

Your Voice Counts



Healthwatch Harrow Annual Report 2020-21

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Message from the Chair of Enterprise Wellness Ltd.

The last year has been like no other. A year during which the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on all our lives and livelihoods, especially the way we work in the “New Normal”.

I am deeply indebted to the dedication of our volunteers and the staff team for finding creative, yet sensitive ways to keep in touch with many of our residents, to ensure that we were still here to listen to them during the pandemic.

Outreach

The team reached out to 3,100 residents, recorded experiences of 2,143 local people, examined 561 stories of people from across the Borough’s General Practice - GP Surgeries. An incredible achievement given our size and funding, and the need to ensure that we maintained a healthy focus on all our statutory obligations.

Our virtual consultation forum held in March 2021, a year after the first lockdown, brought back happy memories of meeting with many of our residents face-to-face and with whom it had not been possible to engage for some time.

It was heartening to listen to their direct, yet positive contributions. No less inspiring, was the honest and upbeat contributions from all our stakeholders and partners that took part in the forum, about how our, and their local health and social care front-line heroes were, and are, still coping under challenging times, and that they are always here for all of us.

Residents’ concerns

Access to GP and Dental Services, along with health inequalities, digital exclusion and the pandemic related increase in mental health challenges were amongst the key concerns recorded by the team. Healthwatch Harrow will monitor trends in these on a periodic basis.

Achievements

I am grateful to my fellow Trustees of the Harrow Mencap Board, our parent company, for their unreserved commitment to providing additional resources to ensure that the Healthwatch service and offer remained viable.

This commitment helped to secure an additional £5K funding from the local authority to focus on the Eastern European Community ensuring that outreach activities remained a priority, particularly with the Romanian and Somalian communities.

Beyond Pandemic

The vaccination programme has undoubtedly given some respite and hope for the future.

However, we know that continuing to understand people's needs, analysing their concerns, and raising these as effectively and efficiently as possible with stakeholders, partners, and providers, will be crucial. As will keeping an eye on issues regarding Post Covid and health inequalities, and how these are being addressed.

Volunteers

The pandemic has brought out the best in people's generosity and dedication to volunteering for all kinds of community services throughout the nation, and locally.



Healthwatch Harrow values the time and commitment our own volunteers provide. We will continue to strengthen our local volunteer base and our Healthwatch Harrow Champions.

I look forward to supporting the team in this over the coming year.



Ash Verma
Chair of Enterprise Wellness Ltd.



About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Harrow. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Sharing the information you need

Through our communication channels we help share key information that residents need to be aware of about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals



1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



2 Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares experiences / feedback with us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



“Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone’s views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people’s lives.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Mission and Objectives

“Healthwatch Harrow are here to champion your concerns about health and social care provision in Harrow by making sure your views on local health and social care services are heard and fed back to the people who commission these services to ensure they improve.”

“Improving and shaping local health and social care”



Our vision is simple

To provide an independent voice and source of information and influence for the residents of Harrow.



Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

Our approach

People’s views come first – especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Holding Healthwatch Forums
- Attending public information sessions
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Working with other organisations in the community
- Undertaking outreach activities
- Attending stakeholder meetings, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body amongst others.

Our main job is to raise people’s concerns with health and care decision makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.

Our Priorities



Engagement

To engage at a local level to gather intelligence and be the voice for local people around issues relating to health and social care in Harrow to influence commissioning of services via:

- Healthwatch Forums
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Intelligence Reports
- Outreach/surveys

Information Sharing & Signposting

We provide a signposting service and in addition work with SWiSH to ensure the best signposting service is provided. We also ensure key information is shared with the residents of Harrow. We do this via:

- Our social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, twitter
- Capturing intelligence in our Community Insight CRM and sharing our quarterly reports
- Our website and bi-monthly newsletters

Monitoring & Scrutiny

Monitor and scrutinise specific aspects and priorities & targets of Health & Wellbeing Board, Clinical Commissioning Group and Integrated Care Programme, through:

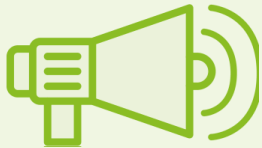
- Policy, Strategy & Scrutiny Meetings
- Healthwatch Annual Report
- Quality Statement Accounts
- Local Intelligence to CQC
- Trend Analysis Report.



Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out **3,100 residents**

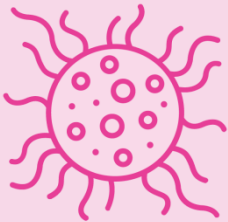


Residents have engaged with us, whether that's at outreach, meetings and online events. That's a lot of conversations, information and advice given, experiences shared.

760 Stakeholders

are in our database, from individual residents, community groups and organisations, and professionals working in health and social care. These are the people we communicate with regularly, many of which actively participate in our projects and initiatives

Responding to the pandemic



We received feedback from

701 residents relating to the Pandemic

1,864 issues being identified

(covering General, Infected, Testing and Vaccine) relating to the pandemic

Making a difference to care

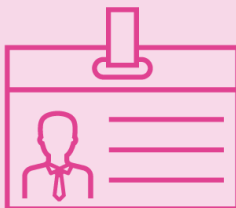


We published

17 reports

Focussing on GP & Dental Access, GP patient experiences, Northwick Park Hospital. In addition we undertook 2 Covid 19 surveys to identify the key issues that were impacting people as a result of the pandemic. (Reports can be can here <https://www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk/insight-and-reports>)

Health and care that works for you



12 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed 165 sessions, and around 660 hours.

We employ 5 part time staff

We are a small team consisting of an Operations Manager undertaking 7 hours per week, an Outreach Manager for 3 days per week, an Associate Information Manager for 2 days per month, a Database & Social Media Administrator and an Administration Officer for 1 day a week.

We received £65,000 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21.

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



20,000 items - service user feedback

Has been collected processed and analysed. This means that Healthwatch Harrow has built up a substantial, meaningful evidence base, one that we and our partners including community groups, commissioners and regulators have utilised frequently.

Reaching out



290 activities

Have been conducted, such as meetings attended and events held.

165 volunteer sessions

Have been recorded and our volunteer team has contributed around 660 hours assisting us at every level in the organisation.

Monitoring Services



2,143 residents

Experience has been recorded through our Patient Experience Panel who meet regularly to review this information or contacted us with questions about local support.

Reaching out through social media



1,505 followers on Twitter

82,890 Impressions and 10,605 Profile visited

531 Followers on Facebook

501 likes and 3379 viewings

258 followers on Instagram



The Shape of Local Services



GP's

We recorded the experience of 2,143 local people. Thanks to the work of our Patient Experience Panel, who met regularly throughout the year to review this information, we have a good sense of residents' collective experiences.

This year we examined the stories of 561 patients, from surgeries across Harrow.

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction has improved marginally by 1%. The vast majority of people continue to receive good quality, compassionate treatment and nursing care, with most feeling supported and involved.

While satisfaction on service access has improved by 4%, complaints remain commonplace - the ability to obtain timely appointments is a problem for many, with accounts of congested telephone lines and waits of days (or more) to see a clinician. Remote appointments and digital services receive mixed views – convenient for some patients, but not for others.

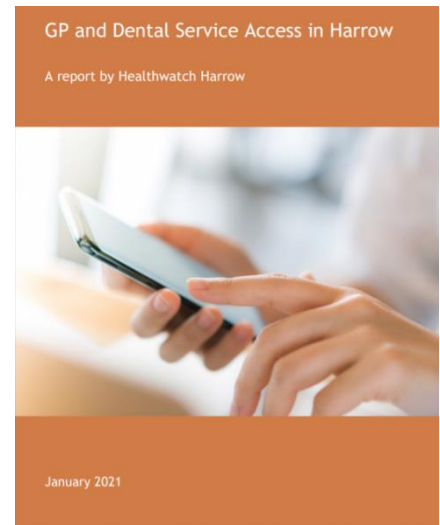


GP and Dental Service Access in Harrow

Access to General Practice's (GP's) and Dental Services is an issue that we are increasingly hearing about, which resulted in our undertaking further investigation, the findings of which are included in our report.

In summary the findings are based on our survey, mystery patient exercise, trend analysis reports and feedback from residents through our outreach. This last year has been an extremely difficult year for everyone as a result of the pandemic, particularly those people working within the NHS. We fully recognise the hard work that is being undertaken as we wrote our report. The purpose of our report was to share what Harrow residents are saying to us. There is general awareness of the issues that need to be addressed. This report was written in the spirit of collaborative working, knowing how hard people are working but also recognising that **patients have the right to access services and to clearly understand how they can do this.**

[Please click here to read our full report GP & Dental Service Access in Harrow](#)



healthwatch
Harrow



“I was satisfied when I used the online form for a known condition and the doctor called me back, however I need to speak to/see a doctor about a new condition and can't book an appointment online and can't get through on the phone.”

In 2017 Healthwatch Harrow produced a GP Access report to see this, click the following link: [Healthwatch Harrow GP Access Report June 2017](#). Many of the issues remain the same.

With the onset of lockdown in March 2020 due to Covid 19 there was a shift in how people access their GPs. Feedback from the community prior to Covid 19 showed peoples experiences were varied with some unable to get through to their GP surgeries, since then the level of dissatisfaction has greatly increased, as evidenced through our Trend Analysis Reports. It is disappointing to see that some of our previous recommendations have not been addressed, please click the following link for our Trend Analysis Report:

[GP Patient Experience, 01.01.20 - 31.12.20](#). For more of our reports please visit: <https://www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk/insight-and-reports>.

There has understandably been a shift in how we access GP Surgeries such as using online platforms for booking appointments and for requesting repeat prescriptions. However, this has exposed the inequalities in Harrow, not all families can afford digital resources. Some patients can only access services by telephone or mail and these are the issues that have been fed back to us.



The Shape of Local Services



Dentists

In addition, we have been increasingly getting more issues raised with us around the difficulties in getting NHS dental appointments, as most dentists had to reduce what was on offer to patients because of the risk of infection and some dentists struggled to find adequate PPE during the first phase of the pandemic. To gain an insight into the extent of the problem we did some investigative work between November and December to ascertain the extent of these issues, so that we would have evidence to share with stakeholders who influence and commission GP and dental contracts. This year we examined the stories of 631 dental patients, from practices across Harrow.

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction has improved by 10%. Those visiting services report good organisation, with hygiene and infection measures clearly visible, appointments on time, and a personal and caring approach by all staff.

We also heard from dozens of residents, many in need of urgent treatment, who found it extremely difficult to register for and receive treatment on the NHS



To view our PEP reports click visit

<https://www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk/insight-and-reports>



The Shape of Local Services



Northwick Park Hospital

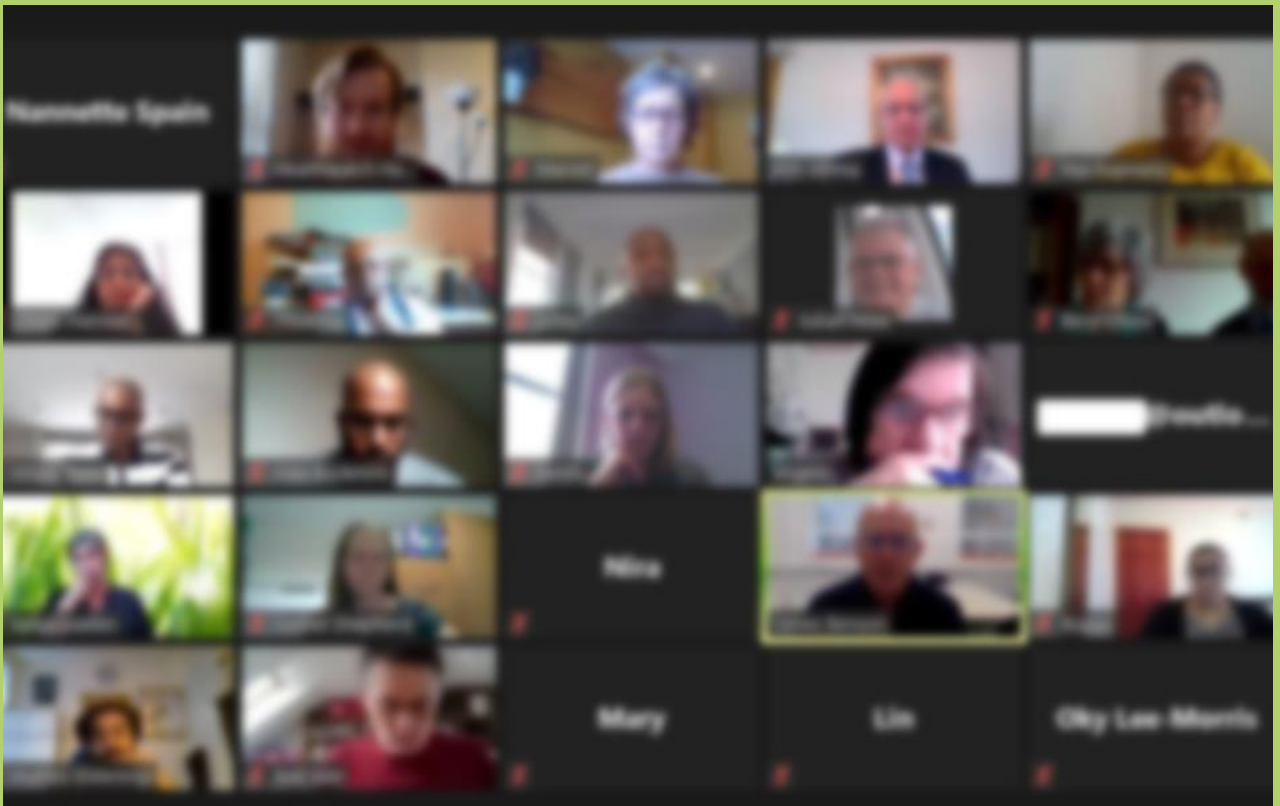
This year we reviewed the experience of 220 patients across the hospital, including A&E, Maternity, Inpatients and Outpatients.

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction has improved by 10%.

Patients comment on good quality, compassionate treatment and care from staff across the hospital.

After Healthwatch Harrow raised concerns with the hospital, regular meetings now take place to monitor progress of work being undertaken it is reassuring to see that complaints about administration and telephone access have significantly decreased this year – with more people getting through on the phone, and the content of letters more accurate and concise.

While the overall service has improved, many people would like greater levels of communication, involvement and support.



Your Conversation Event

In March 2021 Healthwatch Harrow held a Public Conversation Event, attended by around 50 local people.

Featuring guest panellists from Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust, Voluntary Action Harrow, Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Adult Social Care and Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust, the residents were able to ask questions on a range of topics. From discussion, we heard about:

Inequalities of Patient Access to GP Surgeries: New ways of working need to address that online does not suit everyone - going forward 30% of consultations will be online and triage will continue via phone.

Long Term Covid-19: There is a need to further understand what it is, its impact and any measures that need to be put in place to address it.

Single Point of Contact for Mental Health Referral: Greater clarity required around how the service operates and contact points both emergency and non-emergency.

Day Opportunities: The impact on loneliness, isolation and mental health drives the need for investment in building resilience and preventative services – a 'whole system' approach.

Social Prescribing: Has been highly effective in providing support and help to those people who have lower social care needs, by linking people with organisations that can help. The Social Prescribing team work with all the GP surgeries.



How are you feeling?

The mental wellbeing of residents in Harrow

The end of March 2020 saw the country plunged into lockdown because of the Covid19 pandemic. Although mental health and wellbeing has always affected many, the lack of the usual face to face interaction within the community has had a massive impact amongst all ages. Healthwatch Harrow started to hear more and more cases of the impact on individual's wellbeing. Covid-19 has impacted the pace at which services progressed during the year 2020 - 2021 and Healthwatch Harrow recognised the need to find out how Harrow residents were feeling and reacting to what was happening externally both globally as well as locally within their communities. Mental health is such a wide area and there is already a lot of work being undertaken to improve access to support for those suffering from mental health.

This last year has been an extremely difficult year for everyone because of the pandemic. The purpose of our Mental Wellbeing report was to share what Harrow residents are saying to us about their mental wellbeing and how the pandemic has affected them. There are both positive and negative comments in the feedback we have received, but no unexpected surprises.

The key element to the addressed is ensuring that future commissioning of services meets the clear increased demand [Click here for report.](#)



“Appreciate that it is not just formal mental health services which contribute to a person's mental health, it is also clubs like the bowling clubs which contribute hugely to people having a positive outlook on life.”



Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch play an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

In response to COVID-19, health and care services have had to change the way they provide support overnight. Some non-urgent treatment has been suspended and face-to-face appointments have been replaced with video and telephone calls.

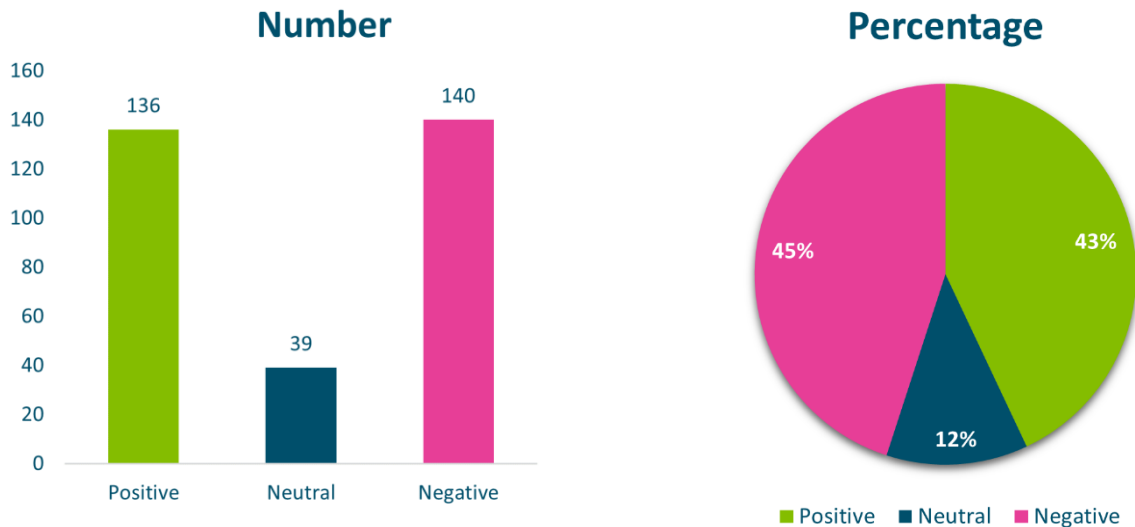
While health and care staff are doing everything they can to keep us well and safe, changes to how services work has naturally affected people's experiences of care. Our role is to find out what matters most to people and to make sure their views shape the support they need. Our key priority is to identify areas of concern, provide clarity where we can, address issues which can be resolved and learn for the future.

To do this we have shared key information via our website, newsletters and social media we launched 2 COVID-19 Surveys, one in May 2020 after the UK lockdown was announced and then in June 2020 to find out about some of the issues people have been facing and to help NHS and social care services understand the effect of COVID-19. We kept the surveys short, asking 3 key questions:

1. How has the outbreak affected you and your loved ones?
2. What is your postcode?
3. Which GP practice are you registered with?

410 surveys were received, feedback was received from 701 residents with 1,864 issues identified.

Initial survey - Findings in Brief: How do people feel?



Overall, people are feeling slightly depressed. 45% of issues are negative, 12% neutral and 43% positive

What you told us:



"I am working from home but it's so difficult with home-schooling children and also looking after a 3 year old. It's nice bonding as a family but everyone also needs their space which is difficult. The children have taken it all in their stride but my 8 year old who is anxious anyway worries about touching everything and washes his hands all the time."



"I cannot go out of my house or let anyone come in due to my condition. I am not allowed to go even to my garden. I live on my own and disabled so cannot even dress myself properly. So difficult."



To view our Healthwatch Harrow Covid-19 Survey Report May 2020 please visit:

https://www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk/sites/default/files/healthwatch_harrow_covid-19_survey_may_2020.pdf

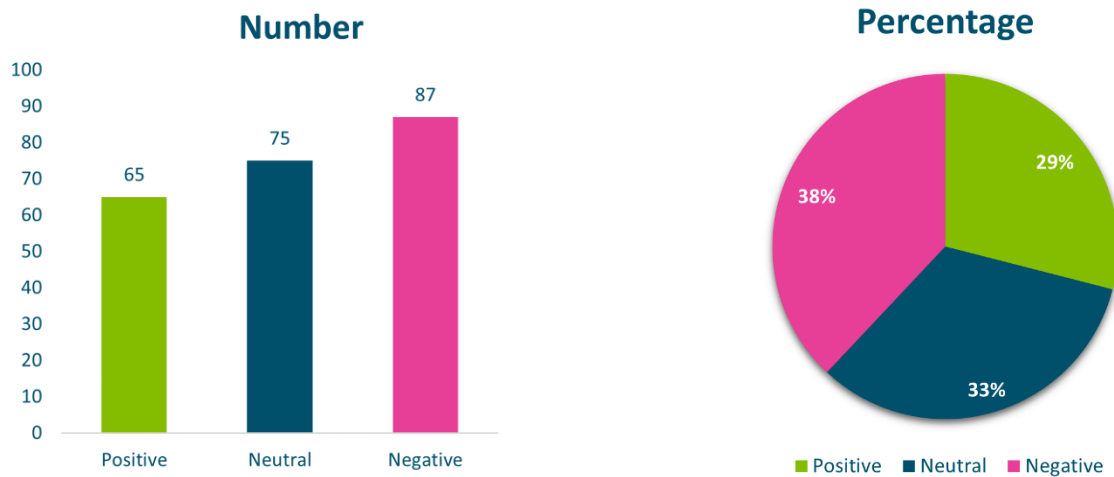
Next Stage : Lockdown changes

We launched our second survey, in line with lockdown restrictions easing, to find out how the changes were affecting people 2 months into lockdown - 145 residents completed this survey:

Again, we kept the survey short, asking 3 key questions:

- How has the loosening of the lockdown affected you and your loved ones?
- What is your postcode?
- Which GP practice are you registered with?

Findings in Brief: How do people feel?



Over a third of comments (38%) are negative on the whole, this compares with 45% from the initial survey in March – May 2020. While the proportion of negativity is still significant, we can say it has improved by 7% during June 2020.

What you told us:



“The economy can always be recovered but human lives cannot.”



“Loosening lockdown is very concerning - there are very good signs of a second wave coming in October and having many more due from this”.



To view our Healthwatch Harrow Covid-19 Lockdown Changes Survey Report June 2020 please visit:

https://www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk/sites/default/files/hwh_covid-19_survey_next_stage_june_2020.pdf



Volunteers

2020 saw our volunteers rise to the challenge each time we reached out to them. During the year our volunteers were involved with engagement within the community, listening to experiences of Harrow residents and attending key strategic meetings with stakeholders. We cannot thank them enough. Volunteers are the backbone of our engagement and bring a wealth of experience and opportunity for which we are eternally grateful.

The diversity of our volunteers is shaping up to reflect the diversity of Harrow residents. Our approach to volunteer development mirrored external situations where the onset of Covid 19 resulted in the growth of virtual volunteering. We continue to ensure support for our volunteers to enable and empower them to go out (sometimes virtually) in the community to champion the patient's voice. We have a strong team of 12 volunteers, which continues to grow.

Moving forward, volunteers will continue to add value and extend our reach into some of the communities that are emerging and seldom heard. We plan to attract more residents from Harrow by offering a variety of opportunities like micro volunteering, employer-supported volunteering and sustain our existing volunteer base. This will run parallel to ensuring Healthwatch Harrow is more visible amongst all stakeholders.



Volunteer with us

 www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk

 **020 3432 2889**

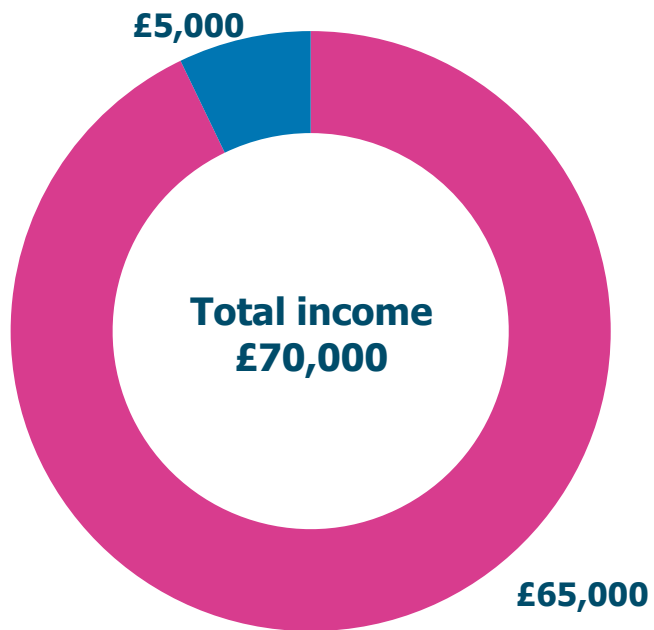
 info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

Finances

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

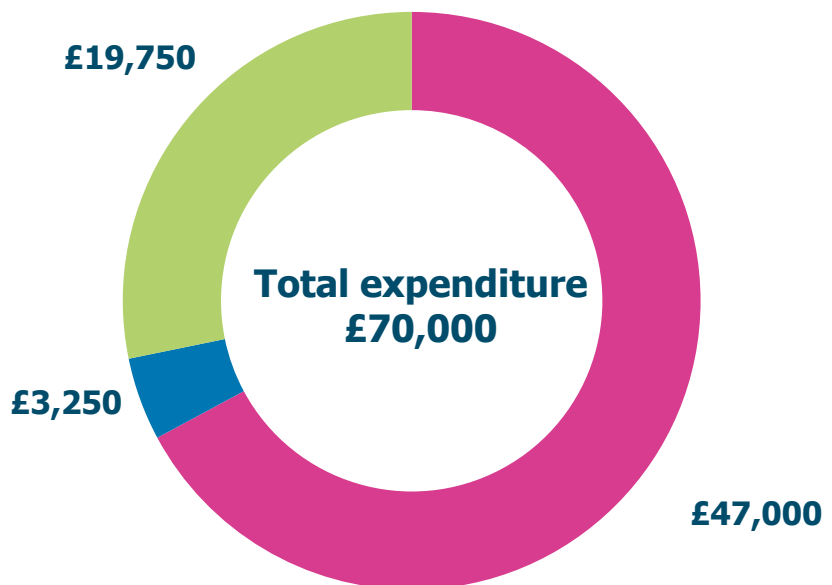
Income

- Funding received from local authority, as per contract
- Additional funding received for quarters 3 & 4 for delivery of a specific engagement project



Expenditure

- Staff Costs
- Management Costs
- How much does it cost to run our Healthwatch



Message from the Operations Manager

The past 12 months have been a difficult time for everyone as we have adapted to living with the pandemic and the challenges that has brought, the isolation and anxiety. For many of us adapting to working from home, learning new technology and different ways of communicating. The past year has also highlighted the equalities that exist in the UK and in Harrow.

We are a small, but I like to think “perfectly formed” team. Our outreach over the past year has been online. We recognise that we have not reached everyone, particularly those who do not have digital access. However, we have undertaken a number of surveys and produced the findings of these surveys and in addition two further reports around GP & Dental Access and the impact of covid on the Mental Wellbeing of the residents of Harrow. These can be found on our website. Their findings have identified key issues to be addressed which have been escalated to commissioners and we are monitoring progress.



Our services are commissioned by the Local Authority and the budget for our contract has remained static for the past 2 years and has been renewed for 2021 to 2023 on the same figure of £65k per year. We continually strive to deliver within that budget which means at times we have to redefine what we can deliver.

As we move forward our focus is clearly on continuing our outreach, producing our reports / newsletters and quarterly trend analysis reports, but most importantly ensuring the voice of the resident of Harrow is heard by those that commission our services, both locally and at North West London level. Access to services is a key issue which we continue to address, particularly: GP, Dental, Mental Health and digital exclusion. The long-term impact of covid and the need to ensure sufficient services are commissioned to deal with the increased demand is also something we are working on.

Finally, a massive thank you to the residents of Harrow who take the time to speak with us, complete surveys, attend our forums, engage and share their stories, so that local services can be improved and to our volunteers, without whom we couldn't operate.



Marie Pate
Operations Manager

Community Engagement

In an effort to hear the experiences of people of Harrow our engagement strategy was targeted to address the diversity within Harrow. Our usual quarterly forums could no longer take place face to face because of the pandemic, so we have had to develop different and innovate ways to engage through our online activities, social media and the development of our Healthwatch Champions.

This year we:

- Listened to young people to learn how they wanted to engage with us
- We increased engagement through social media reaching new audiences and increasing our reach
- Held monthly focus groups with Romanian and Somalian Women's groups
- Held a dental session delivered in partnership with a local dentist
- Engaged with Ridgeway surgery and the Romanian community to address key issues
- Attended the Friendship club every week at Wealdstone Methodist church
- Engaged in 2 sessions with Harrow Mencap volunteers - Reaching communities
- Increased visibility within Harrow through Harrow Times, Harrow council website. Leafletting through foodbanks and shop windows. Contributions to Harrow College intranet, newsletters of Carers UK, Young Harrow Foundation

With additional funding from Harrow Council we engaged in a focused project with Romanian Culture and Charity Together, to look at overcoming language and digital barriers. We held some interactive sessions around Health and Social Care experiences over a 6 month period which cumulated in providing a qualitative insight into the key issues facing this community. Healthwatch Harrow will use this model of engagement to help break down barriers for those who face difficulties in accessing health and social care services.



Yaa Asamany
Outreach Manager



Next steps & thank you

The top priorities for 2021-22

- Integrated Care Programme & Integrated Care System – ensuring the voice of Harrow Residents is heard at North West London level
- Impact on communities of Covid, long Covid and the vaccination programme
- Health & Social Care inequalities faced by the residents of Harrow
- Access to services – including digital inclusion.

The drivers for the next 12 months are:

- White Paper setting out legislative proposals for a Health & Care Bill - "Integration and Innovation: Working together to Improve Health and Social Care for All"
- Harrow partners' recovery plan out of the pandemic and building resilience.



Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- **Members of the public who shared their views and experiences with us**
- **All of our amazing staff and volunteers**
- **The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work.**

healthwatch Harrow

Statutory statements

About us

Enterprise Wellness Ltd., 3 Jardine House, Harrovia Business Village, Bessborough Road, Harrow HA1 3EX

Healthwatch Harrow 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.

Enterprise Wellness Ltd. (EWL) manages the Healthwatch Harrow contract, who are a subsidiary of Community Connex Ltd., (formerly Harrow Mencap), and are governed by the Board of Community Connex Ltd.



Enterprise Wellness

healthwatch

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