



# The Dash Review and the future of Healthwatch

# The Dash Review

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- The Dash Review of patient safety across the health and care landscape was published in July 2025.
- The Government has accepted all 9 recommendations in the review.
- **Recommendation 5** of the review sets out that (a) the statutory functions of Local Healthwatch relating to healthcare should be combined with the involvement and engagement functions of Integrated Care Boards to listen to and promote the needs of service users, and (b) that the statutory functions of Local Healthwatch relating to social care should be transferred to councils in order to improve the commissioning of social care. Primary legislation will be required to make these changes.

# The Future of Healthwatch

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- The new NHS 10 Year Plan proposes to close Healthwatch.
- The plan suggests bringing the Healthwatch England function into the Department of Health and Social Care under a new National Director of Patient Experience.
- Locally, the patient engagement role of Healthwatch will be merged with NHS engagement teams, while social care functions will shift to local authorities.
- In the meantime, Local Authorities have been told, contractual arrangements should continue to be made to ensure that an effective Local Healthwatch organisation continues to operate

# Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth & Torbay

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- Current Contract runs until 31 March 2026, and we are awaiting further information from our commissioners on their intentions.
- Our engagement priorities are being kept under review.
- We are in regular contact with NHS Devon around potential engagement in support of the 10-year plan.
- Our Chair, Dr. Kevin Dixon, has stated that despite this news, it is "business as usual" for us, as we remain committed to listening to people and ensuring their voices are heard.

