



Together

we're making health
and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23

healthwatch
Sandwell

Contents

Message from our Chair	3
About us	4
Highlights from our year	5
Listening to your experiences	9
Hearing from all communities	16
Advice and information	19
Volunteering	21
Finances and future priorities	23
Statutory statements	24



“

"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our Chair

The past year has been challenging but also rewarding for all the Team at Healthwatch Sandwell.

The challenges were around developing our understanding of all the new health care system which was formally approved by the Government with the assent of the Health and Care Bill in April 2022 and once again being able to conduct in person/face work which had been very difficult during the covid 19 period .



Starting with the local NHS structure, there have been fundamental changes both in the structure of the NHS locally and how we operated within it. However, we have adjusted to the new ways of working that the Black Country Integrated Care System needs with our contribution being focused on participation as a statutory partner, in the Sandwell place-based board arrangements as well as integrated Boards including the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Participating in all these arrangements has enabled us to champion the patients voice and ensure that the views of local people are heard to help inform the decision-making process and help ensure that services provided at an operational level respond well to the varied health and demographic needs of the Sandwell population.

Healthwatch Board Members have also fulfilled their role very well. These are all volunteer members who have very busy lives but have chosen to participate as Board members using their local knowledge and broad range expertise to benefit local people in the work that Healthwatch Sandwell carried out in the past year. They have actively supported Board meetings and operational work when required.

On a day-to-day basis we have a small but very effective, enthusiastic and professional Team that is well led managerially that has carried out a broad range of activities including handling complaints, specific project work with a focus around tackling health inequalities, planning work around the Guided by You project, recruiting volunteers to support our work and finally Enter and View.

In conclusion, I would like to summarise by saying that Healthwatch Sandwell has and continues to respond well to the challenging environment we operated in but that we continue to thrive and develop. We look forward to continuing to support and champion the patient voice in the coming year.

Phil Griffin – Healthwatch Sandwell Chair

About us

Healthwatch Sandwell is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and 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

Access to and experience of better Health and Care services for local people.



Our mission

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

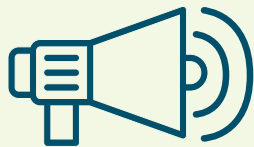


Our values are:

- **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.

Year in review

Reaching out



We engaged with **2,043** people face to face

We reached out to **17,939** people digitally

We have signposted **434** people

Making a difference to care

We published **22** reports



Our most popular reports were **Accessibility: Are Health and Social Care services meeting information and communication needs?** It highlighted the challenges people with disabilities, sensory loss or impairments can face if health and care information or communication does not meet their needs – as required by the [NHS Accessible Information Standard 2016](#).

Case study: A patients journey of moving to a care home. Highlighted the transition journey for a person with a progressive neurological disease to a care home, it identified the obstacles experienced with regards to accessible information.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have **10** outstanding volunteers who have supported us to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received **£180,250** which is the same as the previous year.

We currently employ **6 staff** who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We supported Sandwell Council as an independent organisation to review the effectiveness and legacy of the Better Mental Health Programme to see what difference the project made to people and to potentially inform future investments.

Summer



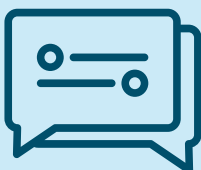
Strengthening relationships with other Black Country Healthwatch teams to support the emerging priorities of the Integrated Care Board at system level.

Autumn



We held our first Guided By You event in West Bromwich in conjunction with Sandwell Health and Care Partnership and we heard the views from over 50 local people on Health and Social Care priorities. Supported by the community and voluntary sector.

Winter



We heard from Bangladeshi and Bengali Women in Tipton about their experiences of the impact of Covid 19 and the vaccination programme.

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Addressing Digital Inequality

Our report 'Using digital technology in primary care services' March 2021 highlighted challenges in digital access and skills levels for up to 30% of the Sandwell population.



Ensuring carers voices are heard

We looked at the hidden impact of COVID 19 on carers November 2021. Our report finding helped ensure carers voices were directly heard at the Health and Wellbeing Board and influenced strategy development.



Sickle Cell health inequalities

Our CQC commissioned report, October 2021, highlighted health inequalities for people with Sickle Cell through patient voices. It is helping inform review of integrated health, care and support services.



Guided By You?

We have been commissioned by Sandwell Health and Care Partnership to undertake public engagement through a series of workshops across the 6 towns of Sandwell. This is in order to help shape the development of the Town Team priorities.



Homeless Report?

We spoke to over 130 homeless about their experiences of accessing and using health services



New hospital patient involvement

Development of the new Midland Metropolitan University Hospital in Sandwell will bring change across the secondary care services. We continue to support, ensuring patients are informed and involved in services design.



Healthwatch Hero

Celebrating a hero in our local community.

This year we said a sad farewell to Bill Hodgetts, our longest serving Advisory Board member.

Bill is a local man, who has had his fair share of health challenges, including heart surgery and cancer, but despite this he has served his local community.

He has had a keen interest in the NHS and motivated by the fact that he found that patients were not represented very well on local committee's, so he became a patient representative at the Primary Care Trust Meetings.

He joined Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and became involved with the Hospital Trust Board, the Local Authority Health Scrutiny and the Local Authority's Ambassadors Groups.

He joined us in 2013 as a Board member, he continued to represent us at Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Hospital Trust Board to raise issues on behalf of local people. He was also the Chair of the Sandwell Cardiac Group and Support Group.

In all areas of his work, he has served faithfully, including the challenges that COVID raised, Bill embraced change including technology, in a determined manner which is an indicator of his character. His aim was always to improve care for the people of Sandwell.

He will be missed by the team and the Board, but we wish him a long and happy retirement from Healthwatch Sandwell.



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 feed this back to services and help them improve.

Guided By You – Our role with the Local Integrated Care Partnership

In April 2022 Healthwatch Sandwell were commissioned by Sandwell Health and Care Partnership (integrated care partnership) to undertake citizen and public engagement through a series of public workshops across the 6 Towns of Sandwell – West Bromwich, Tipton, Oldbury, Smethwick, Rowley Regis and Wednesbury.

The purpose of the workshops is to identify the priorities for local people around health and social care and the wider determinants of health and wellbeing such as social, economic, educational, environmental and employment factors.

This in turn is planned to support the priorities of Sandwell Health and Care Partnerships Town Teams.

Sandwell Town Teams are developing as multi-agency health and social care providers in the community with the plan to support prevention, early help, better transitional care and for people to be provided with the best care, in the best place, at the right time.

Whilst a number of Healthwatch nationally have been involved with their local Integrated Care Partnerships, locally this is a great opportunity for us to be fully part of the ever-changing health and social care landscape. But most importantly for local citizens to have an active voice in helping shape services.

We have held 5 workshops in 5 of the 6 towns in Sandwell and engaged with over 250 local people and representatives. The workshops have generated wide discussion over many topics, issues, concerns and ideas.

“The role Healthwatch Sandwell has played in supporting our Sandwell place-based town conversations has been invaluable. They have worked really hard to ensure that there has been a wide audience representing views from across Sandwell and events were led in a consultative and supportive way.”

Sandwell Health and Care Partnership.

What difference will this make?

We are now working on the next stage of this work to develop multi-agency recommendations and action plan and to firm this up with wider engagement. We are also working with Sandwell Health and Care Partnership this financial year to support further citizen engagement and to also support the recommendations and actions from our engagement.



healthwatch
Sandwell

Sandwell Health and Care Partnership

Guided By You

Health and Social Care Services
Be part of making changes in Rowley Regis

Wednesday 14th June 2023
12 pm - 2 pm
A BSL interpreter can be provided if required

Blackheath Coronation Club
43 George Ave,
Blackheath,
Rowley Regis
B65 9BD

To book a place email info@healthwatchsandwell.co.uk or call 07732 883 483
Food and refreshments will be provided. Please let us know if you have any dietary requirements

Case Study Moving to a Care Home

A person with a progressive neurological disease contacted us querying if they had a right to activities in a care home and how long should these activities be including frequency, because they were having none at the time. This engagement led to us supporting this person with their complaints about their experience of respite care and moving to a nursing home. During conversations all the difficulties and challenges that they had faced became evident. Moving to a care home is not an easy decision to make, this case study gave a picture of a person's experience and identified some of the challenges and obstacles that are faced for someone who has disabilities/impairments with regards to information.

The key themes were:

1. Moving to a care home – information/choice
2. Roles of support staff
3. Meeting the needs of someone who has a disability (information)
4. Financial issues
5. Contract and care plan at care home
6. Care at respite home/ nursing home



Link to report: <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/report/2022-11-15/case-study-patients-journey-moving-care-home>

It is essential that people have accessible information both verbal, written and including websites to comply with The Care Act 2014 and the Accessible Information Standard (2016). This should include information about fees, care and complaints procedures etc, to make ensure that they can make informed choices.

From the findings Healthwatch Sandwell made recommendations to the key stakeholders and these will be monitored during 2023/24.



I'm not giving up I'm a fighter...that's what we do... we don't complain...it stops them doing their job"



Young peoples' experience of accessing GP booking systems - (Accessing Primary Care Services)

Our youth volunteer surveyed **46** students (across year groups) from Holly Lodge High School College of Science Holly Lane, Smethwick. The data provided information about young peoples' experiences, challenges and issues faced whilst using the routes via the GP surgery appointment booking system and awareness of alternative options for primary care services.

Many students **did not** know who their GP was, and most appointments were made by parents, only **6** students book their own appointments, and the majority of these students were aged 16 – 18 years.

The most popular booking option was face to face (in person at reception). The least popular was the NHS App and NHS account on-line. Their dissatisfaction related to on-line booking (surgery), the NHS app and the NHS account on-line.

Students had used and had good knowledge of alternative primary care service options especially Phone NHS 111, Pharmacy and Emergency Accident and Emergency. They were not so aware that some G.P. Surgeries offer registration for on-line Doctor service however, a large number stated that they may use this service and the NHS account - on-line.

When students cannot get an appointment the most popular answer was that they would wait for the next day or available appointment even though they were unwell. A small number would try and get advice online and search for treatment of symptoms.

The largest challenge for young people was making phone calls during school hours. However, a large number stated they experienced no challenges, this may be a consequence of parents making the calls on their behalf.

Young people described how not getting an appointment affected them and this information can be divided into physical health, mental health and school attendance

What difference will this make?

The respondents gave ideas for the future with regards to booking appointments and can be divided into the following themes: Supportive behaviour from GP practice staff and school, digital support including Apps. and general advice about appointments including the need for prevention. Some of these ideas have informed Healthwatch Sandwell recommendations.

Link to Report: <https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/report/2022-10-26/young-peoples-experience-accessing-gp-booking-systems>

Improving Access to Primary Care Services

Covid-19 impacts effectively supported the NHS Long Term Plan 2019 “digital first” agenda for primary care services. However, nationally, Sandwell falls within one of the most deprived local authority areas, including for digital skills and digital access poverty and an increasing ethnically diverse population with some language barriers.

“People cannot negotiate the systems to book G.P. appointments to be seen for health conditions. The systems are creating more barriers to access and more inequality.”

Healthwatch Sandwell frequently hear resident’s frustrations with trying to access and obtain appointments at their G.P. practices. Our priority project looked at the patient experience of accessing primary care services through all booking options and the impacts and outcomes of failure to access services.

Headline findings:



- 29% of patients had tried and failed to obtain appointments at their G.P. practice
- 75% of whom had not accessed other primary care options or still needed to see someone for their health condition
- 32% of the patients who had not been seen responded that they were self-managing their health conditions.

What difference will we make?

The Healthwatch Sandwell report made 11 recommendations to help ensure service development plans for primary care provide equal access to meet all patient's needs.

This report was complemented by our project work on Accessibility: meeting information and communication needs which was based on the experiences, voices and views of people with disabilities, sensory loss and impairments and provided a practical “toolkit” to help health, care and support services meet individual information and communication needs. Both reports have been recognised locally and with Black Country services who are engaging with Healthwatch Sandwell on improvement plans. Nationally, Healthwatch England commended the work on the Accessibility project:

“This is a great example of exactly the kind of complementary local work which can help to amplify and drive forward the wider campaign on accessible information and hold local systems accountable.”

Urte Macikene Policy & External Affairs Manager Healthwatch England



Listening to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people in Sandwell

In partnership with Sandwell Deaf Community Association, we facilitated a focus group to support the PP2 project. The aim of the focus group was to assess whether deaf people's communication needs have been met under the Equality Act 2020, the Accessible Information Standard (2016), National Commissioning Framework for Hearing Loss Services July 2016 and British Sign Language (BSL) Act 2022.

The focus group identified that deaf people preferred face to face appointments with health and social care providers but they experience barriers due to a lack of BSL interpreter being provided and that BSL is not recognised as a language.

When an interpreter was not available people were expected to lip read or read written English. The participants described feeling 'double disadvantaged' and that experienced poor attitudes towards booking an interpreter, which affected their mental health.

Our recommendations:

Record a person's needs especially the need for a BSL interpreter and take responsibility for arranging a BSL interpreter, recognise that BSL is a first language and don't assume people can lip read.

Key findings

This focus group identified many barriers and battles when accessing health and social care. It concluded that the Equality Act 2010 and the NHS Accessible Information Standard (2016) requirements are not being met.



“English is not my first language, so I struggle. Writing needs to be simple – short words only”

“Health services are not accessible to me!”



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.

Raised awareness of alternatives to primary care.

Our enter and view programme visited community pharmacies and found that this service is invaluable to local people and provides an excellent service.

The purpose of the visits was to observe the environment and explore first-hand with customers their experiences. The visits were prompted by the public telling us that they were experiencing difficulties with obtaining medication from prescriptions from GPs. We found that many customers were accessing pharmacists as an alternative to Primary Care.



Staff described their biggest challenge as 'language' as some Pharmacies were situated in diverse communities. Where the population were of south Asian origin, staff with similar backgrounds communicated using their own community language skills to communicate so that their needs could be met.

One pharmacy where this was a challenge, English speaking staff had learnt a few words and endeavoured to communicate effectively despite language differences, this was observed during the visit. This was appreciated by customers.

Customers commented...

'I can ask anything...I always get good advice'.

'This pharmacy is lovely...they've always got time for you'

Staff were described as...

'they are my friends....like my family'.

'as an older person I struggle to understand my medication....but the staff always help me'



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Listening to the needs of parents with autism during pregnancy and birth.
- Engaging with deaf and hard of hearing young people.

Meeting the needs of Parents with Autism during pregnancy and birth

The Perinatal Mental Health Community Service had noticed:

- an increase in referrals for women with autism
- the lack of information available to them
- how their pregnancy journey had affected their mental health, especially in relationship to the needs that arise from being autistic.

NOTE: these women/parents with autism received a diagnosis as an adult or had not been assessed but were showing signs of being on the autistic spectrum.

This group of women have been described as a “hidden pool, in an archived article in The Guardian who have grown up with undiagnosed autism as coming to light.

[Autism: 'hidden pool' of undiagnosed mothers with condition emerging | Autism | The Guardian](#)

This issues identified in Sandwell complemented a piece of research – Autistic People’s Perinatal Experiences II: A Survey of Childbirth and Postnatal Experiences (2022).

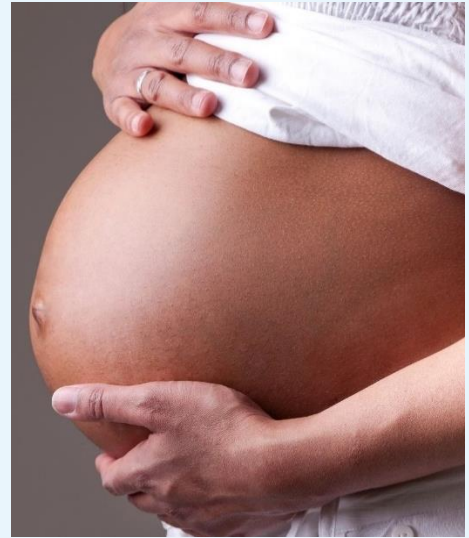
In partnership with Action on Postpartum Psychosis and the Perinatal Mental Health Community Service (Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust), a paper was co-produced which gave an overview of key issues faced by women/parents with autism that are affecting their mental health and made recommendations for key healthcare professionals to improve maternity experiences across the Black Country. This paper was presented to the Local Maternity and Neonatal System (Engagement workstream and the Clinical Transformation Work Stream).

The key issues related to :

- Information and training about autism for staff
- Sensory Issues experienced by patients.

This has led to further partnership work with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead Midwife from Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals Trust for 23/24:

1. A focus group for patients to share experiences
2. Involvement in assisting with producing guidelines for maternity staff especially in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.



Deaf and hard of hearing young people

Deaf World enable and empower Deaf and hard of hearing young people to acquire skills for independent living. Healthwatch Sandwell wanted to ensure Deaf young people were aware of their health and care service rights to Accessible Information and capture their experiences, voices and views on services.



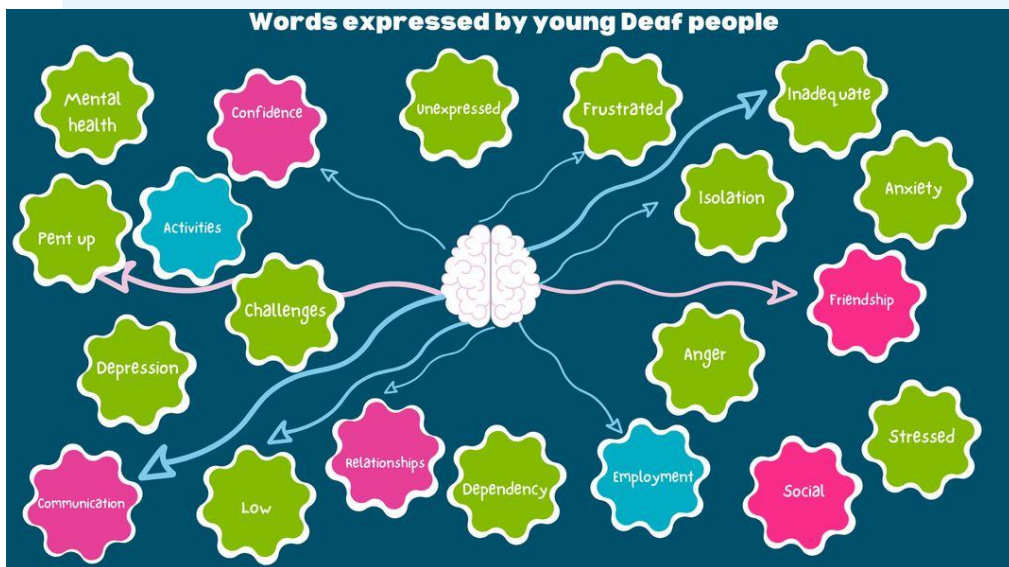
With the support of British Sign Language interpreters, Healthwatch Sandwell and the Deaf World young people’s steering group organised a consultation event. Deaf health charity, SignHealth, research indicates that at least **40%** of Deaf young people experience mental health problems compared to **25%** of hearing young people. They also state that currently there is no primary care service that provides therapy or counselling for Deaf young people in British Sign Language.

Deaf World young people’s steering group fed back that Deaf young people’s mental health should be a top priority to consider in services for Deaf young people.

Some of the Deaf young people created a video to communicate their message to services:

Accessibility consultation event with Deaf young adults - YouTube

Healthwatch Sandwell have shared the report findings and video with the Black Country Integrated Care System including mental health services and called for patient involvement in development of appropriate services.



“System needs to be holistic. There is a lot of anxiety, and the Deaf person wants to be independent.”





Advice and information

Healthwatch Sandwell can help you to find reliable and trustworthy information. We can signpost you to relevant services who can give you the support you need.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up to date information people can trust.
- Helping people access the services they need.
- Listening to people's Health and Social Care experiences.

Better communication between patients and services.

Through community engagement sessions it was highlighted that communication between patients and GP surgeries, or hospitals has been lacking, and most patients would like to be kept up to date with review appointments, prescriptions, referrals and waiting lists. We have been assisting people to get better outcomes by contacting services. Healthwatch Sandwell has supported 77 people with these types of queries to help get issues resolved.

Medication story – Person has been calling GP surgery for medication, and 6 months on still without medication.



“They keep saying there are no appointments.”

Healthwatch Sandwell offered to contact surgery.

“They called me the next day and offered 2 appointments. It is all sorted now. Thank you.”

Operation waiting list story

A resident of Sandwell contacted us because they have been waiting for an operation that should have taken place just before the pandemic. The person has been experiencing discomfort and pain that has been keeping them up at night. Healthwatch Sandwell offered to contact the hospital. After several emails to the hospital, it was found out that once the operation was cancelled the person was never put back on the waiting list. This person has now received an urgent appointment for their operation.

“Thank you for supporting me throughout.”

Linking people with well-being services

People are often needing to join a group or befriending service to help them with their mental wellbeing.

An elderly person feeling lonely and was wanting some help. We discussed the option of chatting to someone from the befriending service at Sandwell Together. This person now has a regular weekly call.

“It is nice to have someone to talk to.”

A person was struggling with caring responsibilities. We referred them to the Carers Assistance Line (CAL). This person has been attending CAL’s coffee mornings and receiving regular check in calls.

“It has really helped with my stress. I do not need to seek mental health support now. Thanks so much for your help.”



Volunteering

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

This year our volunteers:

- Visited communities to promote their local Healthwatch and what we have to offer.
- Supported our Priority Project to find out young people's experiences of accessing Primary Care.
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views.
- Supported our Guided By You and other events.
- Proofreading our reports.

Kiera

"Volunteering for Healthwatch Sandwell has not only helped me to build my confidence and learn new skills, but it has also made me a better and more compassionate person. Listening to people's stories at the deaf focus group in September really opened my eyes to the struggles that people face when accessing health services. It has been such a valuable and enjoyable experience that I would recommend to anybody"



Jessica

"I started volunteering at Healthwatch Sandwell primarily as a proof-reader, it is a career which I would like to pursue and it is ideal for me to gain experience, and I am grateful for the support from my colleagues.

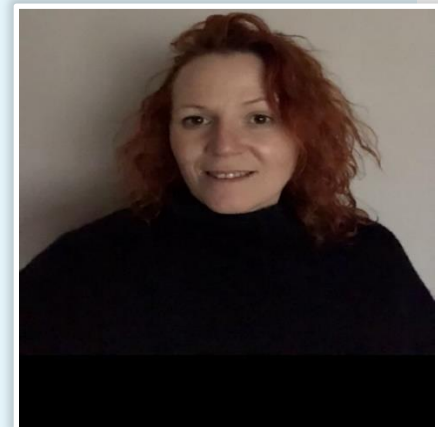
I have also attended and helped at some of the Guided By You events organised by Healthwatch Sandwell. I must admit, I do enjoy the discussions from the residents of Sandwell who attend, because they are very much vocal and passionate about what changes they feel need to take place regarding healthcare and about what major benefits can be achieved"



Maria

"I recently left full time employment in the Sandwell area to return back to further education. As I had some free time, I decided I would like to continue working in the area as a volunteer working with organisations that support the community. Luckily in my previous role I had come in to contact with the team that worked at Healthwatch Sandwell, and I was aware of the fantastic work they do with the community.

I now volunteer with Healthwatch Sandwell in a community research role. This has given me the opportunity to work alongside a brilliant team of people who support a good cause, a cause that is a voice for the community. I enjoy being out in the community with the team to understand the communities' views/issues on services to feed these back."



If you are interested joining our team of volunteers, please contact us at info@healthwatchsandwell.co.uk or call us on 0121 569 7211

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.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£180,250	Expenditure on pay	£184,191
Additional income	£50,000	Non-pay expenditure	£18,441
		Office and management fee	£23,025
Total income	£230,250	Total expenditure	£225,657

Additional income is broken down by:

- **£50,000** received from Sandwell Health and Care Partnership for work on our Guided By You Programme.

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch Sandwell was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work in tackling inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers people face when accessing care, whether that is because of where you live, your ethnic background or disability.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. Listen to the experiences of people living with and managing Diabetes or are prediabetic.
2. Work with stakeholders to ensure access and information is accessible to all patients and service users, including having an awareness of the Accessible Information Standard and complaints process.
3. To explore the impact of cultural and language barriers in Health and Care services.



Statutory statements

Engaging Communities Solutions CIC holds the contract to deliver Healthwatch Sandwell and is based at Blakenall Village Centre, 79 Thames Road, Blakenall, Walsall, WS3 1LZ.



Healthwatch Sandwell 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 Board consists of 5 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met 5 times and made decisions on matters such as raising areas of concern to Health and Care Partnership Board and supporting the Scrutiny Board with an isolation and loneliness workstream

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

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 using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk

Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example we take information to Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board, Scrutiny Board, Adults Safeguarding Board and Provider Escalation Group for example.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in The Black Country Integrated Care System. For example, Sandwell work together with HW Walsall, HW Dudley and HW Wolverhampton by representing the Black Country and various meetings within the ICS such as BC integrated Care Board, System, Quality and Oversight Committee, Involvement and Advisory Assurance Group and Pillar 4 Access to Information task and finish group. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Enter and view

This year, we made 5 Enter and View visits. We made 5 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Pharmacy 365 (Church View) 249 Halesowen Road Cradley Heath	Patients raised concerns about of receiving prescriptions from General Practitioners and them being actioned by this pharmacy in a timely manner	Wrote reports with recommendations with regarding complaints processes within and outside of the community pharmacy
Lloyds Pharmacy Stone Cross 150-152 Walsall Road Stone Cross West Bromwich	As above	As above
Asda Pharmacy Wednesbury Oak Road Tipton	As above	As above
Duggals Chemist 75 Park Lane East Tipton	As above	As above
Late Night -196 Causeway Green Road Oldbury	As above	As above

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Sandwell is represented on the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board by Philip Griffin HAB Chair and Alexia Farmer HWS Manager. During 2022/23 our representatives have effectively carried out this role by contributing to agenda discussions and ensuring that the public/patient voice is heard where appropriate.

Healthwatch Sandwell is represented on Sandwell Health and Care Partnership by Philip Griffin HAB Chair.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Project / activity	Summary of actions
Accessibility	<p>The report has been shared (again) with the Sandwell Health & Care Partnership and wider communications community asking them to recognise the ask and recommendations from Healthwatch Sandwell.</p> <p>Through our contracting team, a request has been made of our Acute, Urgent Treatment Centres and Mental Health providers to establish their approach to meeting the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) and provision of interpreting services (including British Sign Language).</p> <p>Assurance is being sought via our quality and performance governance systems that providers/organisations are meeting the AIS.</p> <p>To understand the range of interpreting services offered by our 3 primary care providers, including if every practice can contact any of the service providers and Integrated Care Board (ICB) the ICB communications team will convene a task and finish group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce a guide for practices on how to access each of the interpreting services. • review of existing contracts to establish if they are sufficient. • understand what is possible from a digital perspective to ensure that communication needs are recorded in peoples records and part of Shared Care Records and how much information is currently included in people’s health records using communication codes.

healthwatch

Healthwatch Sandwell
Walker Grange
Central Avenue, Tipton
DY4 9RY

www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk

t: 0121 569 7211

e: info@healthwatchsandwell.co.uk



@HWSandwell



HWatchSandwell



healthwatchsandwell