

Annual Work Programme

April 2025 – March 2026



Introduction

About Us

Local Healthwatch organisations were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure that the voices of those using health and social care services are heard.

Healthwatch Dudley, formed in 2013 and is hosted by Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) in Brierley Hill.

We actively gather community feedback and ensure that everyone's views are considered by those who commission and deliver services. Our role also includes signposting individuals to relevant resources and providing essential information to help navigate the health and social care system.

By supporting individuals to express their views and experiences we aim to ensure that local people have a meaningful impact on the services they receive.

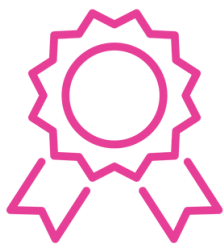
To find out more about us visit : www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk

Our Statutory Responsibilities

- **Gather and share views** on local health and social care services with commissioners and providers.
- **Produce reports and recommendations** for service improvement.
- **Encourage public involvement** in health and social care planning and delivery.
- **Provide information and advice** on accessing services and available options.
- **Share local views and experiences** with Healthwatch England to fulfil the role of a national champion.
- **Escalate concerns** to Healthwatch England and local decision-makers when necessary to advocate for change.

Our priorities for 2025–2026

Review and revisit GP Access report findings



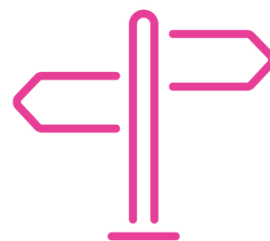
We will review and update the GP Access findings from our 2024 GP Access report, highlighting what has improved against our recommendations and what challenges remain. This will help understand the impact on patients and identify any further actions needed.

The updated report will be shared with key stakeholders to support ongoing improvements in GP services and the community..

Black Country Foodbank ‘More than the essentials’

This project will work with the Black Country Food Bank to understand how poverty impacts health and wellbeing. It will gather insights from people accessing food banks and provide signposting support to relevant services.

By listening to people’s experiences, we will gather feedback to identify opportunities for support, ensuring better access to help when needed.



Dentistry Access



A report will be published to share findings from our research on Dentistry Access, highlighting key issues and challenges faced by different communities including those seldom heard.

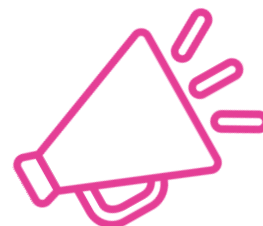
By working with the Local Dental Network, ICB colleagues and Public Health; the report will raise awareness and support efforts to improve dental care access for Dudley residents..

Mental Health engagement

In 2025, we will work with local organisations to make sure people’s voices help shape mental health services.

We will visit a mental health setting to hear directly from those receiving care.

We’ll attend key meetings to speak up about what matters to local people and support local mental health projects that raise awareness and involve the community.



Ongoing Efforts

Here's what we're continuing to work on:

Listening to Local Voices

We are committed to making sure that people's experiences with health and social care are heard. Through meetings and face-to-face conversations, we are gathering feedback by engaging with the community.

What's happening:

- Sharing insights with those who can take action and create improvements.
- Attending local Health and Social Care boards and strategic meetings to raise further insight into policies and delivery.
- Participating in events and engagements to collect views and experiences from across the borough.
- Continue supporting engagement initiatives at Russell's Hall Hospital to gather insights on accessing hospital and related health and social care services.

Making Information Accessible

It's important for everyone to easily find clear information about health and social care. We will continue to share community information online and in person, to help keep people connected.

What's happening:

- Enhancing our website to be more user-friendly and helpful.
- Increasing our social media presence across all our platforms.
- Engaging in outreach across the community to raise awareness of how Healthwatch Dudley can support them.
- Providing information on local services and resources to the community.
- Helping individuals navigate health and social care options through direct support.
- Distributing printed materials and reports to raise awareness and share our research.

Research that Drives Change

By listening to the community, we can identify the changes needed to improve health and social care services. Local stories and experiences guide our research and help us share recommendations.

What's happening:

- Conducting research on key issues such as health inequalities and access to healthcare services.
- Gathering feedback from local residents to shape future services.
- Sharing findings with decision-makers to influence positive outcomes and strategic policies.

Supporting Volunteers and Collaboration

Volunteers play an essential role in delivering our goals. By connecting with the community and offering support, we aim to make a bigger difference together.

What's happening:

- Providing support and training to ensure volunteers are confident in any tasks undertaken.
- Collaborating with local organisations to work towards shared goals.
- Encouraging involvement from underrepresented voices, including young people, in our activities.
- Create accessible ways and online options for people to get involved.

Promoting Health Equality

We are committed to supporting equal access to healthcare, particularly for women and minority communities. By championing for better, more inclusive services, we look to address health inequalities.

What's happening:

- Supporting initiatives that focus on women's health and addressing inequalities.
- Championing for better access to healthcare for all communities.
- Partnering with local groups to raise awareness and improve services, especially for under-represented groups.

Reaching More People

We are dedicated to engaging with our community and making sure everyone stays informed.

What's happening:

- Engaging with the whole community, attending events and community activities and carrying out outreach across the borough.
- Sharing our annual report and key updates with local GP surgeries and community organisations.
- We will continue to build relationships with stakeholders to champion our recommendations from recent research, to create a real impact and a positive legacy.
- Exploring new ways to engage people, such as podcasts and different media channels.
- Keeping our website and social media channels updated with timely information.

Digital and Technology

We are improving our systems to better collect and use data, ensuring our projects are well-informed and aligned with community needs.

What's happening:

- Using new research tools to improve our projects.
- Keeping records and systems updated to capture and report valuable insights.
- Engaging with the community through social media and preferred channels to listen to their feedback.
- Providing training and updating work processes where needed.
- Reviewing and improving research methods to ensure they are effective.

How We'll Show Our Impact

We'll keep the community informed about our progress through:

Quarterly Updates: Highlighting key findings and statistics and the community voice from our outreach and engagement activities.

Annual Report: Offering a comprehensive overview of our year's work and its impact on the community.

Insight Bulletins: Regular updates shared with stakeholders and the public via our website, mailing lists, and social media.

Website and Social Media: Keeping everyone informed with timely updates and important information shared through our website and social media channels.

Research Findings and Enter & View Reports: Sharing insights from our research and Enter & View visits through printed reports and accessible versions available on our website, Black Country Insight Library and Healthwatch England report centre.



Have your say

If you wish to share your experience of booking an NHS dental appointment, or if you want to share your experience of using other health and social care services, contact our team.

www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/have-your-say

Fill out our form



Phone
03000 111 001
(local rate number)

WhatsApp message
07983728913
Message only.
Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

Email
hello@healthwatchdudley.co.uk

Stay updated

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Sign up to our
mailing list





**Committed
to quality**

Healthwatch Dudley is committed to providing a quality service, from how we collect data, to the information we provide. Every three years we perform an in-depth audit, in conjunction with Healthwatch England, to ensure we meet this high standard.

**If you would like this report in another
language or format please contact us.**

Healthwatch Dudley

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