

# Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Bromley  
Annual Report 2021-22



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# Message from the Healthwatch Bromley Committee

We are pleased to introduce the annual report of Healthwatch Bromley (HWB) for 2021 – 2022. This has been a particularly challenging year because of the continuing effects of COVID-19, and the impact of personnel changes.

During the year we had a complete change of staff as both Project Officers and our Patient Experience Officer left for other roles, and our Coordinator, Marzena Zoladz, moved to a Healthwatch Manager post. Several volunteers felt unable to continue because of COVID-19. Four Committee members retired, including two particularly longstanding (Pat Wade and Frances Westerman) – all are much missed. Happily, we successfully recruited two new committee members who are contributing to the strategic oversight of our work.

As the pandemic became less acute, HWB transitioned to blended services, continuing to work virtually while gradually increasing face to face operations.

Local volunteers contributed 231 days of their time to HWB. Work by them and the staff produced 12 reports on services, incorporating patient feedback. These reports, with recommendations for improvement, were widely shared with local partners including SE London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), local authority, service providers and voluntary organisations. Committee members represented HWB on a wide range of committees and working groups.

HWB collected and documented more than 2,400 patient experiences and published four comprehensive reports highlighting positive and negative aspects. We maintained the HWB website as a source of information for local people, focusing on COVID vaccination arrangements as they rolled out. We delivered 149 individual signposting sessions to enquirers, enabling them to access appropriate services.

We aimed to target our work to engage under-represented groups and plan to increase targeting in the coming year, including recruitment of further new committee members and volunteers.

We thank staff and volunteers for their dedicated work to make HWB the independent champion of Bromley health and care service users, enabling their voices to be heard and considered by those who provide, commission and monitor local services.

## **Healthwatch Bromley Committee 2021-2022**

Helen Norris

Jane Walters

Katie Barratt

Betula Nelson

Pat Wade (retired 2021)

Frances Westerman (retired 2021)

Beryl Cross (retired 2021)

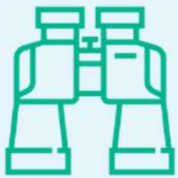
Carol Ellis (retired 2021)



# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Bromley is your local health and social care champion. From Beckenham to Biggin Hill 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 to improve health and care provision.



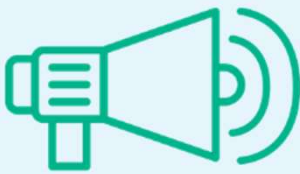
### Principles

- 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 service providers, the 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



**2,442 people**

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

**149 people**

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

## Making a difference to care



We worked on and produced

**12 reports**

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

Our most useful report was

**COVID-19 GP access in Bromley**

looking at residents' experience of access to primary care services following the lifting of national lockdown restrictions.

## Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

**15**

outstanding volunteers, who gave up **231 days** to make care better for our community.

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

**£73,998**

Which is **5% less** than the previous year. We have increased resources whilst reviewing and developing a lower cost delivery model.

We also currently employ

**3 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



Supported the COVID-19 vaccination programme by promoting information on the walk-ins and pop-up vaccination clinics for Bromley and South East London.



Worked with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to improve our quarterly Patient Experience reports and strengthen our relationship.

Summer



Achieved 18,800 impressions on the HW Bromley Twitter account from July to September, which is 15% higher than we had from April to June 2021.



Launched a new Mental Health (MH) patient experience survey. The survey aims to encourage feedback on MH services as this is a recognised gap in our work.

Autumn



Carried out two virtual Enter & View visits to Oatlands and Oatleigh Care Homes.



In partnership with NHS SE London CCG and Bromley Well we organised an online session 'Keeping Well Together This Winter'. The session formed part of the Bromley Self Care Week.

Winter



Developed engagement and marketing materials for a cancer information project following discussions with various partners.



Shared two Enter & View reports with care homes visited this year and received responses from both to our recommendations.



# 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.





## COVID -19 GP access across South East London

Across South East London, the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns put unprecedented pressures on services and increased the challenges patients had in accessing GP surgeries.

Healthwatch Bromley focused on a project that aimed to:

- Conduct an analysis of GP surgery websites from the patient perspective to assess the ease of finding relevant information online, to identify good practice and barriers users may encounter around GP access.
- Carry out a survey to measure residents' experience of GP access and determine their level of awareness of services available and their experience of the services following the lifting of the national lockdown.



**63%** of respondents were satisfied with the quality of the service received

Key findings:

- Website review highlighted areas of good practice such as clarity of information about how to book and cancel appointments, how to leave feedback, hours of operating and other services available for patients such as pharmacies.
- The majority of the websites provided tools to help access to adjust text, font, and other design elements. People could also translate the website text into over 100 languages.
- Despite the information being available on GP practice websites, only 42 people who responded to our survey were aware of face-to-face appointments.
- Only 35% were aware they could email the doctor/practice and only 25% were aware of video appointments.
- Only 33% of respondents reported their experience of booking a GP appointment 'Very good' and 'Fairly good'.

### Next steps

We made nine recommendations based on the feedback received and shared the report with relevant stakeholders including SEL CCG Primary Care team, One Bromley and Bromley Health and Wellbeing Board. We look forward to receiving responses from our partners on what steps they will take to help improve local services based on the feedback provided.



"I would just like to see someone face-to-face." - Patient

## Enter & View programme

We continued to deliver our Enter & View programme throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and carried out eight Enter & View visits.

We adapted our methods, to ensure safety and infection control, and carried out some visits virtually using virtual tours, telephone interviews, paper and electronic surveys.

We liaised with our colleagues in Bromley Council and our HWB Committee members to identify care homes for our visits.

We carried out Enter & View physical and virtual visits at:

- Prince George Duke of Kent Court
- Sundridge Court nursing home
- Coloma Court care home
- Foxbridge House
- Oatleigh care home
- Oatlands care home
- Jansondean nursing home
- Fairmount Residential care home



“They involve me in decisions about my diet and what I am wearing.” – Resident

“I was always supported if I had any problems. The manager's door was always open.” – Staff



## Cancer Information and Support project

Late in 2021/2022, we embarked on a new project to hear from people living with cancer, their families, friends, and unpaid carers, to tell us about their experience of cancer information and support services.

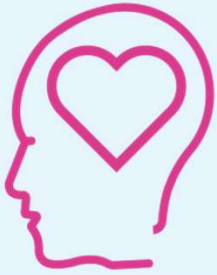
To obtain feedback we launched a survey and carried out extensive engagement with local organisations and partners.

### Next steps

We will collate the findings and write a report and recommendations based on them. We will share the final report with our partners, including King's College Hospital, to supplement their engagement activities and help them implement improvements in this area.

## Three ways we have made a difference for the community

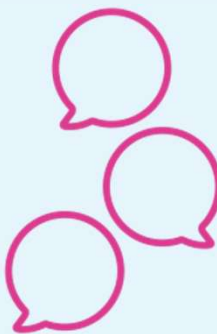
Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.



### Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for the NHS and social care services to step back and see the bigger picture, through hearing personal experiences, and the impact on people's lives.

Healthwatch Bromley contributes to the increased confidence and ability of people to influence the local health and care system. We exceeded our quarterly target of patient reviews this year by continuing to develop our Patient Experience Programme with a variety of partners. For example, in Quarter 4, we successfully carried out 33 face-to-face visits at 14 GP practices, one hospital, two vaccination centres and 12 community health centres.



### Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

We enabled people to share their feedback and encouraged participation in a number of opportunities, including:

- A Medequip Service User Panel
- Healthwatch England's #yourcareyourway campaign
- An Asthma Care focus group in London
- The new 'Hospital@Home' service, run by a team of community nurses



### Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with health and care services to consistently raise issues and push for changes.

We carried out eight Enter & View visits, in-person and virtually, during the pandemic. We made recommendations based on our observations and interviews. As an example, one care home responded to our recommendations and assured us that some areas of improvement will now be possible thanks to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, i.e., reviewing their policy on outings. We will follow up with the care home in three months time to see what progress has been made and how we can encourage improving care over time.

# 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:

- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme.
- Linking people to reliable information they can trust.
- Helping people to access the services they needed.
- Using our communication channels to enable local people to provide feedback and promoting local engagement opportunities.





## Signposting people who needed additional support

Throughout the year, we have signposted many people who needed additional support with finding a dentist. The COVID-19 pandemic has put extreme pressure on dental services, and it has been challenging to find an NHS dentist. We received one enquiry where a resident called up to 50 dental practices, but none of them were registering new patients.

This feedback contrasts with that from our Patient Experience feedback. Where people have a service, they are very positive about visiting their dentist. The challenge is for those trying to find a dentist.



## Helping people access the service they need

Complaints about service providers was the main issue in Quarter 4, January – March 2022. We did notice a decrease in complaints about accessing services and being able to see a dentist. However, there was an increase in dissatisfaction with GP practices, especially with doctors not listening to their patients.

We encountered two cases where patients felt their GP did not want to review their symptoms and described their situation as depressing due to a lack of support.

After obtaining approval from an enquirer, we liaised on multiple enquiries, contacting GP surgeries on their behalf, providing information for social care funding and contacting the GP Alliance for records.



# 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 the NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say by carrying out surveys over the telephone as well as face-to-face engagement sessions at local health care services. These included GP practices, hospitals, vaccination centres and community centres.
- Created digital content on our website and social media platforms.
- Acted as Healthwatch Authorised Representatives at Enter & View visits.
- Supported project research, data analysis, and report writing.







**Kate**

"Working with members of the community is wonderful. Understanding how the healthcare system works and can be improved was very beneficial and rewarding for me. Working collaboratively in a remote setting helped me to utilize online tools in a new way."



**Jane**

"As a HWB Committee member, I have been impressed by the dedication of HWB staff and volunteers in ensuring the voices of patients and service users were heard throughout the pandemic. I have been pleased to use my experience of working in the NHS and local charities to contribute to its work, through our committee meetings, Enter & View programme and work with partner organisations."



**Katie**

"As a Committee member of HWB, I have been pleased to use my teaching experience to offer training to staff in planning research projects e.g. the design of questions to elicit both quantitative and qualitative data. I have revised the questions used for Enter & View work so that they are more straightforward and are based on Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, a model which is fundamental in the teaching of Health and Social Care."



**Do you feel inspired?**

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

 [www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk)

 **0203 886 0752**

 [info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk)

# 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		Income	
Funding received from local authority	£73,998	Staff costs	£62,900
Additional funding	£0	Operational costs	£7,098
		Support and administration	£4,000
Total income	£73,998	Total expenditure	£73,998

## Top priorities for 2022–23

1. Tackle health inequalities.
2. Engage more with communities seldom heard from regarding patient experience e.g. the traveller community, LGBTQ+, and the homeless.
3. Continue to gather patient experience feedback and share our findings with key decision makers.
4. Continue to develop the Enter & View programme to help improve services.

## Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of inequalities of access to health and care, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of people who all too often go unheard. Over the coming year, we aim to reduce these inequalities by making sure all voices are heard, convincing and enabling decision makers to extend access to all Bromley residents and reduce barriers, whether caused by race, gender, income, address or other factors.

# Statutory statements

## About us

Healthwatch Bromley, Community House, South Street, Bromley, BR1 1RH

## Contract holding organisation

Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC), 45 St Mary's Road, London, E5 5RG

Healthwatch Bromley 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 Bromley Healthwatch Local Advisory Committee consists of four members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. In 2020/21 the committee met ten times and decided matters such as Enter & View visit locations and research study topics.

We involve the public in deciding our work priorities. We attend a wide range of meetings and forums, listening to local community concerns and feeding these into committee discussions. In our Patient Experience work we talk to hundreds of people each quarter. Their experiences help guide our research and our action -by identifying people's concerns we are able to identify the areas that would most benefit from evidence-based recommendations and sustained support.

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

We use a range of approaches to give as many people as possible the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2021/22 we have been available by phone and email, provided a webform on our website and a feedback centre rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, undertaken virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media and in person where safe to do so.

We are committed to taking additional steps to obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year for example we have made direct telephone contact using volunteers with additional languages, to enable us to speak with people from a range of communities.

We make this annual report available to as many people and partner organisations as possible across Bromley. We publish it on our website and present it at an array of public and community meetings.

## Responses to recommendations and requests

We conducted eight Enter & View activities in Bromley during 2021-22. We produced reports identifying areas for improvement and provided recommendations for how to achieve it. On each occasion the provider responded to our report and recommendations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully introduced a new digital approach to delivering our Enter & View programme. Service providers could choose between a virtual or physical visit.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by Bromley Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee, and no resulting special reviews or investigations.

## Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Bromley was represented on the Bromley Health and Wellbeing Board by Marzena Zoladz, the then Healthwatch Bromley Coordinator. During 2021-22 she effectively carried out this role by presenting Healthwatch reports and feeding into partner discussions and decision making by bringing the patient/carer/service user perspective to the forefront and utilising community intelligence and evidence to do so.

## Representation

We attended **147** key strategic and operational meetings where we represented the voices of Lewisham residents, encouraged public involvement and shared our intelligence.

### Examples of meetings we presented patient voice:

- Bromley Borough Based Board (of SEL CCG)
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- Bromley Primary Care Operational Group
- One Bromley Communication and Engagement Sub-Group
- ONE Bromley – Local Care Partnership
- ONE Bromley Community Champions
- SEL Healthwatch
- Bromley Healthcare Patient Reference Group
- Patient Experience Committee, King's College Hospital
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board
- Community Living Commissioning Programmes Team
- Kent Association for the Blind
- Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
- South East London HW Staff Network, Away Day
- VCSE Health and Wellbeing Transformation Project, Community Links Bromley
- London Healthwatch and CCG



## Working at a regional level with local HW

Local Healthwatch continue to be represented at a regional level through the SEL Healthwatch Director who attends meetings including the NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (SELCCG) Governing Body, Primary Care Commissioning Committee and Equalities group.

We work closely with other local Healthwatch including Healthwatch Bexley, Healthwatch Lewisham, Healthwatch Greenwich, Healthwatch Lambeth and Healthwatch Southwark. This enables us to influence how health services respond to people's experiences and views and encourage public involvement by working with the NHS SELCCG, Integrated Care System (ICS) and other stakeholders.

Our influence and impact this year include:

- Healthwatch input into SEL Digital Patient engagement plan
- SEL Healthwatch commission from South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) as part of the South London Listens Programme to conduct a South East London wide voluntary and community sector audit to support signposting and early intervention.
- SEL Healthwatch involvement and collaboration in developing the ICS Working with People and Communities strategy
- SEL Healthwatch engagement in the development of the SEL ICS constitution
- The Director SEL Healthwatch role as a model for VCSE participation in the ICS in SEL
- Findings from Healthwatch Bexley, Healthwatch Greenwich and Healthwatch Lewisham included at ICS Digital Exclusion Workshop

As NHS SELCCG ends, we look forward to being active partners in the new, legally constituted South East London ICS. We will continue to work with the Director SEL Healthwatch to provide consistent and harmonised insight and intelligence to the ICS. Healthwatch in South East London will play our part to end health inequalities by amplifying the voices of communities that go unheard and work with the ICS to reduce the barriers to services people and communities face.

### Healthwatch Network Awards

SEL Healthwatch were 'Highly Commended' at the national Healthwatch Network Awards for the 'Working with your integrated care system' award for creating a new job role across all six Healthwatch, ensuring patient feedback is shared with their Integrated Care System, while allowing each Healthwatch to continue working on local priorities



# healthwatch

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