

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch North Yorkshire
Annual Report 2021-22



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Message from our CEO

Reflecting on the last year and looking ahead to our future at Healthwatch North Yorkshire.

Firstly, I would like to thank our staff, volunteers and board members who have worked incredibly hard to make the last year an eventful year for us all. Alongside this, I would like to thank all the people across North Yorkshire who have shared their health and social care experiences with us, for example over the phone, by email, via our website, at our outdoor events or by taking part in our surveys and focus groups.

Without your insight we wouldn't have been able to make change happen and champion what matters to you.

Our relationships across health and social care have also been important to us and we have strived to continue building these across the system to ensure we play an instrumental role in bringing public insight and opinions to the forefront of decision making.

I would like to thank these colleagues for their cooperation, including those in; NHS Hospital Trusts (Acute & Mental Health), Clinical Commissioning Groups, North Yorkshire County Council, Primary Care, the Health & Care Partnerships in Humber & North Yorkshire and in West Yorkshire (including Craven), as well as those working in the Community Voluntary Sector.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report for 2021-22 which provides a summary of the many things we have undertaken, achieved and will continue to champion over the coming year.

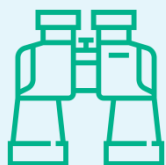


Ashley Green, Chief Executive Officer
Healthwatch North Yorkshire

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch North Yorkshire is your local health and social care champion. From Whitby to Craven and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS and social care leaders 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.



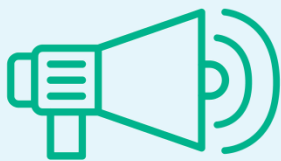
Our values

- 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



3,304 people

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

76,207 visits to our website

from people who came to us for advice and information about topics such as COVID-19 and NHS dentistry.

Making a difference to care



We published

8 reports and briefings

about people's experiences and the improvements they would like to see.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

80

outstanding volunteers, who gave up **157 days** to make care better for our community.

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

£167,459

Which is the same as the previous year.

We currently employ

5 staff

who help us carry out this work.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

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

Spring



We worked collaboratively across the county with partner organisations in for example Selby, Scarborough and Craven to hear from local people about their health and care concerns.



We updated our website to ensure we provided clear, consistent, and engaging content and added new accessibility features to make our website more accessible and user friendly to all.

Summer



When people struggled to access an NHS dentist, we called for radical reform of dental provision in our report. We also facilitated several focus groups to hear what people would want from their NHS dental practice.



We began to hear from young people about their experiences, including working in partnership with colleges and university to help steer our future work to influence improvements in young people's health and wellbeing.

Autumn



We worked in partnership with Healthwatch York to speak with care homes to find out what they thought the impact of mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations would have on their staff and services.



We developed a network of both organisations and individuals who share feedback with us on a regular basis and keep us informed of timely local health and social care issues.

Winter



We looked at the innovative ways care homes adapted their services during the pandemic. Our report highlighted the ways care homes worked to keep their residents safe and how these changes had a positive long-term effect.



We highlighted people's experiences of GP appointments and whilst there was much positive feedback, there were still some concerns about long waiting times to book appointments and a mixed response to using digital support.

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, including those who experience health inequalities and those people who aren't always listened to or involved in discussions about their health and social care a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture and provide feedback to services to help them improve. We've heard from people who have completed our surveys, participated in our focus groups, contacted us by phone, spoken to us at outdoor events and contacted us by social media.



Understanding the real-time health and care issues

We set up our networks of organisations and individuals to give people the opportunity to share their experiences of health and social care services with us by completing a regular survey focused on a set topic.

We published our COVID-19 report (Sep 2021) followed by two pulse reports, and one pulse briefing in the year. Our first pulse report (Nov 2021) focused on *Delays to Treatment* and our first pulse briefing (Dec 2021) focused on *Access to GP Appointments*.

Our second pulse report (Feb 2022) focused on public experiences of *Mental Health and Well-Being*, as mental health was raised as the biggest issue of concern in our first pulse report.



61% of respondents

told us that they had experienced mental health or well-being issues in the past 12 months.

The key issues identified in our pulse report focusing on *Mental Health and Well-Being* included:

- Around 60% of the sample had experienced mental health issues, particularly anxiety and stress, exacerbated by COVID-19.
- Most people went to their GP as their first port of call regarding mental health. However, people had a mixed experience of seeing their GP.
- 53% of the sample did not seek any support.
- Some people found the support offered useful once they managed to access it, but there were several barriers that prevented people from accessing help, including long waiting times, staff attitudes, the stigma around mental health and impersonal care.
- A supportive network of family and friends, exercise and being in nature, a positive home or work environment and routine all helped to contribute towards positive mental health and well-being.

What difference did this make

We shared the report widely with stakeholders involved in the delivery and commissioning of mental health services. An example of the feedback we received can be seen below.



“Some really helpful information here and I think information that is vital to the mental health community transformation work. I am going to raise it at the co-creation programme board and ask how we can better use this information to inform our services.”

Sally Smith, Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust



Call for radical reform of access to NHS dentistry

Thanks to people sharing their experiences of being unable to access an NHS dentist, we produced a report to highlight the key issues people across North Yorkshire are facing.

In August 2020, we published a report reviewing all public feedback we received from May 2020 to May 2021. The report included a review of 176 pieces feedback and signposting requests.

NHS dentistry has been a major area of concern for people across North Yorkshire and this report called for major, radical reform to the way that dentistry is commissioned. The lack of access to and availability to NHS dentistry has severely effected people, and it prompted an unprecedented response.

One of the main issues we heard was the lack of access to NHS dentists across North Yorkshire, and it is unsurprising that 83.5% of feedback we received relating to NHS dentistry was negative. Two other main issues we heard were related to long waiting times and concerns for children's oral health.



“COVID-19 has had a massive impact on how we can provide services. It means more time is required between patients – we must leave the room empty between patients for a deep clean. The PPE that we wear is time-consuming to put on and take off, as well as been exhausting to work with. This report by Healthwatch North Yorkshire demonstrates the need for improvements in the number and availability of NHS dentists.”
- **Zafran Majid, Dental Practice Manager.**



What difference did this make

Due to our call for change, NHS England invited us to be a part of their procurement panel for new dental services in North Yorkshire where we have contributed to the review of public and patient engagement and accessibility to services.

The findings presented in the report contributed to the establishment of a new dental working group in the former West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership, and to the work of the North Yorkshire County Council Health Scrutiny Board.

Additionally, due to our report and ongoing pressure by us and our Healthwatch colleagues in the region, we were invited to join a new Humber & North Yorkshire local dental network. Alongside this our report and public insight has helped to shape the development of a new NHS dental strategy for Yorkshire & Humber.

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health and social care by speaking to people about their experiences.

Working in partnership to hear more voices

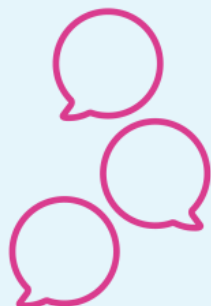
We frequently work in partnership with other organisations to understand and amplify what is important to members of the public.



We supported North Yorkshire CCG to facilitate public events where people could have their questions answered on the provision of stroke services across the county. Alongside this we undertook a joint survey to hear from people who had experienced stroke care both at hospital and in the community to feed into the future delivery of stroke services. Additionally, we asked for public feedback on stroke services that we shared with the CCG, North Yorkshire County Council and the York & Scarborough NHS Hospitals Trust.

Getting services to involve the public

We have prioritised our engagement across North Yorkshire to ensure we hear from those people who experience health inequalities.



We have heard from people with protected characteristics and the organisations that work with them, who have told us that for example older people, those living with dementia, and those with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue, often receive woefully inadequate care and support. We have shared this feedback with service providers and commissioners and have been working collaboratively with them to bring about positive service changes, for example in how these communities are communicated with, consulted on service design and listened to.

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.



Our volunteers (including trustees) have been involved in several local NHS projects to ensure that Healthwatch and the voice of local people are included in the development of new services. These include the redevelopment of Whitby Hospital which has been undergoing rapid transformation to ensure it meets the needs of the local community. Plus, the development of Catterick Integrated Care Campus in Richmondshire to support both the MoD personal and local population.

Advice and information

Healthwatch North Yorkshire 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.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19 and the vaccination programme
- Signposting people to relevant organisations
- Supporting the promotion of the NHS app
- Sharing public feedback with health and care providers across North Yorkshire to ensure people in North Yorkshire were heard



Making sure service users are listened to and understood

Over the past year we have received lots of feedback from members of the public who shared their experiences of getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

We frequently signposted members of the public to people they could speak with about the vaccine, and the places they could go to have the COVID-19 vaccination.

We also built connections with those people organising the roll out of the vaccination and we regularly got in touch to share feedback or ask for further advice and information.

We were successful in seeing improvements made to disabled access at several vaccination centres, for example at the Chain Lane Vaccination centre in Knaresborough, due to feedback we provided where wheelchair users told us they were finding it hard to access buildings



Dealing with the issues at hand

We provide monthly updates to our NHS Trusts and health and care providers to ensure they receive the latest feedback and issues that we have gathered.

Our updates include all the feedback we have heard directly via people getting in touch, at engagement events, focus groups, comments on surveys and indirectly via Care Opinion (another place that captures patient feedback).



All information is anonymous and shared by location and issue. Pleasingly, those organisations that we send our updates to all respond to let us know what actions they have or are taking as a result of the feedback. Often issues and complaints are raised with teams, and actions agreed to deal with the specific issues.

We passed on information about a patient with dementia being discharged with a cannula (a tube inserted into a vein for medication) still in place. York and Scarborough NHS Foundation Trust let us know that they had referred the issue to the Assistant Director of Nursing who would investigate and take the necessary steps to ensure this would not happen again.

Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch North Yorkshire. 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 gather experiences from people across North Yorkshire which informed our COVID-19 intelligence briefings.
- Attended public engagement events and spoke with members of the public.
- Raised awareness of our work by sharing our reports with their networks.
- Facilitated our focus groups and interviewed participants – making notes, and ensuring we had rich content for our reports.
- Attended meetings for Healthwatch North Yorkshire and fed back any key information to the team.





Patrick

"If you are thinking of volunteering, I would recommend Healthwatch North Yorkshire. You can contribute as much or little as you want whilst contributing to the local communities. You will also meet brilliant health and social care professionals and have engaging debates and discussions. But more importantly, you will be able to influence change for the better."



Shaun

"I volunteer for Healthwatch North Yorkshire because I like the concept of *"taking the nation's pulse"* by talking to patients about their health and social care experiences. By talking to people and gathering these experiences we can highlight health inequalities that would only become apparent after long periods or harmful incidents."



Agnes

"I became a trustee of Healthwatch North Yorkshire because as a parent of a child with a hearing impairment we have benefited for several years from the support and care of the NHS, and I wanted to give something back. Being a trustee has allowed me to see the importance that Healthwatch has in improving local care."



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchnorthyorkshire.co.uk

[01423 788 128](tel:01423788128)

admin@hwny.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 2021-2022		Expenditure 2021-2022	
Funding received from local authority	£167,459	Staff costs	£146,160
Additional funding	£17,600	Operational costs	£12,773
		Support and administration	£11,611
Total income	£185,059	Total expenditure	£170,544

Our priorities for 2022–23

- 1. Work with partners across social care, including care homes, to listen to those people delivering & receiving care to support service improvements.** Including our enter & view programme and exploring the impact of workforce shortages on people and services.
- 2. Listen to and gather the views of younger people to ensure they help to influence the design, delivery & commissioning of services they receive.** Involving, for example younger people, mental health providers and educational colleges.
- 3. Listen to & gather the views & experiences of people to ensure they help to improve the provision & delivery of health & care services.** Prioritising work around NHS dental provision, helping people to receive the right health information for their needs, and ensuring that people have improved access and understanding of continence services.
- 4. Work with key stakeholders & organisations to support & influence improvements in health & care services.** Including working with the newly established Integrated Care Systems in Humber & North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire (includes Craven).

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, your income, a protected characteristics (for example gender or disability) or whether you may be socially excluded, such as homeless.

Statutory statement

About us

Healthwatch England, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, E20 1JQ.

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



The way we work

Our Healthwatch board consists of 7 trustees who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2021/22 the board met ten times and made decisions on matters such as the recruitment of new trustees, our work with the new ICSs, and agreeing work priorities, such as working with care homes and younger people. The board also provided support and direction to the CEO and team.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. This includes for example speaking with and involving our volunteers, using the feedback and issues that we have received to help shape our decisions. Listening to our partners and stakeholders in health and social care, as well as considering the opinions and concerns of those people and communities who are seldom heard or unrepresented.

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

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2021/22 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a web-form on our website, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media, outdoor events and community networks.

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, promote it across our engagement networks, share it on social media and with our volunteers, and promote it via our newsletters.

Responses to our reports and recommendations

We received much feedback and praise from health and social care providers, managers and commissioners about our work, and the reports and briefings that we shared with them. On the majority of occasions our public feedback and report recommendations have been discussed and acted upon and have helped to influence service changes and improved patient experiences.

This has included improvements to new dental services across the county so that more people can access a local NHS dentist at a time or location that suits them. Also, that people receive the best possible support for their mental health needs in the community, with support tailored to their needs. Additionally, our work and reports has meant that local people have been able to shape local health decisions, for example across Scarborough and Selby by highlighting the important things that matter to them, from improved access to hospital treatment to affordable ways of exercising.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch North Yorkshire is represented on the North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board by Ashley Green, Chief Executive Officer. During 2021/22 our representative has effectively carried out this role by contributing to discussions around strategic priorities and public involvement. Ashley has brought public insight and issues to the Board, including the effect that a lack of NHS dentists is having on the oral health of people in North Yorkshire.

2021-2022 Outcomes

Projects, Reports and Briefings	Impact
<p>NHS dentistry in North Yorkshire: A review of public feedback 2020 – 2021 (Aug 2021).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We received an increased media interest as a result of this report, including interviews with BBC radio York and Greatest Hits Yorkshire. 2. We were invited to join the procurement process for new NHS services. This involved joining the procurement panel, with a focus on engagement and accessibility. 3. The findings contributed to the establishment of a dental working group for West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership. 4. The findings contributed to the work of North Yorkshire County Council Health Scrutiny Board. 5. We were invited to join a newly established Humber and North Yorkshire NHSE dental network.
<p>Covid-19 in North Yorkshire April – July 2021 (Sep 2021).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This report was shared with key stakeholders across the county, including the North Yorkshire County Council Covid outbreak advisory group. 2. The Vale of York CCG used the findings on GP services to contribute to their primary care development.
<p>Mandatory vaccinations in Care Homes – Briefing (Sep 2021).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This briefing was welcomed by North Yorkshire County Council and supported their ongoing work around care home provision and development. 2. We had significant media coverage and were interviewed on Yorkshire Coast News radio station.

Project / Activity Area	Impact
Public engagement in Scarborough and Robin Hood's Bay (Sep 2021).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New dental services were commissioned in these areas using the feedback we gathered to ensure the new services meet local peoples needs, for example by improved access, location, opening times etc.
Pulse report: public delays to treatment (Nov 2021).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report contributed to discussions within the Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care partnership to improve waiting times and support people manage their health.
Pulse briefing: the public experiences of GP appointments (Dec 2021).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This briefing led to discussions with North Yorkshire CCG and Vale of York CCG to explore wider engagement with the public around primary care provision and health professional access. 2. Our insight supported digital media campaigns by both the CCG's. 3. The briefing was shared and discussed at the Humber Coast and Vale digital inclusion partnership.
Care home's and COVID-19: lessons from an unprecedented time (Jan 2022).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report received praise from the North Yorkshire County Council and from the Independent Care group. 2. It was used as a tool to contribute to positive stories to attract and retrain social care staff and it was shared across the care sector to promote good practice.
Being healthy: ideas and reflections from Scarborough (Jan 2022).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This report acted to support future work by the Healthier Communities programme in Scarborough by identifying public need and service development. 2. The report was presented and discussed at the NHS Scarborough and Ryedale Partnership Board.
Pulse report: the public experience of mental health and well-being (Feb 2022).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We were interviewed by BBC Look North and local Greatest Hits Radio Yorkshire. 2. The report was discussed with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (who deliver mental health services across the county), and the findings contributed to the community mental health transformation programme.

healthwatch

North Yorkshire

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