



Annual Report 2024–2025

Unlocking the power of people's voices

Healthwatch Harrow

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"The impact that local Healthwatch have is vitally important. Healthwatch are empowering their communities to share their experiences. They're changing the health and care landscape and making sure that people's views are central to making care better and tackling health inequalities."

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive, Healthwatch England

A message from our Chair

Community engagement, influencing delivery and maximising on limited resources remains a hallmark of Healthwatch Harrow. We continued to punch way above our resources during another year of challenges faced by the national and local health and social care landscape.

Community voice

4,100 people told us about their experiences of health and social care and 70,000 items of service user feedback were processed and analysed.

We published six newsletters, reaching over 700 people, organised a Community Forum and published 35 reports on such matters as hospitals and health, social isolation, GP services, and general experiences of community and healthcare services.

Making a difference

The evidence from our trend analysis reports and feedback from residents and patients continued to shape the Trust's priorities. Similarly, our reports provided evidence for GPs and primary care networks to identify surgeries with best practice and those that required improvements.

Our collaboration with the Borough Based Partnership led to front line staff being trained to support Romanians and refugees in the Borough to understand the NHS system and access services.

Our commitment

We will monitor progress on the new framework developed by our regional ICB, following our involvement with other Healthwatch with over 1,000 residents, for measuring success, focusing on outcomes for local people, to ensure that it makes a difference to residents' key priorities.



We continued to punch way above our resources during another year of challenges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ash Verma'.

Ash Verma, Chair of Community ConneX and Enterprise Wellness

About us

Healthwatch Harrow is your local health and social care champion.

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Harrow. We are 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.



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 4,100 people to have their say and get information about their care. We employed 5 part time staff, and our work was supported by 7 volunteers.

Reaching out:



4,100 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

880 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.

6 newsletters have been produced and have been used to disseminate and promote key issues and information to over 700 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 2024/25 we received £76,500 which is 17.7% more than last year.

Our year in numbers

Reaching out:



70,000 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 utilised frequently. This depth of evidence is important – routine reports such as 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.

Making a difference to care:



186 substantial activities have been conducted this year, such as meetings attended and events held.

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

Reaching out through social media:



1535 followers on X with 151 impressions

656 followers on Facebook with 616 likes

474 followers on Instagram

A year of making a difference

Over the year 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 highlight issues around access to services especially with specific surgeries and dentists.



Our newsletters have been used to disseminate and promote key issues and information to over 700 people.



Summer

We attend Health & Wellbeing Board meetings and ensure the voice of the residents of Harrow is heard at borough level.



Healthwatch Harrow undertook analysis of service user comments regarding barriers to GP registration which NW London ICB referenced.



Autumn

In September 2024 over 70 people attended our forum – 'Your Hospital, Your Health'. The aim of the forum was to look at people's hospital experiences and some of the solutions already being put in place.



Monthly meetings are held with our volunteers to draw on their knowledge and to facilitate peer-to-peer support among volunteers.



Winter

During Nov 2024 – Jan 2025, 82 local people in Harrow completed our survey on isolation and loneliness.



In March 2025 we held a drop-in session at Hillview Children's Centre where we listened to the experiences of mothers on antenatal, labour and post-natal care.



Working together for change

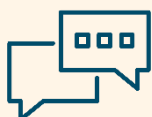
Healthwatch Harrow is funded to operate at a local level and inputs into the Harrow Borough-Based Partnership, Health & Wellbeing Board, Joint Management Board, and the Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Through the borough-based governance structure we ensure our intelligence is fed to the North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB). None of the 8 Healthwatch in North West London are funded to work collectively to provide a single North West London Healthwatch voice.

A collaborative network of local Healthwatch:



We meet with the leads of NW London Healthwatch every other month to network and share ideas and intelligence. Together we helped influence health and social care services

The big conversation:



Along with other Healthwatch, we learned from over a thousand residents what good care looks like to them: accessible, person-centred, and trustworthy. Our regional ICB (Integrated Care Board), which funded the work, used the findings to take steps towards a new framework for measuring success, focusing on outcomes for local people. This focus will make a difference in areas residents most care about.

Building strong relationships to achieve more:



In November, we met with decision-makers from our Integrated Care Board to talk how best to work together in the coming year. We agreed on fresh representation of Healthwatch and our community at ICB level, with Healthwatch Anytown taking up this vital role. We look forward to continuing to collaborate to make care better.

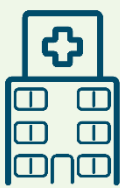
We've also summarised some of our other outcomes achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.

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:

Listening to people's hospital experience:



In September 2024, Healthwatch Harrow held a forum called *Your Hospital, Your Health*.

As a result of the feed back we were hearing from residents about services provided by Northwick Park Hospital, we focused on people's hospital experiences and some solutions already put in place. Over 70 people attended our forum. Concerns heard were on the provision of quality treatment, funding for treatment, outpatient appointments, admin/communication challenges, A&E and discharge delays, and ambulance waiting times. [View Report](#)

Report on social isolation and loneliness:



During November 2024–January 2025 Healthwatch Harrow launched a survey on social isolation and loneliness – 82 people completed our survey.

Our findings revealed that poor health is a leading cause of isolation and that those in good health are much less likely to be affected. Many needing help do not seek it. We heard about 'feelings of embarrassment' and worries that friends and families may be 'too busy'. A level of stigma around poor physical and mental health is reported. [View Report](#)

Listening to maternity experiences:



Healthwatch Harrow visited Hillview Children's Centre in March 2025 with Maternity Voice Partnership and heard from parents with babies below the age of 2 on their maternity experience.

Key concerns were regarding support received around weaning and breastfeeding, choice of hospitals, continuity of midwife, and appointments being impersonal. Patients had opted for Queen Charlotte Hospital (which is out of borough) due to the reviews of Northwick Park Hospital.

Listening to your experiences

Services can't improve if providers 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 experience of 3,883 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 2,196 patients from surgeries across Harrow.

Key things we heard:



83%

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction has improved by 3%, standing at 83% positive at the end of March.

65%

Service access has improved by 2% – to reach an overall level of 65%. Within this there are both upward and downward trends.

41%

Telephone access has risen substantially.

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 appointments overall, with a 5% improvement recorded over the year. On telephone access, satisfaction has risen substantially – by 41%. In part, this is thanks to the rollout of the 'callback system' – patients in long queues can hang up and reception will call later, when able to.



"I was caller number 16; I waited for 15 minutes and moved up 5 places. I didn't have half an hour to spare, so disappointingly put the phone down. While on my way to the bus stop, amazingly my phone rang; it was the surgery calling me back. Got my blood pressure test booked there and then. It's not a perfect system, but it did work in the end."

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

GPs:

Now the negatives – while online booking frees-up phone lines, there are some limitations – the forms are closed-off at certain times of day, it's difficult to choose who you see, and some patients still find the forms to be frustrating to complete. Satisfaction here is down by 12% over the year. It's also down slightly – by 2% on waiting times.



"I find PATCHS to be very hit and miss. I tried it a few months ago and got an appointment for the next day. Now the booking slots are filling-up quickly and you need to get on as early as possible. Tried for three days with no success."

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 is shared and utilised by the commissioners and the GP networks to improve services. [To view our reports, click here.](#)

In addition to our Trend Analysis Report, we developed a survey as we wanted to know if patients are being treated fairly and equally, and if any support offered met the wide variety of needs and circumstances. We are now in our second year of running this so we can benchmark and assess any change in access. The evidence from this survey will feed into our reports to the commissioners.



"For unpaid carers it is important, to have a designated phone line that starts at 8am. Ideally no queue but I know that it's impossible. Or have a designated person to return our calls quickly and prioritise and to ensure that they will return the call at a pre-arranged time that suits the unpaid carer!"

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Northwick Park Hospital:

What did we do?

This year we reviewed the experience of 305 patients across the hospital, including A&E, Maternity, Inpatients and Outpatients. Before continuing, we must stress that our trends are not representative of experiences as a whole – they measure feedback coming directly to Healthwatch only.

Key things we heard:



15%

When comparing this year with last, we find that general satisfaction is down significantly – by 15%. Patients are feeling less involved in their treatment and care overall, and they are not as likely (this year) to compliment staff – receptionists, nurses or doctors.



“I don’t mind the wait, but staff are just walking past. I don’t have any information, I’m beginning to doubt that I’ve been checked in. It adds to an already exhausting experience. Not good.”

Our trends do bring some good news. Satisfaction on service access, although at a low level of 18% has not changed over the year – this suggests that services are beginning to stabilise and, we hope, about to move in a more positive direction. This is one trend we will be watching closely.

What difference did we make?

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

In September 2024 over 70 people attended our forum – ‘Your Hospital, Your Health’. Key speakers were Director Nursing, Chief Nurse and Patient Advice Liaison and Patient Involvement. The aim of the forum was to look at people’s hospital experiences and some of the solutions already being put in place. Attendees were able to ask the panel questions on the Trust.

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital:

What did we do?

This year we reviewed the experience of around 50 people. Feedback suggests that overall satisfaction is at a good level – 72%.

Key things we heard:

Patients are very complimentary of the staff and service:



The experiences we have received mention hard-working, 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.



“The team here are wonderful – checking-in staff, nurses, doctors and not forgetting the porter. It’s a comfortable building and experience – from arriving to leaving. Well done!”

Listening to your experiences

The shape of local services

Dentists:

What did we do?

This year we examined the stories of 1,301 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.



“The dentist saw I was nervous, she talked me through every step, and was really patient – the nurse too. My anxiety is cured, as well as my problem tooth!”

What difference did this make?

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

[To view all our reports, click here.](#)

In Conclusion:

Combining all feedback, we detect an upward trend of steady improvement – with satisfaction standing at 83% at the end of March 2025 – up marginally by 1% on the previous year. Patients are feeling well looked after on the whole, with satisfaction at 90% on staff attitude, and 86% on feeling involved. On access too things are looking up – with a 4% improvement recorded.

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

Hearing from all communities

We're here for all residents of Harrow. That's why, over the past year, 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 different communities by:

- Holding a forum on 'Your Hospital, Your Health'
- Running a survey on Social Isolation and Loneliness
- Working closely with Community ConneX and hearing from people with a learning disability
- Visiting Hillview Children's Centre to hear experiences of maternity and provide information and advice.



Hearing from all communities

Improving understanding of social care within South Asian communities.

We investigated access to social care for the South Asian community.

People told us about language barriers, a lack of cultural understanding among service providers, and failure to address concerns about religious and dietary needs. Other concerns involved the stigma surrounding social care.

What difference did this make?

The social care service pledged to share the insights from this report with staff, care providers, and the Safeguarding Adults Board, and to ensure staff training includes cultural responsiveness, religious literacy, and the experience of carers from different ethnic backgrounds.

Helping Romanians and refugees understand and access NHS care.

Romanians adapting to life in Harrow told us they didn't understand how the NHS worked as it was different to the Romanian health system.

To help, we collaborated with the Borough Based Partnership to look at registering with a GP, what issues residents face and how GP staff can facilitate the process for refugees and homeless people within Harrow.

What difference did this make?

This work resulted in practices ensuring that frontline staff were adequately trained to support residents who may be struggling to register since English is not their main language. They may also find it confusing if told they do not have a fixed address especially if they are sofa-sharing.

Information and signposting

Healthwatch Harrow is not funded to provide advice and information; this is done through Support & Wellbeing Information Service Harrow (SWiSH), which provides a signposting service for Harrow.

Healthwatch Harrow works closely with SWiSH by sharing key updates on information regarding health and social care, and we refer people to them.

We gather intelligence from SWiSH to identify trends around our health and social care services. This information is entered into our database and analysed.

This year, we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Making people aware of how to feedback to providers
- Signposting people to additional support services, such as Advocacy.



Showcasing volunteer impact

Our fantastic volunteers have given 448 hours to support our work. Thanks to their dedication to improving care, we can better understand what is working and what needs improving in our community.

This year, our volunteers:

- Attended stakeholder and community meetings
- Helped develop our strategies and delivery plan
- Promoted the Healthwatch brand in Harrow
- Participated in monthly Patient Experience Panel sessions
- Shared insights at monthly volunteer meetings
- Shared experiences of services in Harrow
- Participated in PLACE Assessments.



Showcasing volunteer impact

At the heart of what we do.

From finding out what residents think, to helping raise awareness, volunteers have championed community concerns to improve care.

"I joined Healthwatch Harrow as I had previously volunteered for LINK and I felt that it looked interesting and it gave me somewhere I could give an opinion, I also liked the other volunteers.

I feel that a speedy hospital outpatient appointment is the most important issue to me. Harrow is an incredibly diverse borough and pleasing everyone is a challenge for Harrow.

I have learnt more about healthcare and enjoy being able to provide feedback. If we want to improve healthcare, we must become involved in giving feedback."



NS

David has been a volunteer for about 5 years and was encouraged to volunteer whilst working. His experience of Health and SC has inspired him to volunteer for HWH. David says that "It's important to bring the views of the Learning Difficulties (LD) community to the fore".



DH

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



020 8869 8484



info@healthwatchharrow.co.uk

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	£76,000	Expenditure on Pay	£48,189
		Non-Pay Expenditure	£7,192
		Office & Management fee	£27,713
Total Income	£76,500	Total Expenditure	£83,094

No additional funding was received

Healthwatch across **North West London** also receive funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level. Healthwatch Harrow did not receive additional funding.

Finance and future priorities

Next steps:

Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas so that those in power hear their views and experiences.

We will also 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 care better.

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

1. To hear from those that suffer the greatest inequalities from health and social care services.
2. To ensure that the views of those we engage with are fed through the appropriate governance channels that are in place, so they are heard and escalated to NWL through those channels.
3. Holding commissioners to account for delivery of services in line with Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Borough Based Partnership Plan.



Statutory statements

Enterprise Wellness Ltd. (EWL), 3 Jardine House, Harrovian 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 PatientLed 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 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 health and care services.

From 2024 to 2025 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 and Wellbeing Board, Joint Management Board, Borough Based Partnership, Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee and London North West University Trust.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in North West Integrated Care Board through the governance links.

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

A message from our Healthwatch Manager

During the year Healthwatch Harrow has successfully sustained its influence in the health and social care arena. Despite cost and resource challenges, staff and volunteers have successfully delivered good outcomes.

Healthwatch worked with Residents and the Borough Based Partnership which brings together all key stakeholders like Harrow Council, ICB, NHS, voluntary and the private sector.

An increase in recruitment of volunteers from the diverse population will result in different groups being able to feedback in different languages and different ways. Barriers of communication will be reduced. It will also mean that Healthwatch harrow will be more visible in communities that do not know we exist.

We have stayed true to our purpose by ensuring that “patient voice” is embedded in our footprint and that intelligence is escalated at statutory meetings.

“

I am looking forward to Healthwatch Harrow overcoming barriers that impede information reaching providers.



Yaa Asamany, Healthwatch Harrow Manager



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