



**Local Intelligence Report**

**May to June 2020**



## We Listen

## We Note

## We Act

### Introduction

Healthwatch Walsall (HWW) is your independent consumer champion for health and social care services in Walsall. Our job is to champion the views of those using the services and give local people an opportunity to speak out about their issues. We listen to views, concerns and compliments about services in order to help shape and improve them so that people are accessing safe, appropriate and quality care services.

### COVID-19 Update

Currently we are working from home in accordance with Government guidelines. However, it remains business as usual and we still want to hear from you, to offer information and advice and to listen to your recent experiences about health and social care services. There are many ways to contact us:

- By phone - 0800 470 1660
- By email - [info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk)
- Through our website - [www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwalsall.co.uk)
- Follow us on social media - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube

During the period May to June 2020 there was still a global Covid-19 pandemic resulting in further changes to the way services are accessed and delivered for Walsall residents.

Healthwatch Walsall has continued to work and is still working during these unprecedented times collating patient experiences and signposting people to needed services and support.

We have a dedicated webpage holding local, regional and national COVID-19 related information and advice. This is updated regularly in line with any changes made. To visit the webpage visit: <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/coronavirus-updates/>

The screenshot displays the 'Coronavirus updates' section of the Healthwatch Walsall website. It features a large image of a coronavirus particle and a DNA double helix. Below this is a video player for 'Coronavirus stay at home advice | NHS' with the NHS logo. To the right, there is a 'your experience' banner with the text 'Giving feedback takes minutes, but the impact could last a lifetime' and a photo of two people. Below the banner are tabs for 'Twitter', 'News', and 'Events'. A tweet from Healthwatch Walsall is shown, mentioning Walsall Palliative Care Centre and expressing gratitude to Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust and Walsall CCG.

We have an online COVID-19 survey to establish how peoples' health and care are affected during this time. Please take part in this survey it will help services to prepare and react for urgent situations in the future.

To take part in the survey, Link:

<https://engagingcommunities.researchfeedback.net/s.asp?k=158584031143>

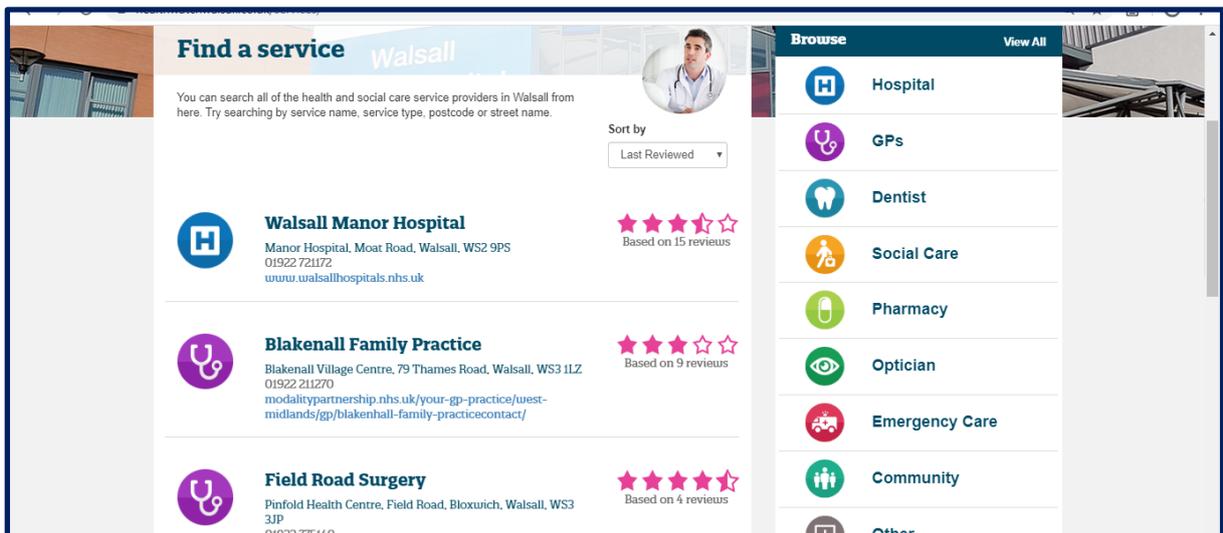
## Feedback Centre

In addition, our 24/7 service feedback centre has continued to be visited by the public. We are pleased to report that since the inception of our 'Service Feedback Centre' in late November 2019 we have received over a 100 experiences/comments shared across NHS and Social Care Services.

To visit the web site use the URL <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/services/>

To leave a review about your experience(s) when you using health and social care services in Walsall visit: <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/services/>

It is important to share your experiences from compliments, concerns or if you wish to make a complaint. We can help.



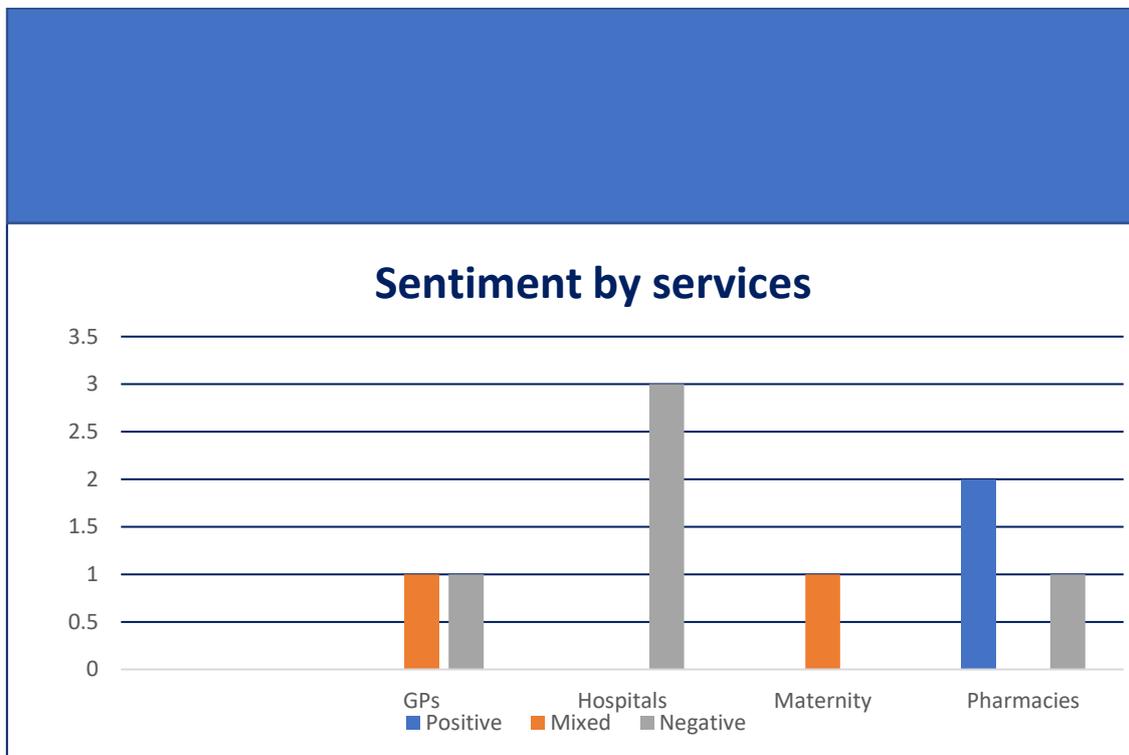
Service providers have the right to reply to comments. To do so contact Healthwatch Walsall and share your details so that we can enable your right to reply process.

## Engagement

During our normal engagement process, we would be out and about in the numerous communities of Walsall, but we are now working via online digital platforms, social media, telephone and email contact. We are also posting information through YouTube.

The graph below indicates the service type and number of comments we have received from our service feedback centre and from our online engagement in the early days of UK Lockdown due to the COVID-19 outbreak and during the period of May-June 2020.

The table below indicates the sentiment of patients and service users when using services.



### GP Surgeries/Services

One issue that was brought to our attention was that a patient was having difficulty getting through to their surgery by telephone. It appeared to be engaged constantly. The patient was shielding due to Covid-19 and required repeat medication, but a GP consultation was needed for this. Despite repeated attempts, the patient could not get through to the GP Practice to book a consultation therefore repeat medication could not be signed off.

*HWW contacted the GP surgery and with patients' permission and we informed the practice of the issue and asked that the patient be called. They were called by the practice as requested and the consultation went ahead, and the medication was issued.*

*We were later contacted by the same patient with the same contact issue. HWW contacted the same GP and informed them again of the problem. We asked the surgery to check the contact details the patient had and from this request it came to light the patient had the wrong telephone number. Correct telephone contact details have now been confirmed with patient assisting both patient and surgery in the future.*

Due to COVID-19, patients now are being triaged and telephone consultations are being carried out. When necessary patients are seen.

Extra GP appointments in the Borough are still available, although this may be an initial telephone triage call with a GP. Two hubs are open, Pinfold Health Centre and Broadway Medical Centre. There were 4 initially but this was reduced to the 2 above due to Covid-19.



## Hospitals

HWW were contacted by a patient who had been diagnosed with cancer at Walsall Manor Hospital and referred for an operation which was due to take place outside Walsall Borough at a Birmingham Hospital. The patient arrived early morning on the day of the surgery and was asked to wait. The patient waited until the afternoon at which time the patient was sent home and no operation took place.

They were informed they were an 'overbook'. The patient was very upset and obviously very concerned. Another operation appointment was made but due to the outbreak of Covid-19 it is a requirement to have a Covid-19 test. The test took place and the patient was given another date for their operation to address their cancer. The patient turned up again early in the morning to be told that their Covid-19 test result was not available and once again the operation was cancelled. The patient was now even more distraught. It came to light that there were issues at the testing site around the availability of testing supplies, adding to the problem. However, the next morning the patient received a call from the Birmingham Hospital who arranged for and undertook the operation.

*A communication from Healthwatch regarding the patient's situation was sent as an enquiry to the Trust for clarification about their responsibilities, follow up and engagement with out of Borough referred patients. Healthwatch Walsall has since received a response from the Trust outlining a full timeline of events and confirmation that whilst every effort is made to offer seamless contact between healthcare organisations, responsibility for care issues does remain with the service provider. The Trust advised Healthwatch Walsall that they would welcome the opportunity to discuss the situation further with the service user, should they wish to do so.*

HWW was contacted by a patient who attended a consultation appointment in Neurology at Walsall Manor Hospital, only to find that their appointment had been cancelled once more, as cancellations had occurred on at least two previous occasions. The patient had not been notified and had paid for a taxi to get them to the Hospital, the situation left them somewhat upset and angry.

*With permission from the patient, HWW contacted Patients Liaison Services (PALS). The patient was then contacted by PALS and a follow up appointment was offered and took place between the patient and their Consultant. Their medication and treatment pathway were discussed and agreed. The Hospital Trust also agreed to reimburse the taxi cost the patient incurred.*

Due to COVID-19 there is reduced visitor access to the Walsall Manor Hospital (WMH). With specific requirements for patients and visitors to the site and departments, Healthwatch Walsall would respectfully remind patients and visitors to check the changing process at the Hospital.



### We are CLOSED to visitors.

Only in exceptional circumstances where ONE visitor – an immediate family member/carer – will be permitted if:

The patient is receiving end-of-life care

You are the birthing partner

You are a parent/appropriate adult visiting your children



### Social Care

During the COVID-19 break out we contacted the Local Authority to support their Quality Team, offering to befriend residents by phone should they wish to have a chat. This offer was taken up and our Senior Insight Lead makes daily befriending phone calls to a cohort of residents in supported living accommodation.

This has picked up pace and is much appreciated by the parties receiving it. Through one of the befriending calls, HWW was told by a service user that they had not had a diabetes/insulin injection on that particular day from the visiting community nurse.

*HWW made the extra care providers aware of this, but they understood that the tenant had had their injection but was suffering from a water infection causing cognitive/ memory issues. As a result of this, the good neighbourly calls were increased for the service user to ensure she was okay, HWW have since been informed that the care package has also increased due to the needs changing.*

In addition, the staff member has undertaken an introduction to British Sign Language which will aid with people who have a need for differing forms of communication.



### Enter and View Visits

We have suspended all Enter and View activities due to the COVID-19 outbreak to preserve the wellbeing of existing residents, patients and staff. We had three E&V visits scheduled, they have been postponed until a later date.

Reports can be found on our website:

<https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports/>



## Pharmacies

Again, we have received mainly positive comments from the public about the pharmacies they use. Those highlighted were around the quality of service, which was described as excellent, delivered by friendly staff.

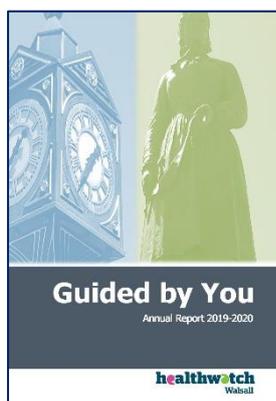
We did receive a patient concern relating to a discrepancy with her prescribed medication from the GP and what was dispensed from the Pharmacy.

*HWW spoke with the patient who was confused about the medication. The matter has been escalated to the appropriate body and the patient has raised a complaint via the NHS Advocacy organisation, POHWER. Healthwatch Walsall also raised this issue with the Medicines Management at the CCG.*

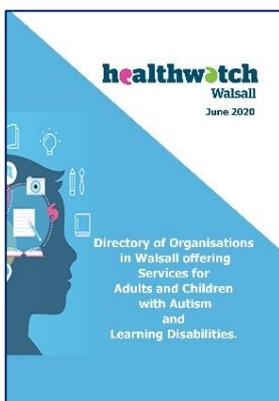
## Updates/Reports

We have been busy and maintained our momentum during Covid-19 lockdown. We have undertaken an evaluation of the CCG repeat prescription hub evaluation, we have completed our Annual Report for 2019/20 which has been submitted to Healthwatch England and sent to all statutory organisations as well as sending it to our network of contacts. We have also produced and issued a Learning Disabilities Directory of Services Available in Walsall. We produced the directory following our work on transforming care when it came to light that there was nothing available to the public in one central document.

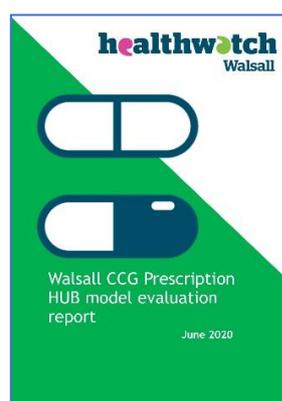
### Annual Report 19/20



### Learning Disability Directory



### Prescription Hub Evaluation Report

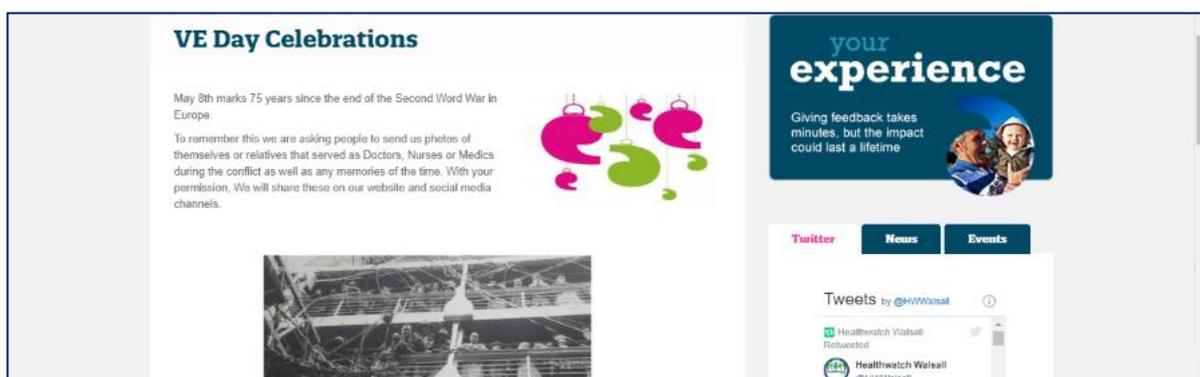
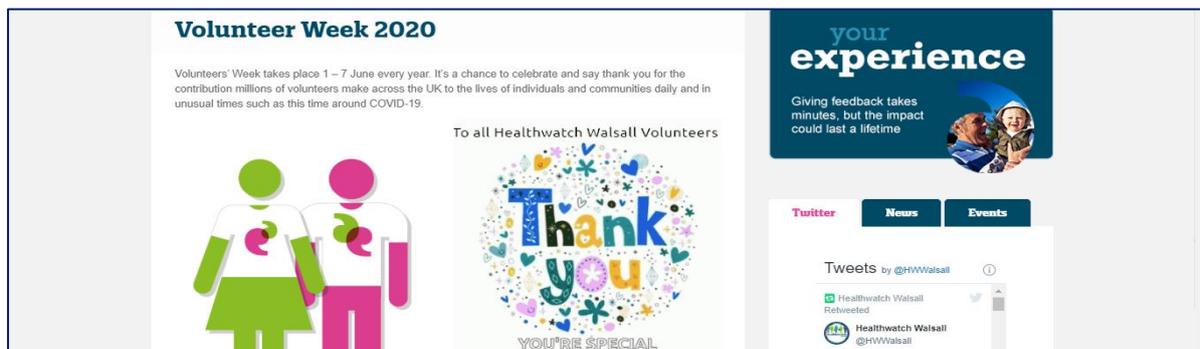


CLICK ON THE PICTURE OF THE REPORT TO DOWNLOAD.

One big event for Healthwatch Walsall was to recognise our Volunteers and during Volunteer Week 2020 we posted daily updates through social media and on our website. We also supported and celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day.

We recognised and celebrated our volunteers during volunteer week

Link: <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/volunteer-week-2020/>



On VE day, we recognised and remembered those who gave their lives during a world struggle. Link: <https://healthwatchwalsall.co.uk/ve-celebrations-day/>



In order to continue engaging with the citizens of Walsall we introduced what we are calling our First Friday Focus which is an informal coffee morning/afternoon tea held through the Zoom digital platform.

Our inaugural coffee morning was held on the first Friday in June and was about gathering the views of the public of their experiences during Covid-19. This event was titled “Walsall how are you doing?”.

We had 20 attendees who chatted and exchanged how they and their families were doing during Covid-19 and the lockdown.

The session provided Healthwatch Walsall with valuable insight into peoples’ lives, health and social care needs as well as their mental health.

We undertook a simple straw poll at the end of the event and members confirmed they had found the morning of benefit and it was well received. With this in mind and with the continuation of no face to face engagement currently being permitted, other online events are being planned. So, keep an eye open for our flyers and book onto any of the sessions that you may find of interest.

### Walsall Together

The initial Walsall Together Service User Group meeting was held during this period which it was very well attended. Key points of note were around communication concerns, continued patient engagement, financial decisions made and the rationale for these, governance and the involvement of GPs in the Partnership.

During June two virtual diabetes patient workshops were held supported through Walsall Diabetes Team. Key themes arising from these sessions were around peer support, loneliness, diabetes and mental health, accessing key advice and the 15 minimum care checks/ standards. This intelligence will be used to support future diabetes pathway redesign.

We have also been working with Diabetes UK and Walsall Diabetes team to support the development of a Diabetes Peer Support Group.

A programme of events and engagement sessions are being developed around the cardiology and respiratory pathways and we have also been asked to support future engagement around the RESPECT form and programme roll out.

## Volunteering

Due to COVID-19 break out we have suspended but not stopped our volunteer activity.

People can still volunteer by promoting Healthwatch Walsall across the Borough and taking part in our Covid-19 survey which asks what services Walsall people could access and if the information they received was useful. Our Volunteer Lead keeps in regular contact with all the volunteers.

All Healthwatch Walsall staff signed up as volunteers with One Walsall and it is pleasing to note that three members of the team were mobilised in their volunteering by making befriending calls.

## Forthcoming Event

We are holding our (virtual) Annual Public Meeting on 23 July at 11.00 a.m. via Zoom. We are delighted to announce that we will be joined by the newly appointed Walsall CCG Managing Director, Geraint Griffiths-Dale to talk about reopening and access to primary and secondary care health services in the Borough. Please contact us to book a place.



It's our **APM**  
Annual Public Meeting  
**Thursday 23rd July**  
**11.00am till 12.30pm**

This will be held as a Zoom online meeting due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

We will present our annual report and tell you about our work for this year.

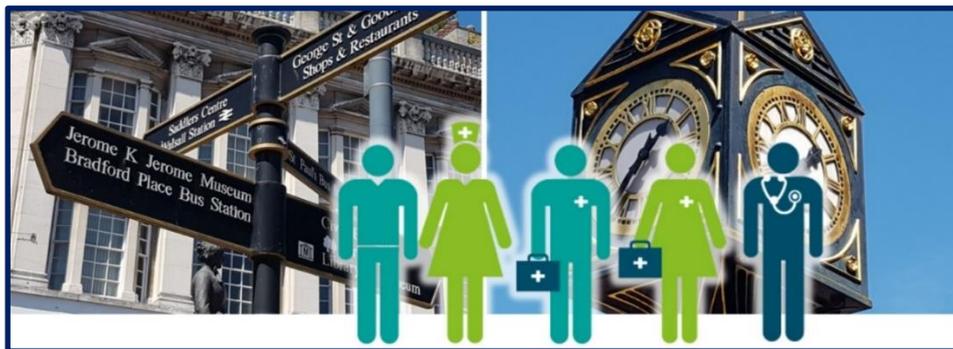
We are delighted to have Geraint Griffiths-Dale, Managing Director Walsall CCG as our guest speaker to talk about the restoration of health services in the Borough.

To book your space  
Tel: 0800 470 1660  
Email: [info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk)

#SpeakUp 2020  
**healthwatch**  
Walsall

## DISCLAIMER

Please note that this report only relates to findings we observe on the specific date of our visit. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



**healthwatch**  
Walsall

To share your patient experiences contact us on Telephone: 0800 470 1660  
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Or Email: [info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk)



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