



Guided by You

Annual Report 2019-2020

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Message from our Chairperson



Mandy Poonia
Chairperson
Healthwatch Advisory
Board

Mandy Poonia

Welcome to Walsall's Healthwatch Annual Report for 2019/20.

The report provides an opportunity to look back over the last year. Since joining as Healthwatch Chair in January 2020, I have been working alongside our dedicated Board, Team and Volunteers working on several key identified areas.

This report identifies that a lot of good work is being done to improve the quality of healthcare in the Borough. Our priorities were identified through the experiences of local people which has been vital to the work we do.

Through listening to individual experiences and gaining an understanding of views, we were able to meet the diverse health and social care needs of our public, thus influencing the quality of primary and secondary care services.

Our independence provides us with the necessary clarity and autonomy to champion change in the Borough. As you will see from the report, we have worked on a number of projects, such as a maternity project, transforming care and inequalities, focussing on the deaf/hard of hearing. Through the findings of this work we have made many recommendations and we will follow up the work.

Our work priorities for 2020/21 have been set specifically to look at access to GP services and communication between the local Acute Trust and patients. We look forward to being able to update you on the impact we make on these projects.

Although we have identified these priority areas, we will continue to review these in order to flexibly meet any other needs brought to our attention by our community and partners.

Over the years we have strengthened our strategic relationships by attending the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings and Walsall NHS Trust Board to name a few.

Healthwatch is viewed as the 'voice of reason', understanding and sharing the experiences of local people. Healthwatch has been successful in gathering views particularly with our 'Enter and View' visits which provide us with essential information, regarding the experiences of individuals using hospitals, GP's, health and social care services see Page 23.

Continued page 4...

Whilst delivering on key areas, we believe it is important to manage expectations, therefore Healthwatch puts the following at its core, ensuring:

- Freedom of choice
- Accessing services
- To live independently
- To live in a healthy environment
- To be safe
- To experience good quality services, to be included to be listened to and to be treated equally.

Volunteers - Our volunteers are an asset to the work we undertake, bringing fresh perspectives and sharing our vision for 'making a difference'. On behalf of Healthwatch I would like to thank all our volunteers for their continued commitment and support see pages 24 to 26.

Healthwatch will continue to work collaboratively and 'bridging the gap' with providers, engaging with the public and stakeholders. We will continue with our 'Spotlight' sessions and we welcome your input on these. Finally, we want to hear from you about your experiences of services.

You are encouraged to provide us with feedback through a range of methods, we have a Freephone, Facebook page, Surveys, Website and a Twitter account and please provide comments on our Feedback centre. On behalf of Healthwatch I would like to thank all the people of Walsall who shared their experiences with us. I sincerely hope you enjoy reading this report.



Message from our Manager



Aileen Farrer
Healthwatch Walsall
Manager

Since coming into post as Manager on 1 December 2019, I am pleased to advise that we have been developing our role as a critical friend to our key partners across the Borough of Walsall.

We are building positive relationships with all our partners and these relationships, plus many others, will enable us to ensure that the patient view is heard across the health and care system. We have also been developing our relationships with Healthwatch England, the West Midlands Regional Healthwatch network, and the Care Quality Commission together with other local organisations.

For the most part of last year we were able to speak to a lot of people in Walsall to learn about their experiences of health and social care. Then the unforeseen happened and Covid-19 impacted each of us in one way or another.

Covid-19 has stopped our face-to-face engagement, but we are linking in with the public by as many other means as possible and we are looking forward to being able to be out and about again in the future.

We continued to hold our "Spotlight On" events around a number of key themes raised with Healthwatch Walsall. These have been well attended by members of the public and stakeholders alike and these sessions provide an opportunity for questions and answers and a two-way dialogue to take place.

I would like to personally thank all partners for supporting Healthwatch Walsall and I look forward to working with you all in the forthcoming year. Thanks also go to all members of the public who generously support us by sharing their views and experiences, indeed it will be good to be able to meet up again in person when safe to do so. Thanks also to members of the Healthwatch Advisory Board for their support and guidance in shaping the service and our activity.

Thank you to all our loyal and hard-working volunteers, we could not do all we do without your invaluable support. Last but certainly not least, my thanks go to all the staff team for the dedication and hard work given to Healthwatch Walsall.

Healthwatch Walsall would like to pay tribute to everyone who pulled together quickly to support each other during Covid-19. Those who lost their lives will forever be in our thoughts, as will their families and friends.

Aileen Farrer

About us

Here to make care better

The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review – sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

 I've now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I'm extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people's views to decision makers at a national and local level.

Sir Robert Francis, Healthwatch
England Chair



About Healthwatch Walsall

Healthwatch Walsall is the independent patient champion for health and social care services. We ensure that the people of Walsall are at the heart of everything we do. We provide the local public with ways to give us feedback, therefore giving them a stronger voice about the services they use.

We listen to what people tell us about services and how they feel they could be improved. This can be about hospitals, general practitioners, dentists, opticians, pharmacists, nursing and residential homes and care received in the community.

When people share their experiences, it can help shape and improve future services. We encourage health and care providers to involve patients and the public in any changes or decisions that may affect them.

We could not do this work without the dedicated efforts from staff, volunteers and you – the public. It is important that services continue to listen so please keep talking to us here at Healthwatch Walsall. By doing this, we can strive to make the health and social care services the best they can be.

The Healthwatch Walsall Team



Lynne Fenton
Insight-Senior Lead
Advocate



Karen Kiteley
Community Outreach
Lead



Paul Higgitt
Senior Engagement
Lead on Walsall
Together



Tom Collins
Engagement and
Information Lead

During the Covid-19 pandemic, all the Healthwatch Walsall team signed up to volunteer for a number of organisations. It is pleasing to note that staff were mobilised to volunteer in making befriending calls to a significant number of people and a member of the team volunteered for the Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust by way of being involved in the Covid-19 family liaison project. It is good that we have been able to support vulnerable and affected people in the Borough and to help individuals navigate through the difficult and unprecedented times.



Our vision

Our vision is to be the independent and trusted voice of the public for health and social care services within the Borough of Walsall.

Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need. To make sure that Walsall citizens get the best out of services and be able to manage any conditions they may face at a particular time.

Our approach

Healthwatch represents the views of citizens in Walsall to the people who design and deliver health and social care services in the Borough.

How we find out what matters to you

Walsall people are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations
- Being active on social media

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions.



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Twitter: @HWWalsall

Facebook: @HealthwatchWSL

Instagram: hwwls

YouTube: Healthwatch Walsall 2020

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2019-2020.



Health and care that works for you

20 volunteers

Help us to carry out our work. In total, they gave up over 300 hours of their time to support us.

We employ:

5 staff

All our staff are full time equivalent, which is the same as the previous year.

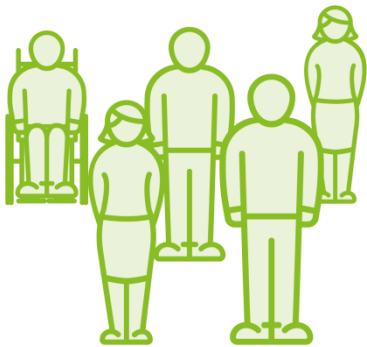
We received:

£184,158 in funding

From our Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council in 2019-20.



Providing support



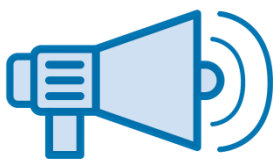
Over 1400 people

Shared their health and social care stories with us.

Over 200 people

Accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.

Reaching out



Over 4600 people

Engaged with us through our website, social media and at community events we attended. We are always keen to visit communities and chat with people as well as reach people via technology.

Making a difference to care



28 reports

With real service user experiences, case studies and impact on peoples lives.

With over 200 recommendations for improvement. Visit our website to see the reports in full. Enter and View, Reports section. www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Our priorities 2019/2020

Last year over 1400 people shared their Walsall health and social care service views from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Their voices and experiences help shape services in the future. These were our priorities for last year based on what we were told.



Young People

Following on from the work undertaken during the previous year, Healthwatch Walsall wanted to expand on the good work and engage with many more young people across the Borough to get their views on health and social care services.

Transforming Care

The Black Country Transforming Care programme was established to transform care and support for people with learning disabilities and/or autism. Healthwatch Walsall undertook to work with families and people with learning disabilities and/or autism to ensure they are actively engaged in the co-production of new services.

Maternity

There had been a number of improvements in maternity services but HW Walsall received recent concerns about access to community-based provision. Healthwatch Walsall undertook to engage with parents to seek their views about pre and post natal services in Walsall.

Inequalities

One in 6 of the UK population is affected by hearing loss equating to approximately 11M people, and of these almost 1M people are severely or profoundly deaf.

Although the exact numbers of Deaf/hard of hearing services users for Walsall could not be established, given feedback and concerns raised, Healthwatch Walsall undertook a project to look at issues facing Deaf and hard of hearing service users within the Borough.

How We Have Made A Difference



Young People



Work on this priority was carried out through a survey and engagement to get as much rich data as possible. 189 surveys were completed, the main responses were about access to General Practitioners, followed by positive comments about primary care services. Almost 50% of respondents told us they had used A&E in the previous 12 months.

A small number of young people said they had been victims of violence in the last 12 months and a little over one-third said they had witnessed violence. Unsurprisingly, 72% of respondents said violence made them feel unsafe.

There were a range of responses about what young people understood by neglect. Some seeing it as relating to how children were cared for by their parents or guardians. Some viewed it more widely in terms of how vulnerable people were being cared for and some viewed it as being ignored or ostracised in a friendship group.

There were a range of answers given about mental wellbeing with most seeing this as being mentally well and stable with happiness mentioned in a lot of responses.

Almost half of the respondents said they were affected by the negative impact of social media pressure to conform to a certain way, making them feel lacking in comparison and this had a negative impact on their self-esteem.

Healthwatch Walsall were able to make several recommendations mostly about raising awareness on services available to young people and how to access these. There should be a focus on mental health, sexual health, violence, drug and alcohol services.

Healthwatch Walsall also recommended that agencies should work together to ensure that young people, parents and education staff are aware of where they can go to access support.

Since undertaking this work Healthwatch Walsall has maintained momentum, linking in with various youth forums and will continue to do so. We want to create a number of volunteer roles for young people and will be pursuing these through our contacts with youth organisations.

The link to the final report: <https://tinyurl.com/w69udlv>



Transforming Care

Early in January 2020 Healthwatch Walsall carried out a specific project looking at the experiences of access to services that support people with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in the community. Participants in the study were invited to complete surveys and attend focus groups which were designed to gain a greater understanding of the experiences of people with learning disabilities and/or autism and their carers in accessing and using services in the community. From the work undertaken it was possible to identify certain themes which were around:

- Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for assessments and for support post-diagnosis.
- Accessing Education Health and Care Plans.
- Access to social activities.
- Access to information about local services.

Following the work, several recommendations were made around easier access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services assessments, Education Health and Care Plans assessments being timelier, provision of an assigned social worker to remain with the client through their journey.

Healthwatch Walsall also recommended that specialist training should be delivered and deemed as being mandatory for social workers looking after service users with autism and/or learning disabilities.

Since the completion of our work Healthwatch Walsall have provided a directory of services and there is a dedicated webpage on our website which contains all the information about what is available locally.

For a list of all recommendations please see the final report from our website.

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/vfh22wr>



Maternity Services

Early in 2020 Healthwatch Walsall carried out a study looking at women's experiences of using community maternity services and health visiting services.

We did the work by surveys and holding focus groups across all areas of Walsall and these were framed in a way to promote discussion and give a deeper understanding of the service user experience.

We carried out a very successful campaign which resulted in us hearing from 280 mums who had given birth during the previous 12 months, and on the whole experiences were positive which was very pleasing to note.

Most mums had a birth plan and had been able to choose where they gave birth. Support and advice was available and there was a lot of trust in professionals supporting

them. The majority told us that their partners and families were treated with dignity and respect.

On the less positive side, issues were raised about poor communication with midwives and health visitors with service users not being responded to. Having continuity of midwives before and after the birth was also seen as a potential area for improvement as well.

In order to address issues raised, Healthwatch made a number of recommendations which were around choice of where to give birth, continuity of midwifery staff throughout the birthing journey, consistent handovers between professionals and information being available around breast feeding.

For a list of all recommendations please see the final report from our website.

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/to99rry>



Share your views with us

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch with us. Healthwatch Walsall is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 470 1660

Email: info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Speaking up about your experiences of health and social care services is the first step to change.

Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Walsall.

Inequalities

Given feedback and concerns raised, Healthwatch Walsall undertook a project to look at issues facing Deaf and hard of hearing service users within the Borough. We wanted to hear the views of as many service users as possible and five key questions were used to start conversations. We accessed service users through local groups.

Our findings highlighted that British Sign Language often is the first language used and as this is not the same as English, then some information leaflets are of no help to service users. Service users are frequently asked to have family or friends interpret for them which leads to an inequality of right to privacy and dignity. Lack of interpreter services can lead to service users not being able to access health and care services which impacts on health and can lead to isolation. The availability of appointments was a major problem pointed out to us and it was noted that often appointments are missed for a number of reasons.

We were able to highlight areas of good practice within primary care with a local Doctor's practice offering communication, information and advice systems to meet the needs of their Deaf/hard of hearing patients. We were also told that new technology was being introduced at the Walsall Manor Hospital which will give the ability to use a video relay to a British Sign Language Interpreter.

One impact from our work is that Healthwatch Walsall developed a card that can be used by Deaf/hard of hearing service



users to identify what support is needed for communicating with services and/or providers.

Healthwatch Walsall were also able to raise the profile of the Deaf/hard of hearing community by facilitating their attendance at the local Accident and Emergency redesign focus group in order to have their views heard.

We continue to engage with service users and since the pandemic, greater issues with technology and access to interpreters has been highlighted for deaf people.

I am Deaf or hard of hearing. 

I require support to communicate.
Please assist.

Supported by

healthwatch Walsall **Freephone : 0800 470 1660**
www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Name.....

Please tick box as applicable

I communicate using British Sign Language (BSL).

Please book me a BSL Interpreter.

Please book a double appointment.

Please look at me. I lip read.

Thank you for your help. Have a good day. 

Link to report: <https://tinyurl.com/yd82vxll>

NHS Long Term Plan (LTP)



In January 2019, NHS England published its Long-Term Plan, setting out its ambition to get healthcare services to work better for people to help them stay well and get the best care when they need it.

The implementation of the Long-Term Plan will occur over the next 10 years.

The Long-Term Plan contains detail on healthcare issues and how healthcare services need to change to make the most of existing and new technologies, deal with increased levels of demand for care, and provide help for those people who are living longer, often with one or more chronic conditions.

Healthwatch Role

As part of this strategy and ensuring the patient voice is taken on board Healthwatch were commissioned to capture the views of Walsall citizens on health and social care changes.

To ensure a thorough range of feedback was gained a mixed approach was adopted that involved two questionnaires and focus groups held in the Borough.

The general questionnaire was designed to get a mix of qualitative and quantitative feedback on respondent's general views about their own health and the quality of service(s) they required.

The health conditions questionnaire was more focused for those individuals with specific conditions such as cancer, respiratory conditions and mental illness.

We captured the views of over 400 people through both surveys.

Healthwatch Walsall undertook 2 focus groups with questions around self-care for people with long term conditions. The first focus group was arranged with 60 students at Walsall College as part of the Student Conference. The event was also attended by some students with physical and learning disabilities.

Our second focus group was arranged with Walsall NHS Healthcare Trust self-care volunteers and staff. The self-care group volunteers were trained as volunteers to support other people with long term conditions.

Healthwatch across the Black Country worked in collaboration to develop a report of recommendations and for the intelligence that we gathered to also fit into the some of the Black Country strategic health and social care plans call the Black County Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.

For more information click on the link below.

<https://tinyurl.com/y73npx24>

Working with Partners

Walsall Together Integrated Care Partnership was established in 2019 between the organisations that plan and deliver health, mental health, and social care services locally. This includes Walsall Healthcare Trust as the host provider, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group, Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Walsall Council and One Walsall.

The aim of the partnership is to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of the Walsall population, increase the quality of care provided and provide long term financial sustainability for the system.

Healthwatch Walsall were commissioned in August 2019 to help Walsall Together in engaging and communicating with service users, carers and the people of Walsall about new integrated ways of working.

Walsall Together has identified six key pathways on which Healthwatch Walsall will be seeking the views of the local patients and public. These include Respiratory, Diabetes, Cardiology, End of Life, Primary Care Mental Health and the Healthy Child Programme.

Work has begun and we have been having conversations and conducting surveys with service users, their carers and family as well as members of the public across Walsall. We have been focusing specifically on long term health conditions and the experience of the services available locally.

Whilst COVID – 19 has made direct face to face engagement challenging, we are using social media and other platforms, to ensure people still have the opportunity to share their views with us.

Healthwatch Walsall set up a Service User Group and will be hosting the first virtual meeting in May, giving participants the

opportunity to tell us what they think of the services they use and ways in which things could be improved.

Healthwatch will continue to engage with the residents of Walsall and support the Walsall Together Integrated Care Partnership in ensuring the patient and public voice is represented in the decision-making process of future delivery of services and service change.

National Adult Social Care Survey
Healthwatch Walsall undertakes the national adult social care surveys on behalf of Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council.

This year saw a very successful return rate of surveys which lead to Healthwatch Walsall being asked to participate in an interview with Ipsos Mori as they were incredibly impressed with the approach taken by Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and Healthwatch Walsall's engagement in the process.

We shared our experiences with the Ipsos Mori researcher and pertinent points made will go towards any recommendations Ipsos Mori make to other Local Authorities across the Country, in order for them to reach out to as many people as Healthwatch Walsall were able to do.

In addition, we liaise with the Care Quality Commission, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group, Walsall Healthcare Trust, One Walsall, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust, Walsall Council and others...



Helping you find the answers



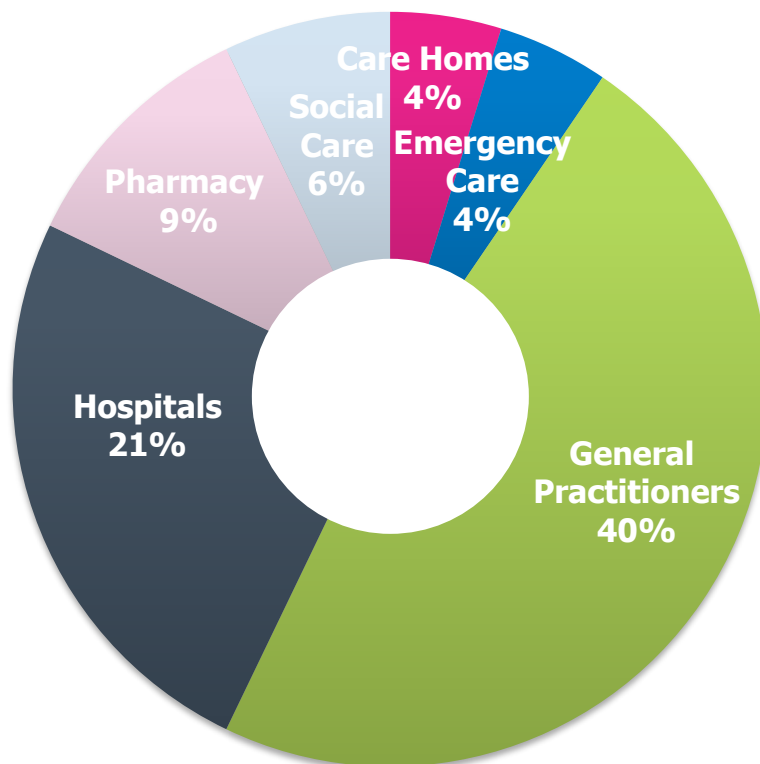
Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch Walsall plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped over 200 people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people’s queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are the services that people shared experiences and asked about.

Most talked and asked about services



- Care Homes ■ Emergency Care ■ Hospitals
- Pharmacy ■ Social care ■ General Practitioners

These are the top 6 services.

The remaining services were: Accident & Emergency, 3%, Ambulance Services 0.5%, Community Based Services 3%, Dentists 4%, District Nursing 1%, Maternity 0.5%, Mental Health 1%, Nursing Homes 1%, Opticians 1%, Other 1%

Case Study:

Our Community Outreach Lead was approached whilst she was doing outreach at Walsall Manor Hospital, by a gentleman who had been given conflicting information regarding his knee problem.

We contacted the Patient Advice Liaison Service at Walsall Manor Hospital, raising his concerns.

Walsall Manor investigated the situation and confirmed the gentleman was on two different pathways, Elective and Trauma. The situation had arisen due to the patient being initially referred by his Doctor and in the interim he attended Accident & Emergency.

In February 2020, the gentleman had a total knee replacement following which he kindly contacted us again to keep us informed.

I've had my knee operation 2 weeks ago and so far, the outcome has been spectacular apart from the post operation pain. So, I would like to say many thanks Healthwatch Walsall for helping me.

Case Study:

Another staff member was contacted via our website with an issue about their family members referral to an out of area hospital.

The family did not have access to a car nor could they drive. They were worried not only about the procedure the family member was going to have, but how to travel and return in the short time left to attend the appointment.

They contacted their own Doctor and Walsall Manor Hospital and were told that no transport could be arranged.

Healthwatch contacted Walsall Manor Hospital and discussed the issue with them. It was after the discussion that the Walsall Manor Hospital arranged for a taxi for the patient to be transported to the hospital and back at no cost to the patient/family.

We are extremely grateful for Healthwatch Walsall's help and advice, and the phone calls which kept us up to date at a very distressing time for us as a family. So once again would like to send our thanks. And anyone else who needs help or advice with any health matters, please contact Healthwatch Walsall who will do their best to help you as they did with us.

Case Study:

A lady contacted Healthwatch Walsall concerned that the factory where her husband works were flouting the Government rules during Covid-19 lockdown. The lady was particularly concerned as she herself had underlying health conditions.

Healthwatch Walsall contacted the Health and Safety Department at Walsall Council and passed on the concern. We were also able to signpost the lady to the Health and Safety Executive Workplace Concerns website to complete the Online Form. The workplace was later restricted to open.

I found Healthwatch Walsall to be easy to contact and they responded to my question very promptly going above and beyond to assist me... when I had cause to contact them again, they were quick and professional pointing me to the correct place to gain further assistance... I would recommend their service to others who need unbiased assistance...



A service user contacted Healthwatch Walsall with a query about the dosage of medication. The patient had been prescribed one dosage by the GP but on collection from the Pharmacy had been dispensed a different dosage.

Healthwatch were able to discuss the concerns with the caller and we signposted to POhWER as they wished to raise a formal complaint.

Healthwatch Walsall also contacted the Medicines Management Team at the Clinical Commissioning Group, with permission from the service user, so that a root cause analysis and investigation could be undertaken.



A patient's relative contacted us about a patient who was referred for scans and tests around a possible cancer diagnosis.

A number of appointments and scans were cancelled by the Trust, giving concern about diagnosis and treatment. Healthwatch Walsall escalated this matter to the Trust and the patient was contacted and given confirmed dates to move things forward for the patient.



What some service users have said.

"Healthwatch offer an excellent service. They were extremely swift and friendly. I got signposted to POhWER and feel reassured that I had a professional independent service to turn to."

"I don't know what's going on or who you spoke to, but Walsall Manor Hospital & GP Nurse have called me & suddenly they have my MRI results. I said don't worry Healthwatch is going to find my results and suddenly they appear 👍"



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or social care service or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch Walsall is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Telephone: 0800 470 1660

Email: info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

Enter and View

Under the Healthwatch regulations, we have the power to Enter and View premises providing health and social care services that are publicly funded. This means that our trained volunteers known as Authorised Representatives can observe the quality of care being delivered and can talk to residents, relatives and staff in health and social care settings.

A public report is published for each visit and this includes Healthwatch recommendations to the provider in order to improve the quality of the service. Before a report is published, it is shared with the provider for comment and feedback, offering them the opportunity to develop an action plan or programme to make positive changes for residents and to address any negative findings that we note.

Published reports are made available on our website and are circulated to service providers and commissioners, Care Quality Commission, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and other interested parties.

During the year we carried out a number of Enter and View visits primarily to social care settings.

We made a number of recommendations summarised below:

- Monitor health and safety checks/issues
- Replace tired decor/furniture replacement
- Carers to have caring roles only rather than multiple roles
- Menus should also be provided in pictorial format
- Cultural foods are made available to residents
- Secure regular Dentist visits for residents
- Hold and record formal resident/relatives meetings
- Secure General Practitioner visits in some homes
- Staff to monitor the use of condiments
- Dedicated activity co-ordinators to be available
- Residents have opportunity to go out more often.

We also visit primary care settings such as Doctors Surgeries, Hospitals and we can visit NHS facilities such as Dentists, Opticians, Pharmacists etc. We undertake our visits based on any intelligence we receive. During the last year we visited one General Practitioner surgery, and made a number of recommendations which are summarised below:

- Consider how to enable working patients and parents to access appointments to fit in with their work/school patterns.
- Tell patients about Extra GP appointments and Urgent Care opportunities.
- Advise patients of use of Push Doctor appointments especially working patients, parents and carers.

As you might expect, Covid-19 did affect our schedule and may do so for some time to come. However, we will be looking at alternative ways to undertake this responsibility whilst ensuring that we preserve people's lives and staff safety in their workplace.

For more information on our reports click on the link: <https://tinyurl.com/y8p6qeyg>

In addition Healthwatch Walsall release bi-monthly intelligence reports which highlight some of the issues/trends that people have shared accessing their health and social care services.

Link to reports: <https://tinyurl.com/ydxteojt>

We also liaise with the newly formed Quality Team at Walsall to ascertain any information that may be useful on an Enter and View. Equally Healthwatch Walsall are able to share any issues found to aide to the improvement of service delivery.



Volunteers



Our volunteers

At Healthwatch Walsall we are supported by 20 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve to services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of the work we do at events, in the community and through their associated networks and groups.
- Visited services to make sure they are providing people with the right support through our Enter & View programme and the Walsall Manor Hospital, ward reviews.
- Helped support many public events such as 'Spotlight On...' Events.
- Supported listening opportunities for people to share their experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

Comments from the Patient Experience Team at Walsall Manor Hospital

"Healthwatch Walsall is one of our key partners in improving patient and carer experience across our Trust. The Healthwatch team and their dedicated group of volunteers have actively supported the Ward Reviews process by collecting patient insights and taking part in post review staff feedback sessions. Healthwatch Walsall is also supporting the Patient Experience Team with involving patients and carers from the community and hard to reach groups for co-designing and shaping the new Emergency Department and Medical Acute Unit. They are also working with our Self Care Management Team to support the delivery of a programme of change in health and social care by making sure that the views of the people of Walsall are heard".

Here at Healthwatch Walsall we could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of them below and hear how they help us.

Manisha

"I joined Healthwatch in 2018. One of the main reasons I joined was because Healthwatch want to voice change and improve NHS services. Healthwatch have mission, vision and value positively changes the NHS.

Our main focus is on understanding the needs and experiences of patients and visitors. We use your and our experiences to encourage those within the services to act on what matters to you. We can raise awareness of key issues affecting local care services and recommend improvements.

This is not just your problems. It is our problems, and responsibility to positively change the NHS. We want patients and public to voice any problems and give us support to help change NHS services.



I am a volunteer working with Healthwatch to improve and empower our community and services.

I want to share my appreciation and give a huge thanks to Healthwatch Walsall who gave me this great opportunity to participate".



Charmaine

"My name is Charmaine Spence, and to me a volunteer means that you are working side by side with others. This connects myself to other human beings as we work towards a common goal. I started as a volunteer to make connections with the community and other organisations and to help solve problems which in fact solves the solution. Whilst working as a volunteer I am also studying public health at university and I have five years of care experience and qualifications, I hope in some way I am capable of doing good within my community".



Dianne

"As well as my position as a Healthwatch Advisory Board (HAB) member I am Chair of the Patient Participation Liaison Group (PPLG) and one of my remits has been to organise the PPLG meetings so they do not clash with HAB Spotlight meetings. We have also been able to keep all PPLG chairs apprised of HAB current projects. With the onset of the current situation we are exploring new ways of keeping both groups apprised of projects".



Richard

"I'd just like to thank Healthwatch Walsall for their continued care for people using NHS services in Walsall. I feel I can help them in a voluntary capacity as we check user experiences services and, perhaps more importantly, help to spread best practice to help service providers.

But HWW skill, knowledge and experience has helped me to better appreciate the services that providers are delivering as well.

I've also learned a lot about the procedures and difficulties that everyone is facing together with some solutions which has benefitted me in my work elsewhere".



Catherine

"I have volunteered for Healthwatch Walsall and I have done a few Enter and View visits with a big support from Tom Collins. I have got involved with surveys and attended a few Spotlight On public events about transforming care and training events which have been very informative. The few times I have volunteered have helped me with self-confidence and skills".

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £170,125.63.

**How much does it cost to run Healthwatch
= £14,429.45**

**Management costs
= £42,238.21**

**Staff costs
= £113,457.97**

**Total Expenditure
= £170,125.63**

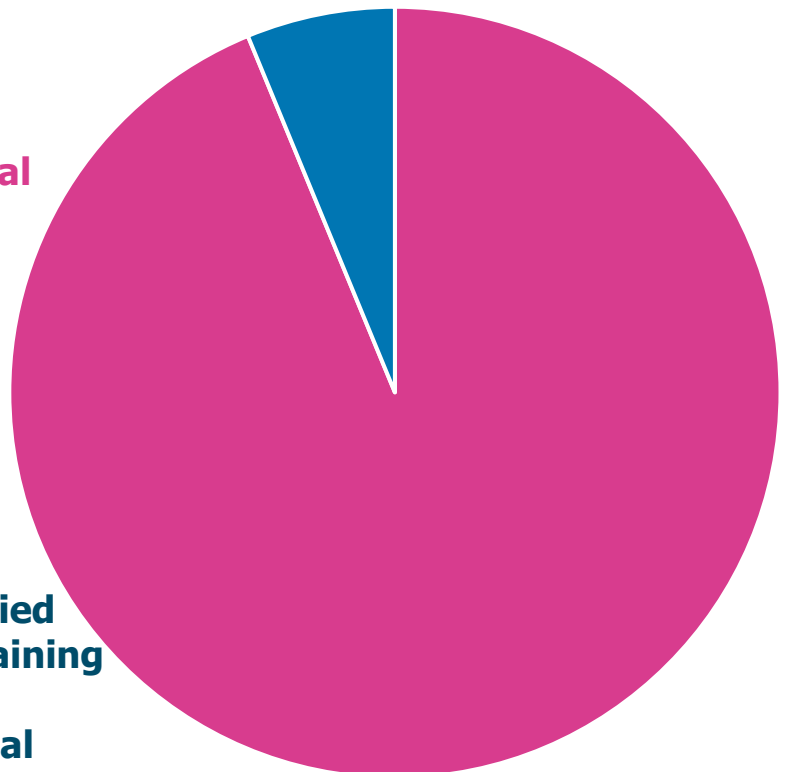


**Income received from local authority
= £184,158.32**

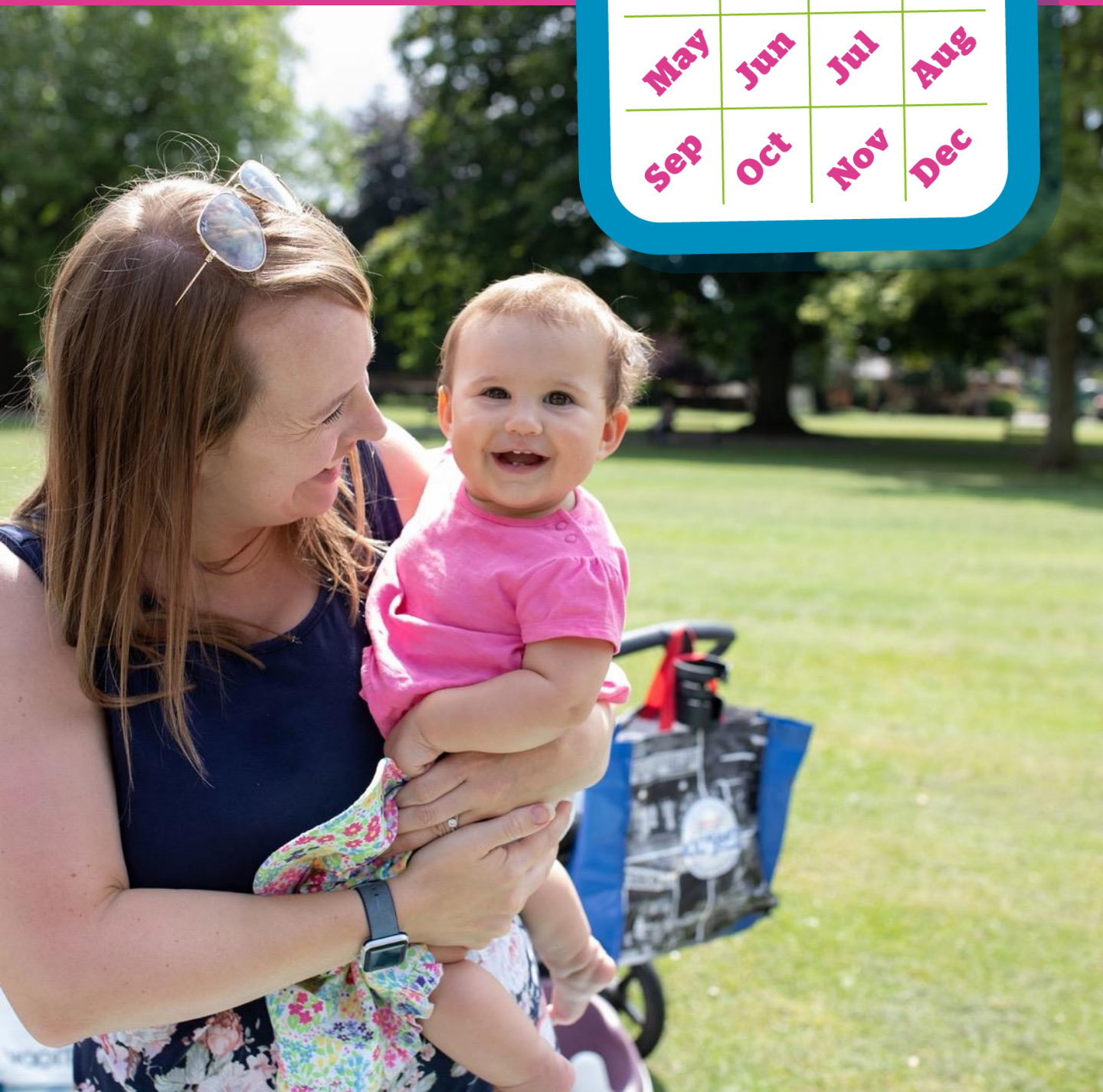
**Additional income
= £12,232.11**

**Total Income
= £196,390.43**

Surplus funds will be carried forward through the remaining contract term and will be available to fund additional projects.



Our plans for next year



Looking forward



The role of Healthwatch Walsall is to work collaboratively with partners and service users in order to shape how services should be delivered moving forward.

In line with core functions we will continue to gather views and experiences of service users and making these views known. We will continue to provide information and advice about access to services. At the present time, since Covid-19 our Enter & View programme has been suspended, but we will be looking at innovative ways to try to gather the views of people in residential and nursing homes.

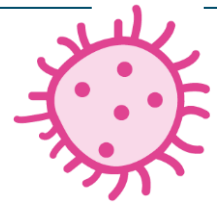
Having achieved success with the previous year's work it is now time to look at our future work priorities to promote increased awareness of Healthwatch Walsall. Our plans are based on intelligence received and for 2020/2021 Healthwatch Walsall will be looking at two key lines of enquiry.

- People have told us how difficult it is to get through to their General Practitioner surgery by telephone and the problems this causes them. Since Covid-19 there has been more reliance on technology for patient access and therefore Healthwatch Walsall will look to seek patient views on primary care digital access with the aim of improving patient experience.
- Over the last 12 months, we have received a number of comments regarding communication issues between patients and Walsall Manor Hospital. Healthwatch Walsall will undertake a piece of work into how communications have affected patients within a range of departments.

We will design our work to ensure impact for service users. We will use the feedback we receive to make recommendations for future improvements for the people of Walsall.

The Healthwatch Advisory Board have approved the above two key lines of enquiry but there is a need for Healthwatch Walsall to be flexible in order to for us to be responsive in year and to work on issues that have been presented to us during Covid-19 to make sure your views shape the support you need.

Covid-19 Update



Due to Covid-19 outbreak we have collated information, advice and support information for our communities in Walsall. We continue to engage with the public by other means in order to keep in touch with people in the Borough.

Our Covid-19 page is updated with new local, regional and national information that may assist people to get support or access services.

Useful government for Coronavirus/Covid-19 information and advice.

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Link: <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/coronavirus-updates/>

To find out what Walsall services are open or re-opening during COVID-19 visit our Walsall Services updates page. [CLICK HERE](#)

Take just a few minutes to complete a survey. You may help to make things better for lots of people in the future. Complete a survey for each member of your household. Share your experiences to help Walsall Health & Social Care services during and after the Coronavirus pandemic/Covid-19

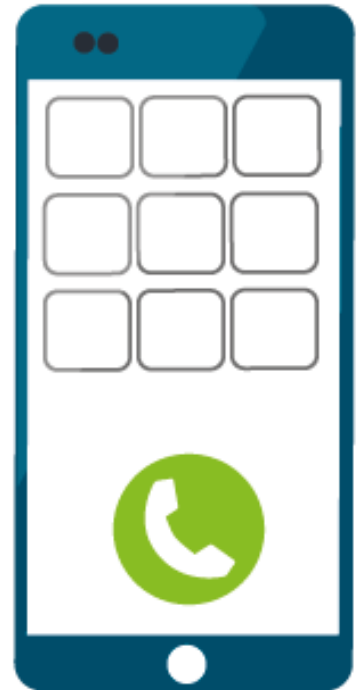
[CLICK HERE](#)

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YouTube: Healthwatch Walsall 2020



Engaging Communities Solutions CIC (ECS)

Unit 42, Staffordshire University Business Village | Dyson Way | Stafford | ST18 0TW holds the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2020.

Contact number: 01785 887809

Email address: contactus@weareecs.co.uk

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 need this in an alternative format please contact us.

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