

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire
Annual Report 2021-22



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Message from the Healthwatch team

As people started to return to a more normal life this year following the Covid-19 restrictions, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire were keen to hear from residents about how these restrictions had impacted on their access to care.

We particularly wanted to ensure that those who are seldom heard had a voice and so we delivered a number of targeted pieces of work in this area. This year Healthwatch been working closely service users of mental health services and their carers; and with those who are experiencing loneliness and isolation via our Telephone Buddy service. Dentistry has also been an ongoing concern in our local area, and so we have continued to escalate these concerns nationally.

Healthwatch has also been keen to support the health and social care system's recovery. Over the course of the year we have delivered an extensive campaign with our neighbouring Healthwatch teams to identify the biggest issues faced by patients accessing all elements of care to help determine priority recovery areas. Again with other Healthwatch and Voluntary Sector teams, we have been raising awareness in the community of the NHS App to help relieve pressures, particularly in primary care.

Additionally, this year the team have been delivering a range of activity to bring patient voice in the design and delivery of services. Healthwatch have supported engagement on a number of initiatives including vaccine hesitancy, Pharmaceutical needs, and GP access; as well as conducting an independent evaluation of the local Welcome Home service. Utilising our power to Enter and View, Healthwatch also obtained unique feedback from users of emergency care services to support the future planning of local Emergency Departments.



This year Healthwatch England have asked that in these busy times we are all in that we keep our annual report succinct. Therefore this report does not intend to showcase the full breadth of our work over the last year, but aims to give a snapshot of some of our work and how we help.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish a big thank you to all our staff, volunteers, partners and members of the public who have all supported and contributed to our work throughout the past year.

Helen Grimwood, Chief Executive, Meeting New Horizons (contract holder)

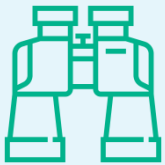
“The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is your local health and social care champion. From the Isle of Axholme to the River Humber and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

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



Our mission

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



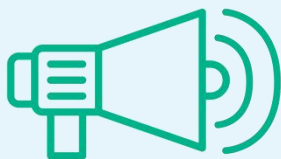
Our values

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

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



1771 people

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

40,454 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

Making a difference to care



We published

10 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Emergency Department Enter and View

which highlighted the struggles people had in arranging appointments with their GP.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

49 outstanding volunteers

who gave up **51 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received:

£115,640

Which is the same as the previous year. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire were successful in receiving further funding from NHS England to conduct a specific engagement programme.

We also currently employ

4 staff

who help us carry out this work.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are the biggest projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



Through virtual Enter and View we completed engagement with care home residents and staff, ensuring they still had a voice during the Covid-19 pandemic.



We began facilitating service user involvement in the mobilisation of a new Crisis House, ensuring service user views were fully informing the development of this new service.

Summer



We have continued to support vulnerable people with our community to feel less isolated, through our Telephone Buddy Service.



With the support of our Volunteers we carried out engagement on North Lincolnshire's Welcome Home Service to support developments to this much needed service.

Autumn



Healthwatch across the Humber Network, sought the views of local residents on the impact Covid-19 had had on accessing local health and care services.



We resumed face to face engagement with the community, and worked with key partners including the Arc Westcliff Community Centre, The Trussell Trust Food Bank and The Forge Project.

Winter



Utilising the power of 'Enter and View', we gathered the insight of Emergency Department users to inform recommendations to local and regional stakeholders.



We supported the national Time to Talk Day by asking local residents for their opinions on mental health services. This included giving people an opportunity to reflect on any aspect of mental health.

Listening to your experiences

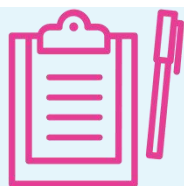
Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feedback to services to help them improve



Improving Access to Alternative Treatments

The Healthwatch Humber Network (Healthwatch Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire) conducted 11 ‘Enter and View’ visits in Emergency Departments across the Humber, to capture patients understanding of, and needs to access, alternative treatment options.

Healthwatch agreed to work with Humber Acute Services to further understand our local populations needs and preferences in accessing urgent care and recommended ways in which they could work with our new Integrated Care System and Primary Care Network Leads to reduce patients unnecessarily requiring the use of Emergency Department services.



41.6% of people

we heard from who attended local Emergency Departments felt that their issue could have been treated elsewhere

Humber Acute Services has shared our findings and recommendations widely across the system to ensure a joined up response to achieving improved patient access and knowledge of support available regarding alternative treatment options These system partners include:

- Four local Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- Two Hospital Trusts.
- Our new local Integrated Care System.
- The Humber Out of Hospital Programme Lead.
- The Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership Emergency Care Network Lead.
- The Humber and North Yorkshire Primary Care Network Lead.

What difference did this make

Our findings and recommendations will be used to inform service and infrastructure development within the Humber. In 2022/23, the Healthwatch Humber Network are devising an outcomes monitoring action plan to follow up recommendations including collating feedback to support short to long-term planning with the Humber Acute Services and partners to ease the pressures on local Emergency Departments and enable the public to access a treatment option more effectively.



“The engagement undertaken and the findings presented have been used to help shape the design of potential future models of urgent and emergency care in the Humber region by highlighting key issues and challenges and providing insight in to how and why people access urgent care through our existing Emergency Departments.”

Ivan McConnell – Director of Strategic Development / Director Humber Acute Services



Welcome Home Service

Thanks to everyone who shared their experience of the Welcome Home Service with us over the last year. The information we've collected will help a local voluntary organisation develop their support service further to ensure vulnerable people are welcomed home after a stay in hospital.

Changes during the previous year in relation to hospital discharge processes meant it was vital to understand how vulnerable people had been affected.

The Welcome Home Service, provided through the voluntary sector, began to ensure vulnerable people who had been discharged from hospital, with no ongoing needs, returned home safely and were supported to reconnect with their communities. During 2021 we were asked to complete an independent evaluation of the new service.



“The responder thought about the little things like replacing the battery in the smoke alarm which I might not have thought about. They also signposted me to a support group I am attending on Monday”
Client A, Welcome Home Service Participant



Recommendations that were made on behalf of those who spoke to us included:

- To ensure there is a robust criteria for referral to the service to ensure it targets the right people. This should include patients who have little to no support network already in place.
- To continue to develop relationships with hospital staff to ensure a smooth transition for those referred to the service.
- To ensure information is provided to clients at the time of referral to make clear the service aims and objectives as well as the process and pathway from discharge into Welcome Home.
- To develop a structure to review operational learning to inform the service further.
- To undertake further evaluation of the service to track longer term impact on individuals.

What difference did this make

The report highlighted the need for the service to continue to monitor the impact for the client and for this information to help with service development.

The service is taking on board the feedback and recommendations, including reviewing literature and developing a contact card for service users, to support a smooth transition in to the service.



75% of people

we heard from lived alone with limited or no support network

Covid Impact Survey

In light of the increased pressure on the NHS since the beginning of the pandemic, and system interest in examining the impact of this, Healthwatch across the Humber region (Healthwatch North Lincolnshire, Healthwatch North East Lincolnshire, Healthwatch Hull and Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire) has undertaken wide spread engagement to understand how the pandemic had directly or indirectly affected health and care services.

From the initial analysis of findings we have found some common themes. Some of these are highlighted below.

Hospitals:

Common themes that covered the hospital trusts in the region included:

- People had faced delays or cancellations when attempting to access secondary care services, with many feeling that inadequate information was provided to them during this time.
- Many people were open to travelling to another hospital if it meant they could be seen more quickly, whether for one-off or regular appointments.
- People were most satisfied with their appointments when they were seen face to face.

GP Surgeries:

- Over 60% of respondents from Hull and North Lincolnshire found it difficult or very difficult to get in touch with their surgeries. This compared to 38% from the East Riding of Yorkshire and 41% from North East Lincolnshire.
- Around a half of respondents had delayed accessing their GP for concerns as a result of the pandemic.
- In the absence of not being able to access their GP easily, respondents advised that they used NHS 111 services, visited their Emergency Department, attended a pharmacy, or went to an Urgent Treatment Centre as an alternative.

Dental Services:

- The majority of respondents from North Lincolnshire, Hull and the East Riding felt that their oral health had deteriorated in the pandemic. In North East Lincolnshire there was a balance response across feeling their oral health had deteriorated and had stayed the same.



Over 70% of people

Who commented about GP surgeries from North Lincolnshire said that they had found it difficult or very difficult to get an appointment

Listening to Young People

Our Youth Healthwatch have worked on their first investigation report that concentrates on young people's perceptions of sexual health information and services.

The Youth Healthwatch chose this topic because they felt that it was a large subject that had not been fully researched previously. The members also drew on their personal experiences, which included, talking with other young people where sexual health was raised frequently, especially around relationships, sexual health talks and their limitations.



Social Media

Was frequently mentioned by young people as a place for researching information about sexual health and relationships

The report is currently being produced and will be published early in 2022/23. Key findings that emerged from the investigation included:

- In the past year the following places were more frequently listed as places where people obtained information regarding relationships: Social Media, Friends and YouTube/Videos.
- In the past year the following places were commonly listed as places where people received information about sexual health: Social Media, Websites and Friends.
- When asked which topics respondents would like to see more information on, the two most frequent answers were: healthy / unhealthy relationships and STI/HIV testing.
- When asked how they would like more information the majority of people highlighted Social Media. Other popular choices included through college taught lessons and leaflets, from Sexual Health clinics / GP's and through websites.

What difference did this make

This first report has given the youth Healthwatch valuable skills that can be used in future projects. The findings will be highlighted to the local sexual health service within North Lincolnshire and to local colleges. The report will also be shared with North Lincolnshire's Children and Young People's Partnership.

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

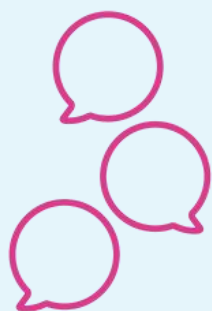
Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.



Giving people with lived experience a voice

Since November 2020 our Every Voice Matters group have been meeting regularly. It creates an open space for people to share their experiences and directly contribute to the shape of future mental health service provision.

In the past year our Every Voice Matters group has continued to work alongside professionals, sharing their lived experience to help shape a newly planned Crisis House. The service plans are really beginning to take shape, now building work is underway, with service users feedback being considered every step of the way.



Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

Supporting local partners to reap the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

This year Healthwatch has been supporting the rollout of the latest Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment survey to ensure local services and planning meets the needs of our local population. In particular, Healthwatch were established as a contact for people who wanted their voice to be heard but who did not have the ability to either access or complete the online form themselves.



Vaccination Feedback and Improving care over time

Since the start of the Covid-19 vaccination programme we have gathered feedback on how local residents found the vaccination process. This included asking people about the information that they received and how they found the location of vaccination centres. Overall people were satisfied with the programme locally, however we received reports of discrepancies with the information being provided by settings. Healthwatch brought this to the attention to North Lincolnshire's Primary Care Networks so that more consistent information across the area could be delivered.

Advice and information

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

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on local health and care services
- Identifying themes around service provision and highlighting these to service providers
- Signposting to the NHS 119 service where appropriate
- Helping people to access the services they need



Supporting people to feel less isolated and lonely

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the first lockdown, we set up the Telephone Buddy Service to provide telephone support to people in North Lincolnshire who felt isolated and lonely and could not get out/ make connections with family and friends in the usual way.

The original service model ran until December 2021. Over this time 71 volunteers supported 124 people making over 1200 hours of calls.

The demand for the service and number of volunteers for this role significantly decreased as lockdowns ended and Covid restrictions were lifted. In January 2022, a revised model was launched to support those who were still in need of support, and focused on providing 6-8 weeks of calls, and working on empowering the individual to be able to self access support and opportunities in the community.

As well as helping people overcome feelings of loneliness and isolation the calls also enabled staff and volunteers to take on board feedback about local health and care services and help signpost people to relevant organisations.



Supporting people to access GP's

Throughout the year we have gathered feedback from residents on issues they have experienced in accessing GP services.

This has included a number of reports about problems getting through on the telephone. In particular we received a high number of comments about one practice.

As a result we contacted the practice and discovered that they were experiencing a problem with their telephone lines, which they were already aware of and were working on a solution to remedy the situation. With this information we were then able to advise the public about what was happening and provide information about alternative methods of contacting the practice.



Promoting the NHS App

In December 2021, the Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership approached the Healthwatch Humber Network to ask for our assistance in raising awareness of the benefits of the NHS App and promote installing the app to the public.

During January 2022 to March 2022, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire's staff and volunteers promoted the NHS App with members of the public and informed them of the various services it offers and how they can make the most out of local health services by installing it.

During our engagement we spoke with students at John Leggott College, visited the Forge Project and held engagement sessions at local libraries.



In total we:

- Provided support to download the app to over 60 people
- Reached 2,654 people directly (those who access information through direct contact; e.g. leaflets being provided, made available in public locations, engagements at events, social media posts, newsletters, website hits etc.)

Dentistry

Throughout the year residents have continually reported difficulties they have faced in obtaining an NHS dental appointment and becoming 'registered' with a dental practice. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire have provided assistance to these individuals / families by explaining that they could join dental practice waiting lists if the matter is non-urgent and to contact NHS 111 if they consider the situation requires emergency dental treatment. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire continues to feedback our intelligence on this matter at a local, regional and national level.



Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Supported people to feel less isolated and lonely during the pandemic through our Telephone Buddy Service.
- Engaged with patients, and carers during Enter and View visits in Scunthorpe General Hospital's Emergency Department.
- Engaged with a care home through virtual engagement, interviewing residents, relatives and staff; and reporting good practice and making recommendations for improvements.
- Interacted with local communities to promote and encourage the use of the NHS App.
- Designed and researched a project focusing on the health and care issues that are important to young people through our Youth Healthwatch group.





Chrissy

“I decided to volunteer as a Telephone Buddy as I was due to retire and was looking for things to do to give something back. I have had several telephone buddies and it has made a big difference to them, especially during the pandemic. When you hear how you have made a difference to people just by giving them a call you realise what a great service it is that Healthwatch is providing.”



Autumn

“Volunteering at Healthwatch is an amazing experience. It’s allowed me to grow as a person and learn to see things from different perspectives and explore this in an enjoyable and interesting way. I have gained better people skills as a Telephone Buddy, and Youth Healthwatch has given me a chance to think critically while working with a fun group.”



Linda

“I started volunteering during the pandemic as a Telephone Support Volunteer. I phoned my buddy each week and discussed how he was coping and events. With our weekly catch ups we soon became Buddies! Since restrictions have been lifted, we have met up for a coffee and have become friends. I have also been involved with Enter and View and promotion of the NHS App. Volunteering has given me so many opportunities to meet new people and receive training, I hope my little bit can make a difference.”



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk



01724 844 986



enquiries@healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk

Annabel Tindale – Enter and View & Volunteer Coordinator

Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from local authority	£115,640	Staff costs	£108,958
Additional funding	£10,000	Operational costs	£10,473
		Support and administration	£9,498
Total income	£125,640	Total expenditure	£128,929

Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. To gather experiences to support the redesign and improvement of end of life care.
2. To support developments in key areas of therapy and community services, including specialist continence services and community equipment, to bring patient voice in service redesign.
3. To deliver a targeted engagement plan focused on health and care inequalities faced by residents.

Next steps

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

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race.

We also wish to continue re-establishing our face to face engagement following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions and to strengthen our contacts with community groups and other stakeholders.

Statutory statements

About us

Our Address: Healthwatch North Lincolnshire, Suite 37, Normanby Gateway, Lysaghts Way, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN15 9YG.

Contract Holder: Meeting New Horizons CIC, The Strand, 75 Beverley Road, Hull, HU3 1XL.

Trademark: Healthwatch North Lincolnshire uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.



The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making.

Our Healthwatch Independent Strategic Advisory Body consists of three members whose purpose is to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. The Body ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the Advisory Body met quarterly, and provided insight and oversight of our workplan, as well as strategically informing our work around children and young people and enter & view.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Public feedback provided to Healthwatch North Lincolnshire throughout the previous year is analysed and taken into consideration when planning our future priorities. In addition we also produced a specific 'Priorities' survey, that asked members of the public if they could change one thing around health and care services what would it be? Healthwatch North Lincolnshire also takes in to consideration any changes in health and care provision and feedback from other stakeholders and groups, as well as the priorities and strategic priorities of our partners to ensure that we do not duplicate but add value where we can.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, and provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media. As restrictions have lifted, we have also had an increasing presence out in the community. We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year we have done this by increasing communication with organisations who are in contact with people from seldom heard groups, for example, by linking in with the Trussell Trust and through visiting The Forge Project.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on the Healthwatch North Lincolnshire website at: <https://www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk/our-reports/> and distribute it widely via our partners and communication channels.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had one provider who did not respond to a request for information or recommendations. This year we carried out one virtual engagement visit, which resulted in three recommendations. A response was received from the provider. We also carried out three face to face Enter and View visits as part of our work with the Healthwatch Humber Network around Emergency Departments. Four recommendations were given and a response was provided by Humber & North Yorkshire Health & Care Partnership (previously known as Humber, Coast and Vale).

There were no issues or recommendations that required escalation by our Healthwatch to the Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire was represented in 2021/22 on the North Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board by the Healthwatch Manager and Chief Executive. During 2020/21 Healthwatch have carried out this role by supporting the work of the board, including being involved with North Lincolnshire’s Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment survey and its promotion.

2021-2022 other activities / outcomes

Project/Activity Area	Actions/Outcomes
Cherry Tree House virtual engagement visit	A trip hazard was identified during the visit and was moved immediately.
Cherry Tree House virtual engagement visit	A health and safety audit was undertaken in order to make sure all loose cables were moved to a safe position.
NHS App – This year we have trained volunteers in how to promote and download the NHS App	Volunteers then visited various locations across North Lincolnshire and spoke with people about the App. This resulted in increased downloads.
Provided refresher training to our Enter and View volunteers	Refresher training helped prepare volunteers, for future, face to face Enter and Views. This was important as many of our volunteers have not carried out a face to face Enter and View, over the past few years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
Attendance at meetings	We regularly attend the meetings of 27 groups. These help us to understand and report on local views and experiences of health and social care services.
Monthly Intelligence Reports	Every month intelligence that we gather is highlighted in our monthly reports. These reports illustrate any negative or positive trends, surrounding local health and care services.

healthwatch

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