
Hounslow

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