

We have  
**42** open  
cases

healthwatch  
Sandwell

We have  
signposted  
**24** people

We have spoken  
to **149** people  
face to face

January Insights

We have  
attended **13**  
groups

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## Patient Stories

### Hospital experience

A patient was due to have an operation just before the pandemic, and consent forms were completed. Then the patient was informed that their operation was cancelled due to the pandemic, with no further communication. The patient told us they **“had heard nothing”**.

HWS (Healthwatch Sandwell) offered to contact the hospital to find out what had happened and whether the patient was still on the waiting list. Shortly after contacting the hospital, PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) responded, issuing an appointment with a consultant.

During the appointment, the consultant refused to do the operation, even though the reason given meant they should never have been offered the operation in first place. The patient was most upset about the outcome and manner that this information was given. HWS advised the person to make a formal complaint and a referral was made to POhWER advocacy for support. After some months, a response was received from the consultant, which involved apologising for what had happened. The patient has now been offered a reassessment by a new doctor with a plan of further treatment.

During the follow up calls it was found that the patient had another hospital issue that HWS dealt with via PALS. Whilst supporting the patient, they shared they were having energy concerns, HWS was able to give the patient information on Warmer Homes, who will be fitting a new boiler. HWS also gave the patient information on local groups, and they now attend a regular knitting group.

***“I cannot thank you enough for everything you have helped me with. All the hard work is much appreciated. Thank you very much.”***

### Hospital care

A family member contacted us because they were unhappy with the hospital care a relative had received.

HWS advised this person to make a formal complaint, following this a referral was made through POhWER Advocacy. Some months later the family member heard back from the hospital who was requesting more time to respond. A few months later a response was received but the person was dissatisfied, and this was escalated to the Ombudsmen.

We were told **“I just want an apology and to make sure this does not happen again.”**

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsmen contacted the Hospital Trust. They had a response stating that an independent review was being undertaken. Following this a further response was received saying, the hospital acted in a timely manner. The hospital admitted the issues around medication and disabilities. The hospital have assured that things will be put place regarding this.

***“Thanks for the support you have given.”***

## Mobility equipment issue

HWS received a referral about a person who has mobility issues and who relies on a wheelchair to be independent.

Their wheelchair, which was provided by the Wheelchair Services, was damaged and required attention.

The person described having to wait a while for the wheelchair to be collected, once collected a replacement wheelchair had been provided in the interim.

The person described their life being disrupted and the impact on their quality of life including their mental health.

They were dissatisfied with the service from the Wheelchair Services in this matter and had made a complaint to Local Resolution (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) which included:

- Being aggrieved with the staff's behaviour from the Wheelchair Services.
- Communication issues with Wheelchair Services and suppliers of wheelchairs.

HWS contacted the Wheelchair Services on behalf of the person, as a consequence the Team Leader from the Wheelchair Services visited the person and addressed the issues and is providing on-going support in this matter.

An investigation of the above complaints was carried out by the wheelchair services and a written response has been sent to the person. The response included an explanation of the issues raised and where appropriate apologies were given. The person had an option to challenge the response but to date has chosen not to.

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## You Shared We Heard

We were joined by members of the public in Tipton for our You Shared We Heard workshop. Thank you to those who joined us and shared their thoughts on services available and for the information sharing.

Our next workshop will be in February and more information will be shared soon.

