



Together

we're making health
and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23

healthwatch
Gloucestershire

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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

As the health and care system begins to recover following the 'pandemic years', the impact of inequalities people face when using the health and care system has become even more apparent.

This year, one of our key priorities has been highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard, to help reduce these inequalities. We focused our work priorities on people rather than specific services, and sought to understand the health and care experiences of people living with autism, refugees and asylum seekers, and young people with mental health issues.

The Gloucestershire Integrated Care System (ICS), which is a partnership of statutory and public services, and voluntary and community organisations, came into existence in July 2022. We have worked within the local system, sharing people's experiences and feedback, and challenging local providers to deliver the high quality, responsive services that people in Gloucestershire want and need. This included investigating people's experiences of digital healthcare to help the ICS make sure everyone gets the care they need in an increasingly digital world, including those who are unable or reluctant to use digital technology.

We would not be able to represent the views of the public without the commitment, hard work and resolve of our team, our Board, and our fabulous volunteers, so I want to thank them for their support over the last 12 months. I particularly want to thank everyone who has taken the time to share their stories, good and bad, so that we could represent local voices and push to improve health and care services locally.



Nikki Richardson
Healthwatch
Gloucestershire Chair



We want to help tackle inequalities around access to health and care services by making sure all voices are heard, and decision-makers understand how to reduce the barriers faced by local people.

About us

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is your local health and social care champion.

We are part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across England. 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.

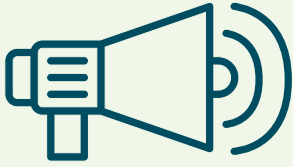


Our values are:

- **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



1,800 people

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

900 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost of living crisis.

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

Adults with autism: People's experiences of the autism assessment process in Gloucestershire

which highlighted long waits for assessment and the need for greater awareness and support.



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

29 outstanding volunteers who gave up
114 days to make care better for our community.

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

£247,914

We currently employ

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

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We asked people in the community about the quality of their care experiences. Feedback informed a review of appointment letters and our project on communications in health and care services.



People told us it's hard to find out about paid care at home services and care costs are confusing. Our findings informed Healthwatch England's report on how to help people understand and navigate social care.

Summer



We reported on people's experiences of accessing GP care. Our findings about GP websites are being used by NHS England to shape an improved GP website package for use in the South West.



We participated in the NHS Gloucestershire Fit for the Future consultation on how best to provide specialist hospital services, such as respiratory, diabetes and endocrinology. The ICB has now approved changes.

Autumn



We spoke to 800 people from our diverse communities and revealed how poor communication in and across health and social care services is negatively impacting people's quality of care.



We visited two local care homes and spoke to residents, families, and carers to evaluate the quality of care and the environment. We shared our findings with the County Council and CQC to support their quality monitoring programme.

Winter



We raised awareness that a high proportion of young people experience poor mental health. Guided by their feedback we called for easy access to more opportunities for social support and connection.



As responsibility for NHS dental care moved to Gloucestershire ICB, we shared feedback data with the SW Local Dental Network and we're now on Gloucestershire's Dental Strategy and Oral Health Groups.

Every story matters



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Most of us are not aware of (social care) services available to us, how much they cost and how we go about accessing them. These things need to be talked about and explained to us properly.

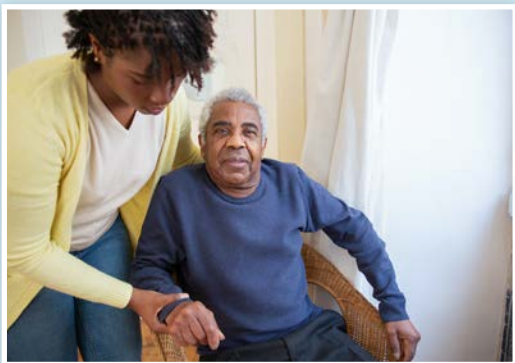
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No matter how much I said, I felt like no one was listening.



“

When someone has dementia, the medical profession needs to think about how to communicate with that person, as texting them is not appropriate.



“

I work with disabled adults and youngsters. The adults struggled with technology during lockdown. Often because they had no support when online. A huge part of making things work is having that support in place.



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 who have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Mental health A&E

We recommended that A&E staff should receive regular mental health awareness training and that a person-centred approach should be adopted when assessing patients. We called for A&E mental health services to be evaluated regularly, with feedback from service users and staff to inform improvement plans.



End of life advice and information

We revealed that patients and their families wanted better information around end of life care. We presented our findings to Gloucestershire's End of Life Care Clinical Programme Group, which makes sure all people at the end of their life and their families receive high quality care.

Access to fresh, affordable food

People in Podsmead, Gloucester, told us that access to affordable, fresh food was an issue for residents without a car, and they were concerned that healthy food is more expensive. Gloucestershire Public Health reported our findings to Leeds Beckett University as part of a national project to help local authorities tackle obesity.

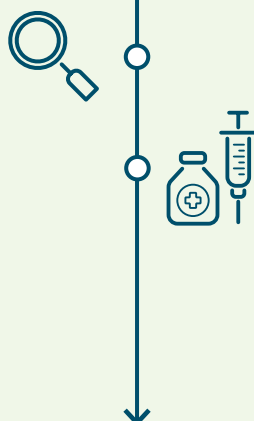


Social isolation and loneliness

We highlighted people's experiences of social isolation and loneliness, an issue intensified by COVID-19. We shared their feedback with Gloucestershire Healthy Communities, along with our research on community initiatives from across England that could be adopted in Gloucestershire to help tackle social isolation and its health and wellbeing implications.

Local NHS Long Term Plan

The NHS Long Term Plan has an impact across the whole of health and social care services. In 2019, we gave local people a say on how the plan should be implemented, asking: what matters to you? We worked with health and care decision makers to embed our findings into their plans for local NHS services.



COVID-19 vaccinations

In 2021, we heard from over 900 people about their attitudes to the COVID-19 vaccination. Their feedback helped shape the county's approach to make sure everyone had the information they needed and the opportunity to get their vaccination.



Healthwatch Hero



Celebrating a hero in our local community

Epilepsy is a serious neurological condition affecting around 600,000 people in the UK. Despite this, there is a general lack of awareness and promotion of the condition.

Rebecca is a Healthwatch Hero for sharing her story to raise awareness of epilepsy and how to improve care and support for people in Gloucestershire. 28 year old Rebecca was diagnosed at 13. She told us that until recently, her condition was not clearly explained to her, information about non-medical treatments was withheld, and she lacked control over her own care and treatment. We shared her story with Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) and recommended that those living with epilepsy, and their loved ones, need to be better informed, listened to, and supported emotionally throughout their diagnosis and treatment.

“ Thank you for putting my story to paper so that other people can learn from the experiences I’ve had. **Rebecca**
Thank you for raising awareness of the issues that affect people with epilepsy in Gloucestershire. **Epilepsy Action**”



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 to help them improve.

Improving care and support for adults with autism

Since COVID-19, Gloucestershire's autism assessment service has experienced a 77% increase in referrals. The current service cannot keep up with demand and waiting times are now on average 3.2 years.



The autism service is currently commissioned to provide 100 assessments a year, but it receives, on average, 572 referrals a year.

Adults seeking support for autism in Gloucestershire shared their stories with us to raise awareness of the challenges they face trying to understand and manage the condition, and to help us identify how the autism assessment service could provide better care and support.

People told us that waiting times for assessment have increased significantly. They find the assessment process difficult to understand and navigate, and there is little or no support provided while people wait to be assessed, or afterwards. People also commented on a lack of awareness and training about women with autism.

Our recommendations:

- Provide everyone who seeks support for autism with a clear outline of the process from referral to assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and support.
- Offer a wider range of support options to meet different people's needs, including advocacy at work and with medical appointments, and workshops outside of working hours.
- Support should also be offered to people who are assessed but not diagnosed with autism.
- People with autism should be involved in developing and improving the service.

What difference will this make?

We identified where improvements are needed in Gloucestershire's autism service and highlighted how changes could have a powerful and positive impact on people's lives. Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust have acknowledged people's concerns and apologised for the long waiting times. They welcomed our recommendations and will use the public feedback presented in our report to guide service improvements.



You cannot access a lot of help without a diagnosis, which is difficult and affects everything in your life, both physically and mentally.

Now I know who I am, I know I'll be ok and I no longer need to try to be something I am not.

Better access to digital health care


Digital technology should make it easier, not harder, for people to get the care they need. However, some people are disadvantaged by the rise in digital healthcare, including disabled people, older people, those on low incomes, and people with mental health challenges.

Also, Digital Divides mapping tools have identified areas across Gloucestershire where there is a high risk of people being digitally excluded due to a lack of digital infrastructure (broadband access), equipment, skills, and confidence.

We evaluated NHS Gloucestershire websites, and spoke to local people, community groups and the NHS to understand what can be done to improve access to digital health care in Gloucestershire.


Our recommendations:

- When providing digital health and care options, always consider how people who are digitally excluded will access those services.
- Make sure websites and Apps are easy to use, consider accessibility and safety.
- Signpost people on low incomes to organisations that can supply devices and financial support to help them access digital services.
- Provide support and resources to help sustain the vital services delivered by Digital Hubs and community digital champions to equip people with digital skills.
- Ensure there is a joined-up approach to digital inclusion in Gloucestershire, with good communication among service leaders, providers and community groups, and signposting and referral to Digital Hub providers.

 Gloucestershire Council (Education Department) arranged a free course for help with laptop skills. I have found this really helpful and now have the confidence to have a go and not be scared.

What difference will this make?

NHS Gloucestershire/One Gloucestershire ICS asked us to investigate people's experiences of digital health care to inform their digital transformation strategy.

 We asked Healthwatch Gloucestershire to help us develop our understanding of what works well, the key barriers people are facing and what we can do in response to people's communication needs. We would like to thank everyone who has taken the time to provide feedback, to improve the reach of local digital health care solutions.

NHS Gloucestershire

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 services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.



We shared the personal stories of people who are disappointed with local mental health services. People like 20-year-old Charlie who has attempted suicide and struggled for years to get support to manage multiple mental health conditions and suspected autism; and Amber's 23-year-old daughter, who has anxiety and an eating disorder and had to wait years to be diagnosed with autism and ADHD.

Getting services to involve the public

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



We shared insight from unpaid carers about the challenges they face getting support for themselves and their loved ones. Carers like Colin whose wife has dementia, he is in his 80s and cares for her at home with daily visits from paid carers; and people like Sandra who has battled to arrange formal care at home. We also shared stories from people like Maggie, in her 70s, who has struggled to find a suitable care home for her husband who has Alzheimer's; Daphne, whose husband died from cancer under the care of Macmillan and district nurses; and 61-year old Richard who survived a stroke, making his wife a carer overnight.

Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.



Access to GPs continues to be of widespread concern locally and nationally. In February 2021, we advised GPs to think more about their patients' communication needs, noting that digital and remote services can create barriers for some people. In September 2022, we reported improvements in feedback about GPs, but once again called for better communication and more joined-up, patient-centred care for everyone.



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:

- Working in partnership with diverse community and voluntary groups across Gloucestershire.
- Speaking to people at events around the county, to raise our profile and hear about people's experiences.
- Collecting stories from groups and communities we don't often hear from, including unpaid carers, adults with autism, young people with mental health issues, refugees and asylum seekers, and care home residents.

Supporting young people to speak up about mental health

As demand and waiting times for young people's mental health services continues to grow, we spoke to over 200 young people about how social support and activities can help them manage their mental health.

We found that a high proportion of young people experience poor mental health; they face pressure from various sources, including school, exams, social media, climate change, friendship groups; and COVID-19 continues to have an impact. Youth clubs and social opportunities outside of school and college provide significant benefits, but there is a lack of awareness of easily accessible informal support options.

Our recommendations:

- Establish and promote an accessible local directory of services.
- Provide a wide range of services that support young people throughout their mental health journey and create opportunities for early intervention, including more social support groups, and free community social and sports activities.
- Ensure easy access to support via phone, Apps, and online platforms to help young people manage anxiety and prevent the need for more formal clinical support.

What difference will this make?

Gloucestershire County Council highlighted its investment in TIC+Chat, a new helpline for young people experiencing anxiety or low mood, and the Build Back Better Youth grant scheme for community-based social and recreational activities. NHS Gloucestershire told us about the development of On Your Mind Glos, a new tool codeveloped with young people, which features a mental health support finder and a directory of services, including self-referral options and self-help resources.



Youth Centres to be open more often.
More people available to talk to.
More free access to social spaces for young people.



We are grateful to Healthwatch for facilitating this insightful engagement report and would like to thank all the children and young people who have contributed.

Children's Mental Health Commissioner, NHS Gloucestershire ICB



Listening and learning from our diverse communities

This year, we have been investigating how well health and care services are working together under the new One Gloucestershire ICS, which combines health, social care, public health and other public, voluntary and community sector partners.

We want to understand the experiences of everyone in our community, including people who are not often heard.

We worked with community partners and attended events and groups across the county gathering feedback from 800 people. We used this feedback to raise awareness of the issues that matter to our diverse communities to help create positive change.

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NHS Gloucestershire ICB has greatly valued many opportunities for partnership working with Healthwatch Gloucestershire in the past twelve months. Highlights have included: codevelopment of the new ICB Working with People and Communities Strategy; attendance at ICB Board Meetings, sharing and discussing patient stories; and working together to improve the accessibility of information for local people.

The ICB was pleased to fund a two-year Healthwatch Gloucestershire post, focusing on ICS engagement. The purpose of the role is to help place the public, patient, and service user voice at the heart of Gloucestershire ICS to support the key priorities of Gloucestershire's Health and Care System. The post plays a key independent role in the delivery of the ICS Working with people and communities Strategy.

Becky Parish, Associate Director, Engagement and Experience, NHS Gloucestershire

Struggling to afford healthcare costs

We presented a case study to Gloucestershire ICB to highlight how people are struggling to afford costs associated with healthcare due to the rising cost of living. The ICB gave a commitment to take positive action, and they invited us to regularly attend meetings to share stories and feedback.

Joined up working

We published several powerful patient stories with recommendations on how services can work better together to improve patient experience and quality of care, and we have shared these with health and care leaders to support the ICS Working with People and Communities Strategy.

No crossover between services

“ They said (my daughter) had been signed off by the mental health team, so there was no support. There are never multidisciplinary team meetings and treatment is within a silo; you're under 'Eating Disorders' or 'Mental Health', there's no crossover.

Communicate better to care better

We published a report, based on a snapshot engagement project, revealing how poor communication, with patients and between health and social care services, negatively affects people's care experience.

Reduce confusion and distress

“ I feel that so much of the confusion and distress I have experienced with medical issues in the past could have been avoided with clearer, more timely communications from and between healthcare professionals.
People need support when they're diagnosed, so they don't go through the hell of failing to cope. My mum would also have coped better if she could have spoken to someone.

Support people to make informed decisions

“ Doctors are smart... but by leaving out options they could ruin someone's life. Sometimes the side effects of medication outweigh the benefits, and patients should be informed that it's their choice.

Help professionals understand people's needs

“ Thanks for all your work and I hope whoever reads this is helped by seeing things from a patient's relative's perspective.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Gloucestershire 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.
- Listening to people's concerns and sharing their feedback with system partners and decision makers.
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost of living crisis.

Support to access medical services

A concerned local resident contacted us because their disability meant they couldn't access medical services.

They have a brain condition which takes away their sight and speech and impacts on their consciousness for ten to 15 hours each day. This makes it impossible to get medical help during normal working hours or early evening.

Although registered with a GP, they couldn't access services as the practice wasn't open late enough and was unable to accommodate their condition by seeing them when they were well enough to attend.

They had tried to reach out for help, but their efforts had been unsuccessful. We listened, we understood they needed support, and we directed them to POhWER where they were able to get advocacy support which helped them access the care they needed.

Helping to improve dentistry in Gloucestershire

We continue to hear negative feedback from local people about dentistry. The main concern is around access to NHS dental care, with most practices no longer taking new patients and waiting lists are very long.

“ I have persistent issues with my teeth and can no longer afford to go to a private dentist. Can you refer me to a dentist who can help? ”

We try to reassure people that they have options, we signpost them to where they can find the information they need, and make sure they understand what they can do.

“ My son is 14 months old and has never visited the dentist, and I'm really worried that I won't be able to find him one. ”

We regularly share reports with NHS England South West Local Dental Network about the feedback and enquiries we receive. We are also a member of the Gloucestershire Dental Strategy Group and Oral Health Group as the commissioning of dental services moves from NHS England to Gloucestershire ICB.

“ Over the past 12 months, Healthwatch Gloucestershire have continued to foster strong relationships and work in partnership with a wide range of local stakeholders to ensure that the experiences of the communities they work with are heard and valued across the health and care system. They have amplified the voices of the public, patients, and service users and consistently provided valuable insights to inform the commissioning and delivery of services. ”

Mohammed Bhula, Public Health Manager (Supporting People)



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:

- Carried out research on paid care at home services, digital exclusion and NHS websites.
- Conducted Enter and View visits to local services to help them improve.
- Collected up-to-date information about services, including availability of NHS dental appointments.
- Reviewed NHS literature to make sure it is easy to understand.
- Represented Healthwatch Gloucestershire at meetings with health and social care professionals and decision makers, to support local people to share their views and experiences.
- Participated in sessions to inform the ICS Working with People and Communities Strategy.

Cathy

"I only recently volunteered but have found it very welcoming and I am already involved in one of the projects. I volunteered as I have a nursing background and feel I could contribute, in a small way, to improvements in the NHS through the areas targeted by Healthwatch Gloucestershire. I enjoy meeting and talking to people and look forward to taking a more active role to help make a difference."

Fred

"I started volunteering with Healthwatch Gloucestershire several years ago after undergoing successful treatment for bowel cancer. I wanted to pay back for the wonderful NHS treatment that I received. In my professional life I had been responsible for helping schools improve. I learned that Healthwatch was doing the same for the health service with the Enter and View process and that my skills would be useful. I have found Enter and View very rewarding and enjoy working with other staff and volunteers."

Maggie

"I volunteered following my retirement from nursing, to maintain engagement with healthcare services, from a different perspective. I have participated in community engagement, project work and the Enter and View process. It is a privilege to meet members of the public and hear their views of Gloucestershire's healthcare services. I have enjoyed being part of a team which enables those views to contribute towards the development and improvement of local healthcare."



Do you feel inspired?

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

 healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

 **0800 652 5193**

 volunteering@healthwatchgloucestershire.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.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from local authority	£212,914	Expenditure on pay	£126,600
Additional income	£55,000	Non-pay expenditure	£58,835
		Office and management fee	£73,872
Total income	£267,914	Total expenditure	£259,307

Additional funding is broken down by:

- **£35,000** from NHS Gloucestershire ICB to support the Engagement Officer (ICS) post.
- **£20,000** from NHS Gloucestershire ICB for work on the digital inclusion project.

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 tackle inequalities and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless of whether that is because of where you live, your income, your ethnic background or your gender.

Top four priorities for 2023-24

1. **Cost of living crisis:** The impact on people's ability to access health and care services.
2. **Social Care Assessments:** People's experiences and perspective on the quality of information, the process, and support available.
3. **Urgent and emergency care:** Evaluating people's experiences of local services.
4. **Access to GPs:** A follow up investigation to highlight changes over time and current difficulties.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Gloucestershire, 13 Wheatstone Court, Davy Way, Waterwells Business Park, Quedgeley, Gloucester, GL2 2AQ.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is hosted by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 2, Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire 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 seven times and made decisions on matters such as priority work areas for the year ahead, appointing our Healthwatch representative in our Health and Care Trust, and they prioritised issues to take forward at the ICB meetings, such as the impact of the cost of living crisis.

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, through social media and via our website contact form. We have also attended 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, announce it in the press, on social media and in our monthly news bulletin. We will provide hard copies on request and share these with people at any events we attend.

Responses to recommendations

All providers responded to our request for information and 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 the Partnership Boards, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board.

The ICS and local authority have a coterminous footprint and we are an integral part of the Working with People and Communities strategy so most of our insight and experiences are taken to decision makers in One Gloucestershire ICS. For example, we share information with the ICB and Gloucestershire County Council. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is represented on the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board by Nikki Richardson, our Healthwatch Board Chair. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by playing a full and active part in meetings, taking a systemwide view and making sure that the public, patient and service user voice is included in the thinking and decisions of the board.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is represented on Gloucestershire Integrated Care Partnerships by Nikki Richardson and we are regularly invited to present feedback to the Gloucestershire ICB, represented by Lucy White, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager, and Nikki Richardson.

Enter and View

This year, we made three Enter and View visits as part of our ongoing partnership with Gloucestershire County Council and the Care Quality Commission to support quality monitoring of residential care homes in the county. We made 11 recommendations as a result of this activity.

Location	What we did as a result
Nazareth House Care Home, Cheltenham Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/EV-Nazareth-House-Cheltenham-Nov2022.pdf	We wrote a report with recommendations. The service began implementing these straight away and noted that they had recruited for key roles.
Wentworth Court Nursing Home, Cheltenham Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/EV-Wentworth-Court-Cheltenham-Nov2022.pdf	We wrote a report with recommendations. The service began actively seeking a way to disseminate their positive philosophies and practices to other similar settings. Reflective practice sessions were used as a way to improve as a team.
Stratton Court Care Home, Cirencester Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/EV-Stratton-Court-Cirencester-Mar2023.pdf	We wrote a report with recommendations to ensure the facilities and environment meets the needs of all service users.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/activity	Changes made to services
<p>Gloucestershire’s Care at Home services: How do people find out about and access these services, and what do they think about the quality of care?</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Care-at-Home-services-report-Final.r_Aug-2022.pdf</p>	<p>This report was shared with Gloucestershire County Council and leaders of One Gloucestershire ICS who agreed with our recommendations. Our findings and recommendations about provision of information to help people understand and navigate social care services have been echoed in a Healthwatch England publication. We will continue our focus on social care in our 2023/4 workplan where we will be investigating people’s experiences of the Care Act assessment process.</p>
<p>Accessing care through GP practices in Gloucestershire: A follow-up report reflecting on public feedback and recommendations for improvement</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/GP-follow-up-report-final.r-Sept-2022.pdf</p>	<p>Our findings were shared with leaders of One Gloucestershire ICS. We know, through enquiries to our Information and Signposting service, that access to GP surgeries continues to be a major concern for the public. We will repeat this research and public engagement in our 2023/24 workplan, asking what people have to tell us since this report was published, to understand of how things have changed.</p>
<p>Adults with Autism: People’s experiences of the autism assessment process in Gloucestershire</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Adults-with-autism-report-HWG-final-Feb2023.r.pdf</p>	<p>This report was well received by Gloucestershire Health and Care Foundation Trust, who said they are working with commissioners to better support the service. The Gloucestershire ICB have commissioned additional providers to work alongside the Gloucestershire Health and Care Autism Service on a waiting list initiative, anticipating a reduction in the waiting times for diagnostic assessment over the next six months. A working group has been established and is formulating an options appraisal paper for further service improvements to present to ICB colleagues for consideration. We are hopeful that our recommendations and further comments from the Trust included in our report will influence commissioning decisions.</p>
<p>Dentistry in the South West: Quarterly feedback reports from local Healthwatch</p>	<p>We reported our feedback data to the NHS Local Dental Network throughout the year. They are using this data to make sure patient voice informs their decisions about development of NHS dental care.</p>

Project/activity	Changes made to services
<p>Helping young people manage their mental health: Young people's views and experiences of social support in Gloucestershire</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/HWG-Young-people-MH-report-final-June2023.r.pdf</p>	<p>We recently shared our findings with Gloucestershire County Council and One Gloucestershire ICS. The Council highlighted recent initiatives including an online chat service, a new helpline for young people aged 9-25, and a grant scheme to invest in social activities for young people. NHS Gloucestershire Children's Mental Health Commissioner highlighted the new 'On Your Mind Glos' tool which has been codeveloped with young people and includes a mental health support finder with directory of services, self-help resources, and self-referral options.</p>
<p>Access to digital technologies: People's experiences of digital health and care options</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/HWG-Digital-Technologies-report-final-May23.r.pdf</p>	<p>This project was commissioned by Gloucestershire ICB. We will continue to track the recommendations we have made through our partnership with the ICB and we will be investigating the costs associated with digital technology through our 2023/24 project work, looking at the impact of the cost of living crisis and barriers to accessing services.</p>
<p>How can Gloucestershire's health and care services communicate better to improve care? A patient and public perspective</p> <p>Read our report: healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/ICS-Comms-report-final-May2023.pdf</p>	<p>Stakeholder responses from Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the ICB reflected on the need for services to develop trust in diverse communities and listen to people's experiences to make improvements to services. Our ICS Engagement Officer will continue to raise the profile of people's lived experiences through writing up and sharing their stories about how joined up services are in Gloucestershire. The Trust welcomed our recent report on communication by and within services, confirming that they want to use our recommendations and codesign improvements with us.</p>
<p>The experiences of asylum seekers and refugees accessing health and care services</p>	<p>We spoke to asylum seekers and refugees and the groups that support them. We sought to understand the challenges they face keeping healthy and well as they try to restart their lives and contribute to the communities hosting them. We have shared our findings with health and care providers to guide their work with the community.</p>



healthwatch

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