

Together

**we're making health
and social care better**

Annual Report 2022–23

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“Having been a NHS patient with my dentist for many years, and my child too, I have been informed by them that I will no longer be a NHS patient. Instead of £22 for a routine checkup I will have to pay £58. Or, £19.99 every month to join their plan. Neither of these are an option for me. I am very downhearted about this. I now have no dentist.”

Feedback from local resident

Message from our Chair

Healthwatch Sutton is delighted to publish our annual report for 2022-23.

The NHS continues to face historic challenges as it emerges from the pandemic. Staff are working incredibly hard to deliver local health and care services, but people in Sutton continue to tell us about their problems accessing GP services and NHS dentists. More government funding for GPs has recently been announced, as well as changes to NHS dentistry contracts. We hope to see real improvements on the ground in the year to come.

We also face local problems, such as the serious disrepair at St Helier Hospital. Again, after the period covered by this report, the government confirmed that funding would become available to build a new hospital and refurbish St Helier, and we look forward to seeing work begin in the coming year.

The last year has seen the end of Sutton CCG and the introduction of South West London Integrated Care System. Healthwatch Sutton is very pleased to be hosting a new Executive Officer role, working across all six South West London boroughs, which exists to ensure that patients' voices are heard in the new structure.

This year we have completed reports on access to dentistry and on Long Covid, as well as doing work around the health impacts of the increasing cost of living and the mental wellbeing of primary school pupils. The commitment of our staff and volunteers has been vital to this work.

In July 2023, we will celebrate ten years since the launch of Healthwatch Sutton. Some of our achievements in those ten years are listed in this report. I feel sure that the next ten years will see us continuing to ensure that the voices of local people are heard as we continue working to help health and care services improve.

Barbara McIntosh
Chair, Healthwatch Sutton



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Chair, Healthwatch Sutton

About us

Healthwatch Sutton 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.
- **Working in partnership** with care providers, government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate. We work with other local organisations which provide advice and information as part of **Together for Sutton**.

Who we are

We employ a staff team to make sure that those running services in Sutton put people at the heart of health and social care.

The work of our staff is overseen by our board of trustees. Our trustees have a wide range of professional skills and experiences of health and care services. They meet six times a year.



Our board

- **Barbara McIntosh** Chair
- **Adrian Attard** Treasurer
- **Adrian Bonner**
- **David Elliman**
- **Shiraz Sethna** from July 2022
- **Noor Sumun**
- **Launa Watson**
- **Janet Wingrove**

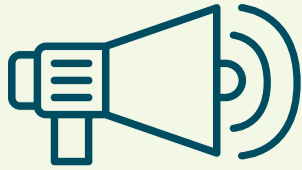


Our staff

- **Pete Flavell** Chief Executive Officer
- **Gemma Abraham** Communications, Engagement and Projects Officer (*to June 2022*)
- **Alyssa Chase-Vilchez** Executive Officer, Healthwatch representative to the South West London Integrated Care System (*from January 2023*)
- **Lorraine Davis** Team Administrator
- **Colin Wilson** Communications and Engagement Officer (*from May 2022*)

Highlights of our year

Reaching out



1,075 people

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

383 people

came to our partners at Citizens Advice Sutton for clear advice and information about health topics.

Making a difference to care



We published

2 reports and 2 briefings

about dentistry, Long Covid and health issues arising from the increasing cost of living.

Our most popular report was

Accessing dentistry services

which highlighted people's problems getting NHS dental care.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

16

outstanding volunteers who gave up **31 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by the London Borough of Sutton. In 2022-23 we received

£89,979





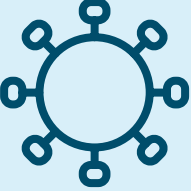


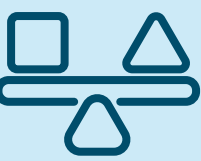
– this is less than the previous year because some funds are now paid directly to organisations which were our subcontractors.

We currently employ

5 staff

who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

<p>Spring</p>	 <p>We published our report on accessing dental services, highlighting the problems many local people were having.</p>	 <p>We began sending out a monthly email newsletter, to raise awareness of our activities and local health issues.</p>
<p>Summer</p>	 <p>We published our Cost of Living snapshot survey, and a briefing based on a Citizens Advice presentation at our AGM</p>	 <p>Working with Sutton Council, our team of trained volunteers began work on a programme of quality assurance visits to care homes.</p>
<p>Autumn</p>	 <p>Our Long Covid report, based on a survey of local patients, called for greater awareness, more peer support and continuing NHS help.</p>	 <p>We liaised with NHS colleagues to provide advice to patients about getting care during NHS industrial action.</p>
<p>Winter</p>	 <p>Our new Executive Officer began work, representing patients within the new South West London Integrated Care System structure.</p>	 <p>We attended the Race Equality Conference organised by Community Action Sutton to ensure we were meeting all patients' needs.</p>

Work across South West London

Changes in health and care

Healthwatch Sutton plays an important role in making sure that people's concerns shape our health and care services. In the past, most of these decisions about our local services were made in Sutton.

Now many of these decisions are being made by a new body called the Integrated Care System (ICS). The ICS brings together NHS, voluntary sector and local authority leaders to make health and care decisions that impact people in Sutton, Croydon, Wandsworth, Kingston, Richmond, and Merton. These changes means that we need to work differently to ensure that your voice continues to make a difference.

Coordinating Healthwatch representation

The six boroughs covered by the ICS each has a Healthwatch, and they are working together to provide representation in the new structure. Healthwatch Sutton has employed an Executive Officer who liaises between all these organisations to ensure patients' voices are heard.

Alyssa Chase-Vilchez began work in this role in November 2022. Alyssa attends many ICS meetings where important decisions are being made that impact people's lives, to ensure that the voices of local communities are heard. South West London ICS has already taken account of over a hundred local Healthwatch reports as it develops its plans.



Executive Officer
Alyssa Chase-Vilchez



"South West London Integrated Care System recognises the huge value of the insights Healthwatch organisations provide in informing our health and social care priorities and ensuring that our services meet the needs of our diverse local people and communities... We look forward to our continued partnership with our South West London Healthwatch organisations. By working hand in hand, we ensure that the patient/public, local communities' and carers' voices are not only heard, but genuinely valued and acted upon, making a transformative difference in the lives of local people."

Charlotte Gawne Executive Director of Stakeholder, Partnership Engagement and Communications

Kate Wignall Head of Patient and Public Engagement

Quality of care in care homes

Following the successful pilot of our own care home assessment system, we were approached by Sutton Council to see if we could support their Quality Assurance system to assess the quality of care being delivered by care home providers in the Borough.

The system they were proposing to use is slightly different to the one that we had used. It is based on the '15 steps' methodology that was originally used on hospital wards. It mainly focuses on observations when visiting a service but does allow for discussion with residents and staff.

We are very pleased that this work is only possible with support of our outstanding volunteers. Pilot visits were carried out in 2022 and the full programme of visits is now being carried out. Volunteers collect evidence, meet after the visit to score the care home against different criteria and then upload the scores, evidence, comments and other data on to an online portal.

Sutton Council adds this data to their own and creates a report. This is used to make improvements and shared with the Care Quality Commission. Sutton has approximately 75 care homes in the borough and more than half of these are smaller homes for people with learning disabilities. We currently visiting one care home every month. We are continually working with Sutton Council to improve the system and we feel this is a great example of collaborative working. We provide the independent assessment and this system avoids duplication of work.

Together for Sutton

Healthwatch is now part of a stronger network with other local information and advice organisations.

For many years, Healthwatch has worked together with Citizens Advice and Advocacy for All, which provide health advice and information, and support with making a complaint about NHS services.

Now Healthwatch is part of Together for Sutton (TfS), a partnership made up of seven local charities, all delivering services in the London Borough of Sutton. Member organisations have expertise in a wide range of services to support Sutton residents and professionals. TfS is an independent, impartial, free and confidential service.

TfS offers advice on topics from money matters to mental health, wellbeing, Council Tax worries, access to local charities, community groups and issues around the rising cost of living. The partnership provides one point of contact, so local people don't need to work out which organisation is best placed to help them.

Primary school mental health

Examining the impact of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing of children aged 9-11

We started looking at the mental wellbeing of primary school children in 2019. After consulting with teachers and other professionals, we launched a survey to be completed in classes at local primary schools using tablet computers. This ran from December 2019 to March 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit and children were sent home from school. At this point ten schools had taken part and 909 survey responses had been collected. We waited for an appropriate time to restart collecting responses, but the ongoing disruption made this impossible, so we published our report in March 2021.

We reconvened our project group with key stakeholders who work with children of this age to develop some recommendations from the findings. Teachers and others felt that the pandemic had made a significant impact on the mental wellbeing of the children. As such the only recommendation made was to repeat the survey in order to be able to compare pupils' mental wellbeing before and after the pandemic.

Schools started repeating the survey in December 2022 and the last responses were collected in March 2023. In total 1,035 responses were collected from ten schools. We are finalising individual reports which will be given to each school, and are also working on the analysis of the borough-wide data in order to be able to publish a pre/post Covid-19 pandemic comparison report in summer 2023.

Supporting patients at GP practices

All practices now have a Patient Participation Group or PPG, where patients, carers and staff meet to discuss and support how the practice is run. In Sutton some PPG members attend the borough-wide Patient Reference Group, which meets regularly with local NHS staff. Healthwatch staff support and administer the PRG, and support local PPGs.

Patient Participation Groups

- PPGs had a successful and productive year, with 16 groups meeting with their practice to give their perspective on its plans and services.
- PPG members brought issues raised at these meetings to the Patient Reference Group, including hospital transport and digital exclusion.
- Some PPGs have also undertaken their own projects. For example, to help address loneliness, James O’Riordan Medical Centre invited 20 patients over 80 living alone to visit the Centre on a Saturday. The PPG, vicar, doctor, nurse and other members of the practice were all present to discuss the issue.

Patient Reference Group

- The PRG has held six meetings in the last year. They transitioned from Zoom meetings to hybrid meetings at the Salvation Army Hall.
- The group have shared ideas and experiences with, and responded to presentations from, staff from across NHS Sutton and beyond. These have covered areas including:
 - GP Extended Access Service, which saw 4000 patients in December 2022
 - Results from the National Patient Survey
 - Addressing loneliness and digital exclusion
 - The work of Sutton Primary Care Networks, such as home visits and additional clinical roles, including paramedics, social prescribers and first-contact physiotherapists
 - The new Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, made up of representatives from the local authority, NHS and voluntary and community sector in each of Sutton’s four Primary Care Networks
- The group also held a workshop and survey to work out how it could have the most impact. Members felt the group was highly effective in allowing information to be shared between the NHS and patients, but did not have much impact on decisions about NHS services. Members identified 10 areas of focus to be developed in the coming year.

Ten years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch Sutton. 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 everyone who stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Supporting patient involvement

Since 2014 we've supported the Patient Reference Group (PRG), which brings together patients from GP practices to hear their views about local healthcare.

Young people's mental health

In 2017, seven local schools took part in our survey.

Winning £1.8m extra funding

5,000 young people from over half of Sutton secondary schools took part in our mental health survey in 2018. 30% said they needed support with their mental wellbeing. Our work helped secure an extra £1.8 million for mental health support in local schools.

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

Improving hospital care

In 2016 our report identified the issue of noise at night in wards at St Helier and Epsom Hospitals. The trust took actions including introduction of comfort packs including eye masks and ear plugs.

Support for learning disabled patients

In 2017 we supported the PRG in producing "top tips" for GPs when working with patients with learning disabilities.

Involving patients in developing new services

We worked with Sutton Health and Care when they were set up in 2017 to ensure that service users were involved in how the new organisation worked.

Improving access to digital services

In 2018 we supported Patient Participation Groups to improve websites at GP practices.

Checking local services

In 2019 we began “Enter and View” work to check services in local care homes. Trained volunteers and trustees carry on this work today.

Covid in care homes

We worked during the pandemic with care home commissioners at Sutton Council. to check that residents felt safe, and could access Covid tests and PPE equipment.

Working across South West London

In 2022, as six borough-level NHS commissioning bodies merged, we employed a new staff member to make sure that patients’ voices are still heard within the new structure.

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

Mental health of new mothers

In 2019 we surveyed the mental health needs of expectant and recent mothers and their partners. Two-thirds of those surveyed felt they and their partners needed more support. The NHS developed a detailed action plan to improve services.

Mental wellbeing of primary school pupils

In 2019 we worked with local schools to survey almost 1,000 pupils. We’re now repeating the survey so as to see what’s changed – for example, as a result of the pandemic.

Information during the pandemic

Citizens Advice worked on our behalf to provide almost 2,000 people with information and advice about issues including Covid itself, community volunteers and vaccines.



Advice and information

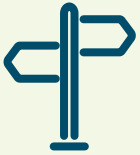
If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch and our partner organisations are here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make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

This year our partner organisations helped people by:

- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Supporting people to use the NHS complaints procedure to get the health and care they need

Providing information and advice, and help with complaints

Providing information and advice



Citizens Advice Sutton works with us to provide information and advice to local people about health and care services, including issues involving health benefits. This year they dealt with

383 enquiries

The most common topic was accessing community care services for both adults and children. Other issues that stood out were queries about dentists, and about accessing counselling or talking therapies. Citizens Advice have noticed a marked decrease in the number of clients contacting them regarding complaints about the NHS, especially in the last few months.

Supporting people making complaints



Advocacy for All supports people in Sutton making formal complaints about NHS services. In 2022-23 they opened

49 new cases

The three areas of care about which they received most complaints were:

1. Quality of secondary care – 11 complaints
2. Mental health services – 8 complaints
3. Maternity services – 5 complaints

73 percent of complainants were women. Of those who disclosed their ethnicity, just under two-thirds were white and British. Complainants were quite evenly distributed in terms of age.



Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. Over the last year we have surveyed patients about getting dental care, about their experiences with Long Covid, and also asked local people about whether the increasing cost of living has affected their physical or mental health.

Dentistry

Problems accessing NHS dentistry became an issue during the Covid pandemic, and have continued since. In January to March we surveyed 98 local people about their experiences. We liaised with Sutton Council, the Local Dentistry Committee, SW London CCG and local voluntary sector organisations to deliver this project.

What we found



- All respondents who tried to register with a dentist after March 2020 told us that they were unable to register because they contacted surgeries but they were not accepting NHS patients.
- Almost 1 in 5 respondents who were registered with a dentist told us that they wanted to register as an NHS patient but they could only be registered as a private patient.
- There has been a significant decline in the number of people who were able to register as an NHS patient when they wanted to after the pandemic started.
- More than 1 in 4 respondents who had attempted to book a routine appointment had to wait 1 month or more for an appointment.
- 13 percent of respondents who had attempted to book an emergency appointment were unable to get an appointment.



“Because local practices don’t accept new patients, I have to take annual leave and spend a 4 hour round trip to visit a dentist on the other side of London.”

What action we took



- We organised meetings with Local Dental Committee Directors (for each borough), NHS England, LDC Confederation, local Healthwatch leads and the SWL Integrated Care System lead for commissioning dentistry to discuss potential action.
- Some issues need to be addressed at a national level. We made Healthwatch England aware of our findings, and they have taken these issues forward with MPs. This has led to some improvements, for example, in the Find a Dentist facility on the NHS website.

Long Covid

In February 2023, the government reported that around 2 million people in the UK – that's about 1 person in 34 – said that they were experiencing symptoms of Long Covid. Between September 2021 to March 2022 we spoke to 79 local people about Long Covid, including NHS staff and members of a patients' self-help group. Later in 2022 we published our findings in a report.

What we found



- Over a third of those who had symptoms for over a year still hadn't been given a diagnosis.
- Older respondents were less likely to have been diagnosed with Covid-19 when they were originally ill, less likely to have been given a diagnosis of Long Covid and less likely to have accessed treatment.
- Long Covid is having a very significant impact on people's ability to work, on their finances, relationships, social lives, and mental health.
- Many people had found it difficult to access support.
- The majority of people who accessed treatment found it beneficial. Different people found different treatment components helpful.
- Respondents expressed considerable concern for the future.



"There is no 'cure' and I will be losing my job in the next few weeks as I am no longer able to do it and have used up all my sickness."

What we recommended



- Increased awareness of Long Covid among the general public, employers and people working in health and social care.
- Better access to peer support.
- For the Integrated Post Covid Assessment Service to continue offering a range of different types of support, including support for emotional and psychological as well as physical symptoms as this is clearly valued by their patients.

The impact of the cost of living on health

The inflation rate for food and non-alcoholic drinks was in double figures for all of the second half of 2022. Energy prices rose throughout 2022, and rose further in spring 2023 as government support ended. We wanted to know what effect the rising cost of living was having on people's physical and mental health, so in August we surveyed 108 people attending a local event, Carshalton Eco Fair.



What people told us

- 41 percent of people told they were cutting back on heating. 31 percent told us they were spending less on food.
- 33 percent of people told us they were experiencing stress about bills.
- 24 percent of people said that they go out with friends less than they used to – we know that support from friends and family is important to mental health.



"I am a local Health Visitor and am very worried about my clients and the impact of cost of living on children and families. My families are going to food banks more and struggling to buy clothing. One of my colleagues is having to go to a food bank to feed her children."



What we did

- We published our survey findings and continued to raise awareness of the issue. In December, Steve Triner from Citizens Advice Sutton spoke at our AGM about health and cost of living issues, and we published his talk as a briefing. In January we publicised government research about the impact of the cost of living on mental health.
- We worked with other local organisations through Together for Sutton networking events and at the Community Action Sutton Race Equality Conference to highlight these issues.



Our volunteers

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:

- Visited local care homes to help them improve
- Helped promote Healthwatch Sutton and what we have to offer
- Acted as trustees to provide strategic management for our organisation, and to represent us on a wide range of local bodies
- Helped with office tasks such as preparing mailings

Next year, we're planning to expand our use of volunteers:

- To promote Healthwatch in community venues
- To ensure that we hear from excluded communities

Noor Sumun

"I am a member of the Healthwatch Sutton care homes visit programme and have participated in a number of visits.

Everyone who carries out a care home visit must be authorised and trained by Healthwatch, A check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is also carried out.

The visit aims to help to identify good practice and areas for improvement in care homes. We give service users, their families, and carers a voice and an opportunity to share their experiences of care. We also help to hold service providers to account and ensure that they are providing a good standard of care, and we help to improve the quality of care.

We visit as a team, and spend time observing the service provided. We talk to service users, their families, staff and carers, and report our findings to the London Borough of Sutton.

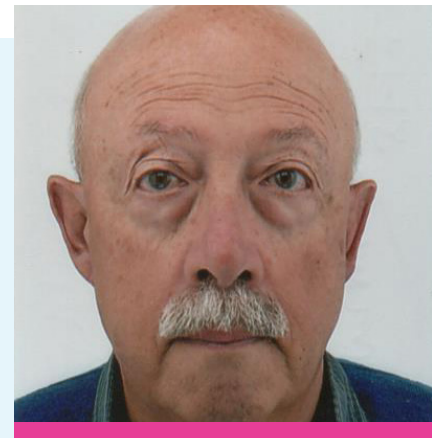
I am proud to be part of this programme, and I would encourage others to consider volunteering as well.



Adrian Attard

"I have been a trustee of Healthwatch Sutton since February 2014, and for the last five years I have been the Treasurer of the organisation. Before my retirement I was a GP in Croydon for twenty five years. When I was approached to join the local Healthwatch I immediately agreed because I felt that I could now look at the NHS from the user's point of view and contribute my experience of a provider of the service.

Since I volunteered to become the Healthwatch Treasurer I have been impressed by the efficiency with which the organisation is run, and the probity that allows us to fulfil our statutory obligations to the residents of Sutton on a relatively limited budget. Under the guidance of our Chief Executive we have also been able to supplement our local authority grant to expand the services we provide to our borough."



Thank you

Thank you to everyone who helped us put people at the heart of local health and care services, including:

All the many members of the public who shared their views and experiences with us.

All of our amazing staff, trustees and volunteers, including:

Adrian Attard

David Elliman

Susan Hind

Chelliah Lohendran (Logie)

Shri Mehrotra

Stephanie Phillips

Shiraz Sethna

Launa Watson

Adrian Bonner

Sheila Gooljar

Aboo Kohealtee

Barbara McIntosh

Neena Mehrotra

Sally Sauvageot

Noor Sumun

Janet Wingrove

PPG and PRG patient representatives, and GP practice and Sutton Primary Care Network staff.

All the organisations and groups who have contributed to our work, including:

South West London Integrated Care System

London Borough of Sutton

Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust

Other South West London Healthwatch organisations (any beyond!)

Community Action Sutton

Citizens Advice Sutton

Advocacy for All

Local Dentistry Committee

Covid Rehab Service

Sutton Health and Care

Sutton schools

Sutton Primary Care Networks

Special thanks to over 1,000 local primary school children who completed our survey, and to their teachers for their support

Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from the London Borough of Sutton under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Sutton Council	£89,979	Expenditure on pay	£202,011
Additional funding	£175,968	Non-pay expenditure	£51,672
Total income	£265,947	Total expenditure	£253,683

Additional funding consisted of:

- **£40,968** from the NHS to support patient feedback and involvement
- **£110,000** from the NHS to support Healthwatch coordination across SW London
- **£10,000** from the NHS for Core 20 work to reduce health inequalities
- **£15,000** from Sutton Council and the NHS for small projects

Next steps

Health and care services are currently facing unprecedented challenges. Tackling the backlog from the pandemic 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 patients face when accessing care.

Our priorities for 2023–24

We're currently developing our plan of work for next year. Key topics include:

1. Access to GP services
2. Maternity and women's health
3. Lifestyle behaviours such as smoking and drinking
4. Risky behaviours in young people
5. Home and domiciliary care
6. Care after hospital discharge
7. Homelessness
8. Mental wellbeing of learning disabled children and young people

Communicating what we do

It's crucial to our work that people know we exist and understand what we do.

Successful monthly newsletter

In this last year we have expanded our communications work with a monthly newsletter. The newsletter is sent to over 400 people, and we know that over 40 percent of them open it – a very high figure for an email newsletter.

Plans for next year

We have been working with a volunteer consultant from the Media Trust to develop a strategy to further improve our communications. Our current plans include:

- Making clearer where we have been able to make a difference to local services, for example through case studies
- Making more regular use of social media
- Updating our website structure so information is easier to find
- Providing more information about our different projects
- Doing more outreach in community venues, and developing a team of volunteers to help with this
- Celebrating our tenth anniversary
- Targeting three key audiences: health and care service users, primary care providers, and staff and volunteers in the local voluntary sector
- Providing non-digital materials such as printed documents and leaflets for people who prefer to access information in this way
- Bearing equalities issues in mind in all our communications work



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Sutton, Granfers Community Centre,
73-79 Oakhill Road, Sutton SMI 3AA

Healthwatch Sutton 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 eight 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 six times and made decisions on matters such as our hosting the SW London Executive Officer and the level of our reserves. The board also met six further times to gather information, including hearing about the work of other local groups.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities by publicising our activities through our website and email newsletter and inviting feedback.

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 and make copies available at community events and as part of our outreach activities.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard from. This year we have done this by attending the Race Equality Conference organised by Community Action Sutton, NHS Sutton's one-day workshop on care for frail older people and Together for Sutton events where Healthwatch staff have liaised with staff working with agencies supporting visually impaired people, learning disabled people and many other user groups.

Responses to recommendations

We had no providers who did not respond 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 the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Sutton Safeguarding Adults Board and the Sutton Anti-Poverty Forum.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in South West London Integrated Care System. For example, we and other SW London Healthwatch provided the ICS with over a hundred reports about health issues affecting local people, which influenced the development of the SW London Joint Forward Plan, where this work is directly referenced. 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. We made two reports to Sutton Council as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Care Home, Carshalton	Quality assurance in liaison with Sutton Council	Reported findings to Sutton Council
Care Home, Sutton	Quality assurance in liaison with Sutton Council	Reported findings to Sutton Council

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Sutton is represented on the Sutton Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chair, Barbara McIntosh. During 2021/22 our representative has effectively carried out this role by by informing/updating the HWB of our work and by sharing information we receive from people using the NHS and Social Services.

- Throughout the year we have shared feedback about difficulties in accessing general practice, dentistry and long waiting times for children's and adults' mental health services.
- We contributed to the debate about the recovery of services after Covid and fed back patients' suggestions for improving primary care.
- Our representative contributed to discussions about the proposed relocation of social services offices, and we presented findings from the Long Covid report.
- We participated in the review of pharmacy services in the borough and gave full backing to the increased participation of pharmacists in the delivery of prescribing, diagnosing and alleviating the pressure on GPs.

- Healthwatch Sutton was in agreement with the Health And Wellbeing Board in their concern about the increasing number of isolated older people in the borough and the increasing need of young families who may be struggling with a variety of mental health, financial and other pressures.
- We were very pleased to hear of progress being made in services to young families and a new strategy for the under 5's from Public Health delivering the principles of early intervention and prevention..

South West London Integrated Care Partnership

Healthwatch Sutton is represented on SW London Integrated Care Partnership by Alyssa Chase-Vilchez, who also attends meetings of SW London Integrated Care Board.



healthwatch Sutton

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