



**healthwatch**  
Nottingham & Nottinghamshire  
**Your Voice in Health and Care**

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

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As we reflect on this year, it's clear that whilst the challenges we faced because of the global pandemic are still as acute, the focus is now on recovering and healing the deep wounds that Covid-19 exposed in the health and wellbeing of our most underserved communities.

Evidence suggests that those worst affected by Covid also had poorer health outcomes before the pandemic. This was especially the case for people from ethnic minority communities and those living in the most deprived areas of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Inequalities in health and care outcomes and differences in life expectancy between different population groups are now front and centre of emerging health and care policy both locally and nationally.

The creation of the Integrated Care System promises a more equity focused approach to population health management and greater emphasis on prevention across the system. Changing how health and care services work with people and communities will be one part of this process. It is a different way of working that recognises the role people can play in improving their own health and supporting them to do so.

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is proud of its record of prioritising the voice of those who are underserved in our health and care system. Challenging health inequalities, particularly for those who face multiple disadvantages is central to our work, and post-pandemic we have a renewed resolve to ensure that we can empower those voiceless communities to be heard. Our vision is to reduce the impact of inequitable health whilst ensuring that our communities lead the conversation on what is important to them.

We've worked hard this last year to reflect and understand this emerging landscape and to create a team of volunteers, staff and board members. We look forward to developing deeper partnerships with our communities, our NHS colleagues, local government, and the voluntary and community sector across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.



*Our vision is to reduce the impact of inequitable health whilst ensuring that our communities lead the conversation on what is important to them"*

**Sarah Collis**  
**Healthwatch Nottingham**  
**and Nottinghamshire**  
**Chair**

# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire enables and empowers your voices in our health and social care system. Across the City of Nottingham and the entire County of Nottinghamshire, 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 signposting.



### Our mission

To champion the right of our communities to receive outstanding health & social care



### Our role

**Scrutiny** - To hold local health and care commissioners and providers to account for listening to the public, as well as providing excellent care, signposting and total transparency.



**Making a difference** - To collect & provide insight into patients & communities, making recommendations to improve services for the public, patients and service users. Holding commissioners and providers to account for delivering these recommendations.



**To work in partnership** - Across local, regional and national networks of Healthwatch and the CQC to ensure big issues/opportunities are acted upon & best practice is shared, whilst ensuring that our independence is maintained.



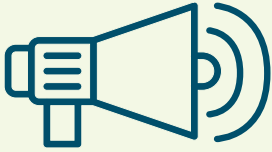
### Our values

- **Inclusion** – we embrace and value difference where all voices can be heard.
- **Compassion** – we listen to and care about people’s experiences and seek to affect positive change
- **Integrity** – We are open, honest, and reliable.

# Year in review

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## Reaching out



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

**1922 people** came to us for clear signposting and information about topics such as mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.

## Making a difference to care

We published

**9 reports**

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



Our most popular report was **"I extracted my own tooth!"** – **Hot Topic Report** which highlighted the struggles people face **when accessing NHS Dental Care.**

## Health and care that works for you

We're lucky to have **41** outstanding volunteers who gave up **102 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received **£306,000** which is **0.1% less** than the previous year.

We currently employ **11 staff** who help us carry out our work.



# How we've made a difference this year



We raised the issue of maternity care for people from ethnic minorities in our Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) report



We reviewed communications for Nottingham CityCare and helped them improve their complaint responses



We supported conversations between GPs and consultants in Neurology Services to focus support on patients



We raised concerns about NUH maternity services and contributed to the Ockenden review



We attended a range of local NHS and Local Authority meetings, always challenging as the voice of the patient



We surveyed 303 people across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire about their experiences of dental care during the pandemic



# 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.

# Advocating for fairer NHS dentistry

NHS dentistry is in desperate need of reform and in June 2022, Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire investigated people's experiences of accessing NHS dental care during the Covid-19 pandemic. 303 responses were received from people across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and our findings of the study highlighted a wide range of issues around accessing NHS dental appointments and the effects of this on patients. These findings fed into a national study undertaken by Healthwatch England, and the collective power of this feedback led to the issue of dentistry being successfully moved up the political agenda.

With living costs on the rise, Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are still hearing that people cannot access dental services. This feedback coincides with Healthwatch England's new findings which 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.

Healthwatch England has made renewed calls to NHS England and the Department of Health and Social care to put a reformed dental contract in place.

## Changes to NHS dental contracts

Healthwatch England collated all these findings and used them to achieve 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 taking action.





# Three ways we have made a difference for the community

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Throughout our work we listen to our local communities about what matters to them.

## GP Access Report



It's important for services to hear about people's experiences so that they can improve care. In 2022 we asked 399 local people about their experiences of using GP services. They told us of their high regard for the skills and attitude of GP staff, but many said that the system for booking an appointment is not working for them. We have made recommendations for improvement which we are following up with the Integrated Care Board.

## Community Transformation Programmes



Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone. Working with our Place Based Partnership's, Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been involved in bringing together local communities to identify which health issues are important to them. Using a co-production model, this local level of involvement has enabled local communities to raise many different issues.

## Maternity Services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire



Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change. In 2020 maternity services at Nottingham University Hospitals were rated inadequate by the Care Quality Commission. Since then we have met with local leaders to encourage the hospital to be open and honest with families, and to involve them in plans for improving services. We have seen gradual progress with this and the hospital issued a public apology on its website in 2022.



# Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure that 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:

**Connecting with the Communities of Hyson Green and St Ann's**

# Phlebotomy at the Mary Potter Centre:

## Listening to the Communities of Hyson Green and St Ann's

### What was the issue

In early 2022, CityCare stopped delivering a phlebotomy service at the Mary Potter Centre, meaning that from April, patients needing bloods were required to travel into Nottingham City Centre. Having received feedback from patients, we were contacted by Practice Managers and the Local Medical Committee, who asked us to look into the issue, particularly by speaking to patients regarding their experiences.

### What did we do?

Our engagement team attended both the Mary Potter Centre and the Valley Centre in mid-November 2022. They spoke to staff at Fairfield and High Green Practices, as well as speaking to both staff and over 60 patients at the Wellspring Practice, during an open meeting in which both groups discussed their thoughts and experiences. More than 80 patients signed an open letter regarding their experiences.

We found that patients were both angry about the fact they felt they were being ignored and concerned regarding the care their community receives. There was a strong feeling that the current system is unfair to a wide range of patients: those with disabilities, those living on limited incomes, those whose first language is not English, those with existing health conditions, those with mental health conditions, those who live in less affluent areas, and the elderly.

### What difference did we make?

We wrote to the Integrated Care Board (ICB), outlining our concerns, and the ICB subsequently committed to providing support for transport costs for local people to reach alternative services in Nottingham City, for example, by reimbursing patients for their transport costs. This will help some people but more needs to be done, and we will be following this up over the coming months.

“Coming down to the surgery is hard enough if you are unsteady on your feet, let alone having to go into town! I can't do it with a disability”  
Sharon



# Information and Signposting

One of the things we do is to provide information and signposting for NHS health and care services. We do this to help inform citizen's choices. We can help you to find information you may need about processes and contacts – for example, if you want to complain about a service; or what you can reasonably expect from health and care service providers or commissioners

**This year we've helped people by:**

- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Directing people to information about NHS dentists



# Volunteering

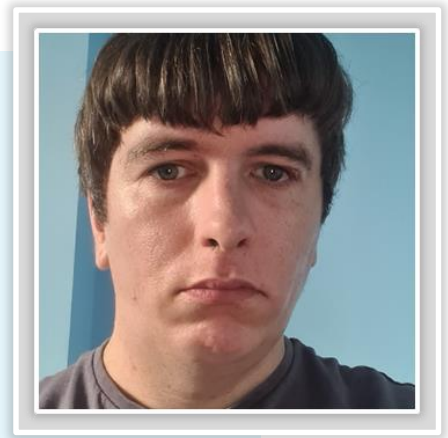
We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.

## This year our volunteers:

- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Collected the most up-to-date information on changes to services, such as whether NHS dental appointments were available at a practice
- Attended meetings on behalf of Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and gathered information to feedback

## Chris

"I am a volunteer filmmaker and have been involved in several projects including directing, filming, and editing a documentary for the Muslim Women's Organisation explaining their opinion of the GPs service that they receive. I have been volunteering for Healthwatch for almost a year, I really enjoy what I do and I am gaining a lot of experience"



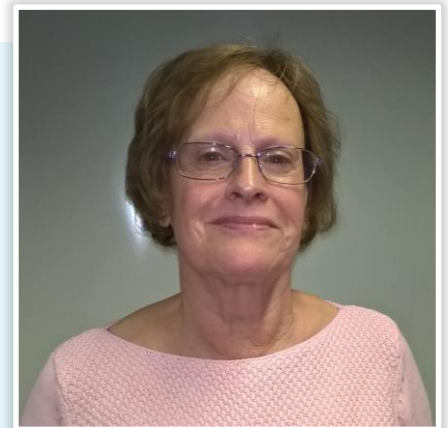
## Helen

"I have come to Healthwatch with no medical or NHS background at all and I feel that this really helps me walk in other patients shoes and raise their voice, their issues and their concerns. My specialised subject is common sense, questioning how practical it will be to write a letter to the homeless about changes to their GP service, or asking why the main carer is not part of the Multidisciplinary team discussing a Dementia patient living with that carer"



## Cathy


"I joined Healthwatch as a Volunteer several years ago, shortly after retiring from a career spent in Social Care. I value most the opportunity to listen to the experiences of individuals navigating both Health and Social Care services without the restriction of being a representative of a specific authority or service. As an Enter and View Volunteer it is very rewarding to gain feedback from residents in care homes about the care they are receiving"



### Do you feel inspired?

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

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

 [0115 956 5313](tel:01159565313)

 [info@hwnn.co.uk](mailto:info@hwnn.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	£306,000	Expenditure on pay	£307,871
Additional income	£60,879	Non-pay expenditure	£70,562
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£366,879</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£378,433</b>

## 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 tackle inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers people face when accessing care, regardless of whether that is because of where a person lives, their income or their race.

## Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. Mental Health
2. Health Inequalities
3. Developing Community Partnerships



# Statutory statements

## About us

- Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Unit 1 Byron Business Centre, Duke Street, Hucknall, NG15 7HP
- Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire use the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.



# The way we work

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## Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making

Our Healthwatch Board consists of 8 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met 5 times and made decisions on matters such as our new strategy, and agreeing our annual budget. We ensure that our priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

## 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.

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 at [www.hwnn.co.uk](http://www.hwnn.co.uk).

## Responses to recommendations

We had no 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 Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny Committees of both Nottinghamshire County Council, and Nottingham City Council.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in our local NHS Trusts, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the four local Place Based Partnerships. We share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

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## Enter and view

This year, Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire didn't make any Enter and View visits, therefore no recommendations or actions arose as a result of this activity. This is because our Enter and View program has been on hold since the pandemic; it will be re-established in Autumn 2023.

## Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is represented on the Health and Wellbeing Boards by Sarah Collis, (Chair). During 2022/23 Sarah has effectively carried out this role by attending meetings to ensure the voice of local people is considered as part of the discussion.

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is represented on the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership by Jane Laughton (Chief Executive). Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are not currently represented on the Integrated Care Board.

## Your Voice in Health and Care



Your Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Staff Team 2023

# healthwatch

## Nottingham & Nottinghamshire

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