

healthwatch East

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to us

have
your
say



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health and
services

What are we hearing, monitoring and doing?

October to December 2023

healthwatch
East Sussex

What we are hearing, monitoring and doing?

About

Healthwatch are the independent public champion for health and care.

We monitor health and care services so that we can understand what issues are affecting people locally.

We use patient and public feedback and experiences to inform decision-makers and guide our work and projects.

This document is a summary of the things we have heard about health and care, the issues we are monitoring and the actions we are taking.

Get in touch and tell us your experiences:

Please share your experiences and help us understand how things are for you:

- **Leave a review on our [Feedback Centre](#)**
- **Contact our [Information & Signposting Service](#)**
 - **Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk**
 - **Telephone: 0333 101 4007 Monday - Friday (10am-2pm)**

What are we hearing? (New themes)

Issue	Description	Our actions
Equality of access to NHS services	Concerns raised on multiple themes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of BSL provision in Patient Transport and Acute Services • Lack of translators and detail on how to request • Limited dementia support for inpatients • Lack of support for visually impaired inpatients • Lack of suitable adaptations in GP practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback shared with NHS Sussex • Feedback shared with ESHT • Explore options for wider engagement and evidence gathering.
Impacts of cost of living on health and wellbeing	Lower take-up of services due to costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescriptions and medication • Dentistry services (NHS and private) • Glasses and hearing aids Reduced use of heating and other essentials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share feedback with East Sussex Financial Inclusion Steering Group. • Run cost-of-living survey in Q1 to explore further.
Confusion over GP services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion about which services GPs do and don't offer, and variations between practices. • Mixed messages and inconsistent communications from GP practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback shared with NHS Sussex Primary Care team. • Individual issues picked up with GP practices directly.
Support 'gap' in health and care services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from people struggling to get 'hands on' support to navigate and engage with health and care services. • Complexity where both social care and NHS services are involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore pathways for escalation with NHS Sussex and East Sussex County Council.
Support for migrants and asylum seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues due to HC2 certificates not being auto-renewed, reducing access to NHS services. • Challenges in self-completion without support for migrants and asylum seekers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback shared with NHS Sussex Primary Care team
Anxiety around 'Frequent Caller Plans'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity on frequent caller plans and their impact on people's ability to use services, especially in an emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop public-facing communications to clarify how Frequent Caller Plans operate.

What are we monitoring? (Existing themes)

Issue	Description	Our actions
NHS Industrial Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is NHS industrial action affecting patients, the public and staff? If so, how? • No explicit feedback received to-date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor public/patient feedback
Advocacy provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential gaps between NHS and Social Care advocacy services leaving people unsupported. • Confusion around eligibility for advocacy. • Limited support mechanisms for non-complainants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise with NHS Sussex • Raise with Local Authority (ESCC)
Access to GP appointments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns over timely access to GP appointments. • Reduced availability of online options (e.g. Engage Consult) and face-to-face appts reported. • Concerns over continuity of care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing feedback with NHS Sussex primary care monthly.
Dentistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges finding dentists accepting new NHS patients, and long waits for appts and treatment. • Dentists unwilling or unable to undertake complex procedures e.g. root canal for NHS patients. • Concerns over quality of NHS treatment at some practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share feedback with NHS Sussex commissioners and Local Dental Committee.
Access to NHS 111, A&E and Ambulances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns over long response and waiting times. • Long waits for responses from the NHS 111 Clinical Assessment Service. • Long waits in A&E services, especially at peak times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise with SECAMB • Raise with ESHT • Monitor to identify changes.
Long delays in processing NHS complaints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns and anxiety due to long wait times for responses to complaints made to NHS organisations. • Variable quality in responses to complaints from different NHS organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share insight with CQC. and Sussex Quality Governance Improvement Group (QGIG).
Mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient confusion over mental health service offer – where to go and for what? • Long waits for CAMHS and other support services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise with NHS Sussex • Raise with Local Authority (ESCC)

What are we doing?

Issue	Description	Our actions
Experiences of oral health in care settings (TBC) <i>(April to June 2024)</i>	High quality oral health is crucial for maintaining the wellbeing of residents in care home settings, both in terms of diet and wider quality of life.	Enter and View of care homes to explore oral health provision and resident's experiences of support with their oral health.
Cost-of-living Survey <i>(April to June 2024)</i>	Feedback suggests increases in cost-of-living may impact on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing. We wish to explore the scale and nature of the impact in East Sussex.	Public facing survey to explore the impacts of changes of cost-of-living on people's health and wellbeing.
Information & Signposting visits to Foodbanks <i>(Jan to March 2024)</i>	Users of Food Banks are often 'less heard' so Healthwatch regularly visits to capture these and offers support to help people access health and care services.	Fortnightly visits to Food Banks to offer information and signposting support to residents.
Information & Signposting visits to Lewes Prison <i>(Jan to March 2024)</i>	Prison residents' health and care experiences are often 'less heard' so Healthwatch regularly visits to capture these and offer advice.	Fortnightly visits to Lewes Prison to offer information and signposting support to residents.
Experiences of Community Diagnostic Centres <i>(February 2024)</i>	Community Diagnostic Centre's aim to provide patients with access to planned diagnostic care nearer to home without the need to attend acute hospital sites.	'Enter and View' at Bexhill Community Diagnostic Centre and a public-facing survey to capture experiences.
Experiences of 'Patient Knows Best' platform <i>(February 2024)</i>	Feedback highlighting variable experiences of the 'Patient Knows Best' platform in guiding people's health and care.	Poll to explore user experiences of 'Patient Knows Best' .

Our recent publications

Title	Summary
<u>Enter and View 2023: ESHT Emergency Departments and Urgent Treatment Centres</u>	In August 2023, we undertook two 24-hour 'Enter and View' sessions in Emergency Departments (EDs) and Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs) at Eastbourne District General Hospital and at The Conquest Hospital. This report summarises our learning.
<u>Eastbourne GP Surgeries Accessibility Audits 2023</u>	During our 2022 Eastbourne Listening Tour we heard from Eastbourne residents about the difficulties some faced when accessing their GP Surgery. We undertook Accessibility Audits at seven GP surgeries to raise awareness around accessibility, review access and share our learning.
<u>'You Said – We Did' – December 2023</u>	This document sets out the issues you raised and any changes you have helped us to deliver during December 2023.
<u>'You Said – We Did' – November 2023</u>	This document sets out the issues you raised and any changes you have helped us to deliver during November 2023.
<u>How Healthwatch has contributed to health and care in Sussex (Healthwatch in Sussex)</u>	This report summarises the themes the three Healthwatch in Sussex (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) heard between June and September 2023.
<u>'You Said – We Did' – October 2023</u>	This document sets out the issues you raised and any changes you have helped us to deliver during October 2023.
<u>Improving the Outpatient experience: Patient feedback from deliberative engagement workshops (Healthwatch in Sussex)</u>	Healthwatch in Sussex ran workshops in April/May 2023 with the purpose of gaining participant views on new initiatives aimed at improving the Outpatient experience. Our report sets out what we heard, the key themes and messages from participants, and our recommendations.
<u>East Sussex Summer Roadshow Report 2023</u>	Healthwatch East Sussex undertook a 'Road Show' during the summer of 2023. This report summarises what we heard about people's health and care experiences at public and community events across East Sussex.