

Healthwatch England
Annual Report 2023-2024

The value of listening



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"Over the last year, local Healthwatch have shown what happens when people speak up about their care, and services listen. They are helping the NHS unlock the power of people's views and experiences, especially those facing the most serious health inequalities."

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive at Healthwatch England



Message from our CEO and Committee member

"I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the eighth annual report for Healthwatch Ealing under Your Voice in Health and Social Care to reflect on what has been a successful year. During this time, Healthwatch Ealing have continued their statutory responsibility to obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services, make those views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services, provide reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved and promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services. This year, working with our partners in health and social care, Healthwatch Ealing launched 17 separate reports of which our vaccine surveys engaged with 414 people across Northwest London. We learned about their views on vaccines, and what misconceptions they had. This information will better inform future vaccine education efforts. Healthwatch Ealing's collaboration with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and third sector organizations resulted in a nutrition project for asylum seekers. This initiative promoted healthier eating habits and reduced social isolation, improving the well-being of asylum seekers in the borough. The opinions of those we talked to shed light on the difficulties and disparities faced within the community. By engaging with their stories, we provide ourselves with a constructive base from which to improve their quality of care. This year we gathered patient experience feedback from 5580 reviews informing the quarterly Healthwatch Ealing patient experience report. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Healthwatch Ealing staff and volunteers, who have continued to work with dedication to ensure a responsive and vital service continues to support the local community"



[Tim Spilsbury, Chief Executive Officer} Your Voice in Health and Social Care, Contract holder for Healthwatch Ealing

"I have been volunteering with Healthwatch now for a few months and I have found the team to be very knowledgeable and proactive in their work. As a volunteer committee member, I have found everyone to be kind and helpful and have made my transition to helping support Healthwatch a huge benefit of my time. I hope what I have to offer has been worthwhile to Healthwatch. The work carried out surrounding care and nursing homes has been very enlightening, and I have and continue to learn a lot."

[Marella O'Sullivan, Healthwatch Ealing Committee Member]



About us

Healthwatch Ealing is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.



Our values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



Our Staff

Carleen
Duffy
Area
Manager



Ruchi
Wadhwa
Project &
Engagement
Officer



Stuart
McMichael
Patient
Experience
Officer



David
Crawley
Project
Officer



Year in review

Reaching out:

5,580 people

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

212 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health support and cost-affordable options in dentistry



Making a difference to care:

We published

17 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Q3 Patient Experience Report

which provides a snapshot overview of how people feel about their health services.



Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

39

outstanding volunteers who gave up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority.

In 2023 - 24 we received

£120,000

which is the same as the previous year.







We currently employ

4 staff

who help us carry out our work.



How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>The hiring of two new project and engagement officers with master level education and multilingual capabilities ensures that Healthwatch services better meet the needs of the borough's diverse population.</p>	 <p>Sharing quarterly Patient Experience Reports with NHS Patient Experience Teams fostered collaboration between patients and hospital management. This feedback loop led to tangible improvements in hospital services and patient care, benefiting residents throughout the borough</p>
Summer	 <p>The Enter and View program evaluated care homes in Ealing, resulting in actionable recommendations for improvement. This initiative improved operational practices in care homes, enhancing the quality of care and living conditions for residents</p>	 <p>Healthwatch Ealing's active participation in community forums increased its visibility and strengthened partnerships with stakeholders. This engagement ensured that health and social care services in the borough are more responsive to the diverse needs of the community</p>
Autumn	 <p>We launched our vaccine surveys and engaged with 414 people. Across North West London. We learned about their views on vaccines, and what misconceptions they had. This information will better inform future vaccine education efforts.</p>	 <p>Regular attendance at Integrated Neighbourhood Team leadership meetings in North West London (NWL) ensured Healthwatch Ealing's efforts were aligned with borough priorities. This strategic coordination led to more effective health and social care interventions across the borough.</p>
Winter	 <p>Collaborating with Age UK Ealing, Healthwatch Ealing attended roundtable discussions to understand issues affecting older residents. This informed initiatives like the "My Staying Steady" action plan and the digital inclusion taskforce, which aimed to enhance support and services for the elderly population in Ealing</p>	 <p>Healthwatch Ealing's collaboration with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and third-sector organizations resulted in a nutrition project for asylum seekers. This initiative promoted healthier eating habits and reduced social isolation, improving the well-being of asylum seekers in the borough</p>



Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why, over the last year, we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.

Patient Experience Programme

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

They tell us what is working well and what could improve allowing us to share local issues with decision makers who have the power to make changes.

2023/24 Summary of Patient Experience Data Collection



5,016 Reviews from 226 visits

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

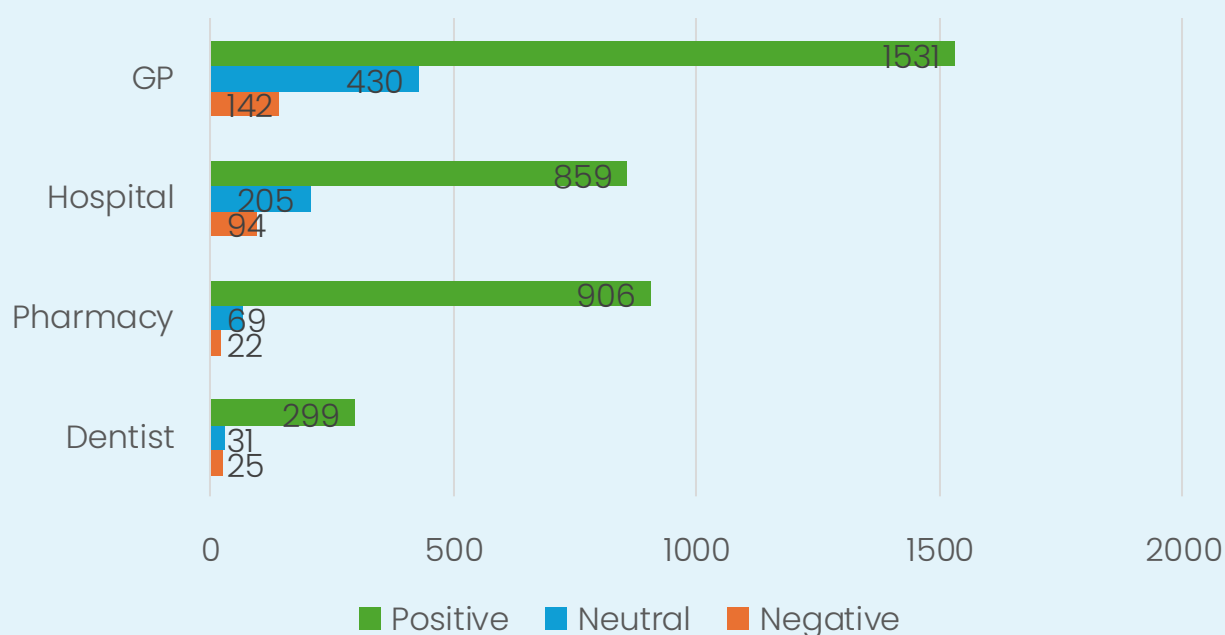


Presented at Board Meetings

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

An overview of our findings from the year

An overview of our findings this year



Step Forward for Better: Recommendations for 2023–2024

Recommendation	Rationale	Implementation	Body of Responsibility
Optimising Phone Lines	Significant challenges due to limited access and extended waiting times.	Implement call-back systems to reduce waiting times and enhance the experience.	GP Practices
Patient-Centred GP Access	Some patients need face-to-face appointments due to specific challenges.	Ensure access to face-to-face appointments considering individual circumstances.	GP Practices
Communication around Test Results	Delays in receiving test results from hospitals to GP practices.	Optimise EHRs and NHS app for effective communication regarding test results.	Hospitals
Enhance Patient Education on Remote Appointments	Many, especially the elderly and non-English speakers, struggle with online services.	Increase training sessions in Patient Participation Groups (PPGs).	PCNs and GP Services
Promote GP Access Information and Available Services	Patients have unrealistic expectations and are unaware of appropriate service options.	Use posters, leaflets, banners, and Patient Participation Groups (PPG) for education.	PCNs and GP Services
Customer Service Training for GP Receptionists	Patients often feel receptionists are unfriendly or insensitive due to lack of training.	Provide customer service training with the help of VCSEs.	PCNs and GP Services
Install a Recognition Wall for GP Staff	Highlighting positive feedback boosts staff morale and shows appreciation.	Display positive patient comments to boost staff morale.	PCNs and GP Services

Recommendation	Rationale	Implementation	Body of Responsibility
Clear Communication Regarding Appointments	Clear communication reduces missed appointments.	Ensure appointment letters indicate the time, date, and any changes clearly and in advance.	NHS Trusts
Real-Time Tracking System for Test Results	Alleviates anxiety and gives patients autonomy over their healthcare journey.	Implement a real-time tracking system for patient test results.	NHS Trusts
Vaccine Education Improvement Programme	Misconceptions and lack of information about vaccines.	Collaborate with local Healthwatch, VGOs, and medical students to create educational posters and engage patients in surveys.	Healthwatch and GP Practices
Increasing the Profile and Visibility of the Complaints Process	Patients were generally unaware of the complaints policy, and online posts had not been responded to.	Increase the visibility of the complaints process and acknowledge online posts and reviews to assure patients that their views are being monitored.	GP Practices and NHS Trusts

Feedback from Practice managers

What is going well:

Our practice is finding it very helpful you providing quarterly reports with patient feedback. It helps us to improve on areas where we can and work better with patients. I had emailed your feedback sheet confirming which ones we have implemented in our practice.

[Romilita Mitchell, Practice Manager] West End Surgery

Please see the attached recommendations confirming which ones we have implemented in our practice. I have received the report. I will discuss it in our team meeting.

The documents indicate that most of the recommendations have been implemented and observed in our visits or data, with some pending further action or discussion.

[Sujitha Ganeshananthan, Practice Manager] Somerset Family Health Practice Surgery

[Nik Karakatsanis, Practice Manager] Mill Hill Surgery

[Mina Shah, Practice Manager] Grosvenor House Surgery

[Tracey Forbes, Practice Manager] Goodcare Practice Surgery

What could be improved:

Implementing callback systems may be difficult for practices lacking technical infrastructure. Improving call handling efficiency requires significant staff training and development of resources, with some patients resistant to automated systems. Healthwatch sharing ideas from practices with shorter call times/ways to signpost patients before they reach Reception would be helpful. Really what would be best is if we could receive cost neutral ideas that can be copied from where it's working well. Maximising ARRS roles is challenged by limited space and the need for effective remote supervision. Collecting and analysing practice-specific data demands substantial resources - again any suggestions from Healthwatch on maximising efficiency of ARRS roles would be great. Utilising buildings for weekend clinics faces funding and staffing difficulties. Integrating business management training into GP education and finding experienced mentors is also challenging.

[Flavio Gracias, Business Manager] West End Surgery
[Victoria Wells, Practice Manager] Hillcrest Surgery



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:

- Addressing vaccine hesitancy amongst parents from ethnic minority communities
- Attending Health Inequalities community listening events to hear about the experiences of ethnic minority communities within the health and care system.
- Engaging with asylum seekers and refugee mothers in the borough about how their status was impacting their access to maternity health and care support.

Examining Attitudes Towards Vaccines In North West London

Last year, we developed a steering group comprised of 11–13 year olds and requested they create an "Attitudes to vaccinations" questionnaire to engage with children and adults in North West London to gauge their attitudes towards vaccinations. In total we engaged with 86 children, and 328 adults.

The vaccine questionnaire engaged with young people who experienced the pandemic during their compulsory education. The objective was to understand how the pandemic influenced their views on vaccines and immunisation. Healthwatch Ealing aimed to share these insights with the NWL vaccination teams and local Public health teams to improve vaccine education and outreach efforts, making them more relevant and effective for this age group

36% of young respondents

Told us that their views on vaccines changed for the positive due to the pandemic.



What did this engagement project tell us about vaccine attitudes in NW London?

- HPV vaccines lag behind others in uptake. This is due to a misconception that only girls need to take the vaccine.
- Most people have a favourable view towards vaccines, with only a few disliking them. Only 4% of those surveyed have never had a single vaccination.
- 36% of young people do not list a reliable source as their primary source of vaccine related information

Our recommendations:

- Any future HPV vaccine campaign should include materials to help dispel gender-based misconceptions
- That any future vaccine education in schools include modules that teach students how to identify and use reliable sources of information.
- Local healthcare partners should maintain a strong presence in the community to build trust and support for future vaccination efforts.



They are a good thing because they help our health. They show how much modern medicine has developed and are an incredible feat of human science. Although there may be temporary side effects, the good far outweighs the bad when it comes to vaccinations.

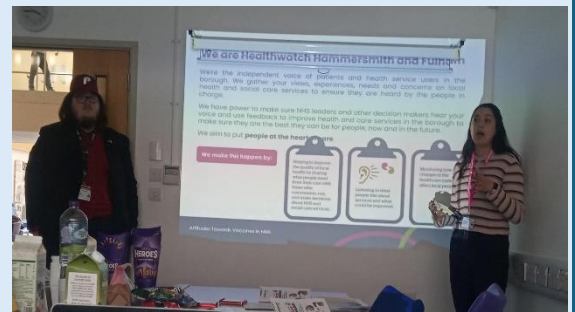
- Ealing Student's thoughts on Vaccines

Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy

In partnership with Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham, we conducted a pilot community outreach event on vaccine hesitancy to share the findings of our "Examining Attitudes Towards Vaccines In North West London" study with residents and discuss the barriers influencing uptake. Many individuals expressed a greater willingness to get vaccinated if more information and transparency was available. This served as the basis for collaborative work with Canberra Old Oak GP Surgery to arrange a community MMR Vaccine Information Session.

As a result of our efforts, we have helped to address some of the barriers that can prevent people from getting their children vaccinated

- A survey conducted with participants of our MMR Vaccine Information Session indicated that they felt more informed about vaccines after our session, with many expressing their intention to vaccinate their children or feeling more inclined to do so.
- Furthermore, our staff and volunteers successfully persuaded one parent and their reluctant child to schedule an appointment with the nurse for further information about vaccines.



Due to the success of this pilot community outreach event, we hope to organise more events like this in 2024-25 with other community groups to continue to increase access to information and trust in immunisation.

Addressing the barriers to vaccination requires a multifaceted approach that includes education, accessibility, community engagement, risk communication, and trust-building. By implementing these strategies, we can improve vaccine uptake and protect public health.



I think they're great, vaccines keep us immune to harmful pathogens so I would rather have a needle in my arm for two seconds than be stuck with a virus.

- A Student from Hammersmith and Fulham on their thoughts on Vaccines

Examining Maternity Experiences of Asylum Seekers

Last year, we engaged with young mothers seeking asylum in the UK to understand the barriers they face in accessing maternity care services.

To gather insights into the personal experiences of these women throughout their pregnancy and childcare journeys, we conducted two focus groups of 24 women, with assistance of local charities. Furthermore, to ensure we covered all aspects that might be missed due to language barriers, we organised a focus group discussion with doulas that work closely with these women.

96% of asylum-seeking mothers had 'negative' or 'mixed' experience during pregnancy

The majority of participants said that their experiences during pregnancy were either negative or mixed, though they reported more positive experiences during and after childbirth on the labour wards.



What were the main issues faced by women?

- A notable finding from our study was that many women faced difficulties with nutrition, housing, stability, emotional support, and financial assistance and they expressed a need for more focus on improving these areas.
- The unsatisfactory experiences before labour or after childbirth were primarily due to unsupportive or abrupt staff, lack of information from staff around pregnancy outcomes, and lack of support for mothers after birth.
- Additionally, doulas highlighted the need to improve transportation, language translation services, and staff training on cultural sensitivity.

Recommendations:

- We recommend that local health teams collaborate with the local Volunteer Community Service to improve access to nutrition, achieve stable housing solutions, and provide a combination of financial support, including allowances and essential baby items. **Healthwatch Ealing is facilitating introductions between voluntary sector organisations and the Ealing & Acton Integrated Network Teams.**
- Stakeholders, including local charities, public health teams, and NHS midwifery units, should work more closely together to improve emotional and mental health support services for new mothers. **The Ealing & Acton Integrated Network Teams are in the process of starting wellbeing courses for asylum seekers.**
- Equip women with better tools to manage their well-being through improved dietary and nutritional practices. **The Ealing & Acton Integrated Network Teams are in the process of starting a Diet & Nutrition project for asylum seekers.**
- Maternity care staff, especially midwives, should receive specialist training to effectively discuss non-traditional pregnancy outcomes/complications effectively and offer this information early in the pregnancy.
- Maternity care staff should ensure translation support services are accessible to these women throughout pregnancy, labour, and after childbirth. **Healthwatch Ealing have received detailed responses from Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust and London North West University Trust with various initiatives and training programmes they have put in place to improve maternity care and support for women seeking asylum in the UK.**

Your voice heard at a wider level

Healthwatch operate at a local level providing local feedback into the borough Partnership/Health & Wellbeing Board/Primary care executive group and Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Through the borough-based governance structure, we ensure our intelligence is fed through to the North West London ICB. None of the 8 Healthwatch in North West London are funded to work collectively to provide one North West London Healthwatch voice. However we do meet regularly to discuss our workplans, share insights and evidence from our various studies and collaborate on projects that are of interest in our boroughs as well as at a NWL level.

We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in Ealing influence decisions made about services at North West London Integrated Care System (ICS) level.

This year we've worked with Healthwatch across North West London to achieve:



Through work, Healthwatch Hillingdon, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham and Hounslow completed individually we were able to inform the NWL mental health strategy. We represented local carers' needs to inform a more comprehensive offer of support for carers in the borough through the Mental Health Carers Council. At a wider level, the West London NHS Trust has since expanded their prospectus to include more mental health and wellbeing support sessions and courses for carers. We engaged with 321 inpatients in Lakeside and Charing Cross Mental Health Units to understand their experiences and satisfaction with the activities, facilities, support and discharge offered, and made 92 recommendations to improve the services that cover residents from Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith & Fulham.

We worked collaboratively with other Healthwatches across North West London to engage with women from seldom-heard groups to understand more about their experiences with maternity care services. Collectively we found that maternity services in North West London should prioritise listening to birthing parents, ensure consistent post-birth information sharing, and provide comprehensive staff training for atypical situations. Additionally, they should maintain high standards of translation services, have contingency plans for low staffing, and offer clear postnatal support information. This is consistent with our findings from our local work focusing on asylum seeker and refugee women. These findings have been shared with the NHS Trusts that provide maternity services across the whole of North West London. The findings will be used to inform maternity strategies being created in the upcoming year.



This year we've worked with Healthwatch across North West London by:



Healthwatch Hounslow Chair, Peter Goulding, represents on the Policy Development Group. He regularly champions patient and carer involvement in policy development. Peter does not represent the voice of any specific boroughs in meetings but will endeavour to keep everyone updated on upcoming policies for discussion. This allows individual officers to attend alongside him when there is a policy or agenda item of particular interest. Peter will aim to promptly share meeting dates and papers with all Healthwatch leads as soon as he receives them. While the onus is on individual staff to attend relevant meetings, Healthwatch Ealing email Peter and copy in the group if we have a specific report to share. Peter contributes all local borough intelligence and reports during discussions.

Healthwatch Ealing advisory committee member, Alan Cook, sits on the NHS111- urgent care board. Championing for equitable care for all residents in Northwest London and beyond. Alan does not represent any particular borough in meetings but rather ensures the patient voice, especially those in the boroughs of NWL are involved in decision-making and standard monitored KPIs. Our data from the Hounslow, Ealing and Ealing London ambulance survey has been shared with Alan and our recent patient experience data on NHS111 services has allowed Alan to successfully point out patient concerns backing this up with numbers. The completed patient survey designed by this group is now awaiting final approval and will be used across the whole of London.



Healthwatch Ealing area manager Carleen Duffy sits on the NWL vaccination and immunisations board. Carleen does not represent a particular borough but has worked collaboratively with members of the board to improve data collection highlighting which communities in each borough are lagging, suggesting ways to ensure equitable access to vaccinations in seldom-heard communities, and promotion materials are created in easily understood language in multiple spoken languages. Healthwatch Ealing and Hammersmith and Fulham spoke with over 400 people across North West London to better understand their attitudes towards vaccines, including their vaccine knowledge and reasons for vaccine hesitancy. The findings from this engagement work will contribute to future vaccine education efforts.



Enter and Views

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

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

Improving care homes across Ealing

Our Care Homes visits were part of a programme of work developed in close partnership with the Local Authority to promote best practice and highlight areas within the sector that can be improved. We accomplished this through a series of visits that incorporated talking to both those who receive and deliver care.

Care homes demonstrated excellent staff-resident interaction, high resident satisfaction, and thorough security measures. Additionally, culturally appropriate care and positive staff attitudes in healthcare services were notable. Community engagement and volunteer contributions have significantly improved support and service delivery.

Access to dentistry and staffing levels in care homes need improvement, alongside increased family involvement and more activities for residents. Additionally, consistent dementia-friendly signage and strategies to support aging in place should be implemented to address capacity issues.

What we have done

- We ensured that we gave voice to a community often forgotten about.
- We have placed patient dignity and autonomy at the heart of our advocacy.
- We have examined what care homes have been doing well and what could be improved.
- We have worked with service managers to promote best practice.
- We have published multiple reports that layout clear pathways to improve care home services.
- We have developed a strategic insight document for all care homes in the borough

“The staff know my routine. They come to me when I need them to. Everything falls in line – they know when to support me. Since the new management has come in, there is more of a structure here. If I have an issue, it is resolved.”

More to come

Healthwatch Ealing is working with the Strategic Director for Adults and Public Health to ensure the implementation of recommendations and best practices across care homes in the borough. We are also creating initiatives such as the "My Staying Steady" action plan, the Carers strategy, and the Dementia task force. Additionally, we are promoting digital inclusion and encouraging personalised care plans, emphasizing patient involvement and personal responsibility for health.



Community Diagnostic Centre

A new Community Diagnostic Centre operated by the London North West University Trust opened at Ealing hospital this year. We visited the temporary site at Ealing Hospital to provide Ealing hospital with feedback and recommendations prior to the centre's new site opening.

What we have done

- Using a multi-faceted approach of staff questionnaires, personal observations and patient feedback we developed a set of recommendations that have been agreed upon by the London North West University Trust. These recommendations focused on signage and navigation, improving patient communications through clearer letters and accessible website updates, and implementing a comprehensive wayfinding program. There will be continued collaboration with GPs and primary care, supported by an ambitious recruitment plan for CDC staffing to address national shortages. Language support and staff communication will be improved with increased adherence to interpreter booking policies and information sharing. New staff will receive thorough induction and support from experienced team members.



I would like to thank Healthwatch Ealing for taking the time to complete the Enter and View visit. I would also like to extend a welcome for another visit once all the work is completed and the centre is running fully on the intended model

– Mark Titcomb OBE



"It needs to be easier to find. I went to the main hospital and I walked around lost for quite a while." – An Ealing resident when asked what they would improve about the CDC

More to come

We intend to visit again once the full site is operational to see how the feedback we collected has been implemented in the new building and measure whether this has improved the experience of patients using these services.



CGI image of the CDC at Ealing as we expect it to look like once completed.

Enter and view

This year, we made 9 Enter and View visits. We made several recommendations as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What we did as a result
Acton Care Centre (W3 8EF)	To determine what was working well and what could be improved in a care home.	We helped to identify improvements for patients in the waiting area.
Blakesley House Nursing Home (W5 2DN)	An example of a home that was rated as Requires Improvement by the CQC.	Our recommendation surrounding improper wall hangings and clutter in the lounge lead to the area being cleaned.
Ealing Manor Nursing Home (W5 3PL)	Rated as good by the CQC, another in our series examining care homes in the borough.	Assisted in developing a framework to implement needed changes.
Neem Tree Nursing Home (UB6 9JX)	Another part of our care home program	Identified actionable improvements including fixing Furniture arrangements that caused patients to remain in wheelchairs and bell response times.
Georgian House Nursing Home (W19 9PU)	Rated Requires Improvement by the CQC.	Our recommendations on resident activities led to the home seeking a part time dedicated activity coordinator.
St. David's Nursing Home (W5 1TE)	Identify benchmarks for effective care. This was the first of our requires improvement visits	We made recommendations addressed the consistency of internal signage and wait times, which the home says they will address
The Willows Nursing Home (UB2 4BN)	To better understand care services available in Southall.	Highlighted diverse needs in care.

Enter and view

This year, we made 9 Enter and View visits. We made several recommendations as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Threen House Nursing Home (UB1 2QW)	To support the largest care home in Ealing.	Observed an exceptional use of space in a home that is a converted house. Highlighted need to have accessible signage in the home
Community Diagnostic Centre (UB1 3HW)	We visited the new CDC at Ealing Hospital during its early trial period to make impactful recommendations prior to its full opening.	We gave recommendations to Ealing hospital that would help residents, understand the concept of the CDC better and navigate it in a more efficient manner.



Advice and information

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

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access NHS dentistry
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost-of-living crisis

Raising Awareness & Accessibility through Social Media Campaigns

As a local health champion, we always aim to highlight services, organisations, and health-related information across our multiple social media streams.

We used various social media channels like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and our website to raise awareness around Mental health, Cost of Living, Asthma, Violence against women & girls, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, Vaccines, Preventive care, and Health screening, among others via a total of 321 posts.

This year we have maintained a strong focus on growth of our digital channels

One of the feedbacks we received past year was to improve our digital footprint so that services, engagement events and health advice is more accessible to residents. Therefore, we have increased the use of our twitter and Instagram and maintained regular e-newsletter distribution and website news item updates, both including items of local health and social care interest and to summarise the findings and recommendations of our work.

To further improve accessibility, we are working on developing translated summaries of our most recent reports to make them easier for partners and members of public for whom English is not a primary language.



Ensuring Public Access to Accurate Contact Information and Service delivery updates

In last year, we received a total of 212 requests for either information, signposting or assistance. Where possible, we ensure we signpost people to agencies with good accessibility

Not all services with phone numbers are accessible and many individuals are passed around, struggling to navigate their way through to get the support they need. Therefore, we try our best to direct people to services that have direct numbers/strong website information and options for individuals.

To ensure accessibility, we reach out to different services, particularly mental health services and GPs to ensure that service users are on right track in getting the support they need. Furthermore, we ensure that we provide residents about changes in service delivery by contacting health and social care leads for confirmation and then explain this information to residents in easy-to-understand format via, phone, email or face to face.

Healthwatch Ealing is planning to review the new service responsible for careline service provision for Ealing residents

- Not all residents feel confident or information they receive regarding changes to service delivery and look to Healthwatch for clarification and reassurance.
- Due to recent changes in careline provision for Healthwatch Ealing residents, we have taken it upon ourselves to review what is working well and what can be improved.



Improving access to NHS dentistry

We use our information and signposting programme to raise awareness and improve access to local dental services



Central London
Community Healthcare
NHS Trust

We make it a point to highlight the barriers and challenges that residents feel when accessing dental care at relevant meetings in order to provide our partners with the real time insight that is so crucial to the ultimate decision-making process.

We use the insights collected through our patient experience and other engagement initiatives to inform different stakeholders that it is essential that residents know when their local dentists are accepting additional NHS patients, and they are informed about cost affordable treatments and treatment plans.

Furthermore, we reach out to services, particularly local oral health promotion teams to keep an updated record of general dental practices accepting new NHS patients and signpost local residents to it as and when required. We are in process of adding these updated lists to our monthly newsletters and social media posts to enhance local resident's ability to access these services in a prompt manner.

Increasing digital literacy in Ealing

Sound digital skills can make access to healthcare services easier and faster

Digital platforms are increasingly becoming the new normal for things like booking appointments, accessing one's healthcare records, especially after pandemic. But this big push towards digitalisation has put people who are less confident with their digital skills at risk of exclusion from accessing these services.

We regularly attend the digital inclusion taskforce group to understand more about the borough level initiatives to address the issue of increasing dependence on technology and its impact on our older residents.

Healthwatch Ealing wants to make sure that everyone can get the benefits of digital services.

We do this by sign posting our residents to the digital inclusion workshops run by Age UK Ealing and update residents re on any such initiatives that aim to address digital exclusion like device loan schemes, digital poverty alliance, among other things.

City of London
ageUK

Digital Inclusion Service

The digital world can be a daunting thought for some, but we are here to help you gain the skills and knowledge you need to access the internet, technology and connect with others.

Our Digital Inclusion Service supports anyone over the age of 55 with any tech issues you are experiencing.

The Digital Inclusion Service offers:

- Home Visits
- One to One Support
- Group Gadget Clinics
- Speciality Tech Workshops
- Digital Guides

Contact us
For more info or to book onto a session, please contact us on:

- digitalinclusion@ageukcityoflondon.org.uk
- www.ageukcityoflondon.org.uk
- 020 3488 6884



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:

- Visited communities to promote their local Healthwatch and what we have to offer
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Carried out enter and view visits to local services to help them improve



"Volunteering with Healthwatch has raised my awareness of the health challenges faced by my local community. I have found a renewed sense of purpose in my professional career which is in a health-related industry. I have been able to apply the skills I have developed while working on Healthwatch projects to my routine work. These skills include conducting research based on published materials, analysing the results, preparing presentations and effective communication with the Healthwatch Team.

The quality of my work presentations has improved, and my confidence has increased as a result of utilising the transferable skills I have developed from volunteering with Healthwatch.."



Lynsey –
Healthwatch Ealing



"I really enjoyed working with Healthwatch! The field of health care services and NGO work make me understand the importance of easy access to health care and the meaning of helping people. All the colleagues here are nice and friendly, I was able to ask any questions and they always helped. My internship at Healthwatch was a wonderful experience and gives me a great help in my work experience and guides me into the field of healthcare with NGO."



Angel –
Healthwatch Ealing



"I am happy to have impacted the community in a positive way by putting in effort to make changes to the healthcare system that will benefit those who use it. I was able to learn so much about healthcare in the UK and apply that knowledge back into the work I was doing, in order to better communicate and understand people I interacted with."



Isabella –
Healthwatch Ealing
& Hounslow



"Over the last 8 months, I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as a patient experience volunteer at Healthwatch Ealing! This opportunity has enabled me to contribute towards beneficial change in the local community during every healthcare visit and through working with Stuart, I have thoroughly developed confidence and communication skills which I am deeply grateful for. I'm incredibly excited for what the future beholds!"



Piyeeshan –
Healthwatch Ealing

Do you feel inspired?



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

 www.healthwatchealing.org.uk

 020 3886 0830

 Info@healthwatchealing.org.uk



Feedback from partners

While reflecting on our work and impact from the past year, we also invited local partners to do the same by telling us what they think we've done well, and to provide us with suggestions as to what they would like to see more of from us.

This year partners told us:

- They value the work we do as a critical friend which drives up the quality of services to ensure that services continue to meet the needs of residents and local service users now and in the future.
- That Healthwatch Ealing plays a crucial role in improving the London Borough of Ealing Health and Care Residents Forums by working closely with NHS and Integrated Care Partnership colleagues. This collaborative approach allows residents to gain insight into how these organisations work together.
- That Healthwatch Ealing provides valuable insights that inform strategic decision-making and the development of new services like the Community Diagnostic Centre.

Feedback from partners



“Collaborative engagement between NHS Engagement Team, Healthwatch Ealing and organisations in the Integrated Care Partnership continues to strengthen community engagement for Ealing’s residents.

Healthwatch Ealing adds value to the London Borough of Ealing Health and Care Residents Forums. NHS and Integrated Care Partnership colleagues work collaboratively to deliver the Forums for residents across the borough. Healthwatch’s presentation to the Forum in early 2024 provided residents with an excellent overview of the work they are doing in areas such as Patient Experience in GP surgeries, hospitals etc.; community care homes and mental health project. This example of collaborative working provides residents with the opportunity to see and understand how both organisations work in partnership on local and national and national objectives to improve outcomes in population health and health care.”

Judith George (Engagement and Equalities Delivery Manager, NHS NWL)



“The partnership working between Ealing Council and Healthwatch is key to how we work with the communities we serve. The partnership provides support through the enter and view programme in the care sector and helps drive up the quality of services provided to local people. Further to this we work closely with Healthwatch in terms of their regular reports across health and social care provision which help define our strategic decision making.”

Kerry Stevens (Strategic Director for Adults and Public Health, Ealing Council)



“We view Healthwatch Ealing as critical friend. Whether it’s existing services, or new ones like our Community Diagnostic Centre, regular ‘Enter and View’ visits provide us with welcome insight on people’s views and experiences. It’s a constructive relationship that’s helping improve the health and wellbeing of our diverse local communities”

Mark Titcomb OBE (Managing Director EOC, Central Middlesex Hospital & Ealing Hospital, LNWH)
Andy Mahoney (Stakeholder Engagement, LNWH). Annika Towell (Head of Patient Experience, LNWH)

Feedback from partners



"We really appreciate your team's hard work and dedication helping us to improve our services."

Ealing Manor Nursing Home Management



"We were all encouraged by Healthwatch Ealing's visit to our home. Our residents were excited about the visit and enjoyed talking to the representatives from Healthwatch"

Georgian House Management



"We at Neem Tree are always eager to receive constructive feedback from other professionals and would like to take this opportunity to thank Healthwatch Ealing for their recommendations made and have implemented changes in accordance with these to enhance the daily living experience of our residents. We have found the collaboration constructive, useful and the Officers were a pleasure to work with"

Neem Tree Management



"The work of Healthwatch over the last year has helped our understanding of why people are not coming forward for vaccinations in North West London including producing an important piece of work that sets out what services must do to improve overall vaccination uptake."

Kevin Driscoll Head of Vaccinations and immunisations NWL ICB



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 Government	£120,000	Expenditure on pay	86000
Additional income	£1415	Non-pay expenditure	16415
		Office and management fees	19000
Total income	£121,415	Total expenditure	121,415

Additional income is broken down by:

- £540 received from Healthwatch England for work on a Maternity in North West London project.
 - £875 received from Healthwatch England to complete Enter and Views in the Community Diagnostic Centre.
-

Next steps

Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of Ealing, especially people in the most deprived areas, those who struggle to access services and those seldom heard and engaged with .

We will work together with partners, our local Integrated Care System and the voluntary sector to help develop a health and social care culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

Our current top priorities for the next year are: TBC:

1. Exploring the key trends and themes around homelessness in the borough and how those who are homeless access services.
2. Investigating the experiences of residents living in mental health hostels and how they use health and social care services.
3. Investigating the experiences of residents using health and social care services to identify barriers to attending cancer screening.
4. Reviewing the changes to Careline service and ensuring residents know where to go for support.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Ealing and the contract holding organisation Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) are located at 45 St. Mary's Road, London, W5 5RG.

Healthwatch Ealing 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 Local Advisory Committee consists of 4 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide local intelligence on the ground, as well as direction and scrutiny of our activities. Our Committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the committee met 7 times and made decisions on matters such as access to NHS 111 and London ambulance services, what is a dementia friendly care home and engaging with seldom heard communities in Ealing.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities through our patient experience feedback, engagement/community events, patient participation groups and patient reference groups we attend/facilitate, voluntary sector networking meetings and our 'Have Your Say on Healthwatch' annual survey.

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

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 2023/24 we have been available by phone, email, WhatsApp, face-to-face at local health and social care services, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings and events of community groups, drop-in sessions and forums. We ensure that this Annual Report will be made available to as many members of the community and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, take copies to engagement events, promote in a newsletter launch, social media posts, and share it via email with our past project participants and all local and NWL partners.

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.

For example, in our local authority area, we take information to our Health and Wellbeing Board, Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee, WLNHST SUCE, London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust PPEEG, North West London engagement and communications meetings, Ealing Primary Care Executive Group, West London Trust Carers Council and Safeguarding Adults Board.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers at North West London (NWL) integrated Care System. For example, we meet with our 7 other Healthwatch at the NWL level and discuss local issues, current projects and insights with the NWL ICS engagement team and feed our reports into the NWL insight reports. We attend the NWL Vaccination and Immunisation board, and we attend the Integrated Care Partnership Strategy Forums. We also share our reports with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch Ealing is represented on the Ealing Health and Wellbeing Board by Carlen Duffy Healthwatch Ealing area manager. During 2023/24 our representative has effectively carried out this role by raising insights and data evidence of access barriers to dentistry, mental health provision, suicide prevention, maternity services, vaccinations and care homes. Healthwatch Ealing is represented in Ealing Integrated Care Partnerships by Carleen Duffy Area manager at the Primary care executive group, and at North west London engagement meetings. Healthwatch Ealing is represented at London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust Patient representative groups by Stuart McMichael.

2023 – 2024 Outcomes

Project/Activity	Outcomes Achieved	Impact
NHS Ealing Community Forums	Our engagement efforts have helped to increase our networking and visibility with our stakeholders. These networks have helped us establish strong partnerships for future projects. Furthermore, this increased collaboration ensures that diverse community perspectives are integrated into our research and future decision-making progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The improved networking and visibility with stakeholders has led to more effective information dissemination and signposting, ensuring residents receive timely and relevant support. •Strong partnerships formed through these forums facilitate future projects and initiatives. •The integration of diverse community perspectives into research and decision-making processes results in more inclusive, representative, and responsive health and social care services, ultimately improving the overall well-being of the community.
Experience of asylum seekers with Maternity services	Research was conducted to understand the experiences of asylum seeking/migrant women with maternity services in North-West London (NWL). Based on these findings, recommendations were made to NHS Trusts across NWL to improve support and care, ensuring equitable care for all women. Additionally we facilitated introductions between voluntary sector organisations and the ICB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •By implementing these recommendations, NHS Trusts in NWL can ensure more equitable and supportive care for all women. • Improved dietary practices and reduced social isolation among asylum seekers, improving overall health and well-being •Strengthened support networks and collaboration, leading to better service delivery for asylum seekers •Better understanding of asylum seekers' needs, leading to targeted solutions and improved support services
Information and Signposting Service	Provided information, signposting, or assistance to 212 people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Helped residents navigate health and social care services effectively, ensuring they receive the support they need

Project/Activity	Outcomes Achieved	Impact
<p>CDC Enter and View Visited the Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) during the preview period and provided impactful recommendations.</p>	<p>Visited the interim CDC site and provided impactful recommendations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to facilities and processes at the CDC new permanent site, ensuring a smoother opening and better patient experience and care quality from the start.
<p>Ealing Care Home Enter and View</p>	<p>Conducted visits to eight care homes, identified areas for improvement, and shared best practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved care home practices, improved resident satisfaction, better family involvement, and more activities for residents.
<p>Vaccine Hesitancy Research</p>	<p>We conducted a comprehensive investigation into public attitudes towards vaccination, in both adults and children. This research helped us to understand the key barriers and support NHS and public health leads devise strategies to improve vaccine uptake.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing the barriers to vaccination requires a multifaceted approach that includes education, accessibility, community engagement, risk communication, and trust-building. By implementing these strategies, we can improve vaccine uptake and protect public health.

Project/Activity	Outcomes Achieved	Impact
Age UK Ealing Meetings	We collaborated with Age UK on what is impacting older residents. We attended a round table hosted by Age UK in January of 2024 to discuss issues that are ongoing for the elderly in Ealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Helped inform our background knowledge for the care home reports and our future work supporting the council with various initiatives such as the “My staying steady” action plan, Carers strategy, Dementia strategy and the digital inclusion taskforce.
West London Trust Friends and Family Feedback	Collaborated to increase uptake and make recommendations based on carers’ feedback. We achieved response rates slightly above average and expanded the availability of courses for carers at the Wellbeing College.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improved engagement and participation from residents in providing feedback. •The Trust's commitment to listening and responding to resident feedback has strengthened support for carers and promoted a more inclusive and responsive healthcare environment across West London.
Mental Health Inpatient Engagement	Engaged with 321 inpatients, made 92 recommendations on patient engagement, access to sanitary products, multi-faith spaces, dietary preferences, and online food ordering systems in mental health units . We also connected patients with community support groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improved patient satisfaction and involvement in their own care. •Reduced stress and discomfort associated with lack of access to sanitary products. •Fostered a sense of inclusion and respect for cultural diversity. Increased patient autonomy and satisfaction by allowing them to choose their own meals. •Widened patients’ social support networks, which may support long-term recovery.

healthwatch


Ealing

Healthwatch Ealing

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