

Annual Report

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove
Annual Report 2021-22



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Message from our Chair

In March 2022, after eight and a half years, I stood down as Healthwatch Chair. Having started at the organisation's inception, I am immensely proud of the highly credible organisation Healthwatch Brighton and Hove has become.

For me, the last year exemplifies the incredible impact we make as an organisation. As COVID-19 continued to dominate health and care, our dedicated volunteers answered hundreds of people's queries and offered reassurance. Our nationally recognised hospital discharge project – shortlisted for an award – also supported people, with over 4,500 referred to us so far. Helping people find the services they need has remained a core part of our work.



We have continued to influence how health and care services are provided, designed and commissioned as reflected in the 20 reports identified in this annual report. We have ensured that the public voice from Brighton and Hove has been heard nationwide and in Parliament.

Our Young Healthwatch team has delivered innovative and inspiring work to provide a voice for younger people, especially those affected by mental health issues.

Despite ongoing COVID restrictions, we have reached more people than before, but we are looking forward to speaking face to face with the public, patients and service users soon.



*“Our End-of-Life work was shortlisted for a national **Healthwatch England** award, and our work on Hospital Discharge received a commendation.”*



I leave Healthwatch as a highly respected and credible organisation whose independence and impartiality is sought out by media and senior leaders of the NHS. We are viewed as an evidence-based and authoritative voice for health and social care issues; an organisation which provides sound advice and recommendations.

My thanks go to Geoffrey Bowden for stepping in as interim Chair, and to Bob Deschene and Sophie Reilly who have stepped down after eight loyal years as Directors.

Our Board has been strengthened by new people too: Sophie Crowther, Angelika Wydra, Gillian Connor and Chris Morey – a warm welcome to them all.

I wish you all well and look forward to hearing about your continued success.

Fran McCabe

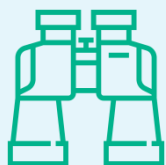
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran McCabe".



About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is your local health and social care champion. From Whitehawk to Portslade and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other 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

- 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.

This Year...

71 Volunteers Contributed over



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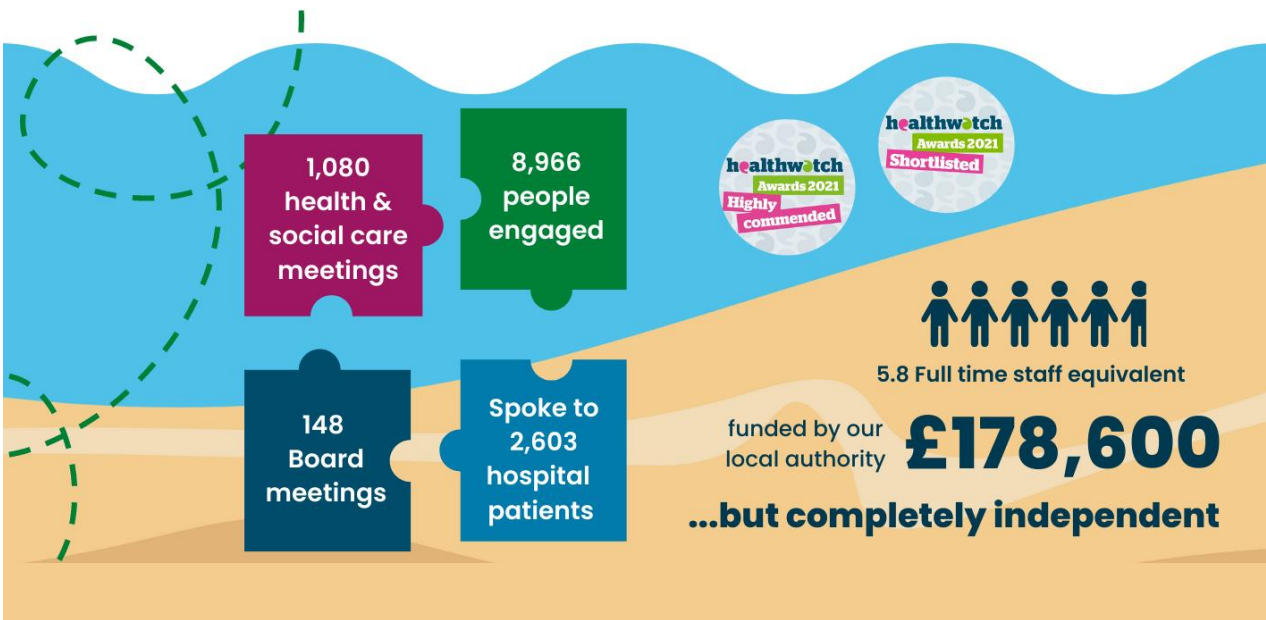


to help our community



We made 62 Recommendations

- Including
- 15 Board Members
 - 4 Student Placements



What our partners say about us

"It's vital we pay attention to the voice of our local communities and the people who use health and care services. Healthwatch plays a vital role in bringing this voice to the fore. Thank you for being a champion, a critical friend and an influential agent for change in shaping the way health and care services are provided for residents of this city."

**Dr Jane Padmore, Chief Executive Officer
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

"This report continues to evidence the importance of Healthwatch in Brighton and Hove. The Council is both a commissioner and provider of services that Healthwatch has an interest in and I welcome the independence and objectivity they bring to their scrutiny. Their reports are invariably balanced in content to both hold services to account and try to secure further service improvement"

Rob Persey, Executive Director of Health & Adult Social Care, B&H City Council

"Healthwatch has continued to make a significant difference to the way in which services are delivered in the city, drawing together insight on challenges and barriers people face across health and care services in our city, whilst constructively challenging delivery plans to ensure they meet the needs of our population, and helping to ensure there is clear and accessible information for residents."

**Lola Banjoko, Executive Managing Director
NHS Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group**

"I have worked closely with Healthwatch over the past year, particularly on dental issues. Their expertise, experience and professionalism have been invaluable to me in my work scrutinising Ministers. I look forward to continuing to cooperate in the coming year and doing what I can to ensure their voice as an independent champion for those needing health and social care services in Brighton and Hove is properly heard. Thank you to David, Alan and all the brilliant Healthwatch team!"

Caroline Lucas, MP for Brighton Pavilion

"Healthwatch has contributed greatly by representing a public voice on the Falls Prevention Steering Group. It has added huge value to the development of the Falls Prevention Screening Tool and raising awareness about falls prevention in Brighton and Hove through the Stay Strong, Steady and Independent Campaign."

**David Brindley, Public Health Programme Manager, Ageing Well/Dying Well,
Health and Adult Social Care, B&H City Council**

"We were delighted to be able to work in partnership with Healthwatch this year to highlight the challenges which LGBTQ+ communities face. Alan and the team were passionate and committed to improving the experience of LGBTQ+ across Health and Social care."

**Jane Woodhull (she/her/hers), Health and Inclusion Coordinator
LGBT+ Switchboard**

"Healthwatch continue to provide invaluable support to the Brighton and Hove Safeguarding Adults Board as part of our ongoing development. In particular through participating as a member of the newly established Leadership Group, as well as continuing to chair our Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) subgroup that leads and oversee SARs that are undertaken by the BHSAB."

Guy Jackson, Business Manager, B&H Safeguarding Adults Board



"We are very pleased to see our residents' views are being listened to in such a meaningful way and thank Healthwatch for their work in highlighting how the reduced hours in New Larchwood Surgery in Coldean is having a detrimental impact on more than 2,000 registered patients that use the service, and especially so for some of the more vulnerable groups."

**Zoe John & Martin Osborne
B&H City Councillors**

"East Sussex LDC had the pleasure of working with Healthwatch over the past few years. Our meetings have given us the opportunity to acknowledge and understand the concerns of the local population with regards to their dental care. Your representative Chris Jennings has been proactive in bringing these concerns in a concise and clear manner to our meetings. We are looking forward to continuing our joint working relationship with you for the benefit of your local population and the dental workforce."

Nish, Chair, East Sussex Local Dental Committee

"Healthwatch are valued partners, delivering crucial insights into the experiences of individuals using social care services across the city. Healthwatch has supported a number of projects on behalf of Brighton & Hove Adult Social Care Commissioners; for example Michelle Kay's advice on the care home contract has helped reaffirm service users and their families at the centre of what we do."

**Alex Saunders, Commissioning & Contracts Manager
Brighton & Hove City Council**

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, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need



COVID-19 Enquiry Line



Healthwatch volunteers continued to play a big role in supporting the city's [COVID-19 Vaccination Enquiry Service](#) - set up by Sussex NHS Commissioners in 2021 with our support, to respond to public enquiries..

Between April 2021 and March 2022, our **12** volunteers:

- answered an amazing **1,460** calls
- contributed **536** hours!



Volunteer Feedback

"It's been great to help out here, I've really enjoyed it...everyone has been great to work with."

"The majority of callers I have spoken to are extremely grateful for the help they are getting from the team."



"Healthwatch volunteers have been absolutely amazing - they have built great knowledge and only ever need our advice when there is a change of guidance, or if something new or complex comes up. Many thanks for your efforts and contribution to the work on the Vaccination team. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and commitment with the Vaccine Enquiry Helpline."

Vaccine Enquiry Manager Feedback
B&H Clinical Commissioning Group



Read our [Project Update](#)

Information Line



Over the last year, our two dedicated Healthwatch volunteers, **Elaine** and **Fran** responded to **416** emails and phone calls from members of the public who had requested information about health and social care services, or had wanted to share their concerns with us.

Your top queries were:

- **114** questions about the COVID vaccine roll out - timing and how to access
- **107** requests for information about NHS dentists
- **102** complaints about NHS and social care services
- **55** concerns or requests for advice concerning GPs and GP practices

We shared your individual feedback with NHS services and Commissioners, helping thousands of others as a result. In September, we alerted Commissioners to the difficulties that people were having trying to obtain the AstraZeneca vaccine and public advice was subsequently published.

As a direct result of your dental enquiries, we worked with Healthwatch teams across Sussex, dental practices and the Local Dental Committees (who represent dentists in the South East) to create the Healthwatch guide to your rights and accessing the treatment you need.

We have also worked with local MPs to raise your concerns in Parliament.

Feedback



"Thank you so much for your most informative reply. I have contacted PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service) and I made an official complaint as no-one was prepared to believe me or support me."

"Thank you very much for your phone call and all the information. It's a huge relief to know I can try outside of Brighton to receive dental care."

"My Mother passed away at the RSCH and I thought it best to let you know. She spoke very highly of your team and the people that called her. I personally would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to all involved."



How we helped

We supported a patient and their partner who had recently moved, but they were having difficulty registering with a new GP.

They were told they were outside of the catchment area.

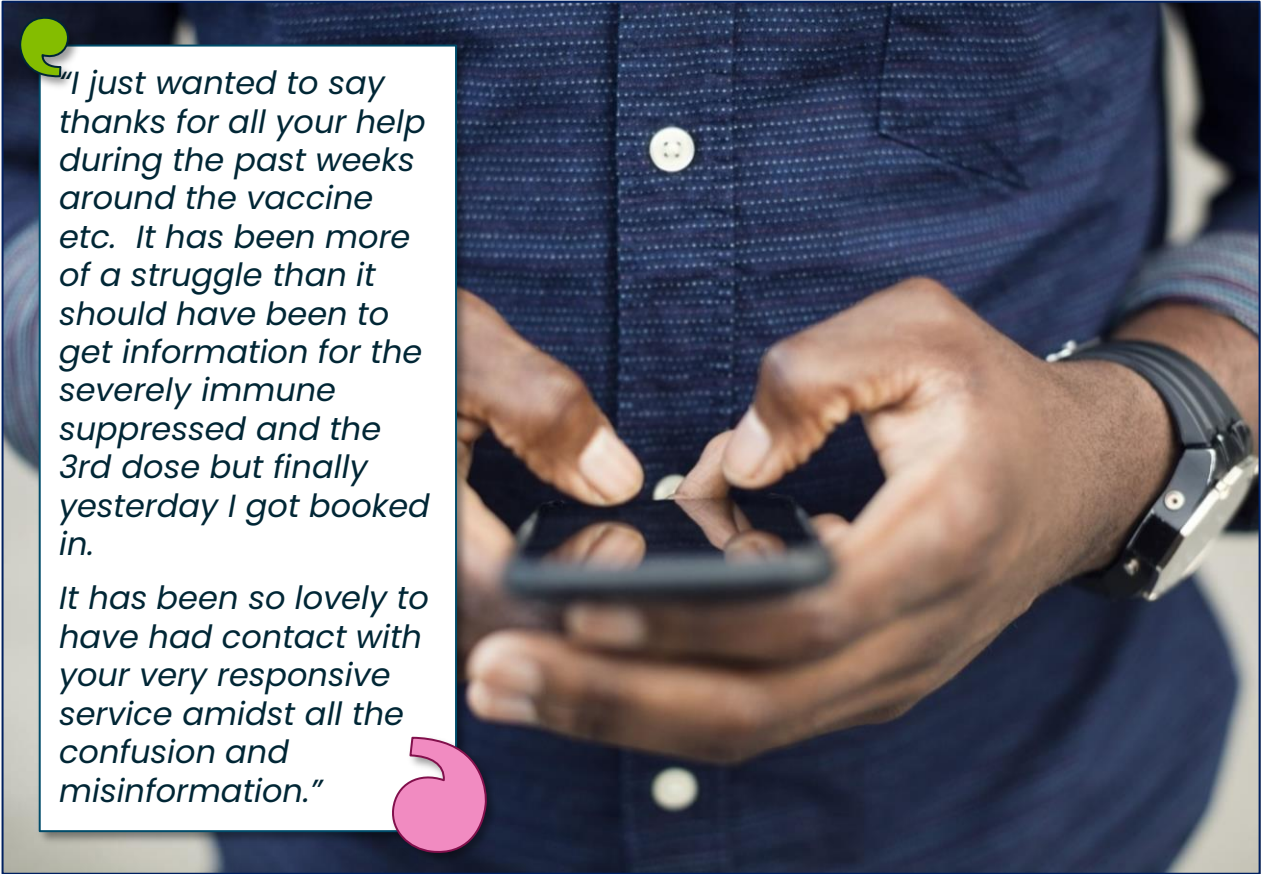
We provided them with advice and information explaining their rights and how to challenge the decision.

As a result, the patients managed to successfully register with their local GP practice.

A UK visitor had their vaccines at walk in centres, but without a GP registration or NHS number, they could not use the NHS app or 119 to get proof for events and travel. We contacted the local vaccine provider and were able to put them in direct contact with someone who could help.

In the process we exposed a loophole where there was no national process for patients without a GP or NHS number to obtain a COVID Pass or digital proof of vaccination.

We helped a heavily pregnant woman experiencing difficulty accessing dental treatment. She was in a lot of pain and had been refused by several practices. We signposted her to a dental practice which was accepting new patients and she managed to get treated by an NHS dentist.

A photograph of a person wearing a blue patterned shirt, holding a smartphone with both hands. The person is looking down at the screen. The image is partially obscured by a white text box on the left and a pink speech bubble on the bottom right.

"I just wanted to say thanks for all your help during the past weeks around the vaccine etc. It has been more of a struggle than it should have been to get information for the severely immune suppressed and the 3rd dose but finally yesterday I got booked in.

It has been so lovely to have had contact with your very responsive service amidst all the confusion and misinformation."

Care Home Webinars



In November, we held a Sussex-wide care home webinar for friends and relatives of residents. Relatives and providers shared their perspectives of visiting restrictions and included particular focus on “essential caregiver” status.

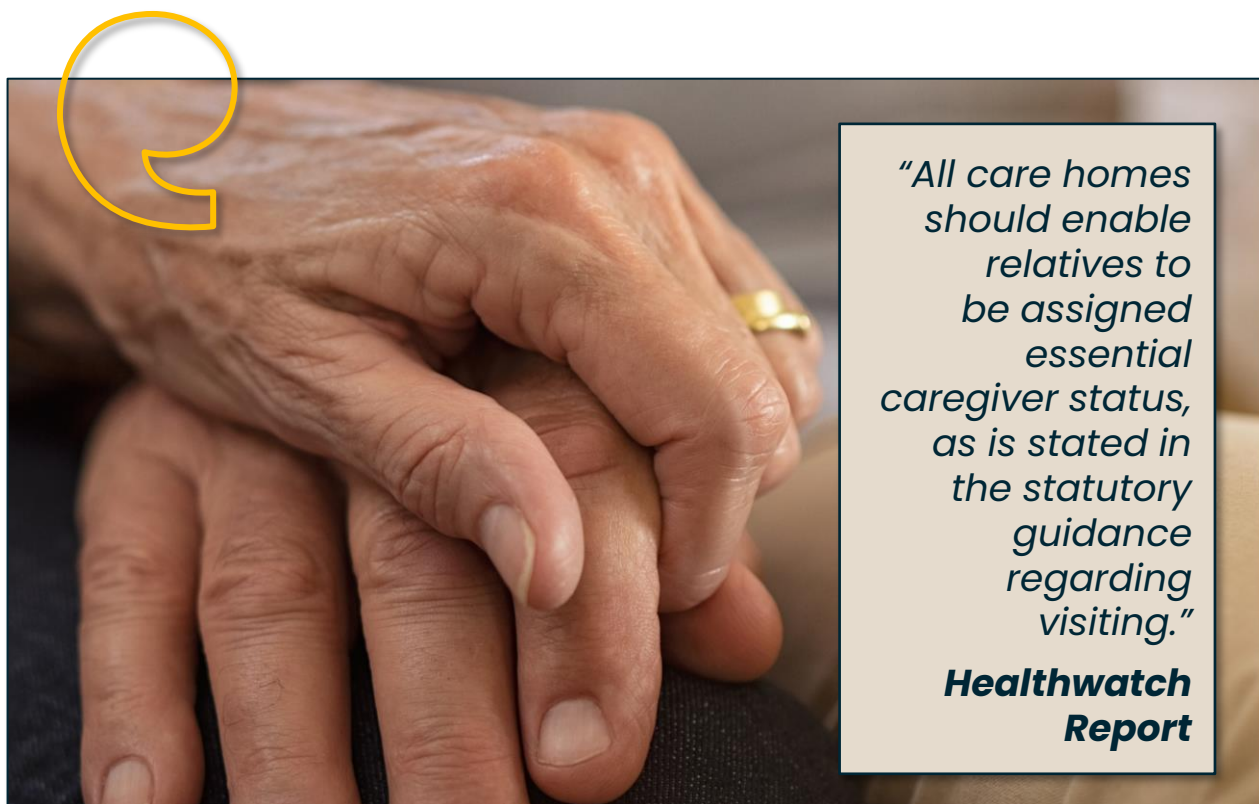
We had **40** people attend, including relatives, statutory & independent health and care professionals and voluntary community sector organisations.

In addition to the focus themes, relatives and providers shared their experiences of the last year, asking important questions about vaccinations and staff turnover.

We recorded the session so it could be shared with those unable to attend, but we also held a closed session (unrecorded) for relatives who wished to talk in private about their concerns. This was supported by us and Carers Support, West Sussex.

This event marked one year on from our first Healthwatch in Sussex care home webinar and it was the ninth webinar event to be held across Sussex since then.

A recording of the webinar – and others – is available for you to watch and the report can be downloaded from our website.



“All care homes should enable relatives to be assigned essential caregiver status, as is stated in the statutory guidance regarding visiting.”

**Healthwatch
Report**

View the [webinar](#) and read the [report](#)

Our impact this year

Your stories and feedback have the ability to deliver real change to local health and social care services that can benefit everyone in the city . Over this last year we have:

- Supported **2,143** patients of a local GP surgery to reverse their decision to reduce opening hours
- Offered support to **2,603** people recently discharged from hospital
- Given meaningful advice to over **400** people through our helpline, supporting them to access GPs, dentists and life-saving vaccinations
- Shared more than **600** of your experiences and ideas to influence how health and care services are provided, designed and commissioned
- Overall, we have heard from around **9,000** people this last year



New Larchwood Surgery



Hours reduced to two mornings a week

On the 1st April 2021, New Larchwood Surgery – based in Coldean – reduced their opening hours from seven sessions to just two mornings a week.

Since 2016, the surgery has been run by the partners of Carden Surgery, so patients were offered additional appointments at Carden Surgery – which is around 30 minutes away and requires two buses to get to.

Unhappy at these changes, local residents contacted us to ask if we could help.

What did we do?

We arranged a local survey and had a tremendous response of **385** New Larchwood patients wanting to share their views.



New Larchwood Surgery in Coldean

The results showed strong opposition to the reduced hours:

- Over half (**59%**) were dissatisfied with the new opening hours
- **81%** said they wanted more than the current two mornings per week
- **75%** provided negative examples of the impact of the reduced hours

We then arranged three meetings where local residents could meet and raise their concerns with the **GP Surgery** and local **NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)** that funds the service.

The residents spoke out about the difficulties that these changes had made to their lives, and asked questions – and their voices were heard.



"We need the surgery open every day for the elderly, vulnerable and those unable to access Carden surgery."

"The reduced hours have greatly impacted my mental health."

"Vulnerable family members have not sought the care they need as the 'hassle' now involved with wait times and booking puts them off."



The Impact

The Result

After all of the sessions, and the patients' voices being heard:

- The CCG approved additional funding to re-introduce sessions at the surgery
- They are now open four days a week
- The additional hours include patient requests for an afternoon, and a dedicated nurse-led session

"I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the sterling work you put in on our behalf. Now we have the final findings from you and consequently, the resulting actions from the CCG and GPs at the surgery."

Anna de Wit, Chair, Coldean Residents' Association



"WELL DONE to all of you who wrote letters, took part in the Patient Survey, or attended the online meeting with Healthwatch Brighton & Hove, the Surgery and the CCG last month! And particular thanks are due to Brighton & Hove Healthwatch who championed the case for restoration of our lost surgery hours so eloquently."

Rosie Parks, Secretary, Coldean Residents' Association



[Read the full report](#)

Hospital Discharge Wellbeing Service



This project – jointly funded by the local council and NHS Clinical Commissioning Group – started in April 2020 as part of the initial COVID-19 emergency response, and for a second year our volunteers have been calling people recently discharged from hospital to check on their wellbeing.

Our volunteers check if there are any outstanding issues or concerns linked to their discharge which need following up with the hospital discharge team, who would then advise and resolve as needed. Volunteers also check if there are any other issues or concerns with which they could help.

The responses include worries over coronavirus, unable to exercise, social care needs, ability to support others, income and debts – with two big areas of concern being “help to pay for food/supplies” and “feeling lonely or isolated”.

Our volunteers then assist by finding available support and referring people to find the help they needed from a range of community, voluntary and private sector services.

Key Figures

- 61 Volunteers spoke to 2,603 people to offer support since the project started
- 22% of those contacted had concerns relating to their hospital discharge
- 23% were signposted to additional community support services including the Brighton and Hove City Council Community Hub, Possability People’s Hospital Discharge Service, Aging Well Service, Together Co, the Carers Hub, GP surgeries, and various Mental Health support services
- 373 people (17%) were identified as having mental health needs with 50 being referred on for urgent support
- 97% of those spoken to considered the calls to be ‘helpful’ (66% ‘extremely’ or ‘very helpful’) and 75% gave permission to be called back in a few months



“I am 100% convinced that everything I do in this volunteer role is making a positive impact on people’s well-being and lives.

It’s simply a brilliant project.”

**Caroline Trimby,
Hospital Discharge Service Volunteer**



How we helped

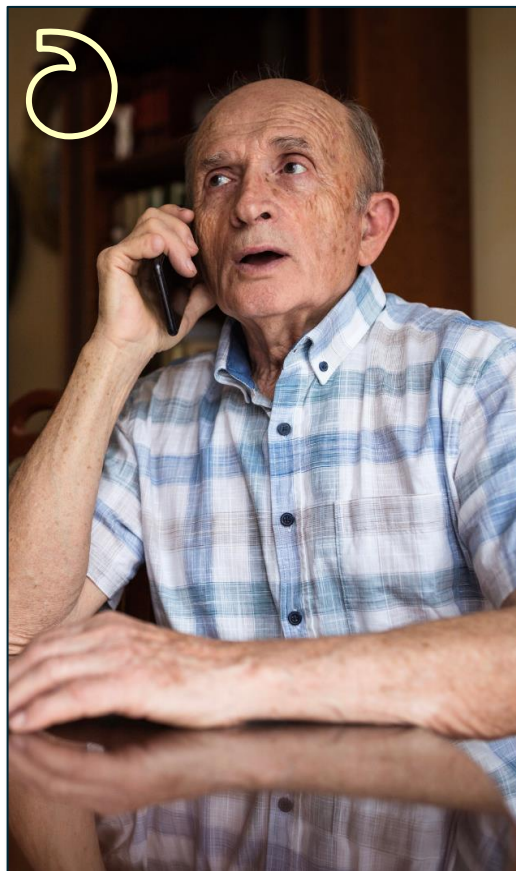
A 93-year-old patient discharged home after a fall, told our volunteer that her family rarely visited and though her carers visited daily, they were too busy to chat after their basic duties were completed. Her neighbours sometimes did shop for her, but when they were unavailable she often made do with very little food. As a result, she was quite isolated, extremely lonely and completely dependent on others for help.

Our volunteer first gave the patient details of **Morrison's Doorstep Delivery Service** so she could order shopping by telephone and regain some independence. Then they contacted charity **Possability People** who assigned a case worker to support her home support needs. They later confirmed that they had undertaken a full assessment of the patient's needs and were now providing support to her in the areas that she most needed it.

Finally, our volunteer contacted a befriending organisation to check for availability, but it was a six month wait for a befriender. As a trained befriender, our volunteer offered to be the lady's interim telephone befriender until a permanent match could be found.

A patient transferred from another county had issues with their care package, and asked our volunteer to speak to their son to explain his parent's situation. With the patient's permission, our volunteer contacted the council's adult social care services (Access Point) and they agreed to expedite the reassessment process so that a care package could be put in place. The assistance was greatly appreciated by the patient and family.

A patient felt 'uncertain' and 'unsettled' with their discharge notes as they overheard nurses' conversation. They promised they never drank excessively and were concerned a mention of such things in their notes meant they would be treated differently in the future. The volunteer contacted the GP with the patient's concerns, who confirmed that wasn't the case and there was no mention of any drinking issues. The patient was very grateful and reassured.



[Read the latest report](#)

The Re-commissioning of

Commissioning is the process of assessing needs, planning and prioritising, purchasing and monitoring health services, to get the best health outcomes.

We have delivered five projects seeking your views about how services could be improved or changed. Your views have influenced how these health and care services are provided, designed and commissioned.

Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS)



A Sussex-wide service, transporting patients to and from their appointments, seven days a week, providing around 300,00 journeys a year. Commissioners asked us to engage people using this service which was originally due to be re-commissioned in 2022. We carried out a literature review to see what others had found and a survey which captured the views of 130 service-users.

The commissioning process has been delayed to 2024 due to external factors, notably COVID and a national review, but our results will still be used in the eventual retendering of the service. **Your views** were shared with the NHS national review of the service, and their recommendations reflected many of our local findings.

Through this work, we have built a closer working relationship with the provider of the service - South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust - contributing to the delivery of two patient forums in October and January, with further ones planned.

We received an update in February 2022 from Commissioning leads which showed **positive changes**, many of which we had highlighted as areas of improvement in our last report in January 2021, including better promotion of alternatives to NEPTS for those who are not eligible for the service and better patient communications.

Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs)



These centres provide early diagnostic tests closer to home without people having to visit a hospital. They began operating across Sussex in Autumn 2021. We have been involved in reviewing bids from providers to develop this service, to be delivered in a variety of settings including shopping centres and football stadiums.

This involvement stemmed from our **report** that examined people's experiences and views towards CDCs. We engaged 21 people from communities whose voices are often less heard: people with Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, people from the gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans community, younger people (under 25), and those with complex clinical conditions.

The report was shared with local Commissioning leads for CDCs with whom we are actively working to deliver on our recommendations, as well as with NHS England.

NHS Services

Equipment and Adaptations Service

People who need extra help to live at home can access equipment such as grab rails, stair rails or ramps, and appropriate aftercare. A review of this service was commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council. This will have a long-term influence as it will inform the recommissioning process, due in 2023. Healthwatch had previously conducted a similar review in 2017 so were able to compare how the service had been performing.



Our **report** included the views from 343 service-users and 92 prescribers (professionals). Our recommendations to embed in the future service specification include improving the recycling of equipment and being able to order and review deliveries and installations (including reporting faults) online.

“The engagement has primarily been used to inform the service specification and we are combining the outcomes from the engagement with other feedback streams to make changes now (where possible) and to also inform the future specification.”

**Elaine Ramsay, Commissioning Support Officer
Health & Adult Social Care, Brighton & Hove City Council**



Musculoskeletal services

These services provide physiotherapy and related treatments and therapy. In September 2021, we began working with Commissioners as existing contracts for Musculoskeletal Services (MSK) are due to be renewed in 2023 across Sussex.



This marked an opportunity for us to influence the recommissioning process. We attended a series of workshops, feeding into design proposals and flagging patient concerns/considerations. We will continue to work with Commissioners on the new service specification.

Mental Health Services

At the time of writing, we have been commissioned by Brighton & Hove City Council to engage people’s views about mental health services (including that provided through their accommodation).



This involves a survey of service users and providers and telephone interviews. This engagement will help to inform the Mental Health and Housing Plan for Brighton and Hove and our findings will be added to the forthcoming Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (a compilation of local data).

Young Healthwatch



We commission YMCA DownsLink Group to deliver Young Healthwatch projects

Our [e-wellbeing project](#) shines a spotlight on the emotional health and wellbeing of young people. The group runs youth-led projects, focus groups and listening labs enabling young people to share their experiences of health and wellbeing services.

Young Healthwatch aims to find out what young people think is going well, and what they think needs improving. These findings are communicated to the people who run these services, so they know how to best support young people and help make their services as accessible as possible.

Diversity and Inclusion

One of our priorities for this year, was neurodiversity and young people's lived experiences. Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. For Neurodiversity Celebration Week 2022, we **raised awareness of neurodiversity** and the importance of **celebrating different minds**.

Young people wanted to remind everyone that neurodiversity is about accepting natural differences; our differences are what make us who we are!

Part of this involved meeting with and interviewing neurodivergent young people to hear their perspective on neurodiversity and mental health and enable young people to share their stories.



Ready Set Connect

We explored young people's views on mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our youth volunteers looked at the barriers young people face when accessing remote (video or phone call) mental health appointments.

They also involved the young people consulted in creating solutions, to break these barriers and improve their experience of accessing these services. We asked young people what could stop them from accessing mental health appointments.



"I find appointments online much more exhausting. Like you are constantly panicking the WIFI will go or that your device will shut down, it's not easy and feels a lot more draining."

Watch one of the neurodivergent [interviews](#)

“I personally just struggle to connect with someone when not face-to-face, I tend not to trust people in general so doing everything online kind of makes it worse.”



The main barriers to accessing mental health appointments were:

- **Communication and Trust** – Not being able to establish rapport and communicate effectively with the mental health professional remotely
- **Privacy and Confidentiality** – Not having a private space to have the call
- **Anxiety and Lack of Confidence** – Not knowing what to expect from a remote appointment
- **Technology** – Not having a proper device or stable internet connection to access remote appointments
- **Stigma and Fear of Being Judged** – Fear of being judged when seeking mental health support, feeling one's issues 'are not big enough' and that others may need the support more

Young people recommended ways to establish positive relationships with professionals, including 'pre-appointments and informal chats' to ask questions and learn how the process works. They also suggested it may be easier to communicate certain thoughts or feelings via different means, such as the chat function during a video call or communicating emotions using quick drawings.

The most popular solution was a digital guide to help young people prepare for their remote mental health appointment. Our volunteers were fully involved in the planning and development of the digital guide.

Ready, Set, Connect!

It's OK to feel **worried** or **nervous** before an **online** or **telephone** mental health **appointment**. YMCA e-wellbeing has created this guide with **practical tips** and **suggestions** to help you (or a young person you know) feel **more prepared** before, during, and after the appointment:

Struggling to cope? Find help here:
 SAMARITANS: Call us free 24/7 on **116 123** samaritans.org
 shout: **85258**

This guide, co-created with young people across Sussex, is to help young people prepare for phone or online mental health appointments!

In the weeks before:

- Write down your thoughts, feelings, or questions about your appointment
- Choose your appointment space (e.g. a private room or quiet outdoor area)
- Talk to someone you trust about your experience of the appointment, if you feel comfortable doing so
- Plan some time for yourself before and after the appointment
- Check the details you were given about accessing the appointment (e.g. making sure your phone/device will be suitable)

In the hours before:

TECH CHECK!

- Test your mic and speaker
- Check your device is charged
- Turn off any distracting notifications
- Watch 'Getting ready for your online session'

BREATHE...

- Have a pen and paper ready if you like to take notes
- Wash your face, brush teeth and hair – this helps you feel 'ready'!
- Let school/college/work know if you need time off for your appointment

During your appointment:

Know that it is normal for the odd glitch to happen, or a long pause, or people talking over each other.

If there is anything that you don't understand, you can ask questions such as, "Can you explain that to me...?"

After your appointment:

Speak to your trusted person to let them know how it went.

You might like to have some time away from the screen and go for a walk.

Privacy & Confidentiality
 Your professional will make sure that your appointment is kept confidential (even if they are in their own room). They may have to tell someone if they think you or someone else might be in risk. Usually the professional will try to tell you know first.

Find more support and information @
 e-wellbeing | i-Rock | WHERE to go FOR

Switchboard
 Connecting you to LGAFA support.

Find more info about the RESEARCH FOR THIS GUIDE HERE.

Guide produced by: **e-wellbeing** (SUSSEX'S e-wellbeing by YMCA Sussex Group)

Sussex NHS Commissioners | **Young Healthwatch Brighton and Hove**

[See the interactive digital guide!](#)

One of findings from **Ready Set Connect**, showed that young people were concerned about their privacy, and how their information was being used by mental health professionals, during and after therapy sessions online.

We received further support from NHS Commissioners, to create a youth-led animated film for young people, *by* young people, to provide reassurance on privacy rules, their rights and confidentiality within sessions.



"I'm worried that people in my house might overhear me talking."

Foundations for our Future

Our volunteers were also involved in the engagement and inclusion part of **Foundations for our Future** – a Sussex-wide review of emotional health and wellbeing for children and young people.



They shared their experiences of mental health services; suggested changes to improve flexibility and accessibility, and helped 'youth-proof' the final recommendations of the Sussex-wide review.

Young Healthwatch continues to be involved in the next phase to develop and embed the recommendations of Foundations for our Future.



[Watch the animation!](#)

GP Patient Survey in East & Central Brighton



To understand what people thought about health screening services and their preferences for community services in East and Central Brighton, we surveyed patients registered at local GP practices.

We had **1,845** replies, and some headlines are:

- Only around two-thirds of women were using screening services for cervical cancer from age 25 (**68%**) and for breast cancer from age 40 (**64%**)
- Although 10% of those aged 25 or over were unaware of cervical cancer screening, a further **23%** were aware but had not used the service
- **18%** of women aged 40+ were not aware of breast cancer screening, and another **18%** were aware but had not used the service
- The leading service preferences within the community, reported by around three-quarters of people, were for general wellbeing checks (**73%**) and blood tests (**72%**)
- People preferred community services in a community hall or centre (**78%**), followed by a home visit (**35%**) and at a school (**32%**)

The survey also explored people's use and preference for booking GP appointments online. Most people (**56%**) had not used an online booking form to make an appointment with their GP.

"I prefer to talk to a human being than a computer."

Service User

"I'm a technophobe."

Service User

"The Covid pandemic highlighted the glaring health inequalities in our society, so I was happy to work with Healthwatch to let patients describe the health deficiencies in current primary care provision, and I'm using those descriptions to access resources to diversify and improve services."

**Peter Sutcliffe, Primary Care Network Operations Manager
East and Central Brighton PCN**

Read the full [report](#)

Our other reports

Digital Exclusion (work ongoing)

We looked at people's views about booking GP appointments online (through e-Consult, for example). Our report showed a mixed picture with some finding this convenient and others not able to use this due to lack of technology or skills. We also spoke to 15 people who preferred not to use an online booking system with their GP to find out their views. This work is ongoing.

LGBTQ+ end of life care, February 2022

We conducted a review of published literature, and our [report](#) looked at how to deliver personalised end of life care for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer patients (LGBTQ+). Our project found no specific LGBTQ+ end of life guidance is produced by University Hospitals Sussex; that nationally LGBTQ+ people may face discrimination in healthcare settings, and that they need support to express their needs and wishes. We are working with our local Trust to take forward our findings.

Outpatients booking services and patient communications, December 2021

This Healthwatch [report](#) is a review of patients' experiences of being referred for an outpatients' appointment. It showcases the standards that patients themselves recommend should be applied to all communications. Our key finding is a lack of consistency that must be addressed. Our seven recommendations support work being done by Sussex NHS Commissioners to transform outpatient services and they have agreed that they will help to improve patient communications.

Remote appointments – compilation of evidence, November 2021

This [review](#) includes evidence from 28 studies since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the main conclusions is a preference towards a hybrid system including text, phone, video, email and in-person appointments.

Healthwatch in Sussex – GP Access, July 2021

In collaboration with East and West Sussex Healthwatch, we produced an [insight paper on GP Access](#) for the [Sussex Integrated Care Service Plan](#). This report provides an important perspective and will be well-considered in the Sussex Health & Care Partnership "Access to GPs Plan".

COVID-19 vaccinations – experiences and views, May 2021

A [survey](#) completed by 2,102 people across Brighton and Hove between February 13th and March 31st 2021. A 'point in time' survey showed positive experience of the appointment and booking service as well as evidence that some people were not opting to receive the vaccine.



Patients share their experiences of using A&E at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (April 2022)

Our report details examples of patient experiences of using the A&E department at the Royal County Sussex hospital. We found that basic elements need to be addressed such as maintaining a clean environment where patients feel safe; regularly checking in on patients to ensure they are ‘waiting well’; keeping them informed, and the provision of basic refreshments and comfort.

Read more about what patients told us [here](#), and our [press release](#).

Equality Impact Assessment 2021 (April 2021)

We regularly evaluate our work to assess how effectively we have engaged with the diverse communities of our city. In 2020/21, we were effective in hearing the views from people with disabilities, people who are LGBTQ+ and people with or without a religion. Over the past year, we have been working on those areas which we identified as needing more focus: ethnic diversity, gender (we hear more from women), and age (we hear more from people aged 40-74 years). Read our report [here](#).

“A Good Send-Off?” Patients’ and Family’s Experiences of End of Life Care. One year on (March 2021)

Our work on improving End of Life care at our local hospitals was nominated for a Healthwatch England award for the contribution our volunteers had made. Our earlier report (September 2020), found that End of life care was not a dignified and well-arranged experience for many.

Our recommendations were accepted in full by the NHS and since then, formal processes have taken place to embed our report findings into strategy and policy. This has provided confidence that having quality end of life care and dying well remains high on local statutory agencies agendas.

You can read more about how our work has influenced this agenda in our ‘one year on’ report, [here](#).



Reports Published 2021-22

The full list of the 20 reports we issued, describing our work, your experiences of health and social care services, and the impact that COVID-19 has had on our city.

1. [Feedback on the Accident and Emergency Department, Royal Sussex County Hospital](#) - April 2022
2. [Evaluation of B&H's Equipment and Adaptations service](#) - March 2022
3. [Patient opinion in East and Central Brighton Primary Care Network](#) - March 2022
4. [The impact of reduced hours at New Larchwood Surgery](#) - February 2022
5. [How to deliver personalised end of life care for LGBTQ+ patients](#) - February 2022
6. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Hospital Discharge Wellbeing Project](#) - Jan 2022
7. [Putting good communications with patients at the heart of service change](#) - December 2021
8. [People's views about remote access to appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic – a compilation of evidence](#) - December 2021
9. [Patient Transport Services - how your views are helping to reshape services](#) - October 2021
10. [Infographic describing the contribution our volunteers made to the successful operation of the Sussex-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Enquiry Service](#) - August 2021
11. [Healthwatch in Sussex Insight: Health and Care Pressures 2021](#) - July 2021
12. [The COVID-19 Vaccination enquiry service](#) - July 2021
13. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Annual Report](#) - June 2021
14. [Exploring young people's perceived barriers to accessing video/phone mental health appointments](#) - July 2021
15. [The Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Annual Performance Report 2020/21](#) - May 2021
16. [Community Diagnostic Hubs: a patient-centred pathway through the diagnostic journey](#) - May 2021
17. [People's experiences and views about COVID-19 vaccinations](#) - May 2021
18. [Equality Impact Assessment](#) - April 2021
19. ["A Good Send-Off?" Patients' and Family's Experiences of End of Life Care. One year on](#) - April 2021
20. [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Hospital Discharge Wellbeing Project \(HOPs\) April 2020 to April 2021](#) - April 2021

Read the full reports at
[HealthwatchBrightonandHove.co.uk/news-and-reports](https://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/news-and-reports)

Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch. Their efforts were recognised by two national nominations in the Healthwatch England awards – a brilliant outcome and truly deserved. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in the NHS and social care.

This year 71 volunteers, which included 15 Board members and 4 students on placement:

- spoke to more than 2,600 patients recently discharged from hospital, offering a friendly listening ear, advice and support
- provided answers to over 400 people who contacted our helpline
- reviewed and sense checked 16 patient leaflets produced by our local hospital
- answered 1,460 of your COVID related queries via a specialist helpline
- attended hundreds of meetings on our behalf
- helped hundreds of people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online





Caroline Trimby

The hospital discharge follow-up calls I make are most enjoyable and rewarding. It's fantastic to be able to signpost folk for any post-hospital help or services they may require to make this challenging time easier.

I also love having a friendly chat to many who have little social contact and really appreciate our thoughtful service.

I am 100% convinced that everything I do in this volunteer role is making a positive impact on people's well-being and lives.

It's simply a brilliant project.

Jo Kaddish

My experience with Healthwatch has been entirely with the COVID vaccine enquiry line where I started in February 2021. I thoroughly enjoy helping with the queries and over the year and a quarter I have gained a great deal of experience in handling many varied queries.

The team are extremely helpful and supportive and having the chat available means there is always someone who can help if any of us is stuck on a query.



"Whether it is collecting the data that informs all our work, supporting those that we engage with, or providing wise counsel around the

board room table, volunteering is at the core of what we do. Without the tireless energy and enthusiasm of our volunteer support, the quality of our work would be severely compromised. For this we raise our collective hat and salute our volunteers - not just during Volunteers Week, but for every day of the year!"

Geoffrey Bowden, Interim Chair

Cindy Willey

During the pandemic I worked on the COVID-19 vaccination enquiry line which made me feel as if I was contributing to this ambitious roll out, and helped me appreciate the complexities involved.

I have worked on several projects with Healthwatch during the last four or so years. They have been very interesting, worthwhile and give one the satisfaction that hopefully you can make a difference.

For the last two years all work has been by phone, but the recipients of your call are always very appreciative. Regardless of one's situation speaking to these people is always very humbling. They demonstrate stoicism despite their difficulties.



"Being a volunteer has been a rewarding way to develop my skills as a Public Health Student. The team are incredibly supportive and no issue is too big or small."

Asher Foister



Paul Koczerzat

I have been working on the Hospital Discharge project since January 2021 and simply enjoy speaking to people. I am frequently humbled by how pleased to be called many people are. Most were doing well, pleased to be home, but some were struggling and needed help accessing additional support.

Whilst we play an important role in linking individuals to the right organisation to get the help they need, the calls also help maintain their faith and trust in the health service and shows that someone does still care about them once they have been discharged from hospital.

Tracey Tremlett

I thoroughly enjoyed the time I spent volunteering for Healthwatch. It relies so heavily on the good will of its volunteers, and they made me feel valued and part of the team.

The HOPS project that I was specifically involved with is a fantastic initiative to address the social isolation and loneliness that people have been experiencing during the height of the pandemic.

I hope to be able to support the team in the future in further projects.



Interested in volunteering?

For more information contact us on **01273 234 040** or **interested@hwbh.co.uk**

Authorised Representatives

During this year we had **78 Authorised Representatives** able to review services, attend decision-making forums and speak up for patients and care service users. This was made up of **71** volunteers – including directors – and **7** members of staff.

Alan Boyd	Denise Millar	Lester Coleman
Alastair Hignell	Dr Khalid Ali	Lorna Towner
Amina Ba	Duncan Stewart	Lynne Shields
Amy Oliver	Elaine Crush	Mae Cole
Angelika Wydra	Elaine Foster-Page	Maisie
Ann Nealer	Elaine Fox	Richardson-Wilson
Anya Waigh	Elisabeth Miskarik	Maureen Smallldridge
Asher Foister	Emily Page	Mazzie Sharp
Barbara Myers	Eva Zemcikova	Michelle Kay
Bob Deschene	Francis McCabe	Neil McIntosh
Brigid Day	Fran O'Neill	Nicholas Gorvett
Cara Redlich	Gaby Rennie	Nick Goslett
Caroline Trimby	Geoffrey Bowden	Olivia West
Catherine Swann	Gillian Connor	Paul Koczerzat
Cecily Bryant	Hadi Kebbeh	Peter Burton
Chloe Mackney	Hilary Martin	Robin Guilleret
Chris Jennings	Holly Earthey	Roger Squier
Christiane Reineke	Howard Lewis	Ryan Prichard
Christine Clark	James Davies	Sophie Crowton
Christine D'Cruz	Jayne Cockburn	Sophie Reilly
Christopher Morey	Jo Kaddish	Sue Seymour
Cindy Willey	Judith Batchelor	Sylvia New
Clary Collicut	Karen Barford	Tracey Tremlett
Conor Sheehan	Kat Pearce	Trish Comley
David Liley	Kurt Stevens-Billing	Vanessa Greenaway
Deborah Rogerson	Leah Ashley	Will Anjos

Thank you

Chair & Directors

Our board of directors are all volunteers



Geoffrey Bowden
Interim Chair



Catherine Swann
Director



Neil McIntosh
Director



Christine D'Cruz
Director



Karen Barford
Director



Howard Lewis
Director



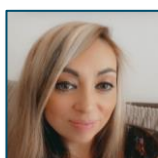
Angelika Wydra
Director



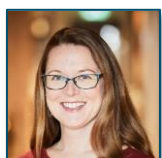
Dr Khalid Ali
Director



Alastair Hignell
Director



Sophie Crowton
Director



Gillian Connor
Director



Christopher Morey
Director

Learn more about our directors at healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-board

Goodbyes

"For over 8 years, Healthwatch enabled me to feel as if I could use my earlier experiences and constructively contribute to the improvement of NHS and social care services the city. Healthwatch punches way above its weight and I have total confidence it will maintain its standing way into the future."



Frances McCabe ~ Independent Chair from Oct 2014 to Apr 2022

"Healthwatch allowed me to support the patient agenda to remind the NHS and social care that it is a service for patients. I will miss the highly successful staff and Board, but the current team is gifted with innovative and dedicated personnel, who are well positioned to continue the success."



Bob Deschene ~ Director from Oct 2014 to Apr 2022

"Being a Director on the board of Healthwatch Brighton & Hove has been a privilege. It has given me the opportunity to shape & improve Health and Care services across the city. I will miss working with such a knowledgeable and dedicated Board and Staff Team. Thank you to all."



Sophie Reilly ~ Director from Oct 2014 to Apr 2022

& Hellos

"Being on the board has been an amazing experience and opportunity to utilise my knowledge and experience for a good cause. It has also given me an opportunity to learn from great and very experienced leaders and gain more insight about the operational processes involved in running a community interest company."

Angelika Wydra ~ Started June 2021

"I had a lot of care in the community for my grandma when she was poorly so being able to be a director in Brighton made me feel I was giving something back. I've loved using my dementia knowledge with people on the board and am really looking forward to the face-to-face meetings"

Sophie Crowton ~ Started June 2021

"I'm thrilled to be part of the team. I have always had a keen interest in health: my father was a Paediatric dentist based in Hove and helped to form The British Society of Paediatric Dentistry in 1952, my mother was a nursing Sister at The Royal Alexandra Children Hospital, and my brother is a consultant anaesthetist in the NHS in London."

Christopher Morey ~ Started Feb 2022

"I joined Healthwatch as a trustee because I'm passionate about good healthcare outcomes for all and want to be a part of the fantastic work that Healthwatch does in representing the patient voice in my local community. I believe this is needed more than as ever as health and care services face tough recovery challenges."

Gillian Connor ~ Started Feb 2022



Message from our Chief Executive

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is emerging from the COVID-19 challenge as a strong, viable and sustainable voluntary organisation. Our volunteer group has grown substantially over the last two years. Our staff team remains stable and we have strengthened our links with the Universities and Medical and Nursing Schools. Our partnerships with other organisations and neighbouring local Healthwatch in East and West Sussex have also strengthened and whilst our reports and recommendations have been focused on Brighton and Hove, many have had implications Sussex wide.



In response to COVID-19, Healthwatch has decided to allow staff to work from home and provided the resources required for this. We remain available to anyone who needs and reaches out to us.

We lost not one day of activity over this whole year, our volunteers and staff have given the very best of public service. I cannot thank them enough. Alongside the NHS, social care, and public health, Healthwatch continue to help Brighton and Hove be a safe and healthy place to live and thrive.

 *“We lost not one day of activity over this whole year, our volunteers and staff have given the very best of public service. I cannot thank them enough.”* 

As a Community Interest Company (CIC) we make no personal profit and all income we generate is used to benefit local people. This year our Board has been strengthened with new members better representing the diversity of our city. Some Board members have stepped down at the end of their tenure, and we thank them for many years of loyal service.

If you want to make a difference in health and social care, if social justice and combatting health and care inequalities is important to you, come and join us; you will find a warm welcome.

David Liley

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Liley".



Staff Team

Our employees

David Liley
Chief Executive

Dr Lester Coleman
Head of Research

Alan Boyd
Project Coordinator

Hadi Kebbeh
Project Assistant

Michelle Kay
Project Coordinator

Will Anjos
Project Coordinator

Clary Collicut
Project Officer



Left to right: Will, Hadi, David, Clary, Michelle, Lester and Alan.

Learn more about our staff at
healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/our-staff

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. In addition, we receive additional income to deliver a small number of projects in line with our charitable objectives.

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from local authority	£178,600	Staff costs	£187,125
Additional funding	£63,766	Operational costs	£19,137
		Support and administration	£15,657
Total income	£242,366	Total expenditure	£221,918

Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Promoting patient and public voices to assist COVID recovery in health and care services
2. Focusing on health and care inequalities and seldom heard voices
3. Ensuring decision makers keep their promises to improve services

Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3XG.

Young Healthwatch delivered by:
YMCA DownLink Group, Reed House, 47 Church Road, Hove BN3 2BE.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove use 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 12 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. Through 2021/22 the board met 6 times and made decisions on matters such as work priorities and ensuring our staff, Board and volunteers reflect the diverse communities in our City .

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Over the last year we have worked with a 'people's panel', a group of local people who have shared their views on topical and important health and care issues. They have directed us to focus on access to dental care, GP shortages and digital disadvantage.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

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 health and care services. During 2021/22 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year we have done this by, for example, exploring with young black people access to emotional and wellbeing services.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it online, to our local Healthwatch Community, share with Healthwatch England, promote to the local media and present the report formally to the Brighton and Hove Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee .

Responses to recommendations and requests

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

healthwatch

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