



Healthwatch Walsall

Annual Report 2017/18





Contents

Message from our Chair	3
Message from our Executive Director	4
Highlights from our year	5
Who we are	6
Your views on health and care	10
Helping you find the answers	18
Making a difference together	21
It starts with you	24
Our plans for next year	28
How we work	32
Our finances	34
Contact us	36



Message from our Chair



Healthwatch Walsall is listening to local people and working with partners to improve local health and social care services.

That was the conclusion of our recent strategic review and what we have been told by local people, the NHS and Walsall Council. Last year I reported that Healthwatch was under new leadership and determined to make a difference. This year I am convinced we are doing just that. For example:

- We have launched new statutory Enter & View visits ensuring vulnerable older people living in residential care homes are safe and getting quality services (see page 16)
- We have researched and reported on access to GP surgeries and made recommendations that Walsall Commissioners and surgeries are now implementing (see page 15)
- We have recruited 20 hardworking volunteers to maximise our reach and impact (see page 31)
- We have held 5 public ‘Spotlight’ meetings where we hold NHS leaders and Council bosses to account over services and changes (see page 20)
- We listened to people’s views about A&E services at the Manor Hospital - and the Hospital have agreed to take forward all our recommendations (see page 15)

These are just examples from a busy year of our impact. This is made possible by our dedicated team of Board members, staff and volunteers - many thanks to all of you.



Healthwatch at its heart is an independent evidence based champion for local people that will engage, collaborate and hold health and social leaders to account.

Over the next year we will focus on 3 major lines of enquiry:

- Young people’s experience of health and social care services
- Ensuring that the health and social care integration project, Walsall Together, has people and patients front and centre of their thinking and delivery
- Investigating whether local services are tackling inequalities and working for marginalized communities.

In addition, our volunteers will be extending Enter & View into GP surgeries as well as residential care homes, working with other local Healthwatch to monitor proposed changes at the Black Country (“STP”) level and working with Councillors at Walsall Council to monitor and scrutinise local services.

We recognise that the health & care sector faces unprecedented change, increased demand and continued budget pressures. We understand this at Healthwatch. However, it cannot be used as an excuse for bad planning, engagement or poor care.

Finally, Healthwatch is committed to be an open and welcoming organisation. Our board meetings form part of wider ‘Spotlight’ public meeting, held across the borough where we listen to the public and take forward their views and concerns. I look forward to seeing you at one of these in the coming year.

John Taylor, Healthwatch Board Chair

Message from our Executive Director

It's the time of year that the Annual Report and the Annual meeting come round again. We can reflect on the work we have delivered and the impact that we have made as the consumer champion for health and social care services in Walsall.

The past 12 months have been very busy for us, particularly as we have been committed to raising our profile which has seen an increased demand for our services. The increasing regularity that health and social care topics have been popping up in the national and local news, and our own expansion on social media, has meant that health and social care are at the forefront of local people's minds.

We have successfully worked on a range of priority issues this year, completing some excellent work on A&E and Urgent Care experiences, patients views and access to primary care services, cancer support services and access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). We have also been working closely with Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to support consultations around changes to Hyper Acute Stroke Services in Walsall and patient feedback around medication and procedure of low clinical value.

The number of patient views and experiences that we capture has also increased significantly and we have used this information to escalate issues and further investigate common themes and trends across the Borough.

Our work would not have been effective without the support and commitments from both our Healthwatch Advisory Board and our volunteers and we look forward to continuing to work closely as a team in the coming year.

We have worked incredibly hard and recorded almost 8,000 patient experiences, all of which helps us set our priorities, focus our work and tailor our recommendations so that we can encourage services to work as well as possible for people in Walsall.



We are committed to continuing our work and ensuring that people in Walsall have a strong voice and get to have a say in the changes to the way health and social care services are delivered.

We are very much looking forward to the next 12 months working with commissioners and service providers, but most importantly with the people of Walsall in order to amplify the public and patient voice.

Whilst we have working relationships with commissioners and providers of services we still ensure that we remain a critical friend so that we can represent, support and inform the public.

Simon Fogell, Executive Director



Highlights from our year



This year we have embraced social media, setting up a Twitter and Facebook account



Our 19 volunteers help us with everything from supporting outreach events to undertaking Enter & View Visits



We've visited over 150 local services, community groups and public events



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from cancer support to GP access and changes to urgent care



We've spoken to 7993 local people about their health and social care

We carried out 9 Enter & View visits to care settings around the borough, and produced public reports with recommendations for improvement



Who we are

Healthwatch Walsall are the local consumer champion for health & social care in Walsall.

Health and care that works for you

People want health and social care services that work for them by helping them to stay well and manage conditions they may face.

Our Purpose

As Healthwatch Walsall, we exist to help make health and care services in the Borough work for people who use them. Everything we say and do is informed by our connections with patients and local people. Our main focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and to speak out on their behalf. We find out what matters to people and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

Our role is to make sure that local decision makers and providers put the experiences of people at the heart of their work. That is why we want you to share your experiences of using health and social care both good and bad. We use your experiences to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority in England.

We act as an independent voice of local people, championing quality health and social care. We make sure that the needs and preferences of service users are central to how services are planned and delivered across Walsall.

Through effective engagement to gain service user feedback, we can raise awareness of key issues affecting local health and social care services and recommend improvements.

We:

- **Monitor** service delivery through concerns raised, feedback received and our Healthwatch Walsall Advisory Board.
- **Analyse** consumer feedback and data to produce evidence and insight reports.
- **Challenge** commissioners and providers on the quality, access and delivery of health and social care.
- **Develop services** through public involvement and engagement to ensure the consumer voice is heard.

Healthwatch Walsall is delivered by Engaging Communities Staffordshire (ECS). ECS is a community interest company that brings public engagement, consultation and consumer advice services together in a central organisation to create evidence and insight to help improve local health and social care services.

We also collaborate with other neighbouring Healthwatch to look at regional issues and share best practice.



Meet the team



Simon Fogell

Executive Director

Simon has been with Healthwatch Walsall for over three years. He has 25 years of experience in local government where he has been policy and strategy manager, responsible for corporate engagement, Children's and Adults safeguarding lead, a member of an equality task force for over 10 years, the Ageing Well lead for the LA, Personalisation Engagement Lead and Policy Manager for Adult Social Care, Policy and Communications Project Manager for Children's and Adult Social Care as well as managing children's residential social care facilities. He is a Parish Councillor and former Chairman of the Parish Council. He has also been a Chair of Governors for a primary school, Chair of a village hall fundraising committee, Chair of District and Borough wide Neighbourhood Support Groups, a reader at church and secretary to a Mission and Ministry Area.

Simon.Fogell@ecstaffs.co.uk

Paul Higgitt

Healthwatch Manager

Paul Higgitt is our Healthwatch Manager and has been with us for 9 months. He has previously worked at Healthwatch Staffordshire and Healthwatch Sandwell. Prior to this he has over 15 years' experience working in neighbourhood regeneration and community development. His passion is ensuring that local people within communities access quality, safe and timely health and social care services.

paul.higgitt@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk



Tom Collins

Engagement and Information Lead

Tom Collins joined us in March last year as our Community Outreach Officer. After a year in this position he is now the Engagement and Information Lead. In addition to working in the community with groups and meeting with individuals, Tom now attends some strategic meetings and takes part in Enter and View. He is also responsible for recruiting and training volunteers for a range of exciting roles. Prior to this Tom worked for Healthwatch Sandwell.

tom.collins@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk



Rosamund Greiner

Community Outreach Lead

Ros joined the team in May as the new Community Outreach Lead. She previously worked as a researcher at Healthwatch Staffordshire, where she gained experience carrying out surveys, interviews and focus groups with members of the public. Last year she graduated from the University of Birmingham with a biology degree, and brings an analytical approach to the patient experience data we collect.

ros.greiner@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk



We wish to extend our thanks to Coral Lemm, Michelle Letford and Ashley Lovell, who left the team over the course of this year. We wish them all well in their new endeavours and thank them for their contribution to the work of Healthwatch Walsall.

Healthwatch Walsall Advisory Board



John Taylor (Chair)

John is the former West Midlands Head of the Big Lottery Fund where he led the regional team awarding around £60 million per year between 1992 and 2013.

Nationally he devised, using co-production methods, the £100 million Talent Match program for young people furthest from the labour market. He now acts as a consultant and adviser to a range of public and charitable organisations. Clients have included Black Country Together CIC, Walsall Council, Avon and Bristol Law Centre, ESF, St Basil's and the Heart of England Community Foundation. John is a Magistrate in the adult and youth criminal courts and a member of the Lord Chancellors Advisory Committee.

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A'isha Khan

Aisha is the Managing Director of Aaina Community Hub, a third sector organisation that caters for women from diverse sections of the community who are living with disadvantage and exclusion. She is also founder and treasurer of Iqra Supplementary School and Youth Provision since 2005, which is based at Aaina and delivers life enhancing opportunities for young people who are living in marginalized communities. Her background is in Law and she maintains an interest in this area through her work as a Magistrate and member of the Charities Tribunal. She is a full time working mother of who enjoys reading and writing, swimming to keep fit and radio broadcasting.



Teresa Tunnel

Teresa graduated from the University of Birmingham with a physics degree and moved into the software development industry. When her second son was born with profound learning disabilities her life changed completely. She gave up work to care for her son and became more involved in helping to shape education, health and social care services for children and adults with learning disabilities. Currently Teresa is Co-chair of Governors at the Old Hall and Mary Elliot Federation and sits on Walsall's Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She is a member of the Parent Carer Forum Committee, FACE Walsall, which aims to work in co-production with the authority to improve services for disabled children and young adults.



Frances Beatty, MBE

Frances has spent most of her career concerned with advocacy, complaints, engagement - spent working for a rural and farming membership organisation, influencing national/regional government policy making from the evidence base of problems experienced by its business members. She subsequently ran her own business, and has a background in business, higher education, local government, environment and health and social care. She holds the Cabinet portfolio for Economic Development & Planning on Stafford Borough Council. Frances is a Board member and Caldicott Guardian for Engaging Communities, and EC Board representative on the Healthwatch Advisory Boards for Staffordshire, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

Ross Nicklin

Ross spent his career working within the steel industry. This included working for British Steel, now Tata UK, as General Manager. In 2001, as co-owner, he helped establish a successful steel stockholding and manufacturing business supplying products to a number of blue chip customers typically within the Automotive, Construction and Waste industries. Ross has also volunteered at Age UK, befriending older people within the community. He has both an NVQ level 3 and a degree in Health and Social Care. He has lived in Walsall for over 50 years and is passionate about improving both services and outcomes for local citizens by utilising the extensive range of skills he brings from the private sector.



Lucy Land

Lucy qualified as a nurse in 1980 and worked in the NHS for many years. Following this clinical career, Lucy became a clinical nurse teacher and later qualified as a registered nurse tutor. Lucy teaches both undergraduate and post graduate health professionals and undertakes funded research projects. Her research focuses on service user experiences of care. As a Professor of Nursing, Lucy is also director of the Centre for Social Care Health and Related Research (C-SHaRR), which focuses on studies relating to quality of care and patient safety. Lucy has presented at conferences around the world regarding her research, published papers and written two books on the subject of health research. Lucy is committed to improving the experience of people who access healthcare services.



Sylvia Bailey

Sylvia has lived in Walsall for 50 years with a background in Primary Care Management in Walsall and Birmingham. She has served as a Non-Executive Director on the Walsall Health Authority and Walsall Community Health Council, Lay Governor Mental Health Trust, setting up of Patient and focus groups. She has a keen interest in health care delivery, embracing diversity and equality. Since retiring she has become Chair of her own GP practice's patient group, member of the Walsall Patient and Public Liaison Group (PPLG), involved in health research with varying universities including National Institute of Health Research (NIHR), and, as a cancer survivor, Cancer Research UK.



Your views on health and care



Making services work for you

Healthwatch Walsall has listened to and documented many local people's views regarding the health and social care services they and their families receive throughout the year.

We have listened to people in many different places and settings, attending sessions at community groups, town fetes and fayres, doctors' surgeries, faith groups, hospital wards and clinics to name but a few. We find it is most effective to go to where people already are - whether the event is focused on health or otherwise.

We have documented people's views using methods such as surveys both online and in paper formats, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and interactive voting systems.

When we have undertaken a piece of work with a specific focus we always check our research methods are in line with research guidelines. We also compare it to national data whenever this is available and relevant.



Healthwatch Walsall has an online reviewing platform called Experience Exchange where members of the public can leave comments about services 24/7. People can also read the reviews left by others, helping them to make informed decisions about the services they choose for themselves and their families. This can be found by using the link: <http://x2.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk>



To promote our engagement opportunities and activities, we use a broad range of communication tools to maximise our reach, including:

- Website
- Newsletter
- Social media posts and campaigns
- Press releases and editorials
- Leaflet and poster distribution, displays and campaigns
- Targeted promotional campaigns for consultations and projects including our work on mental health and primary care services
- Public Board meetings and listening events, including our "Spotlight on..." events
- Annual Report and Annual General Meeting



Outreach

Our outreach and engagement is vital. It is what informs our work for the following year.

Where we go

We have reached out to a diverse range of cultures, age ranges, groups and neighbourhoods, enabling us to capture the experiences, views and voices of the public through holding consultations, organising focus groups and undertaking surveys.

We have visited locations such as Aldridge, Bloxwich, Blakenall, Brownhills, Pleck, Paddock, Pheasey Streetly, Great Barr, Moxley, Caldmore, Palfrey, Short Heath and many more, on weekdays, nights and weekends.

We have visited Walsall Football Club, Walsall Manor Hospital, A&E department, Walsall Urgent Care Centres, several GP practices, Active Living Centres, Shopping Centres, Supermarkets and many more.

We have met with a number of groups such as Walsall Breast Cancer Support Group, Upper Gastro Intestinal (UGI Blues), Brain Tumour Support and a number of Dementia Cafés. Also visiting: Young Carers, The Glebe Centre and The Beacon to engage with those harder to reach.

What we hear

People have shared compliments, concerns and complaints. There has been praise about services, departments and professionals. But there have been concerns and complaints that meant that we have taken a closer look, or escalated to the appropriate service provider or commissioner.

The success of our outreach has been made possible by the support of our volunteers, collaboration with local community organisations, and the willingness of people in Walsall to share their experiences. Once again thanks to the individuals and the groups that we have worked with and contributed to our work and achievements over the last year.



Statistics and Figures

- We have engaged with 7993 people across Walsall on a variety of topics across 137 venues.
- 4186 surveys were filled out by members of the public, on topics including transitional beds, cancer support services, A&E and GP access.
- 56 people signed up to become members of Healthwatch, meaning that they receive our newsletter, updates and reports, and invitations to public meetings and to participate in consultations and surveys.
- We carried out focus groups with 123 people, gaining an in depth understanding of their experiences.



Our Reports

During the year Healthwatch Walsall has been actively collating the views and voices of patients experiences of services.

We have visited a range of venues, groups and captured the voice of the individual across Walsall Borough. This has led to the writing of several important reports which have then been passed to commissioners, providers, stake holders and of course the public.

Our role is to ensure that commissioners and providers take our report recommendations into consider in relation to improvements in services.



Improving Urgent Care Services in Walsall – Walsall Urgent Care Report October 2017

Healthwatch Walsall was asked to gather service users' views and choices around possible changes to Urgent Care Centre sites in Walsall. Healthwatch Walsall visited the proposed affected sites and other sites to talk to the public and explain what Walsall CCG were proposing in their plans. The possible closure or merger of two sites was relatively unknown by the public, but the consequences would have been far reaching, including putting extra pressure on A&E and other primary care services.

The overriding opinion was that the Urgent Care provision should not been changed at the current time. There was a clear dependence upon the service in the town centre, particularly due to the convenient location. There were genuine concerns that if the UCC was to move to Manor Hospital it will make access to urgent care more difficult.

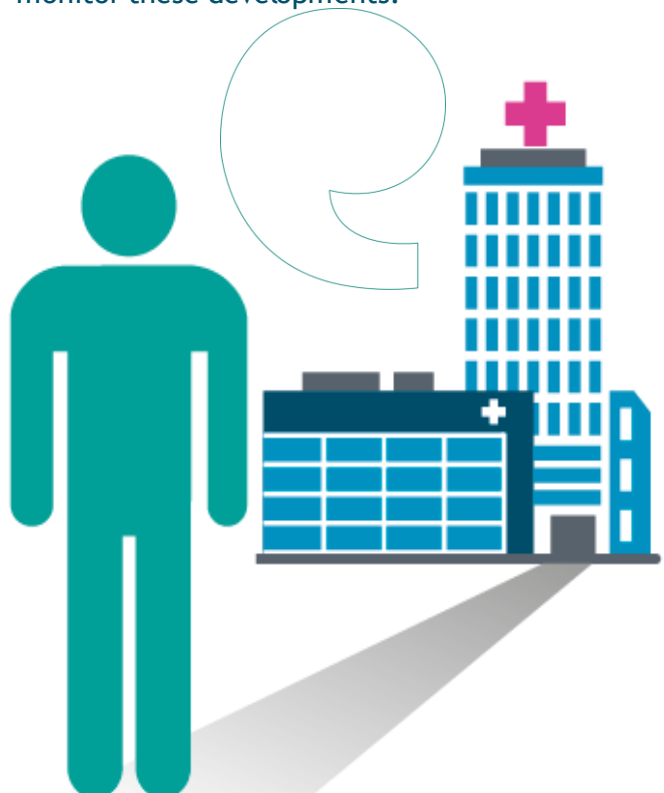
Public comments that came out of the consultation:

“Difficult to get a doctor’s appointment that fits my working week. With the 2 centres I can still be seen”

“Closing the town centre care would make the Manor become overcrowded and make the waiting time even longer”

We also raised concerns that any changes would need to be integrated into the winter pressures plan on A&E and Urgent Care.

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have not yet made the decision. Given that 9 out of 10 people in the public consultation were against change, we anticipated the CCG will need to fully explain and subsequent decision and involve Walsall Scrutiny Board in that process. We will monitor these developments.



Consultation on Changes to Hospital Stroke Services – Walsall Stroke Report October 2017

Access to the right stroke care at the right time helps to reduce death rates, improves the resulting condition for those who survive, and reduces risk of disability. Walsall CCG worked with clinicians, patients and the public to develop a proposal to improve local stroke services. Healthwatch Walsall were asked to capture the views of the public and explain the reasoning for the changes.

Key Recommendations:

- Detailed information about the proposal should be forwarded to all Walsall GP practices so that all Walsall residents are able to have access to the detailed proposal and an explanation of the planned changes.
- Cost saving measures that can help patients adjust to the changes e.g. a volunteer run Ring & Ride system that can help with those who struggle to get to the new services.

The “Super Centre” at New Cross hospital has now been set up and in operation. Healthwatch Walsall will monitor its delivery for Walsall residents.

Possible changes to GP practices in Walsall - APMS Report September 2017

There was a proposal of possible closures, opening time change, and reduction of evening and weekend appointments for nine GP practices in Walsall. The impact on patients was at the heart of the consultation. We visited the nine practices identified and other local surgeries (as patients may wish to move there or other local surgeries may be impacted due to the increase of patients they may take on due to the changes). Public comments that came out of the consultation:

“What about the patients who just want to stay where they are – they like the doctors.”

“What about the elderly – we can walk down the road to this Practice.”

Key Recommendations

- Use online booking systems with GP name and availability so people can advance book with their GP of choice.
- Prioritise evening opening hours and weekend opening for those in work while encouraging those retired/part-time working etc. to use services in the day.
- Have specific support that is tailored to retired patients in the morning to encourage day use (e.g. have chiropractors, mobility/Parkinson’s staff etc. situated in the morning rather than in the evenings). This can also be tailored to school runs for instance, have paediatric drop-ins or children health services available after school lets out.

Whilst there have been some changes to opening hours, there has also been an extension of GP Out of Hours appointments

Policy for procedures of Lower Clinical Value (PoLCV) – A listening exercise September 2017

The main reasons for having policies in place for PoLCV is to ensure that patients receive appropriate health treatment, in the right place and at the right time.

There was broad agreement with the principles that the CCG had used in order to develop its policies, although there were some principles that were better supported than others.

Key Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the CCG undertakes further public engagement in relation to spinal fusion surgery; spinal epidural injections; and bunions (Hallux Valgus).
- Define cosmetic surgery under the principles used to develop the policies to ensure that the public understand what is included and excluded.

Concerns were raised about the potential impact on quality of life for affected patients. Although the public felt the consultation was about cutting CCG costs, the PoLCV is a national initiative.

Walsall A&E Report November 2017

We revisited the Accident and Emergency Department at Walsall Manor to establish if things had changed from our visit the previous year. We were looking for improvements in communication with patients, better signage around A&E, improved and quicker care through the triage system, improved care and cleanliness.

Public comments that came out of the consultation:

“I feel there should be more information about waiting times.”

“One and a half hour wait with chest pains.”

Key recommendations:

- All patients to be asked if they are in pain and offered pain relief when booking in. If this is left until the triage assessment is undertaken people may be waiting in pain for some time.
- All patients to be given a waiting time to be called for triage and then given a waiting time to see the doctor.
- If initial waiting times are increased those waiting should be checked to see if their symptoms have got worse or changed.

Walsall Manor hospital A&E department have developed a patient experience action plan. All of the recommendations have been incorporated into the Emergency Department A&E Action Plan, which has been reviewed recently.

Access to Primary Care Services Report November 2017

The public told us that there were concerns about access to GPs in both normal surgery hours and out of hours. We undertook a consultation with over 800 patients. The objective of the report was to establish how the public booked appointments, whether they found their GP service accessible in terms of getting an appointment when needed, if they would prefer extended surgery opening times, and if the lack of appointments at GP surgeries impacted on use of A&E and Urgent Care Centres in the area.

It also looked at whether there were any influence by demographics on the use of A&E or Urgent Care Centres. The demographic information used was gender, location, ethnicity and disability.

Key Recommendations:

- Extending surgery opening times to open earlier, later and at weekends.
- To support access for those individuals who work daytime shift patterns.

Our report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board. As a result, the CCG are undertaking a detailed audit of a number of GP practices in Walsall. They will be collecting data on access and opening times, including reception opening, communication with patients and clinicians' availability. Work is now being undertaken for each practice to adopt an action plan of agreed improvements.

Transitional Beds Survey September - December 2017

We were asked by Walsall Borough Council to engage with elderly patients who had recently been discharged from hospital into a temporary nursing home and gather views on how the patients felt about the process and service.

The one consistent theme was communication. Some patients said that they had not been told when or where they were going to be discharged to. There needs to be a clear emphasis on making sure people fully understand what is happening to them and the need to communicate effectively using a range of different techniques.

We are currently finalising two other reports: Cancer Support Services in Walsall and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Walsall (CAMHS). These will be published shortly and will be available on our website.

All reports are available on our website.

Link:

http://www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/our-reports/?cp_reports

Enter & View

Under the Healthwatch regulations, we have the power to Enter and View premises providing health and social care services which are publicly funded.

This means that our authorised representatives can observe matters relating to health and social care services. Enter & View visits are conducted by a small group of trained volunteers who visit health and social care settings to observe and assess the service being provided; write a group report with suggestions for improvements which becomes a public document; and follow-up suggested recommendations where necessary.

These services may include:

- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- Local Authorities
- Primary Care Services - GPs, Dentists, Opticians, Pharmacists

During visits our authorised representatives take views from relatives, carers and staff and most importantly gathering the patients perspective.

Why carry out Enter & View?

Because people matter and it is important that the quality of their care is monitored, we exercise our statutory right of Enter & View.

Enter & View contributes to the Healthwatch remit of engagement and evidence gathering to help ensure that the views and feedback from patients and carers are an integral part of local commissioning across health and social care.

Following an Enter & View visit, a report is written which is made available on our website. This is also circulated to the providers, commissioners, Care Quality Commission, Walsall Borough Council and other interested parties.

In 2017 /2018 we visited:

Anson Court Residential Home
Parklands Court Nursing Home
Delves Court Care Home
Rushall Care Home
Mill Lodge Care Home
Swan House Care Home
Harden Hall care Home
Pelsall Hall Care Home



We have selected various social care provider settings on a basis of intelligence, the length of time of the last CQC inspection, change of management and the standard achieved from their CQC report. We have also been working closely with Walsall Borough Council in sharing intelligence for our visits.

Whilst carrying out the Enter and View visits with our teams of authorised volunteers we have encountered many people who have kindly taken part in the process. Speaking to residents and their relatives and carers helps us to build a picture of the quality of care they have received. We have observed and reported on good practice in both care and nursing homes.

This year we are coordinating our Enter and View programme to include primary care sites such as Walsall GP practices and various departments in Walsall Manor Hospital. The scope may also be widened to other NHS facilities.

Our Enter and View visits can be found on our website on the following link:

www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/downloads

We would like to thank Ross Nicklin, Health Advisory Board member for his work co-ordinating and carrying out our Enter & View programme.



Have Your Say

on health and social care services in Walsall



<http://x2.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk>

Experience Exchange lets you search for and provide feedback on hundreds of health and social care providers in Walsall

Impartial

Anonymous

Free

SELECT

from 12 service types

SEARCH

for any of over 1000 providers

SHARE

your feedback on key factors



healthwatch
Walsall

Choose the Type of Service

To begin leaving feedback you need to find the service you want to leave feedback for. Either use the search box or select the type of service below.

Search for an Organisation

Care In Your Own Home Providers	Community Services	Dentists
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Helping you find the answers



Information and Signposting

NHS Complaints Advocacy Service

Healthwatch works closely with communities in the borough ensuring they have access to advocacy support in situations where the care or support provided by the NHS has not met their needs.

In the last year we have referred or signposted 42 people to the NHS Complaints Advocacy service for the Walsall Borough.

Sharing Information

We have also been working closely with both Walsall CCG and Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust to share our intelligence that we gather from our engagement and to escalate complaints and concerns so that we can help patients get responses and feedback on issues with their care.

We are always keen to promote and share the good things that people tell us around their positive experiences of health and social care. Staff want to feel appreciated for their hard work and commitment. We pass on this information but also encourage patients to contact providers to say thanks and explaining what were the main positive points in relation to their care.

Signposting

Healthwatch has a wealth of information on support organisations to actively signpost people to so they can get the valuable support.

We signpost to organisations like POhWER, AGE UK, Local Dementia Café, Walsall Carers, One Walsall, CAMHS, support groups and more.

Escalation of Issues and Complaints to Providers

We do not just signpost patients to the NHS complaints advocacy service. We are able to escalate issues and concerns to providers and commissioners of services. In circumstances where the concern is less severe, we have been able to help patients to come to a resolution with the provider.

Partnership Working with Hospital Complaints Department

We have built up working relationships with Walsall Manor Hospital and Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust. We have made the necessary connections to discuss patient issues and complaints, escalate concerns and obtain responses. This means that we do not have to refer all cases to formal complaints. We believe that effective communication between the patient and the service provider is fundamental to resolution.



What Matters to You

Maternity at Walsall Manor Hospital

Good quality and safe maternity services mean a great deal to the people of Walsall. Since the CQC inspection in May 2017, Healthwatch Walsall have been attending the Maternity Oversight meetings. These meetings between senior clinical and non clinical staff, CQC inspectors and NHS England look in detail at the changes and improvements that need to be made to bring the maternity department up to a “good” CQC standard. Members of the public have informed us about their frustration with how long it has taken for some of the improvements to be implemented. We are encouraged by the progress that is being made. We will continue to examine and monitor the patient experience for expectant and new parents, and hope to see the impact of robust improvements being embedded in the system.

GP Access

Being able to access appointments is one of the most common issues that is raised with Healthwatch. In addition, we often hear that patients need more information about what services are available in their practice.

Through our membership of the Primary Care Committee we have encouraged Walsall CCG to provide extra GP hours across three GP hubs.



Spotlight on Services

From the information and intelligence that we receive from patients, we are able to identify patterns and themes. We not only use this information to steer our work and set out priorities but we also hold regular public meetings with themes dictated by the intelligence we receive. We have guest representatives from the commissioners and providers of services. This allows us to bring the public’s concerns to the table for discussion. At these we hold decision makers to account in a public forum. This allows the public to directly question those making decisions on health and social care in Walsall.

Spotlight on GP Services, June 2017

Donna Macarthur, Director of Primary Care, Walsall CCG

Spotlight on Urgent Care Services and Hospital Services, September 2017

Paul Tulley - Director of Commissioning & Sally Roberts, Chief Nurse, Director of Quality, Walsall CCG

Spotlight on Mental Health and CAMHS Services, November 2017

Mark Axcell - Chief Executive Officer, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust

Spotlight on Intermediate Care Services, January 2018

Kerrie Allward - Head of Integrated Commissioning, Walsall Borough Council

Spotlight on Cancer Support Services, March 2018

Sally Killian - Operational Manager, Palliative and End of Life Care



Making a difference together



Partnership Working

Working with the Care Quality Commission

During Healthwatch Walsall's engagement exercises we gathered patient stories about maternity which we escalated to the CQC who used this information to support their existing concerns about the maternity services at Wasall Manor Hospital. This enabled CQC to work with the hospital and CCG to implement improvement plans. Healthwatch was part of the oversight group for these plans.

We are in regular contact with the CQC where we share the intelligence we have gathered about GP practices from patient engagement. The CQC are able to use this information in preparation for their inspection.

Walsall Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Walsall also has a statutory seat on the Walsall Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board is a formal committee of Walsall Council with statutory duties and its members include Councillors, GPs representing Walsall CCG and representatives from the police and fire departments and community and voluntary sector, who fully understand local health and wellbeing challenges and opportunities.

These meetings consist of strategic overview discussions and decision making around health and social care strategies which affect the public of Walsall. Healthwatch Walsall are able to continue to raise the importance of the public voice and ask questions around the decisions that are made. We also make our reports available for discussion.

Walsall Health Scrutiny Board

Our Chair, John Taylor attends this Council Board and advises Councillors on public feedback and patient concerns. During the year we have fed back public concerns around proposed changes to Walsall's Urgent Care Centres and ensured the bosses at Walsall Hospital publicly explained their decision to cancel operations in the Spring of 2017. We have also challenged providers around mental health services, A&E waiting times and the quality of local maternity services.

Primary Care Commissioning Committee



Healthwatch is a member of this Committee and also attends and asks questions at Board meetings of Walsall CCG (the commissioners). During the year we have questioned whether enough money is spent on mental health services and how the public can influence the integration of services ('Walsall Together'). We also presented our report on access to GP services which was welcomed by the CCG and they agreed to take further action to increase GP access and provide extended out of hours GP hubs.

One Walsall

One Walsall is the voice of the voluntary sector in Walsall. We work closely with them as a conduit to promoting and supporting our volunteering opportunities. We also attend a number of events each year organised by One Walsall as they are welcome opportunities to engage and network with many community and voluntary groups.

Local Healthwatch



Healthwatch Walsall regularly meet up with other Healthwatch: Wolverhampton, Dudley, Sandwell, Birmingham. We attend bi-monthly research meetings. Here we discuss similar trends and patterns of intelligence in health and social care. We also discuss our work programmes and explore opportunities for joint work, similarities in difficulties we face and opportunities to further enhance our work.

Part of our discussions have been around the Black Country Sustainability Transformation Partnership (STP) and Healthwatch play a pivotal role in ensuring that our local communities are engaged and informed about decision that will be made around health and social care services.

Our Chair, John Taylor, will in future represent all local Healthwatch on the Board of the Black Country STP to ensure the patient voice is at the heart of decision making.

Walsall Together

Walsall Together is an ambitious and exciting programme to transform health and social care in Walsall.

The programme will be bringing together all the local NHS organisations; NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group made up of GP practices across Walsall; Walsall Healthcare Trust; Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust and Walsall Council. Healthwatch Walsall sits on the Walsall Together partnership board. Key for us has been to consistently ensure that the patient voice plays a role in decision making.

Why do things need to change?

The challenges that exist nationally are no different in Walsall. As our population continues to grow and people are living longer - and often with long-term health conditions - the increasing demand being placed on our health and care services is not being matched by the available funding.

At the same time, health inequalities are widening, with certain groups of people more likely to develop certain diseases and more likely to die from them prematurely.

Resilient Communities

Early intervention and prevention supports people and communities to live independently and to have active, prosperous and healthy lives. For example, a new borough wide initiative between health, social care, the voluntary sector and community groups called 'Making Connections Walsall' is being developed by Walsall Council's Public Health team to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by tackling loneliness.

It will commission and work with the voluntary sector to utilise social networks and community groups to improve the health and wellbeing of the community (targeted interventions to build social

relationships amongst isolated groups). The aim is to utilise existing expertise and knowledge in voluntary sector organisations by taking referrals from health and social care professionals.

General Practice and Integrated Health and Care Teams

Creating patient-centred care will be a key to managing medically complex condition. For example, people registered with GPs in Walsall will be supported by a team that is made up of GPs, community nursing, social care, mental health and the voluntary sector, providing accessible, high quality co-ordinated care in people's homes and communities.

Walsall-wide specialist services

Accessible, high quality care with local hospital teams working as part of a network of specialist care. Supporting people with health needs to prevent unnecessary hospital admission and receive care in the most appropriate setting. For example, a person who no longer needs to be in hospital but may need extra support to help them recover, will be able to access care at home which is appropriate to their needs. This could include physiotherapy, home-help, specialist services and equipment to enable them to live independently.

Healthwatch Involvement

Healthwatch Walsall is part of the Walsall Together Board. We contribute to the improvement plans for health and social care by ensuring that the voice of the public is considered in all plans to change service provision. We act as a critical friend and work collaboratively but stand prepared to hold commissioners and providers to account if the need arises.



it starts with
YOU



"It starts with You"



It is important that our work has a positive impact for individual patients as well as the way health and social care is delivered. These are some examples of the support we have offered to patients who have come to us with concerns.

Hospital Discharge procedure for Patients with Dementia

Whilst attending a community event we spoke to someone whose relative had been treated at Walsall Manor Hospital. As well as needing treatment for their ailment, they were also in early stages of Alzheimer's. The relative had been informed that the patient would be in hospital for at least 24 hours, so she left. They received a call from the patient the next day who was walking home on their own. The patient was confused and was found by neighbours and taken in whilst the relative returned home. The relative was concerned that other vulnerable patients may be discharged from hospital without relatives, carers or friends being informed, and that they may come to harm.

Healthwatch Walsall got in touch with PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) at Walsall Manor Hospital, raising the concern about the discharge and lack of communication to relatives of vulnerable patients. PALS investigated the referral and found there had been a fault in the discharge that should not have happened. Not only was an apology made to the relative directly, but it highlighted the importance of better communication between staff at the hospital and that there were still gaps in patient safety.

Outcome

A new communication style to highlight vulnerable patients has been developed called "Blue Ribbon Process". "All Blue Ribbon patients will have a poster placed above their bed and this will be documented in their notes and updated on the list by the Matron. We think this is a much better way of describing their needs than using "Do Not Move" and would like to see other divisions adopt the same approach.

Patients are now escorted to a discharge lounge by staff (either lounge or ward) to ensure patient safety in transfer.

This will mean that vulnerable patients are monitored and placed in a safe environment to be discharged and that relatives, carers or friends are informed of their discharge details.

Comment from relative of patient:

"I am exceedingly happy with the way that Healthwatch Walsall dealt with my concern. They listened to me and kept me informed throughout. I would recommend talking to them when any one else has a concern. I hope that other patients will be safer when being discharged from hospital and their relatives don't have the worry it caused me."



"It starts with You"

Choice of Maternity Services

We were contacted by Ms C, a resident of Stone Cross, close to the border between Sandwell and Walsall, regarding her choice of maternity services. She went to her GP who asked where she wanted to be referred to for the birth of her 3rd baby.

Ms C noted that she would like her baby to be delivered at Walsall Manor, only to be told that they are not accepting referrals outside of the Borough. She was not given an explanation as to why this was the case.

She had also discussed with the Senior Midwife that she would prefer to have baby at Walsall Manor rather than at City Hospital in Birmingham but the senior midwife did not get back to her with a response.

Ms C was worried as labour with her 2nd child was very short and there had been some complications. She was worried that her baby may be born in an ambulance if she had to go to City Hospital in Birmingham.

This issue was escalated by Healthwatch Walsall to Walsall CCG clinical lead in relation to patient safety and choice. As a result of this Ms C was informed that she would be able to have her child at Walsall Manor Hospital.

Healthwatch raised this issue at the Maternity Task Force and highlighted that better communication with the public was required about current maternity services provision.

Around 5 weeks later both Walsall CCG and Walsall Manor Hospital put out press releases explaining the difficulties and changes in maternity services.

We continue to raise the issues of patient safety and choice at the Maternity Task Force at Walsall Manor Hospital.

Healthwatch Walsall have also attended a number of Maternity Services Improvement events called "Whose Shoes" led by Black Country Local Maternity Systems (LMS). They are held to capture the experiences and views of new mums and parents and to try and make the maternity services more parent driven and focused.



"It starts with you"

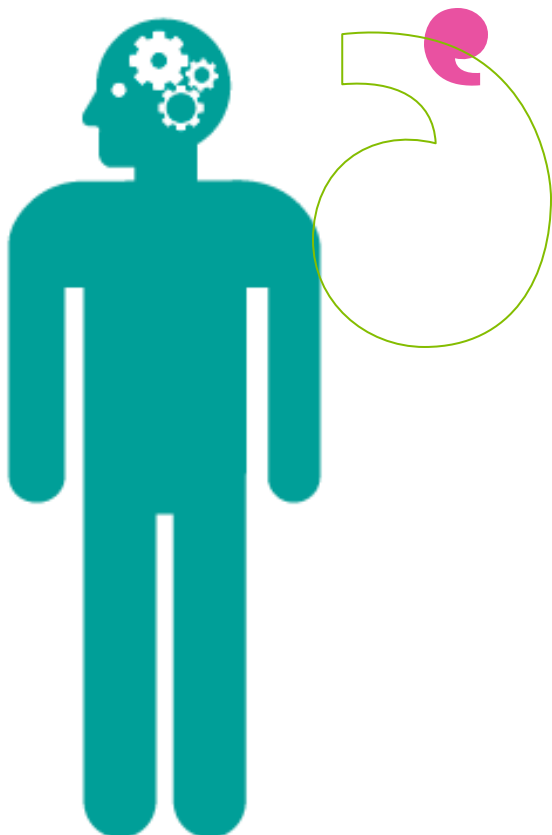
CAMHS and SEND Support

Healthwatch Walsall were contacted by a mother concerned about the lack of support she was getting for her 2 children from the school and from Walsall SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities). One son has a number of difficulties. However he had not been given a full CAMHS assessment and the school refused him an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan). Mum was told that she would have to pay for her son to have an EHCP. Mum had also requested for her son to see an Educational Psychologist.

There were a number of communication errors between the school and SEND. Healthwatch met up with Mum who told us she felt that she had been pushed from "pillar to post". We advised Mum to contact CAMHS for another assessment and to be provided with advice on which organisations are responsible for support.

As a result Mum has had a productive meeting with CAMHS and has been advised what they, the school, and child services can offer to her and her family.

This has resulted in Mum being much clearer about the roles of different services, so being able to hold organisations to account.



GP Access to Medication Reviews

In early 2018 we received a call from a member of the public who had raised a concern that they could not see their GP for a medication review on a four-weekly basis. They had a history of mental illness for several years but had controlled the condition with the medication. They had also successfully gained employment and a new page in their life had been turned. Because they could not get their review they felt that their mental health may decline, and they may possibly lose their job. They felt they may spiral down again into poor mental health.

We contacted the GP surgery with the patient's permission and spoke to the Practice Manager about the situation. The concern was taken on board and the Practice Manager organised scheduled appointments for the patient so that they could maintain a more positive mental status and retain their employment.



Our plans for next year



Our Priorities for 2018/19

Our Work Plan

Next year our work programme will have even more of a positive impact for the communities and the people we serve. We aim to strengthen partnerships with providers and commissioners of services, further increase our engagement, and raise and escalate these issues to decision makers.

Based on what people have been telling us we have devised this year's work plan around the following:

- Black Country STP
- Young People's experiences
- Health inequalities
- Supporting public involvement in GP's



Public involvement in the Black Country Sustainability Transformation Partnership (STP)

The STP is about bringing together organisations across primary care, community services, social care, mental health, acute hospitals and specialised services across the Black Country. The aims are to:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of local people
- Improve the quality of local health and care services
- Deliver financial stability and efficiency throughout the local health care system

We want to ensure that the public are informed, consulted and engaged effectively regarding planned changes within the STP and within Walsall Together. We will undertake a major research project into the impact on Walsall residents.



Young people's Experiences of Health and Care

We recognise the vital importance of engaging young people in order for us to gather their views around accessing and using health and social care services. One of our work priorities for this forthcoming year is to develop a peer education model that allows young people to identify their own concerns, research these and then peer inform and educate other young people.

We have recently undertaken a pilot project involving young people from Walsall's local schools that provided volunteering, training and events focussed on their wellbeing. Our AGM for this year will have a focus on young people. We are also aiming to have young people as representatives on our Healthwatch Advisory Board.

We will recruit a group of young people from Walsall aged 12-25, we will target all wards in the borough, male and female, and reach out to groups not currently well represented such as BAME, young carers and LGBT young people.

"My biggest concern around health care is the stigma around mental health for young people, especially boys" – Year 10 Student

It will be for the young people themselves to define the areas of focus, but from our pilot work we anticipate this might include:

- Drugs and 'legal' highs
- Alcohol and binge drinking
- Self-harm
- Mental health and access to services
- Obesity
- Physical activity
- Young people with caring responsibilities
- Economic disadvantage and access to benefits and work
- Housing
- Eating disorders

Working in Partnership to Reduce Inequalities

One of our key areas is to work with Walsall Borough Council and other organisations to understand how we can support communities that experience higher levels of health inequalities. We aim to understand how organisations can breakdown inequalities around health.

We, like many organisations, want to ensure that we do not 'miss' another generation of children who already face health inequalities.

Walsall Together will be shall looking at how we build resilient communities and measure positive outcomes on peoples' health. We want the public to play a key role and have a voice on how we can improve people's lives, particularly those who experience health and social care inequalities.

Supporting public involvement in GP practices in Walsall

Patient Participation Groups (PPG's) are volunteers and GP patients who come together with Practice Managers and GP's to discuss the operational details around the practice, share intelligence on general issues, discuss changes in primary care, and develop improved ways of working based on patients views. They help to advise the GP practice from the patients' perspective.

Working in close collaboration with Walsall CCG we want to help develop and support PPG's in particular those that are less established, or requiring additional support. We see PPG's as an opportunity to share and inform our work, inform changes in primary care in Walsall, and to share intelligence on themes.



Care Assessments

This year we have received a number of patient issues, concerns and requests for information about care assessments. One of our areas of work will be to gather intelligence and stories from a wide range of people about their care assessments. We want to find out if people are receiving appropriate care support. This differs in many cases and it will be important to also work with stakeholders to identify the parameters on providing care and support.

“PPG’s are able to highlight both concerns and good practice. They are the link between patients and the CCG. With cooperation between PPG’s we can achieve even more.” - Dianne Beddows, PPG Chair, All Saints Surgery, Pinfold Medical Centre



Volunteer Recruitment

We currently work with a group of passionate and active volunteers. We aim to recruit an additional 20 volunteers across the 5 roles available by June 2019, providing full induction and training for our volunteers and working with them to understand how best their time and skills can be utilised. Healthwatch Advisory Board member Aisha Khan is our champion for Volunteers.

Aim: Recruit an additional 20 active volunteers over the year

Enter & View Visits

During this year our Enter & View programme has grown from strength to strength. For the forthcoming year we will train an additional cohort of Authorised Representatives. We will also continue to build on our developing relationship with Walsall Borough Council's Older People and Vulnerable Adults Team to share intelligence and to support our visits.

We are also developing an Enter & View programme for GP surgeries. These visits will contribute the findings from our Access to Primary Care Report.

Aim: Carry out at least 16 Enter & View visits during the next year

Community Engagement

Our Community Outreach Lead currently works closely with a number of volunteers on our outreach programme. We visit local communities within the Borough, establish links to seldom heard groups, health and social care establishments and to gather feedback and information to inform our work.

We will enhance our outreach and will recruit additional volunteers to also undertake outreach independently.

Aim : Undertake at least 150 outreach events during the next year

Strategic Engagement

Healthwatch Walsall has built up a working relationship with a number of strategic level organisations and committees. These include the Health and Well Being Board, Walsall Together Board, Health Scrutiny Committee, Quality Surveillance Group, CCG Governing body meetings, Primary Care Commissioning, A&E Delivery Board and CCG Quality Committee. Our remit is to work with these partnerships to ensure the voice of the public and patients are heard, and to provide advice, guidance and assurance on how to achieve this.

Aim: Healthwatch continues to be a strong voice in strategic decision making

Promotion of Healthwatch – Social Media

In 2017 we set up our Facebook and Twitter accounts to help us expand our reach, network with other organisations and provide live updates on our engagement activities, local health news and national campaigns. Tying our social media activity in with trending topics helps us to get the message out to more people and ensures that what we are focused on remains relevant to members of the public. It also makes us more accessible, as people can message us at any time to seek advice or information, and we can quickly signpost them to other organisations.

Aim: Double our Facebook followers and post 750 tweets over the year



How we work



How we work

Decision Making

Healthwatch Walsall is delivered by Engaging Communities Staffordshire (ECS), a not for profit Community Interest Company (CIC) which was set up to help provide a voice for the public in the delivery of public services, using our expertise and industry knowledge to maximise our impact on engagement with the shared ethos to:

- Always support the voice of the community and to offer an effective way for people to be involved in the services that provide for their health and social care needs.
- Enable better decisions to be made by health and social care organisations based on the experiences and views of the public and the collection and analysis of borough wide data.
- Involve people in ways that are both efficient and effective.

ECS is governed by the ECS Board which holds ultimate accountability for the delivery of the Healthwatch Walsall contract and wider portfolio of service delivery. The ECS Board is led by our Chair, Robin Morrison, supported by Non-Executive Directors.

How we involve the public and volunteers

There are a range of ways for the public to get involved with Healthwatch Walsall. These include:

- Completing surveys
- Talking to us in the community
- Message us on social media
- Experience Exchange
- Email or call
- Attend Healthwatch events

Our Healthwatch Advisory Board members are also volunteers. Staff work closely with the Healthwatch Advisory Board in setting the strategic plan and work programme for Healthwatch, addressing health and social care priorities as identified through our public engagement and service user feedback.

John Taylor, Chair continues to support the development and strategic direction of Healthwatch along with other board members and staff.

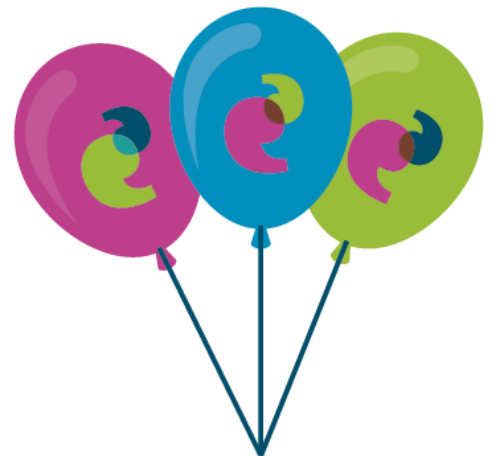
Governance

Our Board ensures that Healthwatch Walsall is accountable and transparent in the delivery of its work and engagement with the public. The Board enables scrutiny of the delivery of Healthwatch, and ensures that our statutory requirements are being fulfilled, and statutory powers utilised. They help to identify whether other organisations are enabling us to fulfil our role.

Our volunteers

A massive thank you to...

Richard Przbylko
Dianne Beddows
Dougie Patridge
Gerdaline Child
Richard Jolly
Karam Kaur
Simona Zetu
Bobbi Owen
Roger Corbett
Carmen Thomas
Julie Hutchinson
Manisha Patel
Bill Ellens
Julie Finch
Ray Langston
Helen Cooper
Luke Newton
Christine Stringer



We also wish to extend our thanks to the Healthwatch Advisory Board for all of their input and support over the year.

Our finances



Our Finances



Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£175,000
Additional income*	£32,735
Total income	£207,735
Expenditure	£
Operational costs	£32,735
Staffing costs	£168,099
Office costs	£4,399
Total expenditure	£205,233
Balance brought forward	£2,502

*This additional income has been received through work undertaken in partnership with Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group.



Contact Us

Healthwatch Walsall

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**Website:
www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk**

Twitter: @HWWalsall

Facebook: HealthwatchWSL

Our annual report will be publicly available on our website by 30 June 2018. We will be sharing it with Healthwatch England, the Care Quality Commission, NHS England, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and Walsall Borough Council.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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