

# Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay  
Annual Report 2021-22



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# Message from our chair

This report shows the wide range of engagement, representation and impact undertaken by Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay over the past year; a period where we have seen health and social care services begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

All our services have inevitably been under pressure in such exceptional circumstances. Ongoing feedback has been essential for providers and commissioners to capture what is working well and what may need to be improved.

We have therefore worked closely with our local voluntary, community and statutory partners to ensure that residents' voices, including the most vulnerable, are taken into account.

I would like to thank all those that have supported Healthwatch in our mission to monitor and improve health and social care. Relationships between local organisations are consequently much stronger, and we look forward to our partnerships continuing and strengthening. Together we really are making a difference, and I am confident that such progress is evident in our Annual Report.



Dr Kevin Dixon  
Interim Chair  
Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



"The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities."

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

# Message from our partners



"2021/2022 marks the second year of our new partnership delivering the three local Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (HW in DPT).

Against the backdrop of continued challenges for health, social care and our service from the ongoing pandemic, our teams rose to the occasion finding new ways to gather feedback and provide information and guidance to our communities using digital platforms.

The result of this adaptability can be seen in the varied and influential projects showcased in this annual report, both at a local Healthwatch level and across the region for HW in DPT. We are particularly proud of the fast-growing Healthwatch Assist network helping us to reach into communities across such a diverse area as Devon and some of the projects in partnership with local services that have helped create positive change in health and social care.

The contents of this report is testament to how all three local Healthwatch have continued to pull together under exceptional circumstances.



Thank you to our staff, volunteers, steering group members and partners."



Pat Harris  
Chief Executive Officer  
Healthwatch Torbay and  
Engaging Communities South West



Janie Moor  
Chief Executive Officer  
Citizens Advice South Hams



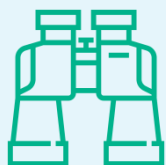
Vicky Shipway  
Chief Executive Officer  
Colebrook (SouthWest) Ltd



# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are your local health and social care champions. From Bideford to Salcombe, Plymouth, Torbay and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



### Our vision

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.



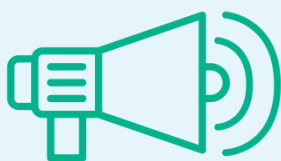
### Our values

- 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 Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay have engaged and supported people.

## Reaching out



**1491 people**

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

**1.9 million people**

Were able to access clear advice and information about topics such as COVID-19 using our social media channels.

## Making a difference to care



We published

**11 reports**

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

Our most popular report was

**Think 111 first**

which asked if the NHS campaign was reaching key groups in Devon, including the Deaf community

## Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

**32**

outstanding volunteers, who gifted **650 days** to make care better for our community.

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

**£560,000**

Which is **the same as** the previous year.

We also currently employ

**21 staff**

Working across **3** local Healthwatch who helped us carry out this work in 2021/22.

## 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



A team member, who is Polish, translated vital information about COVID-19 into Polish for BBC Radio Devon in a series of health updates.



The Mayflower Medical Group responded to our patient feedback with three positive actions to improve communications.

Summer



We supported the #BecauseWeAllCare campaign which saw 54,000 people come forward to tell us about issues they faced with services.



We urged the Government to act after reporting a 452% increase in people struggling to see an NHS dentist.

Autumn



We teamed up with NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to find out why Emergency departments in Devon were so full.



A national Healthwatch survey led to a review of how NHS Dental Services are commissioned in Devon.

Winter



We represent people's feedback and drive change at strategic meetings. On average, we attended 83 meetings per month including various NHS Devon CCG and Patient Engagement Committees meetings.



To support the COVID-19 vaccination programme we talked to different communities to understand their hesitancy towards the vaccine and published guidance to improve trust.

# Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority, even going online when we couldn't meet in person. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feedback to services to help them improve





## Making it easier for key groups to access NHS 111 services

Thanks to experiences shared by people across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, we've helped the Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) understand the impact of the Think 111 campaign and the challenges faced when accessing NHS 111 for people who are:



Deaf, visually impaired, parents of children, carers, elderly, living with long term conditions, people with dementia, people with autism, and people who speak English as a second language (ESL). The CCG were satisfied with the research and are using the valuable feedback to inform future campaigns.



### 92% of people

**Who took part in the forums had not seen, or did not recall seeing, the Think 111 promotional material.**

The main issues we raised on your behalf:

- Accessibility – visually impaired and deaf people shared their experience of unsuitable promotional materials and difficulties accessing NHS 111 services
- Usability – forum participants were critical of long automated calls, discharge doesn't mean no support, even if people don't need a formal assessment, they may still benefit from informal community support
- Confusion, as some participants said that the NHS 111 TV advert looked like emergencies – for which 999 would be more appropriate
- Participants from the Deaf community said that information should be more accessible to people whose first language is BSL, and that information about accessibility (e.g. the availability of interpreters) should be more prominent in the promotional materials.

### What difference did this make

This report will inform the specification and evaluation of a new provider as part of the CCG's Integrated Urgent Care Services contract later this year. The feedback, insight, and patient experience will be used to directly inform the future 111 campaign currently being developed.



*"...a valuable report for us to help determine the next steps of the campaign development. The audience for the engagement with Healthwatch was comprehensive and included the main groups we wanted to hear from."*



NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group

## Making sure local people's needs are heard

Healthwatch Devon was asked by the North Dartmoor Primary Care Network (PCN) to find out about the health and wellbeing needs of the local community and gather feedback on how to use the community space at Okehampton Hospital.

**healthwatch**  
Devon



### 44% of people

In Okehampton, who responded to this survey, felt that a Mental Health drop-in centre was "most important."

Some of the findings from local people that we spoke to:

- Mental health support and activities supporting wellbeing received the highest ratings for the use of community space at Okehampton Hospital. Respondents' suggestions for other uses included resources for exercise, nutrition, and weight loss, new parent and early years support, support groups and activities for people with long term conditions and disabilities, groups and activities for people dealing with loneliness and social isolation, and support for the elderly
- Many respondents feel strongly that the hospital is a valuable local resource, and some were concerned about the loss or reduction of services in Okehampton, particularly inpatient beds and the maternity ward
- Most respondents said it would be difficult for them to travel to another community hospital such as Tavistock or Holsworthy if services were not available in Okehampton.
- When asked what other clinical or medical services they would like to see delivered from Okehampton Hospital, the top five responses were inpatient beds, maternity care, x-ray facilities, dentistry, and oncology
- Some respondents are concerned about Okehampton's population growth and the effect this may have on services, particularly GP and primary care services.

### What difference did this make

North Dartmoor Primary Care Network Advisory Group can shape future services based on the feedback of local people.



*"The community engagement report from Healthwatch is a rich source of information and intelligence which will inform the work of the North Dartmoor PCN Advisory group and its subgroups going forwards. The size and scope of the respondents add to the robustness of the detail and give us confidence in our direction of travel and our priorities."*



Statement from North Dartmoor Primary Care Network

## Making it easier to get a GP appointment

Thanks to people sharing their experiences on social media, we have helped residents in Ivybridge and Plympton get better access to their GP.

*"30 minutes waiting in a queue on the phone to speak with your GP surgery isn't much fun."*

In May 2021, we noticed a rise in feedback around accessing GP services from Beacon Medical Group (BMG) in Ivybridge and Plympton. We raised the issues with BMG and it was agreed by BMG and NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), for us to explore further.

During September to October 2021, we conducted a survey about people's experiences of contacting and communicating with BMG surgeries based in Plympton and Ivybridge. The survey was distributed and publicised online via our social media pages, our weekly E-bulletin, Healthwatch Staff and our fantastic volunteers also conducted in-person surveys in Ivybridge on three separate occasions. 616 people responded to the survey; 57.84% were Ivybridge patients and 42.16% were Plympton patients..

**healthwatch**  
Devon

**healthwatch**  
Plymouth



### 94% of people

Who took part in the forums, and who had called the surgery in the last four months felt they waited in a queue for a long time to speak to someone; of these respondents, 54.25% said they waited longer than 30 minutes.

### What difference did this make

By patients sharing their experiences, BMG could see that peak times for calls were Monday and Wednesday mornings.

BMG responded by increasing staffing levels during these peak times so they could manage incoming calls.

In two months, call waiting times during peak periods were down on average by 3 minutes.

BMG are committed to improving services for their patients and were pleased to be able to partner with Healthwatch Devon so that their patients can benefit from these insights.

## Making it easier for key groups to raise complaints

Healthwatch England's (HWE) report 'Shifting the Mindset' Report, highlighted key national issues that Healthwatch Torbay (HWT) believed their partner Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) would benefit from knowing. TSDFT benchmarked themselves against the HWE report and worked with HWT to improve patient experience and the complaints process.

**healthwatch**  
Torbay



### Only 38% of NHS

Hospitals are reporting on any actions being taken in response to a complaint

Healthwatch Torbay's recommendations to the Trust included:

- Encouraging staff and Board members to play an active part in learning from complaints
- Using patient feedback to avoid potential patient safety issues before they develop.
- Making it easier for patients to raise complaints and feel confident they are being listened to
- Publishing regular complaints reports that include learning, what has changed and details on learning and improvement that has taken place
- Improving communication and public confidence in the complaints system, visible to the public in more accessible ways
- Collecting demographic data, including information on all protected characteristics, as part of complaints process to help understanding of equalities impact of complaints
- Developing and support hospital staff and boards to empower complaints to be proactive in demonstrating learning from complaints and transparency in reporting
- Themes and analysis of learning from complaints and concerns should be conducted at Integrated Care System to enable proactive changes and learning across trusts.

### What difference did this make

By 'Shifting the mindset' Trusts can accept the benefits of listening to patient experiences and learn more from complaints. We will continue to monitor progress as TSDFT make improvements to their complaints process.



*"Hospitals need to do more to show patients how the NHS are learning from mistakes."*

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England



## Three ways Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health and care services key by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.



### Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

Due to increased pressure on Emergency Departments (ED), we visited EDs across Devon asked local people what had brought them there. As a result, the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are using these views from local people to create an action plan to improve Urgent Care services in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.



### Building trust in our diverse communities

We believe that everyone in society needs to be included in the conversation. Especially those whose voices aren't being listened to.

Feedback in 2020 told us the lowest uptake in having the COVID vaccine was amongst diverse communities. As a result, NHS CCG recruited 20 Vaccine Ambassadors to represent all people across Devon. Our team member Ola, who has been recognised for her work with the Polish community became 1 of 20 Devon ambassadors.

They have worked with hundreds of people, listening, promote reliable information about the Covid-19 vaccination and helping people to have confidence to have their vaccine.



### Local Devon issue triggers national response

We have connections with every community. We gather feedback and act on it so we can drive change on a local and national level.

We have known about dental problems for a long time. In 2018, Healthwatch Devon reported NHS waiting lists had doubled. In 2020, we saw a rise in feedback about access problems and we escalated our concerns. Last year Healthwatch England called for reform of NHS dentistry, co-signing a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for NHS dentistry to be accessible and affordable for everyone.

## 3 ways we helped partners shape health and care services across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

**Healthwatch is an independent partner. We gather people's feedback about services which partners can take onboard before key decisions are made.**



Helping people share their views on how inpatient records are stored

Our partners wanted us to ask people in Torbay what they thought about this issue before making any changes.

**Response from Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust:**

"[This report] has enabled us to pilot solutions to notes storage that are based on both our legal duty but also the wishes of the people we care for."



Listening to first-hand experiences of people from diverse groups so their views were heard

Our partners wanted us to help them quickly understand the issues faced by learning disabilities carers by gathering feedback independently and reporting them back.

**Response from Torbay Adult Social Care:**

"We will work with families, providers and Healthwatch to address the concerns identified, and continue to be committed to working together to find solutions."



Helping a community shape their local services

Our partners brought us in early to ask people what they would want from any future development of the site of the former Dartmouth and Kingswear Cottage Hospital.

**Response from Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust and Dartmouth Town Council:**

"We wish to thank our colleagues at Healthwatch and the 642 local people who took time to share their views with us. It is clear that local people would like to see more affordable housing and more community facilities. We will make sure that they receive regular updates as our work progresses."

## Ways people's experiences are shaping health and care services across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

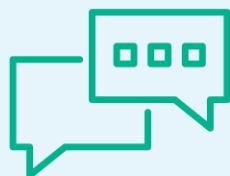
During 2021/22, local service providers asked us to share local people's feedback – so they can know what they want and need, and plan accordingly.



### What people told us about GP and Dental services

We value the insight that's gained from analysing people's experiences to learn how to improve care.

Devon County Council and NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), requested Healthwatch share people's feedback with them to have a clearer understanding of where services were working well and where improvements were required. The reports were well received and "described as "incredibly helpful" for planning future services in the region.



### What people told us about the Think 111 campaign

We believe service providers benefit from bringing us in early before key decisions are made.

The CCG asked Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay to ask people if their experiences with the 111 service had improved or changed since the previous research was carried out.

The CCG were pleased with the results saying, "The feedback, insight, and patient experience will be used to shape the public campaign and make improvements to the service itself."



### Mystery Shopper exercise helps improve GP services

Healthwatch are capable of understanding (and amplifying) issues that are important to people.

Pathfields surgery wanted to work with an independent organisation who could help them understand their patient's experience of their services. Volunteers acted as if they were patients, and these findings were shared with the surgery. Pathfields found it, "helpful to get feedback from a patient's perspective." Adding, "We continue to work on improving our patient experience and thank you for the input this report has given us into this process."

# Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay 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. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need





## Healthwatch Devon and Citizens Advice are working together to help people in Devon get the advice and information they need.



Here are ways we have helped 2 people:



### Vulnerable residents get their "freedom" back

A 93-year-old lady called our Healthwatch Champions a month after the lift at her sheltered accommodation stopped working. She was frustrated, angry and suffering uncharacteristic low mood due to being unable to leave her flat and walk to town each day.

A Healthwatch Champion contacted the Housing Association responsible for the properties. They responded and residents were notified that a new lift was on order and temporary stair lifts were to be fitted. The Client was given £200 compensation as acknowledgment of their poor communications.

Thanks to this lady calling our Healthwatch Champions and making a complaint, her neighbours, also unable to leave their homes due to restricted mobility, were also helped.



*"Thank you once again for all your help and hard work. I am feeling so much better and I have got my freedom back."*



Happy client

### Helping people get the care they need

A client who was born female but identifies as male, in his mid-fifties, called our Healthwatch Champions to say he had been waiting 5 years for a follow up appointment with the Gender Reassignment Clinic. With a recent diagnosis of Stage 3 bowel cancer, he contacted us as he wanted help in being given a follow up appointment.

A Healthwatch Champion contacted The Laurels and he was given an appointment within two months. Following his appointment, we called to discuss his progress and general health. He reported that his consultations with The Laurels had gone really well.

They have agreed to fast track to the next stages in the process of gender reassignment and have also taken over the prescribing of testosterone medication. As a result, and despite experiencing severe side effects from his chemotherapy treatment, client was feeling more optimistic.



People across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay can contact us on our Freephone number or Live Web Chat for information or to leave feedback about health and care services.

**Freephone 0800 520 0640**

 **LiveChat**

**healthwatch**  
Torbay

Here are 2 examples of how we have helped:

## Poor communications causes grieving family distress

A Client's father passed away recently at Torbay Hospital. the family is trying to make funeral arrangements however Doctors on the ward have yet to refer his death to the bereavement office or write a medical certificate which is causing the family a lot of stress.


The family tried contacting the ward however don't seem to get anywhere and now being told the ward manager and matron are away on leave. Also tried to contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), however went through to voicemail advising may not get a response for 3 days.

### What difference did this make

With support from Healthwatch Torbay, PALS were contacted. PALS in turn responded and made contact with the Medical Examiners Officer who would contact the family directly.

## Lack of mental health services in Plymouth

**healthwatch**  
Plymouth

 "I have been searching for mental health support for my 44-year-old son for 4 months and have found no help at all.

He is trying to recover from being alcoholic with seizures, depression and anxiety. He gets so far in stopping but there is no support for his mental health which is the root cause.

We have rung The Samaritans who can only offer a phone call chat, local Live-well service which are the same, Harbour Centre who ring him once a fortnight, GP gave him a First Response number, who referred him back to his GP, applied for a Social Worker who never returned out message, our MP who referred us to a social worker site, contacted a nearby drug rehab centre and it would be 6 months wait. No wonder there are so many people taking their own lives, there is just nothing, no support for mental health."



### What difference did this make

A Healthwatch Plymouth adviser linked the caller through to The Advocacy People who could help with the complaints procedure.

# Volunteers

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

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.
- Carried out website and telephone reviews for local services on the information they provide and assessing their accessibility.
- Assisted as part of 'Readers' Panels' – checking local services' publications to make them more people focussed and easier to read.





### Mary

"I had the opportunity to work on the procurement of a new Primary healthcare provider in Plymouth. I drew on my long-time experience in the NHS, and the support and training I have received as a volunteer. I hope my insights around accessibility, patient involvement/engagement and contribution will help ensure Plymouth gets the best provider for this service."



### Chris

"During the pandemic our Board meeting moved online, and I wasn't overly technical before. Using the internet is a key skill and gives access to so many other things that I was glad I learnt it. I can now share that knowledge by being a digital champion for my local Healthwatch and helping others learn how to access healthcare online."



### Pam

"As a generalist volunteer, I represent the voice of local people in service improvement. Working virtually keeps me in the mainstream of activity and my carbon footprint low. Working this way, I am more able to share what matters to people and communities from the information I collect. Most rewarding is reviewing patient leaflets to ensure they are easily understood."



### Do you feel inspired?

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



0800 520 0640



[Info@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org](mailto:Info@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org)



[www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchplymouth.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchplymouth.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchtorbay.org.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	
Funding received from local authority	£560,000
Devon	£348,573
Plymouth	£115,427
Torbay	£96,000
Additional income	£3,200
Carry in	£14,344.75
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£577,544.75</b>

Expenditure	
Staff costs	£416,601.35
Operational costs	£62,151.16
Support and administration	£58,073.69
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£536,826.20</b>

## Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Integrated Care System framework – Development of local Healthwatch involvement with Integrated Care System for Devon and Local Care Partnerships
2. Equitable access to health services for all patients including those with learning disabilities/language barriers/sight impairment/hearing loss/young people
3. Recovery of Health & Social Care Services due to COVID-19 pandemic.

## 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, income or race.

# Statutory statements

## About us

Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay are provided by Colebrook Southwest in partnership with Engaging Communities South West and Citizen's Advice Devon, r/o Engage South West, St Levan Road, Plymouth PL2 3BG

Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay use 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.**

Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay are delivered by a collaborative partnership of Colebrook (SW) Ltd, Engaging Communities South West and Citizens Advice Devon.

The partnership provides the vision, infrastructure, staffing and overall governance, ensuring delivery of the contract as the hosted organisation. As Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are independent services, driven by the voice of local people, a steering group is set up in each locality, Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay.

During 2021/22, we established 3 independent Steering Groups led by lay people, 1 for each local area in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. The role of Steering Groups is to support delivery of its work-plan, priorities, and statutory functions and work in partnership with the staff team to create a successful local Healthwatch to deliver the vision for the service.

Our Steering Groups meet Quarterly with the first meetings taking place in January 2022. The Steering Groups use local insight from information and signposting enquiries to decide on engagement priorities and will oversee the setting of local priorities.

### **Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.**

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.

This year we have done this by, for example talking to Deaf, visually impaired, parents of children, carers, elderly, living with long term conditions, people with dementia, people with autism, and people who speak English as a second language (ESL) around their experiences of the NHS 111 First campaign.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it via our website, e-Bulletin and social media channels and are looking at ways to have printed copies accessible across Devon in public places (such as Public Libraries).

### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are represented on their respective Health and Wellbeing Board.

During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by providing patient feedback on GP Services, NHS Dental Services and raising concerns and queries around future service commissioning.

## Healthwatch Assists Network in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

The Healthwatch Assist Network allows us to build links with communities so we can gather information about the health and care services they use.

We established and continue to grow our network of community-based groups and organisations and value their expert knowledge and reach into hard-to-reach communities. **To date: 112 community groups have joined our network.**

In 2021/22, to help our network carry out their own targeted consultations or surveys, we set up the Healthwatch Assist Engagement Grant. This was officially launched in April 2022. The feedback gathered is shared with us so we can ensure local communities are heard by those in charge of making decisions about services.

### Responses to recommendations and requests

**We had 0 providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.**

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.



*"It was inspiring to hear about the work you do and your plans for the future. This is clearly a time of significant change for your organisation and your detailed plans for the future are thorough and ambitious."*

**Delana Lawson, Quality Assurance & Regional Manager,  
Healthwatch England**



## Healthwatch England Quality Framework assessment

The Quality Framework is made up of 6 domains:

- Leadership and decision
- People
- Sustainability and resilience
- Collaboration
- Engagement involvement and reach
- Influence and impact

Each domain is accompanied by a series of questions and prompts so that Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay can understand and evidence their effectiveness. Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay were successful in completing and met the standards of the quality framework. In addition, we have developed, and agreed, an action plan with Healthwatch England to ensure we continue to excel all six domains for each Local Healthwatch.



## Working with our Integrated Care System

On 1 July 2022, a new Integrated Care System for Devon (ICSD) will launch.

An Integrated Care Board (to be known as NHS Devon) will replace the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and a separate statutory Health and Care Partnership (One Devon Partnership) – made up of partners from the NHS, local government and organisations such as Healthwatch and those from the voluntary and independent sector (VCSE) will begin. This move is hugely beneficial, and key to its success will be a strong focus on enhancing partnership working.

## Healthwatch have been recognised by the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group as:

- 'Go to' partners for helping us understand the needs of the local populations
- A long-standing strong relationship – We meet regularly, planned and ad hoc – it is a genuine partnership

Healthwatch have worked with NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group on the People and Communities Strategy that sets out how the voices of people and communities will be heard within the ICS and have contributed to:

- The writing of this strategy
- Co-designing the Devon Involvement Network

## More widely we have also contributed to:

- Collaboration potential as the evolution to a One Devon system is limitless
- Innovative ways of working together to build partnership – e.g. Involve Platform and ICS Involvement structures

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay have seats on both the Integrated Care Board and Integrated Care Partnership as valued members of the Devon system .



*"Everything we do will be inclusive of our people and communities across Devon, to widen opportunities for involvement, tackle health inequalities and make services better for all. We will achieve our vision through a culture of ongoing conversations and collaboration, built on trust and a shared purpose."*



One Devon's Vision

# Organisations we work with

We work with hundreds of voluntary organisations across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay representing the views and experiences of local people to influence change in a positive way. To enable us to do this effectively we have continued our representation at key groups and committees, both strategic and operational. This involvement allows a patient perspective to be presented and opportunities for patient involvement to be identified.

Statements from our partners in this section :

- NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Director of Public Health, Plymouth City Council
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals, Plymouth NHS Trust
- Livewell Southwest
- Beacon Medical Group



# Statement from NHS Devon



Andrew Millward  
Chief Communications and Corporate Affairs Officer,  
NHS Devon



**Devon**  
Clinical Commissioning Group



“Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (HW in DPT) continue to provide an excellent and consistent level of support and commitment to involving people, especially in the wake of COVID-19 and how people have adapted the way they engage.

We are all really proud of what has been achieved, including a parliamentary award for our response to tackling health inequalities and supporting people accessing their vaccinations. Healthwatch played a pivotal role in all of this work and we are extremely proud of our ongoing relationship with them to put people at the heart of what we do.

The benefits of our relationship were heralded at the recent Healthwatch England (HWE) Committee meeting in June 2022, which was led by Sir Robert Francis – he described the visit as, ‘inspirational’ and ‘amazing.’ Being able to showcase how health and care partners work closely with HW in DPT was a key part of the visit and HWE said they felt Devon had achieved a gold standard.

HW in DPT continue to provide fantastic support to the NHS in Devon, as well as championing the voice of local people and communities. The reach and depth of their community networks enables us to access service users and members of the public who are appropriately matched to key pieces of work that informs our decision-making.

The launch of the One Devon Partnership on 1 July provides a real opportunity for us to work even closer with HW in DPT in 2022/23 and we look forward to this.”

Ways we have worked together – continued on next page



## Ways we have worked together



“Healthwatch have been instrumental in supporting the NHS in Devon to involve communities and this year:

- Supported the Protected Elective Care engagement – Chair Kevin Dixon facilitated multiple focus groups, supported by engagement lead Sarah Bickley and her brilliant team, to help tackle the waiting list for care in Devon
- Were a key stakeholder in our focus groups to develop the new general practice strategy for Devon
- Delivered onsite engagement with service users in Emergency Departments across the four hospitals in Devon to understand experiences and barriers to access
- Supported public engagement to understand experiences and help shape the way patients can better access their GP practices
- Helped Beacon Medical Group conduct engagement with their patients to support better patient experience
- Shared insight from engagement with deaf patients and people using BSL to help inform our patient access review.”



“Beacon Medical Group have welcomed the opportunity to work with Healthwatch Devon and Healthwatch Plymouth during the last year following concerns raised around patient access particularly waiting times when trying to access our services by telephone.

We always aim to provide the best possible care for our patients and the joint work with Healthwatch has allowed us to pinpoint areas where our systems were under pressure and introduce solutions to make accessing our services easier and quicker for patients.

We are pleased that our improvement plan has already delivered a reduction in our call wait times and will continue to work on further improvements. The average wait time for answered calls was 14 minutes for October 2021 and this has since reduced to 10 minutes in for the period from January to April 2022.

Other improvements have also been made or are being developed to support the online ordering of prescriptions, and the use and access to online services.

We will continue to look at development in areas such as the continuation of the reduction of wait times and improvements in access.

Beacon Medical Group appreciate our patient and community feedback and support to help continue with this journey and welcome members of our community to join our Patient Participation Group.”



# Statements from partners



Suzanne Tracey  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust



“The Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust welcomes the opportunity to provide a statement for the annual report produced by Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay for the year 2021/22.

It is deeply important to us that we listen to what matters to our local communities, and Healthwatch has once again provided us with invaluable insights and support to help us better understand how our patients are experiencing our services, which has enabled us to implement improvements across our services. This includes helping us to adapt and develop our urgent and emergency care services to meet the needs of local people, particularly given the continued challenges of COVID-19.

Healthwatch will continue to play a vital part in our plans for the future - as a newly integrated Trust which provides core services to over 615,000 people and specialist services across the whole of the peninsula, Healthwatch will support us to achieve our commitment of ensuring that the patient voice is at the heart of the services we deliver.

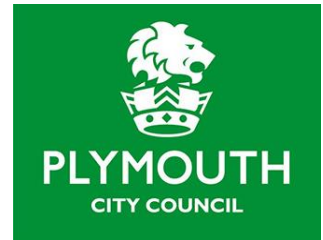
We’d like to thank Healthwatch for their continued support and look forward to further joint working with Healthwatch colleagues in the future.”



# Statements from partners



Ruth Harrell  
Director of Public Health,  
Plymouth City Council



“Over the last few years, we have gone through unprecedented times with the Covid-19 pandemic. The impacts are much wider, and longer term, than might first appear; and of course, we are still in a time of uncertainty, although with considerable optimism that we have made huge progress in learning to live with this new virus.

As well as longer term impacts on health, from declines in mental health and wellbeing, to long covid, we have also seen changes to the ways in which services are delivered, and a build-up of waiting lists for many treatments; despite best efforts to tackle this.

At the height of the pandemic, it was so important to reduce face to face contact to a minimum, to keep everyone safe. Now, with the balance of risks having changed, we need to understand much more about how successful different models of service delivery are for different groups of people.

It has previously been shown that often, the people who could most benefit from support of many different types, can often find it the most difficult to access; and that can lead to later diagnosis, less opportunity for preventative measures, and poorer outcomes. It is therefore essential to understand direct from those people of their experience, their concerns, and what they feel could be done differently and better.

The role of Healthwatch has been, and will continue to be, vital in providing very useful insight and support, amplifying the voice of the patient, service user and person.”



# Statements from partners



Liz Davenport  
Chief Executive  
Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust



"We are committed to listening to our communities and having meaningful conversations with people. Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay has been instrumental in helping us to make this a reality as we work together to deliver our vision for better health and care for all.

We have worked with Healthwatch both at a system level to understand people's experiences of Ill services and attendance at Emergency Departments and locally to improve how we gather and use feedback from people who use our services and their carers to make improvements to the care and experience we provide. People's views and feedback are directly shaping our work in this area and the expertise, advice and support of Healthwatch has been, and continues to be invaluable to us.

In Dartmouth, Healthwatch have worked alongside us and Dartmouth Town Council to explore whether the community can buy the former Dartmouth and Kingswear Community Hospital site and whether its redevelopment could include uses specifically to benefit people in and around Dartmouth. They have helped us ensure that we have reached as many people as possible and that their voices have been heard.

We look forward to continuing working in partnership with Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay as part of the Integrated Care System for Devon. There are exciting times ahead as we all work together to reduce health inequalities for our people and better involve people and communities in NHS and care services.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay for their continued support and for their achievements this year. I wish them every success going forward as we continue to work together to support our communities and people to live well and thrive."



# Statements from partners



**NHS**  
**University Hospitals  
Plymouth**  
NHS Trust

Ann James  
**Chief Executive**  
University Hospitals  
Plymouth NHS Trust



**Livewell**  
Southwest

Michelle Thomas  
**Chief Executive**  
Livewell Southwest



“We worked closely with Healthwatch during a difficult two years as we responded to COVID-19. During this time, we built stronger relationships and have capitalised on those strengthened relationships since to improve our services across a wide range of areas. In 2021/22, we have worked closely with Healthwatch in several ways, including:

- Healthwatch have continued to contribute to our Patient Experience and Safety and Quality Committees at UHP and supported with engagement work in the community around children’s services for Livewell Southwest
- Healthwatch undertook a piece of work commissioned by Devon Clinical Commissioning Group to understand people’s use of the Emergency Department at Derriford Hospital. During summer 2021, the Healthwatch Engagement visiting team asked patients questions about their visit to the department, including whether they sought advice or treatment from any other services before arriving, if they were unable to access any other services, and if their visit was related to hospital treatment they are waiting to receive or have recently received. Healthwatch also gathered feedback via its three local websites from people who had used one of the four Emergency Departments across Devon in the past two months. The findings have been instrumental in shaping communications with patients and the public and fed back to operational managers to help them understand how services are used currently and how they might be improved
- 1 July 2021 saw the formal launch of our Integrated Care Partnership between University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust and Livewell Southwest, designed to improve pathways and offer patients more integrated care. As we develop this Partnership and improve pathways, for example in cardiology and respiratory, we know that Healthwatch’s continued support will be critical to success as we seek to build improvements around what matters to patients.”





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# healthwatch

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