



Together

**we're making health
and social care better**

Healthwatch Stockport Annual Report 2022–23

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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our Chair

Welcome to our Healthwatch Stockport 2022-23 Annual Report. This year we celebrate 10 years being a health and social care champion for the people of Stockport.

The team here continue to work tirelessly with local people and communities and our health and social care partners, ensuring we all work together to improve the quality of services for you and your loved ones.

Following a successful bid in May last year I am pleased to say we have been successful in securing our future to continue to operate as an independent Healthwatch to champion the voice of Stockport residents.

In July, the health and social care landscape changed as the integrated care structure for Greater Manchester was created. We have since been working with our fellow Healthwatch colleagues across Greater Manchester to create a Partnership Agreement to work more closely together. We've worked with system partners and organisations such as the Care Quality Commission, NHS England, Healthwatch England, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust, care providers, Stockport Council, voluntary and community partners and most importantly the



Sue Carroll
Healthwatch Stockport
Chair

residents of Stockport, who have shared their health and care experiences with us.

Thank you to all our staff, volunteers and fellow board members for their continued commitment to Healthwatch Stockport.

And not least we remember David Atkinson, a dear friend and fellow board member who sadly passed away in June 2022, for his dedication in helping set up Healthwatch Stockport back in 2013.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Pawl." with a horizontal line underneath.

“We are delighted to have worked with the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network on the Partnership Agreement and look forward to working together to hear the voices of patients and carers to improve care.”



On behalf of NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care, Warren Heppolette, Chief Officer for Strategy and Innovation,

About us

Healthwatch Stockport is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and 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 and approach

Inform. We provide **independent information** about health and social care support and services that **works for you**

Helping you **stay well**



Involve. We **independently** gather **your views** and ensure **you are listened to** about what works well and what could be improved.

We identify trends and themes and we use it as evidence to **Act upon** and support our influence.



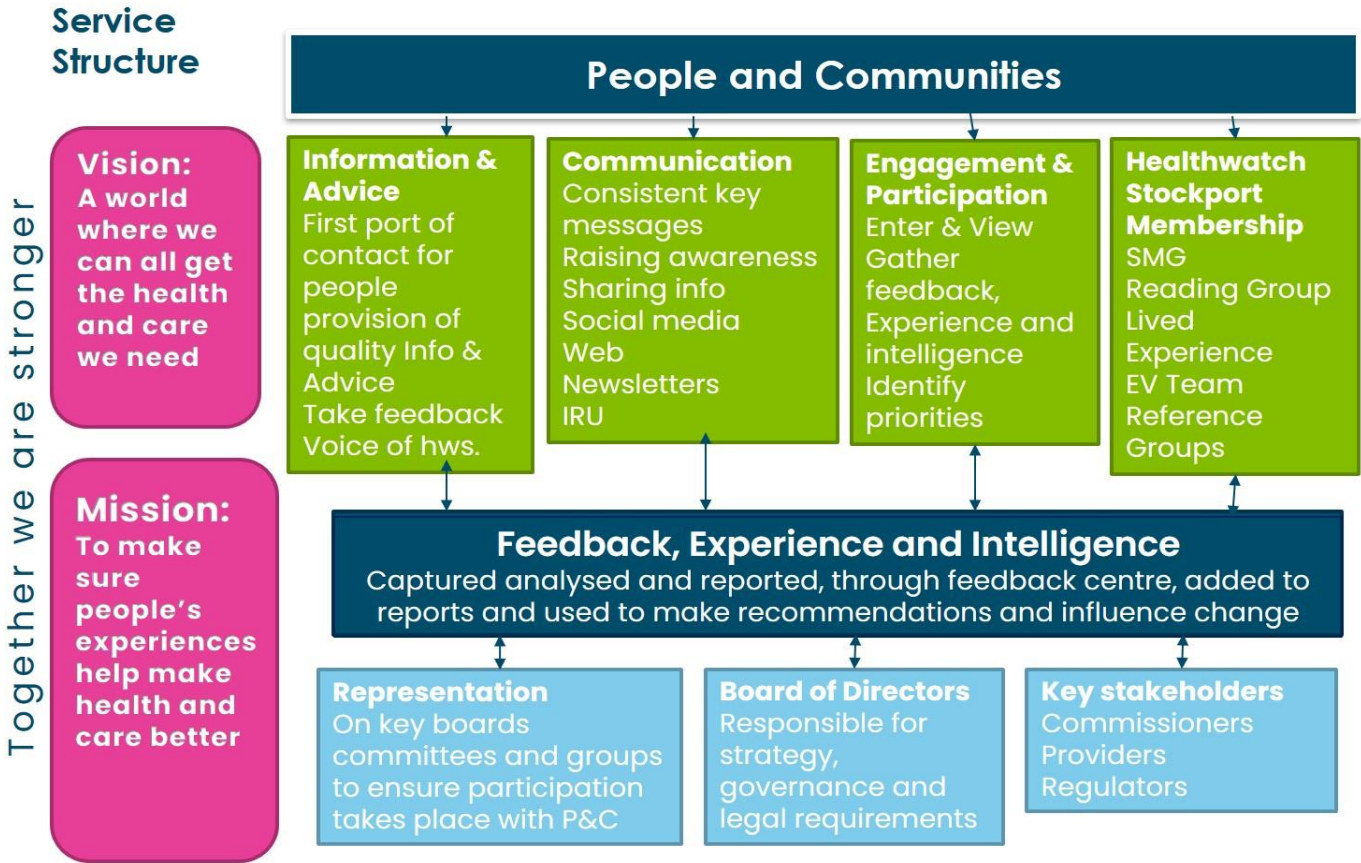
Influence. We work and **partner** with those that **run services** to ensure improvements are made because of **what you said**.

We **analyse** and use your feedback **independently** to work with commissioners to make **services work for you**



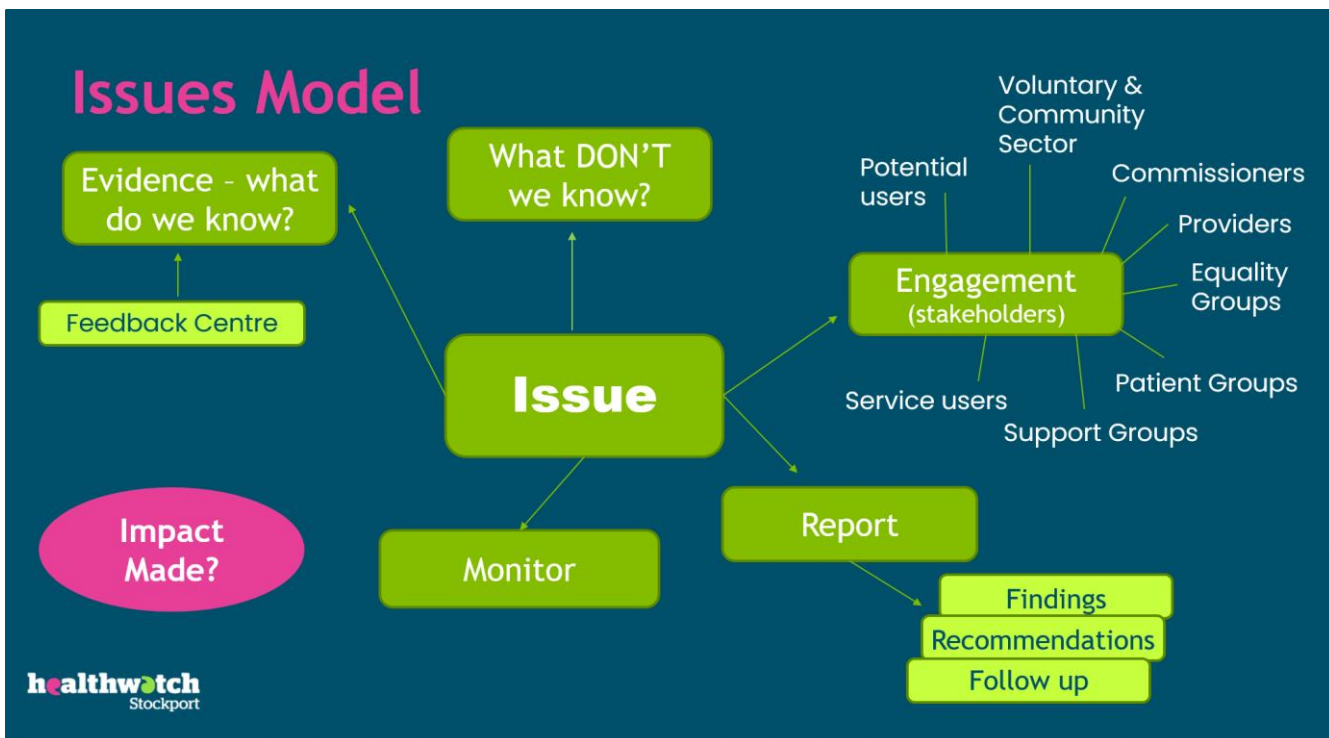
We Value our Independence

Our service structure



Inform Involve Influence Independence

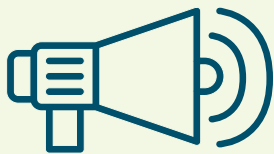
Healthwatch Stockport 'Issue to Action Model'



We use this model to work through the issues that are identified for our work programme

Year in review

Reaching out



978 people

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

161 people

came to us for support and or clear advice and information about topics such as mental health, dentistry, and direct payments

Making a difference to care

We published

4 reports

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

Our most popular report was

'Living with dementia'

which highlighted the struggles people face **when trying to access dementia support services following a diagnosis.**



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

50+

outstanding volunteers who gave up **200 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£146,500

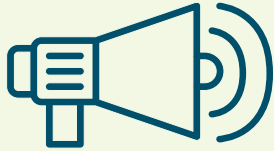
We currently employ

5 part time staff

who help us carry out our work equivalent to 3.5 full time equivalent staff..

Year in review

Reaching out



41 IRUs published

Most weeks we circulate an **information round up** of all the week's events, news and information from our partners organisations. We published 43 last year.

646 people

Receive our Information Round Ups! Up from 480 last year.

Social media

834 Instagram followers

Up 176 from 658 last year

We made over 100 Instagram posts

2887 Twitter followers

934 Facebook followers

Up from 862 last year with

33% male and 67% female followers



What we have done this year



Spring



Helped set up and Co-Chair a new **People and Communities Voice Partnership** as a subgroup of the Locality Board



We started a 10-month engagement programme gathering feedback about **GP access**

Summer



Supported the 'Your Care, your way' campaign to ensure services provide **accessible information** in a way that people understand



Ran a series of '**Big Conversation**' focus groups and engagement events to understand what matters most to people when they access health and care

Autumn



Kept raising challenges faced by the Deaf community when they need to access **British Sign Language Interpreting services** in hospital



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

Winter



Produced a '**What to Know this Winter**' guide to help with cost-of-living crisis and promote access to available services



Hosted a **public Feedback Network Event** to enable people to share their experiences of Health and social care

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:



How have we made care better, together?

Hospital Care 2021

we created a video with James who experienced poor treatment whilst receiving care in hospital to highlight the difficulties many people with learning disabilities face when they need to go into hospital.



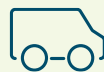
Home Safe after Discharge 2016

We undertook a largescale research study into discharge from hospital with patients, ward staff, pharmacy, discharge coordinators, social workers and staff from hospital and intermediate care facilities. The report highlighted the complex and expensive process patients go through when being discharged and made over 50 recommendations



Volunteer Hub 2020

During the pandemic we set up a much needed volunteer hub for Stockport in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The volunteers were amazing – from delivering shopping, picking up prescriptions and being on the other end of a telephone to befriend people who needed to hear a friendly voice



It's in the Drawer 2014

The introduction of routine follow up appointment from the audiology department were introduced following a 3-month engagement programme that we ran to understand why so many people did not wear or gave up on their hearing aids not long after obtaining them



Mental Health 2017

Following feedback from focus groups we held with mental health patients at Stockport Secure wards; consistency and frequency of ward rounds started to happen as well as improved information on admission..





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. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.



Healthwatch Hero



Celebrating a hero in our local community.

John is a Healthwatch Hero for bravely raising his experiences with us and creating change so that no one else had to struggle as he did.

John had a stroke several years ago which left him with paralysis and continuing health and social care needs. Before this time, he was retired and living comfortably. At first, he was told he was not entitled to any help with his care costs, which at the time was 3 visits per day from care staff to help him with all his personal care needs. He was assigned a social worker whom he never met and thought he was not entitled to any further support with adaptation or support..

We helped John tell his story to both Healthwatch England and our council colleagues and as a result we have helped him access a range of information and support services. Without John sharing his experiences with us, we would not be as aware of the issue that face people who fund most of their care themselves and that they would benefit from further help, support and information. Thanks to John we are better able to advise, signpost and support people like him and are able to better understand their care needs.

Advocating for fairer NHS dentistry



NHS dentistry is in desperate need of reform and this year Healthwatch across the country through Healthwatch England successfully moved NHS dentistry up the political agenda, making it easier for people to find a dentist taking on NHS patients.

With living costs on the rise, our new findings show widening health inequalities as people in every part of the country struggle to pay for dental care.

We have seen a shortage of NHS appointments, which has affected people on the lowest incomes the most, meaning they were less likely to have dental treatment than those on higher incomes.

We made renewed calls on NHS England and the Department of Health and Social care to put a reformed dental services.

Changes to NHS dental services

Our findings achieved widespread media attention and as a result NHS England announced changes, including:



- Increasing the payments for dentists when treating patients with complex needs, for example, people needing work done on three or more teeth.
- Requiring dental practices to regularly update the national directory as to whether they are taking new NHS patients.
- Moving resources from dental practices that are underperforming.

What difference will this make?

This announcement showed the power of people's feedback – with decision makers listening to your voice and acting upon it.

With these changes in place, it should be easier for people to find a new dentist taking on NHS patients, elevating the stress and worry so many suffer when they cannot afford to go private.



Sitting in the dentist's office, listening to the cost of treatments brought me to tears. Whenever I eat and feel a twinge my heart drops. I panic that something terrible is happening. MPs have money to get care if they need, most people don't. There's no version of private dentistry that's affordable."



Lydia, dental patient.

Issues affecting the Deaf community



We have been working closely with our friends at Walthew House for several years to raise the issues being faced by Deaf people when accessing healthcare.

This year we further highlighted the issues Deaf people face when attending the hospital. These include:

1. Staff not knowing how to book British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters.
2. When an interpreter is 'booked' it is in fact only 'requested' and most of the time the request has not been confirmed. This leads to a lot of interpreters "not turning up" (and being blamed).
3. When an interpreter is booked, it is not booked regularly i.e., if someone is known to be staying in hospital for a while, a daily interpreter (including weekends) needs to be booked for the individual.
4. Notes and communication are not passing between doctors, physios, nurses, during staff change overs.
5. Some staff have been led to believe or assume that it is the responsibility of the Deaf individual to book a BSL interpreter.
6. There have been instances where patients have been given diagnosis or other details written on a piece of paper

Our recommendation:

We provided case studies to the hospital; where treatment has not been acceptable and not compliant with the Accessible Information Standards. As a result, we requested a task group to be set up which would include members of the Deaf community.

What difference will this make?

It will

1. Implement measures to ensure compliance with the Accessible Information Standard, and current legislation.
2. Ensure patients have a BSL interpreter when needed and that they feel they have been treated with dignity and respect.
3. Improve the overall quality of experience and care.



Listening to local people

The Big Conversation

In our last issue, we set out the work we started to support the NHS Greater Manchester 'Big Conversation'. We wanted to understand what matters most to people and communities in Greater Manchester and to ensure that the new five-year plan reflects the health and care needs of local people and communities. Throughout **October 2022**, in partnership with NHS Stockport locality and Sector3, we asked people and communities in Stockport four simple questions.

The four questions were:

What would make the biggest difference to your life in relation to healthier choices?

What enables you to make healthier choices?

What prevents you from making healthier choices?

What improvement should be prioritised for health and social care services?

Questions were devised by NHS GM and all 10 boroughs asked the same questions.

We engaged with more than 250 people in this consultation and had over 75 responses via our online survey.

The most common themes that appeared were:

- health and care services to communicate more efficiently
- cost of living and peoples finances
- knowledge and being able to access 'good' information
- lack of time and time management
- to see more prevention and early intervention services
- access to more services that are more convenient



NHS Greater Manchester have now produced their [Big Conversation phase 2 report](#), reaching over 2,500 individuals and gathering over 10,000 comments. If you would like to read the report please contact the office.



Locations we attended:

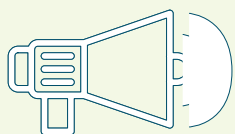
One Stockport HUB,
Lancashire Hill,
Meet, Greet & Grow,
and local networks



Andy Callaghan from NHS Greater Manchester collecting responses at the Merseyway One Stockport hub. (above)

Working together with our partners

Throughout our work we work in partnership where possible with all partners who may have a view about the work we are undertaking, here are some examples:



Voluntary and community organisations

Collaborated on joint Coffee Mornings

Throughout the year we hosted 5 coffee mornings in partnership with Stockport Advocacy, Walthew House, Re-dish, Beechwood and Age UK Stockport

Joint social media post

In partnership with Stockport Advocacy, we have been able to secure funding to appoint a joint social media officer. Michelle will start with us in March 2023.



Mental Health

We have spent 2022 working with Stockport Mental Health Carers

We have worked collaboratively with Stockport Mental Health Carers to collect feedback from carers, service users and local voluntary organisations such as Mind, Sparc and Pure about the experiences of people with severe mental illness.

We will be presenting our findings to the Locality Board in 2023



Healthwatch in Greater Manchester

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

Over the years, Healthwatch in Greater Manchester have championed together to ensure people across Manchester have fair and equitable health and care by raising awareness about inequalities. This year we have developed a new strategy together and collaborated on a partnership agreement with the new Greater Manchester Integrated Care System.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Working closely with the Stockport Women and Girls Network
- Providing information targeted at reaching people struggling from socio-economic deprivation
- Involving the Equality Networks across Stockport in our work
- Visiting college students and asking for their thoughts and experiences of health and care



Better engagement with women and girls

Working closely with Nadia from Make a Difference and Heaton Norris Community Centre, the women and girls network meets monthly to discuss how better to support women and girls in Stockport. This year there was a focus upon the planning of the International Women's Day celebrations. This event highlighted the work that is being done by various organisations in the locality in supporting women and girls.

Healthwatch Stockport Chair, Sue Carroll, gave a motivating speech at the celebration.



Stockport refugee support network

This network brings together organisations from across Stockport who aim to support refugees and asylum seekers in Stockport. It is an opportunity to share information about what each organisation can offer and provide updates about the support that is being provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Stockport. We attend this meeting, as a networking opportunity, but also to propose and share what our aims for the coming year are as well as plans to ensure that Stockport is a place of Sanctuary, similarly to the 'City of Sanctuary' title that many cities have in the UK.

Better engagement with students

The health and social care students at Cheadle College were interested to hear from Healthwatch and what role they play in Stockport. As well as informing the students about the work that Healthwatch Stockport have completed and what is ongoing, we had a lively discussion about the lack of health and social care services for young people in Stockport and the students provided feedback about their recent experiences with using local services which were most often about waiting times for GP and dental appointments.





Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch 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've helped people by:

- Helping them access NHS dentistry
- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping them access the services they need such as dermatology/mental health
- Supporting them to look after their health during the cost of living crisis

Helping to find dental care

Michelle is currently out of work after being diagnosed with depression and anxiety and she has been struggling to find a dentist for over 10 years.

This meant her teeth have been deteriorating over several year and were in a bad way by the time she contacted us and clearly needed some extraction work doing. This was also impacting her mental health as she had a genuine fear of dentists.

We explored several ways in which services could support Michelle and gave her the details of a community dental service that she could be referred to. When we made our follow up call, she had not been able to get referred due to not being able to see her support worker. However, we had just been made aware of a dentist accepting new NHS patients, we shared this with her and with our support she felt confident enough to ring the dentist herself and make an appointment with them.

“... I literally just rang and registered after trying to contact my sister to call for me because I was too scared. But with your encouragement I did it myself. I'm so grateful for your help thank you so much”

Michelle, Stockport resident

Helping a resident with autism to register with a GP.

We were contacted by Barbara, who was trying to register her son with a GP as he had not been registered for some time. Following a house move. He has Asperger's Syndrome and was not willing to do this himself.

We sought advice from colleagues in primary care who informed us that if the patient has capacity, they will have to register themselves, but if he was unregistered and in need urgent medical treatment he could be seen at a practice. We advised Barbara of this and suggested printing the registration forms, completing them on behalf of her son, and then let him check and sign them in his own time.

During the follow up call Barbara had managed to sit with her son and do the forms and he is now registered. With a new GP practice.

“Thank you for the suggestions, sometimes trying to solve a problem needs another's perspective. I was grateful for your help, although a simple step it meant my son was not stressed or overwhelmed, which made me feel less anxious. He would not cope with any of the process”. Thank you

Barbara, Stockport resident



Volunteering

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

This year our volunteers:

- Represented us on over 20 health and care related boards and committees in Stockport and Greater Manchester
- Visited communities and attended events to promote Healthwatch and what we have to offer
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views

Meet our heroes

Neisha

"Volunteering for Healthwatch has allowed me to share my skills and experience as a retired health professional with Healthwatch Stockport. Being part of the Lived Experience Panel has taught me so much about the importance of finding out how people experience health and care services."



Mike

"I have been with Healthwatch from the start and helping to make a difference is so important to me. Having an understanding of the system and being part of it through the meetings I attend representing Healthwatch Stockport gives me that insight. I enjoy doing my bit to make sure local services in this area are the best they can be."



Rosemary

"I recently joined Healthwatch Stockport and have enjoyed working together with the strategic monitoring group to ensure local services are meeting people's needs. I also joined the Enter and View Team and I am looking forward to my first visit. The experiences that Healthwatch collect are invaluable to shaping these conversations to ensure we have a good understanding of the needs of our local community."



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchstockport.co.uk



0161 974 0753



info@healthwatchstockport.co.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.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£146,500	Expenditure on pay	£95,000
Additional income	£7,000	Non-pay expenditure	£27,000
Total income	£153,500	Total expenditure	£122,000

Additional income was received from Healthwatch England for additional project work and the NHS for commissioned work that was outside the Healthwatch Stockport agreed work plan

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work to tackling inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless whether that is because of where you live, income or race.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. Understanding Social Care and discharge complexities – getting people home and/or into care safely/
2. Further tackling health inequalities and plans to reach areas of the community we currently don't hear from.
3. Working to support a mental health advisory group and work with partners to improve mental health especially for people who have a seriously mental illness



**Outpatients
Waiting Area**

Statutory statements

Healthwatch Stockport, Land o Cakes, 48 Middle Hillgate,
Stockport, SK1 3DL.

Healthwatch Stockport uses 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

Our Healthwatch is member led, it has a board of 6 volunteer directors who take their responsibilities for running the organisation seriously. They ensure the effective running of the organisation in meeting its legal obligations and meet quarterly (four times during this reporting period)

The board recognises that meeting its legal obligations as a company is distinct from meeting its statutory requirements for Healthwatch as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

To this end the board created a wider advisory Strategic Monitoring Group [SMG], made up of Healthwatch members to oversee our strategic priorities, workstreams and Healthwatch functions and they have met ten times this year.

Along with staff and wider members, the SMG represents Healthwatch Stockport on a range of health and care committees. They renew, refine, or identify new strategic priorities and project areas during their annual planning cycle.

They Identify priorities based on:

- Feedback from the community engagement we carry out with wider Healthwatch Stockport members, the public and the VCFSE sector, through a range of methods.
- Health & social care requests from our members, networks and local voluntary and community organisations
- Enter and View activity undertaken.
- Themes identified through our Information & Advice service, care opinion and other stakeholder reports.
- Findings from the task groups we set up to work on specific areas.
- Monitoring the general direction of health and care services.
- Tracking services due to changes in provision or commissioning.



The way we work

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 using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums. For example, we have hosted 5 coffee morning in partnership with local voluntary organisations, 2 network events, 2 generic information sharing sessions and 12 online sessions with our members.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, promote it through our weekly Information Round up, publicise it in our newsletter (paper version) and circulate it to our members, VCFSE partners and system stakeholders.

Responses to recommendations

We did not have any providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so 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 insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example we take information to the local Adult and Health Scrutiny committee such as the initial findings of our GP access survey.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers at the Stockport locality Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. For example, we will be producing a quarterly people and communities voice report to the Stockport locality board. We work collaboratively our 9 other partner Healthwatch organisations across Greater Manchester to provide intelligence to the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board.

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

Enter and view

This year, we did not undertake any Enter and View visits. We did however review our training package and recruited new Enter and View members.

We ran a member training session in **February 2023** and have another planned for May 2023. this training was open to existing members and was relevant for exiting Enter and View Members who needed a refresh in their training.



Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Stockport is represented on the Stockport Health and Wellbeing Board by Sue Carroll, Healthwatch Stockport Chair.

During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending the meetings, presented our annual report and by providing a public view of services and reporting on the work programme of Healthwatch Stockport.

Healthwatch Stockport is represented on Stockport Integrated Care Partnerships and Integrated Care Boards by Maria Kildunne.



2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Delivery
Let's Not Be Rash – Allergies	We have been working on implementing the recommendations set out in our 2022 report
Don't Forget About Me – LD	We have almost completed to the recommendations set out in our 2020 report
Dementia Experiences	We have been working on implementing the recommendations set out in our 2022 report and are planning a big Dementia Event in 2023
Mental Health	We have been working with our local mental health groups to produce an experience report from people who have a serious mental illness
Social Care	We have been planning our work programme around social care and have worked with Healthwatch England to carry out interviews with people who use social care services



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