

The value of  
listening

# About this presentation

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**Kevin Dixon, Chair of Healthwatch in Devon Plymouth & Torbay (HWDPT)**

This presentation talks about all the different ways Healthwatch has connected with, represented, and made an impact on people in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay over the past year.

It shows the hard work and dedication of the Healthwatch volunteers and staff.

It shows why listening to patients is so important.

I want to thank everyone who has supported Healthwatch in our goal to monitor and improve health and care.

# How Healthwatch works in Plymouth

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Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay are independent services with statutory obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council work together to commission local Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (HWDPT).

Although they work together, each area keeps its own separate local Healthwatch service. They are run by a partnership of three organisations: Colebrook (SW) Ltd, Engaging Communities Southwest and Citizens Advice Devon.



## Who funds us?

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) fund the work of Healthwatch nationally. DHSC gives money to local councils so they can commission an effective independent local Healthwatch service. **Although local Healthwatch are funded by and accountable to local authorities, they are completely independent.**

# Our Mission Vision and Values

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## Our Mission

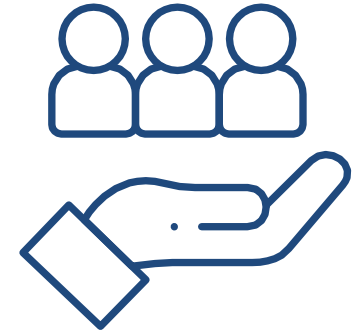
To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.

## Our Vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.

## 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.



# Working and volunteering in HWDPT



- We have 26 excellent volunteers and continue to recruit on a regular basis.
- We employ 15 staff members - not all are FTE.
- We offer dedicated walk-in centers in Torbay, Plymouth and in wider Devon.
- Our Citizens Advice (CA) Healthwatch Champions' are located at offices based in East Devon, North & West Devon, Exeter, South Hams, Torridge & Mid Devon and Teignbridge.

# Healthwatch Assist Network

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Our Healthwatch Assist Network helps us connect with people in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

Sharing helps find what works well.

It helps make health services better.

We now have **150** organisations in our Healthwatch network from across the whole of Devon .

They are from local groups, school councils, parent groups, committees and sports groups.

## How many people we reached in 2023/24

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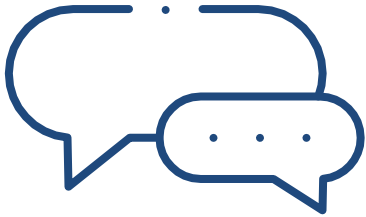


- **3395** people shared their experiences with health and social care services. This helped raise awareness about issues and improved care.
- **620** people came to us to get clear advice and information. This was on topics like dental services and doctor appointments as well as delays to a wide range of services.

# How we share advice and information

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This year over a thousand people got help from our HWDPT contact center. The contact centre helps by phone, email, and online chat.



Many people visited our **3** websites and followed us on social media.



Over **3000** people are now sign up for our Email Bulletins. We share the latest updates from Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay as well as NHS, Local Authority and VCSE news on health & social care services.



# Examples of what people tell us



"At the worst of my complex trauma, I felt listened to. I felt like I mattered and their advice was warm and caring. Very congruent staff enabling me to take responsibility on my journey into healing thanks to their empathy and empowering doctors. Very grateful"



★★★★★

#yourvoicecounts

**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



"I've tried everything to get an appointment. I am 84 and all I get is go online and book one. Well 4 of us have tried and it's still impossible. Bring back the old system this is just ridiculous, its very upsetting."



★★★★★

#yourvoicecounts

**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

# Examples of what people tell us

"Made an emergency appointment, tried to cancel because of an emergency at my home and was told I had to pay regardless of my circumstances."



#yourvoicecounts

**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



"I've attended several appointments in different departments recently and have had positive experiences each time. Twice I have been seen and left the hospital before the scheduled appointment time! No waiting, cheerful and professional staff."



#yourvoicecounts

**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



# Examples of what people tell us

"I have been on the waiting list for the pain management team since June 2021 for an appointment. They have not written to me even though my GP wrote to them to exasperate my case."



#yourvoicecounts

**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



All the staff are caring and supportive, the stroke and medical team took their time to explain as I am extremely deaf. The paramedics were exceptionally kind and made me feel at ease as I was very confused and afraid."



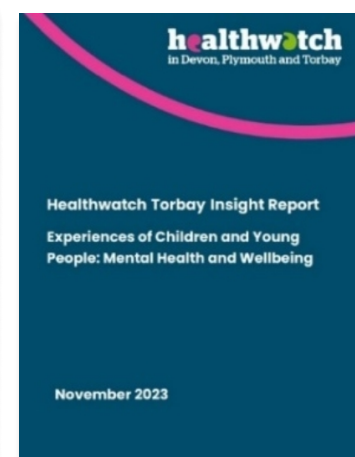
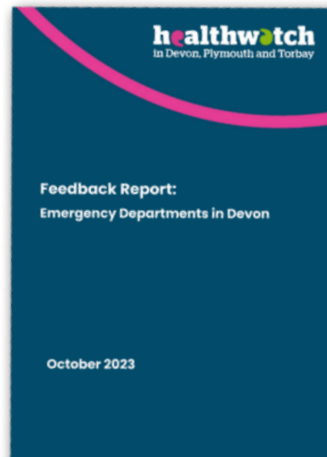
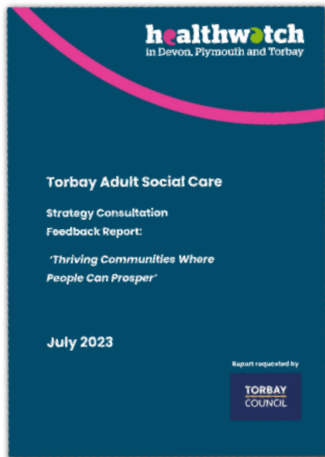
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**healthwatch**  
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



# What we did with these experiences

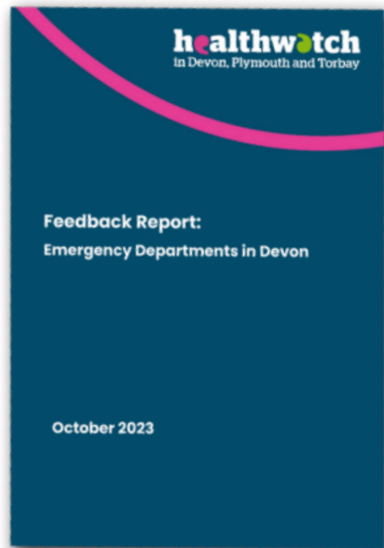
We published 10 reports about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services, including:



# Emergency Departments across Devon

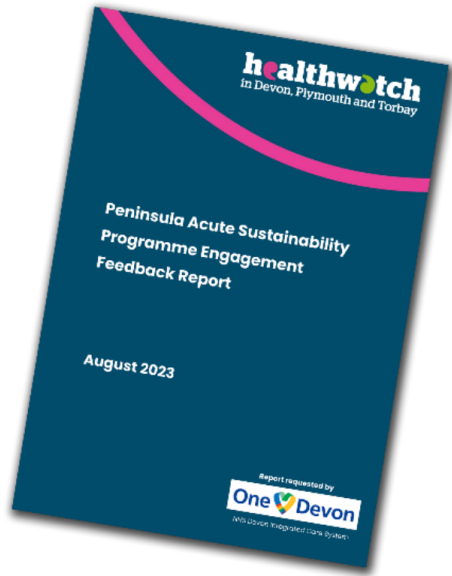
In Spring 2023 we were commissioned by NHS Devon to visit Emergency Departments at Devon's four main hospitals.

- We interviewed 511 people (122 from RUDH, 133 from NDDH) during 34 visits at different times and days, including daytimes, evenings and weekends.
- Our report was shared with NHS Devon and all key stakeholders, including Urgent and Emergency Care Boards.
- The report was also given to the NHS Devon Primary Care Commissioning Committee.
- The Southwest Clinical Senate invited NHS Devon and HWDPT to give a joint presentation on the work at their Annual Conference in Exeter.



## Peninsula Acute Sustainability Programme (PASP)

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- NHS Devon asked HWDPT for support to run some focus groups to find out more about people's experiences of Acute Medical Services, Surgical and Pediatrics across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- Working with Healthwatch Cornwall, we provided feedback from 335 people which was summarised in a full report and shared with NHS Devon.
- HWDPT will remain involved with the PASP programme as it moves forward.

# Patient Experiences of Pharmacy Services



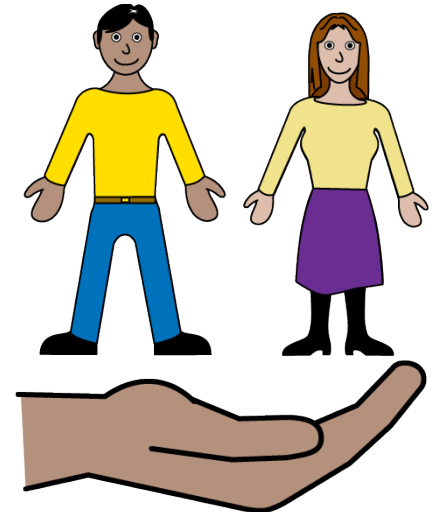
- 141 people shared their experiences with pharmacy services through our normal feedback channels.
- We shared our report and recommendations with NHS organisations in Devon.
- After we released the report, Plymouth Hospital NHS Trust said they will be providing a new pharmacy for outpatients which supports those visiting from surrounding areas.
- NHS Devon said they will use our report to help develop their Pharmacy strategy for the local community.
- Community Pharmacy Devon said they will use all our recommendations to improve pharmacy services.

# Other examples of communities we have supported to have their say this year

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We have worked hard to make sure we can speak to as many people in our communities as possible and shared our findings with key stakeholders .

- **Children & Young People** - We gave CAMHS and emotional well being support evidence at a Torbay Council spotlight review, sharing concerns on behalf of parent's families and representatives from local community groups.
- **Carers** - We gathered feedback from 224 people across Devon about the impact of providing unpaid care in their homes and in particular the effect it has on their wellbeing.
- **Local communities** - we ran a social media campaign to find out how the cost-of-living crisis was impacting on people and their health, feeding into a national HWE report





# Other examples of communities we have supported to have their say this year

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- **Men's Health** - we collected feedback from men of all ages who access Torbay and South Devon healthcare services to find what matters to them about their health.
- **Local communities** - we continue to independently chair and collate people's feedback from stakeholder groups on the possible future use of Teignmouth Hospital.
- **Eye care patients** - we are making sure patient experiences are used in UHP, by codesigning a short survey on access to services at the new Royal Eye Infirmary (REI) building in Plymouth.



# Recognition – This year we have:

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- Attended different national Healthwatch England events.
- Shared the work we did around urgent care at HWE national leadership conference in London.
- Won a commended award at the National Healthwatch Impact Awards.
- Shared lots of briefing documents about the work of the wider Healthwatch Network.
- Presented our Emergency Department report at the South West Clinical Senate Conference in Exeter.

# Our Priorities for next year for HW Plymouth

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Over the next year we will keep reaching out to every part of our community - especially in deprived areas - so that people can share their experiences and have their voices heard. Based on public feedback, our priorities for 2024-25 are:

**Health:** Accessing Primary Care, Secondary Care and Mental Health services.

**Social Care:** Accessing Social Care Services and residential and home support services.

**Children & Young People:** Development and integration of Children & Young People services.

**Mental Health:** **Accessing Mental Health** services under the Community Mental Health Framework.

**Digital Health:** Use of digital technology to support access to services and monitoring services at home.



## Quote from Devon Integrated Care Service

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**Steve Moore -  
Chief  
Executive  
Officer for  
NHS Devon**

*"Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay provides a patient voice which is vital for the delivery of NHS services locally.*

*Healthwatch is a valued board member of the One Devon Partnership, a committee that includes a range of organisations and groups who can influence people's health, wellbeing and care. The committee's primary aim is to drive integration by producing a strategy to join-up services, reduce inequalities, and improve people's wellbeing, outcomes and experiences.*

*Healthwatch continues to provide important feedback from patients, on big themes and small, so that as we redesign services, we can better tailor them to meet the expectations of our local population. Our mission at NHS Devon is to provide equal chances for everyone to live happy, healthy lives, and we need 'critical friends' such as Healthwatch to help achieve this.*

*We look forward to another year of close working with our partners*

## Quote from Devon & Cornwall Police

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**Devon & Cornwall  
Police and Crime  
Commissioner  
Alison Hernandez**

*"Health and social care organisations play a critical role in building the types of communities in which people can thrive, leading healthy and productive lives.*

*I've worked with Healthwatch to assure me that patients who have come to the awareness of the police are being managed well in our community. They know who to approach and the right questions to ask to ensure services meet required standards.*

*In the same way I am there to represent the voice of the people in policing, Healthwatch is there to be that 'critical friend' to some of the most vital services our communities will ever need. People can turn to them and get actively involved or seek guidance on what steps to take. It is an invaluable organisation."*

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**Thank you – any questions?**