



Speaking up for better care

Healthwatch Harrow Annual Report 2025/26

Contents

A message from our Chair	3
About us	4
Our year in numbers	5
A year of making a difference	7
Working together for change	8
Making a difference in the community	9
Listening to your experiences	10
Championing community concerns	17
Hearing from all communities	18
Information and signposting	19
Showcasing volunteer impact	20
Finance and future priorities	23
Statutory statements	25

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Acting Chief Executive
Chris McCann

The NHS plays a vital role in our lives, and we know it faces real challenges. Listening to people's thoughts about their care is one of the best ways to improve services. Every comment, concern, and compliment helps health and care professionals see what works and what needs to change, so care can be safer and better for everyone.

We want to say a heartfelt thanks to all the local people who have taken the time to share their experiences, and to the health and social care professionals who have listened and acted on that feedback. Your commitment has helped make a real difference for our community.

A message from our Chair

I am pleased to present Healthwatch Harrow's Annual Report for 2025/26. Despite uncertainty around future funding, we are delighted to have secured funding for a further two years. Our dedicated team, volunteers, and ambassadors have unwaveringly represented and supported Harrow residents, ensuring local voices remain central at a time of continued pressure on the NHS and social care system.

Our reach and impact

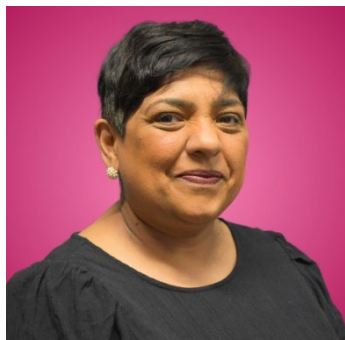
This year, Healthwatch Harrow reached 4,500 local people. We now have 945 active stakeholders in our database. We've published 35 reports and issued six newsletters viewed by more than 900 people. Our diverse communities face evolving challenges, from accessing primary care to navigating mental health and social support. Thanks to your willingness to share your experiences, we have been able to bridge the gap between residents and decision-makers, ensuring local needs are heard at the highest levels.

Championing local voices

Throughout 2025 and in 2026, our primary focus has been ensuring that the voices of Harrow residents remain at the heart of local decision making, particularly as the Harrow Borough Based Partnership and the Integrated Care System adapt to ongoing national structural changes. We gathered residents' experiences of GP surgeries, Northwick Park Hospital, the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, and dentists. We evidenced areas of best practice and highlighted areas where residents call for improvement. We spoke with young people about the factors that impact their mental health and wellbeing along with their experiences of accessing services.

Looking ahead

Healthwatch Harrow would not be possible without our volunteers, staff, and the public who share their experiences. While we look back on a year of substantial progress, our work is far from finished. As the health and care landscape continues to evolve, we remain committed to being an independent voice that will hold local services to account. We will support calls for improvement, and champion fairness, accessibility, and high-quality care for every resident in Harrow.



**Chair of
Trustees**
Rebecca Amin

About us

Healthwatch Harrow is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure your views shape the support you need. We do this by sharing your views and experiences with those who have the power to make change happen.



Our vision

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



Our mission

Healthwatch Harrow is 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 improvements are made.



Our purpose and approach

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

People's views come first – especially those people 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.

Our year in numbers

We've supported more than 4,500 people to have their say and get information about their care. We employed three part-time staff, and our work was supported by 16 volunteers.

Reaching out:



4,500 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

945 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 whom actively participate in our projects and initiatives.

6 newsletters have been produced and have been used to share and promote key issues and information to over 900 people. [Click here to view our newsletters](#)

Championing your voice:



We published 35 reports on areas such as hospitals and health, social isolation, experience of GP services, and experiences of health, care and community services.

[Click here to view our reports](#)



Statutory funding:

We are funded by Harrow Council. In 2025–26 we received £80,000, which is 4.58% more than last year.

Our year in numbers

Our volunteer team helped to collate 17,000 items of user feedback through their 448 hours of support, while our social media reach has doubled.



17,000 items of service user feedback have 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 used frequently. This depth of evidence is important: routine reports, such as those on GPs, hospitals or mental health services, will be underpinned by large volumes of feedback and whatever the topic, there will usually be something in the database.



Around 200 substantial activities have been conducted this year, including meetings attended and events held.

This year, our volunteer team has contributed 448 hours assisting us at every level in the organisation – from developing strategy and attending meetings to helping with outreach and engagement.



We continue to increase our online presence through our website and social media channels. Our reach has almost doubled.

- 10,027 website visitors to our new website.
- 31,101 followers on social media (X, Facebook and Instagram).

A year of making a difference

We've been out and about in the community listening to your stories, engaging with partners, and working to improve care in Harrow. Here are a few highlights.

Spring

Our trend analysis reports highlighted issues around access to services especially with specific surgeries and care homes.



Our newsletters have raised awareness, informed residents and promoted key issues with over 900 people.



Summer

We attended Health & Wellbeing Board meetings to ensure the voice of the residents of Harrow was heard at borough level.



We launched our ambassadors programme, allowing us to do a deep dive to pull up stories from people who are not often heard.



Autumn

We attended Stanmore College Freshers Fair, where students spoke to us about volunteering and mental health. The event was attended by 1,000 students and as a result our social media following increased.



We held monthly meetings with our volunteers to share their knowledge and outreach work, and to facilitate a supportive network.



Winter

We hosted a forum in October 2025 to discuss how to make eye, ear and dental care more accessible: 80 residents attended.



Our team and volunteers reached out to residents to hear their experiences of health and social care services and empower them to give feedback.



Working together for change

Healthwatch Harrow is funded to operate at a local level and inputs into Harrow Borough Based Partnership, Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Management Board, and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub Committee. Through the borough-based governance structure we ensure our intelligence is fed to the NHS West and North London Integrated Care Board.



A collaborative network:

4,500 people have engaged with us this year, whether that is at outreach, meetings, community festivals, or events. That is a lot of conversations, information and advice given, and experiences shared.



A big conversation:

On 9 October 2025, Healthwatch Harrow hosted a forum, which brought together 80 residents and local health experts to discuss how to make eye, ear and dental care more accessible within the community. Prior to the event, a survey was sent out to gather people's views on optician, dentist and audiology services in the borough.

[Click here to read the full report on Healthcare Support & Services in the Community.](#)



Building strong relationships to achieve more:

Our quarterly trend reports brief boards and the Harrow Borough Based Partnership on resident issues across local healthcare services. We share these insights with key partners including Harrow Council, Harrow Public Health, Primary Care Executive Group, LNW University Healthcare NHS Trust, Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust, Joint Management Board, Health & Wellbeing Board, Care Quality Commission, and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub Committee.

Making a difference in the community

We bring people's experiences to healthcare professionals and decision-makers, using their feedback to shape services and improve care over time. Here are some examples of our work in Harrow this year:



Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

Hearing personal experiences and their impact on people's lives helps us to understand the issues people face.

We supported a forum in June 2025 to help community members recognise, avoid, and report scams that especially target vulnerable groups such as those with learning disabilities and autism



Getting services to involve the public

By involving local people, we help services to improve care for everyone.

In Q4 2025, some of our volunteers attended a public consultation regarding the future of cancer services provided by Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. A full report will be published by the NHS later this year.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.

Our volunteers attend hospital patient and carers groups; they also help with decision making on items such as menu planning, publicity materials and wayfinding around the hospital.

Listening to your experiences

Services can't improve if they don't know what's wrong. Your experiences shine a light on issues that may otherwise go unnoticed.

This year, we've listened to feedback from all areas of our community. People's experiences of care help us know what's working and what isn't, so we can give feedback on services and help them improve.



Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Over the year, we recorded the experiences of 4,547 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.

GPs

What did we do?

This year we examined the stories of 2,420 patients from surgeries across Harrow.

Key things we heard



82%

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction has declined marginally by 1%, standing at 82% positive at the end of March.

71%

Service access has improved by 6% to reach an overall level of 71%. Within this there are both upward and downward trends.

78%

Satisfaction with online access has notably risen.

The vast majority of people continue to receive good quality, compassionate treatment and nursing care, with most feeling supported and involved.

Firstly, the positives. Patients are finding it easier to book online, mainly through the PATCHS system used by most local practices. Appointment requests and general queries are processed "within hours" we hear. There is also more flexibility now, with patients able to select who they see – a doctor, nurse or other staff member (social prescriber or pharmacist, for example).

Waiting times are coming down as well, according to feedback.



"I used the PATCHS system to get an appointment. I received a text and also a call to confirm a time later that day. It's a much-improved service."

"I was seen within two hours of my appointment request. No waiting at the surgery either – straight in and out."

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

GPs

Now, the negatives. Satisfaction with telephone access has declined by 30% over the year to stand at just 20% positive (four out of every five comments are complaints). While booking systems are working better, they are also becoming more restricted – it is commonly reported that online booking is now the “only viable option” at many local practices.



“I waited over 30 minutes to get through, only to be told – in an unfriendly manner – to book online.”

“I was at the practice and told to go away and book!”

What difference did this make?

Our trend analysis reports provided evidence for GPs and primary care networks to identify surgeries with best practice and those where improvement is required. This was shared and used by the commissioners and the GP networks to improve services. [Click here to view our reports.](#)

In addition to our trends analysis reports, we developed a survey to learn if patients are being treated fairly and equally, and if any support offered meets a wide variety of needs and circumstances. We are now in our third year of running this survey to benchmark and assess any change in access. The evidence from this survey will be fed into our reports to commissioners.

[Click here to read the latest report.](#)



“I would still like to have the option of calling and requesting an appointment directly. I believe that babies should be given priority, and there should be a simpler and faster option for parents.”

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Northwick Park Hospital

What did we do?

This year, we reviewed the experience of 311 patients across the hospital, including A&E, Maternity, Inpatients and Outpatients. However, we must stress that our trends are not representative of experiences as a whole. The trends we report measure feedback coming directly to Healthwatch Harrow only.

Key things we heard



6%

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction is up by 6%. Patients are feeling more involved in their treatment and care overall, and they are now more likely to compliment staff (receptionists, nurses or doctors).



“My mum broke her hip and was admitted on Monday morning. The staff at each department have been so friendly, patient and caring. Really good natured, so refreshing to see.”

However, on access, particularly waiting times at the emergency department, satisfaction has continued to decline. Staff are observed to be “working hard” but waiting times of 10 hours or more are commonly reported. This is one area we will be watching closely in the coming year.

What difference did we make?

The evidence provided by our trend analysis reports are shared with London North West University Healthcare Trust. In addition, the evidence is presented at strategic meetings and regular patient experience meetings to help influence the changes required. [Click here to view our reports.](#)

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital

What did we do?

This year we reviewed the experience of 30 people. Feedback suggests that overall satisfaction is at a very good level.

Key things we heard

Patients are very complimentary of the staff and service



The experiences we have received mention hard-working and dedicated staff of all categories (clinicians, nurses, and administrative and support staff). The organisation and effectiveness of treatment and care is also widely complimented by patients and their families.



"I was treated excellently from start to finish. The operation went well and the ward was clean, with very good nurses. The food was pretty decent as well!"

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Dentists

What did we do?

This year, we examined the stories of 1,654 dental patients from practices across Harrow.

Key things we heard



90%

Satisfaction remains at well over 90%. Those visiting services say that appointments are well-organised and on time, and that staff (receptionists, dentists and assistants) have been caring, with good levels of communication and involvement.



"I've always had a phobia of dentists. Not now though, the lovely dentist and her assistant calmed my nerves right away, talking me through each step. I look forward to my next visit now!"

What difference did this make?

We use the trends and indicators in our reports to identify areas of potential improvement, and equally to learn from existing good practice. We also benchmark – by looking at how services perform over time and how they compare with similar services in other boroughs.

[Click here to view our reports.](#)

Combining all feedback, we detect an upward trend of steady improvement with satisfaction standing at 84% at the end of March 2026 – up by 3% on the previous year.

Patients are feeling well looked after on the whole, with satisfaction at 92% on staff attitude, and 86% on feeling involved. On access, too, things are looking up with a 5% improvement recorded.

We feel, services are moving in the right direction, and we will be watching our trends closely this coming year.

Listening to your experiences

Experiences of health and care services

Our last quarterly report examined the experience of 1,063 local people.

Key things we heard

Overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction is at 84% positive and 16% negative. Feedback suggests people receive good quality, compassionate treatment and care on the whole, with good levels of involvement and communication.

Information, involvement and support

Satisfaction is at 84% positive and 16% negative, comments suggest. This quarter, complaints are down by 8% on communication, while up by 5% on support and by 2% on user involvement.

Quality and empathy

According to comments, satisfaction is at 90% positive and 10% negative. Good levels of quality and empathy continue to be reported.

Access to services

Satisfaction is at 73% positive and 27% negative. This quarter, complaints are down by 17% on telephone access, while up by 1% on ability to book appointments and waiting times.

Championing community concerns to make services more accessible

What did we do?

Over the last year we have been tracking residents' concerns and feedback on all the GP surgeries in Harrow. We have produced our trend analysis report from this data.

Key things we heard

One surgery in particular received over 100 complaints.



86%

of users reported negative feedback on the surgery in general.

73%

felt the quality and empathy of the surgery staff lacking.

94%

had complaints about the general access to services at this particular surgery.

What difference did this make?

We have put this particular surgery on our "watch list" and have informed the CQC of our findings. We are waiting for CQC to respond.

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Harrow. That's why we've worked hard to reach out to those communities whose voices may go unheard.

Every member of the community should have the chance to share their story and play a part in shaping services to meet their needs.

This year, we have reached out to, and heard from, different communities:

- We worked with our volunteers and ambassadors to reach out to their own communities, for instance Chinese, Romanian and Somali groups.
- We ensured our website had information in 102 different languages.
- We engaged with autistic people and families to highlight to commissioners a long waiting list for ADHD diagnosis and difficulties in receiving medication.



Information and signposting

When you're struggling to find an NHS dentist, looking for help to make a complaint, or need advice about a good care home for a loved one, we're your first port of call.

People reach out to us for advice, support or help finding services. These conversations help us to understand where, and how, your care can be made better.

This year, we helped people with a range of issues:

- We signposted residents to the right person at the surgeries where they are registered.
- Although we don't deal with complaints, when approached we signposted residents to the correct department and continue to do so for numerous queries from residents related to health and social care.
- Since October 2025, we've signposted directly to Harrow Council's information line.



Showcasing volunteer impact

All 16 of our fantastic volunteers have supported our work.

Thanks to our volunteers' dedication to improving care, we can better understand what is working and what needs improving in our community.

This year, our volunteers took part in a range of activities:

- They visited diverse communities to promote our work.
- They listened to feedback and supported their communities to share their views.
- They attended and set up stalls at community events whilst engaging with different audiences.
- They researched key topics and supported our work with administrative tasks.



Showcasing volunteer impact

At the heart of what we do



Asha



I wanted to volunteer with Healthwatch Harrow to support people in sharing their experiences and gathering feedback from the local community with the aim of improving local health and social care services.

I care about making services easier to access and understand, and I am keen to gather information and feedback to share with the team. By doing this, I hope to contribute to positive changes for both service users and health and social care staff. My goal is to ensure that service users can receive fair, effective, and efficient care that meets our needs, and to ensure that we feel heard and comfortable when sharing our feedback.

I chose to be an ambassador for two groups: one for young people, and another for visually impaired individuals of all ages.

As a youth ambassador, I want to encourage young people to speak and have our voices heard. It is important to have the opportunity to share our experiences and to be taken more seriously by service providers, who can use ambassador feedback to shape services to meet our needs when we access healthcare services.

As an ambassador for visually impaired people, I want to represent and support people with sight loss no matter what our age. It's important for all of us to have our views heard and feel empowered to give suggestions on how health and social care services can be improved.

Unfortunately, many people with disabilities face barriers and discrimination, making them feel less confident about sharing their experiences especially when they have faced unfair treatment. This can lead to them not accessing services, which negatively impacts their health.

By drawing on my lived experience, I hope to raise awareness of challenges that other visually impaired individuals also experience, and help to make services more accessible and inclusive.

Be part of the change.

If you've felt inspired by these stories, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change.



www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk



0208 869 8484



info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

Showcasing volunteer impact

At the heart of what we do



Jaya



I recently started volunteering with Healthwatch Harrow. Having lived in Harrow for over 20 years and having experienced both positive and negative aspects of the local health services, I want to help ensure that residents' voices are heard by those who make the decisions.

Healthwatch Harrow had a stand at the Harrow Health and Wellbeing Fair. I volunteered to help and was joined by another new volunteer, and a more experienced volunteer.

Although the fair was quieter than expected, we still had several visitors share their comments and experiences of healthcare in Harrow. We recorded the feedback on an iPad, which will later be compiled into a report and passed on to decision-makers through the proper channels.

Many of the visitors' concerns echoed my own – issues accessing NHS dentists, difficulty getting GP appointments, and long A&E wait times.

A few families attending a children's dance class also stopped by to give feedback. We took the opportunity to visit other stalls as well, speaking with exhibitors, many of whom were Harrow residents. There were stands from GP surgeries, pharmacies, Diabetes UK, and Age UK, among others.

Volunteer Action Harrow, who organised the fair, provided plenty of tea, coffee, and snacks to keep us going. They also held a raffle, and I was lucky enough to win a small spa kit.

Overall, I really enjoyed my first task as a volunteer and look forward to contributing more to improving healthcare services in Harrow.

Be part of the change.

If you've felt inspired by these stories, contact us today and find out how you can be part of the change.



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Finance and future priorities

We receive funding from Harrow Council under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help us do our work.

Our income and expenditure:

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£80,000	Expenditure on pay	£43,262
		Office and Management fee	£24,000
		Other expenses	£12,738
Total income	£80,000	Total Expenditure	£80,000

Finance and future priorities

We will work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make health and care better.

Our top four priorities for the next year are:

1. To hear from those that suffer the greatest inequalities when accessing health and social care services.
2. To ensure that the views of those we engage with are fed through the appropriate governance channels, so they are heard and escalated to NHS West and North London Integrated Care Board through appropriate channels as well as Harrow Borough Based Partnership.
3. To independently hold commissioners to account for delivery of services in line with Harrow's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Borough Based Partnership Plan.
4. To support stakeholders to transition towards new ways of delivering Integrated Neighbourhood Care.

Statutory statements

A message from our Healthwatch Manager

Looking forward

Healthwatch Harrow will continue to deliver and champion the voices of residents in Harrow even though we are in a period of change as the 10-year NHS plan is being implemented and the role of local Healthwatch is being debated in Parliament.

Knowledge of imminent changes and also having secured funding for 2026 to 2028 (until the Local Authority and the Integrated Care Board take over our function), has led us to reflect and re-strategise on our delivery approach. We will harness the strengths and social value that we bring to the table on behalf of residents.

Our funding, which has stayed stagnant for several years despite rising costs, has meant that our delivery will remain closely aligned to the statutory function for which we exist. Our unique role calls for focused and targeted delivery to collaborate and partner with stakeholders in health and social care in order to address health inequalities.

We are proactive in bringing residents' issues and shared trends to the attention of commissioners who can make a difference through strategy and through commissioning the right services. Our impact will be showcased by improvement in access to services.

Moving forward, we will remain close to the transition process in Harrow as a partner if the Health Bill 2026–27 is passed to dissolve local Healthwatch.

A big thank you goes to the whole team of staff and volunteers who have brought together feedback from the community and escalated concerns to people in a position to make a difference.



**Healthwatch
Harrow
Manager**
Yaa Asamany

Statutory statements

Enterprise Wellness Ltd. (EWL), 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.

EWL manages the Healthwatch Harrow contract. EWL is a subsidiary of Community ConneX Ltd. and is governed by its Board.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision making.

Volunteering at Healthwatch Harrow can take many forms. Our longest-serving regular volunteers have been with us since Healthwatch was set up. Others engage in micro-volunteering (short-term) as well as virtual volunteering (remotely online). Micro and virtual volunteering involves desk research.

Our general long-term volunteers are involved in community events and meetings where they collect data, which forms intelligence that feeds into our database. Some of them attend Patient Experience Panel sessions where they are involved in coding data. Volunteers have visited services and helped assess existing services within Patient-Led Assessment of the Care Environment.

Our volunteers are invaluable, and we are grateful for the massive effort and time they devote to Healthwatch Harrow. Some of the volunteers have moved into employment.

Methods and systems used 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 health and care services.

From 2025 to 2026 we have been available in person, by phone and email; provided a webform on our website; attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums; delivered our own in-person forums; and engaged with the public through social media.

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

Statutory statements

Responses to recommendations

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to the Healthwatch England Committee, so there were no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

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

For example, in our local authority area, we take information to the Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Management Board, Harrow Borough Based Partnership, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub Committee, and London North West University Trust.

We also share insight and experiences with decision-makers in NHS West and North Integrated Care Board through the governance pathway.

We share our data with Healthwatch England to help them address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch Harrow
3 Jardine House
Harrovian Business Village
Bessborough Road
Harrow HA1 3EX



www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk



0208 869 8484



info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk



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