





Contents

Message from our Chair	3
Who we are	4
Milestones we have reached this year	5
Our Activities during the Year	7
Our people	19
Our finances	21
Contact us.....	22

Message from our Chair



Our Chair. Sue Toole

Welcome to our Annual Report.

As you can see from the details in this report, this has been another busy year of engagement with people to find out what you think about health and local care services and how they can be improved. There is so much to do!

Thanks to all our volunteers, as they have made this work possible. It's been great to see the growing number of volunteers who have joined us during this year.

Thanks also go to the staff who have delivered and developed these services, despite the many challenges.

There are many changes in the coming year. I wish Healthwatch well with them and I hope, with your continued help, they will continue to thrive and raise important local issues.

This was my last year as Chair with Healthwatch, and I would like to thank all my colleagues on the Board for their work in setting the strategic direction of work over the past 5 years.

Best wishes for the future!

Sue Toole
Chair



Who we are

We know that you want services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care services with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

Our vision

At Healthwatch Waltham Forest (HWWF) the public voice is at the heart of what we do. Our priority is to gather and champion the views and experiences of people who use local health and social care services.

We do this by attending strategic health and social care meetings. We build critical but professional relationships with influential members of statutory bodies. We listen to the voice of the voluntary and community sectors. We signpost people to appropriate services and promote health and social care events to wider communities.

We go to the people and reach out to hear what you think throughout the year in a variety of community and health settings. We take those voices with us everywhere we go and use them to inform and shape public services.

We are uniquely placed as part of a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our priorities

- Ensure people from all communities and backgrounds are able to be actively involved in Healthwatch Waltham Forest
- To continue to work with Whipps Cross Hospital and Bart's Health to improve local services
- Social Care: particularly home care services
- Maximise impact of service user voice in commissioning processes and service improvement
- Transforming Services Together Programme
- Better Care Together Programme
- London Borough of Waltham Forest Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- North East London Sustainable Transformation Plans





Milestones we have reached this year

We have 3,000 stakeholders that we regularly communicate with



110 volunteers help us with everything from Outreach to Enter and Views



Our team have taken part in 1,300 activities



40,000 items of service user feedback collected processed and analysed



150 Patient Experience Panel meetings have been concluded helping us keep up to date with trends



20,000 residents have engaged with us through events & activities





Let's Talk Numbers...

Healthwatch Waltham Forest has always recognised the importance of accurate and robust record keeping, and we were amongst the first to install a comprehensive information system, and to provide high quality training and support to staff and volunteers.

Thanks to this foresight, investment and planning, we are pleased to say that a number of milestones have been reached, and surpassed this year.

40,000

Items of service user feedback have been collected, processed and analysed. This means that Healthwatch Waltham Forest has built up a substantial, meaningful evidence base, one that we and our partners including community groups and commissioners have utilised frequently. This depth of evidence is important - routine reports such as on GPs, Maternity or Social Care will be underpinned by large volumes of feedback and whatever the topic, there will usually be *something* in the database.

20,000

Residents have engaged with us, whether that's through outreach, meetings, community festivals and events. That's a lot of conversations, information and advice given, experiences shared.

3,000

Stakeholders are in our database, from individual residents, community groups and organisations, and professionals working in health and social care. These are the people we communicate with regularly, many of which actively participate in our projects and initiatives.

1,376

We currently have 1,376 followers on Twitter

1,300

Activities have been recorded, such as meetings attended and events held. Given that most Healthwatch teams are relatively small, and ours no exception, we can certainly say that time has been utilised to full effect!

150

Patient Experience Panel meetings have been concluded, enabling us to keep a constant close eye on health and social care related trends, while monitoring safeguarding, general patient safety, dignity and equality.

110

Volunteers have assisted us, at every level in the organisation, from developing strategy, to helping out at outreach and information stalls. It is thanks to the dedication and commitment of our volunteers, most of whom are residents of Waltham Forest, that we have been able to achieve what we believe, are impressive milestones.



Our Activities during the Year

Working together

Healthwatch Waltham Forest places great value on its relationship with its stakeholders, and with the wider local population.

Respecting people as individuals, we ensure that the personal attributes of our stakeholders and volunteers, such as interests and special requirements are formally recorded, so that we are able to engage in a way that is meaningful and productive. With details recorded in the database, we are able to determine the target audience for any given topic, and method of communication in each case.

Our main publication, the monthly eBulletin has been produced routinely in various formats - regular, text only (compliant with text readers), large font, traditional print and audio. This would have been done anyway, but we are mindful of the 'Accessible Information Standard' (AIS), approved and launched by NHS England. It is there to ensure that disabled people (and their carers and parents) with communication support needs have those needs met by all health and social care services and organisations.

The onus will be on the voluntary sector and other bodies such as Healthwatch to promote and monitor effective implementation of AIS. We have worked extensively with local sensory impairment groups since our inception. Healthwatch Waltham Forest is at the forefront of this drive.



Building relationships and working together.



Supporting people to make complaints

Information and Signposting

In this ‘modern age’ of social media and email you may assume the telephone seldom rings, however this is not the case at Healthwatch Waltham Forest, where staff have responded to 166 cases via the phone.

A well utilised part of our work is the ‘Information and Signposting’ service, where we support residents with guidance on any health or social care related topic. Some enquiries are straightforward and dealt with swiftly, while others are complex, requiring in-depth research and investigation. Our cases are extremely varied, ranging from a diabetes patient not knowing where to dispose of needles, to an elderly resident finding it difficult to obtain repeat prescriptions, to a person experiencing poor quality home care.

Sometimes, we spend an hour on the phone hearing a story and even if we are unable to offer decisive guidance, we will listen.

Joined Up Information

As part of wider information and signposting across the borough we assisted the Council this year to produce, populate and launch the ‘Waltham Forest Directory’, an online resource containing comprehensive information and advice. This new service incorporates information from, and therefore replaces, the Healthwatch Waltham Forest ‘Community Directory’, which has made a substantial contribution to the new service.

Complaining for Change

The ‘Complain for Change’ initiative by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman portrays complaining in a positive light, and we share this view, encouraging many residents to exercise their right to complain. It is through complaining, that issues are documented within the system, and may lead to service improvements that benefit not just the complainant, but all other service users.

However we know that residents can be reluctant to complain as the complaints system is difficult to navigate and the process can be complicated. Healthwatch Waltham Forest has sought to provide residents with clear guidance, issuing a two-sided advice sheet that details in plain language how to make a complaint and who to contact.



We encourage people to share their experiences, and provide information where necessary.



This year's findings

The Shape of Local Services

Approximately 120 stories reached our office every week, and our database contains some 40,000 items of feedback overall.

GP's

The 2,939 comments acquired this year suggest sentiment is positive, overall with patients receiving good quality services, and most feeling listened to and involved in their treatment and care. However, we hear common accounts of congested telephone lines and waits of days (or more) to see a GP of choice. Patients would also like a greater level of confidentiality, particularly when giving personal information to reception staff.

Homecare Consultation

We regularly have feedback from carers and service users regarding home care. We are planning a consultation with service users and service providers to ensure that homecare services being delivered locally are fit for purpose and meet the needs of local service users.

Healthwatch Waltham Forest has completed the preparatory work for the homecare consultation. We want the results to have maximum impact on service delivery. Therefore, we have identified key partners that we would like to work with on this consultation.

Whipps Cross Hospital

Barts Health has introduced its 'Safe and Compassionate' programme, which aims to drive up standards across the Trust. Over the year we processed 3,140 experiences about Whipps Cross University Hospital, and when comparing our findings with the previous year, we are pleased to say that things appear to be moving in the right direction.

This year, waiting lists have come down, waiting times at appointments have improved, and there have been fewer cancellations of appointments (particularly for elective surgery). Also the phones have been more responsive this year, but having said that, there is still room for improvement on the overall administrative system. And crucially, recruiting and retaining staff is still a challenge.

Social Care

It has been reported in the mainstream media that Social Care services are under 'more pressure than ever', with a knock on effect to the wider NHS. This year we examined some 10,768 issues, obtained directly from residents and existing surveys. We found that most people are satisfied with social care services, on the whole. However, we are becoming increasingly aware of social isolation, with residents voicing a variety of concerns around not being adequately supported to improve the quality of their daily lives.



Projects

Dementia in African and African Caribbean Communities

In December 2016 we worked with Waltham Forest Alzheimer's Society to run two Focus groups, to identify feelings about diagnosis, diagnosis rates and timeliness, barriers to diagnosis and post diagnostic services for Dementia in African & African Caribbean Communities. We involved local service users, family members, carers of people with dementia, and local professionals working with people with dementia including the Council, a nurse, Age UK and Infinite Oasis Care, a day-care service. We identified themes including:

- A gap in knowledge and information of carers, family members and local professionals around dementia and the services available.
- The need for diagnosis to access any services and support was seen as a barrier.
- Lack of inclusion of carers when services contact people with dementia.
- A need for better referral systems, including more proactive GPs.
- People were afraid to make complaints about services.
- A need for more support for family and carers, including respite.
- Fear, stigma and bias is an issue, with people being afraid of the way they would be treated once they're diagnosed, or misdiagnosed with a mental illness.

Care Home Support

Healthwatch Waltham Forest have worked with the local authority to offer targeted support to care homes in service engagement and involvement. We have developed a strong track record in this area. Presentations were made at service provider forums to encourage care homes to better engage their service users. We will continue to offer support to health and social care providers to improve service user engagement.

Enter and View

This year, we conducted an Enter & View visit to Rowan Ward, within Whipps Cross Hospital - part of Barts Heath NHS Trust. The ward is a female only general surgical delivering patient care on a daily basis. Our team captured the experiences of patients on the ward, and those involved in their care at the point of service delivery. Whipps Cross Hospital have responded positively to the report. They have developed a delivery plan to implement the recommendations raised.



Our volunteers play a key role in the projects we do.



Deaf Communities Focus group (commissioned by local Pharmacy Network) on Accessible Information Standards in pharmacies

In June 2016 we were commissioned by North-East London Pharmaceutical Committee (NELPC) to find out what hard of hearing people thought of their community pharmacy services. This project's aim was to improve the information and communication needs for hard of hearing people in community pharmacies, and to ensure that they become compliant with Accessible Information Standards (AIS). We also co-designed materials to show people what services a pharmacy can offer, support taking medicines correctly and long-term condition information leaflets.

The information from this and other focus groups were used to design training materials for community pharmacy teams. We had a great turnout of 18 people from Tower Hamlets, Newham and Waltham Forest.

Attendants shared their stories and provided insight; "Pharmacist doesn't match the skills of a deaf person - they still use jargon" and "When you bring an interpreter, doctors often speak directly to family rather than deaf person themselves".

We discussed the idea of what an accessible pharmacy would look like and how medication guidelines can be clearer with more pictures and tables. "I need instructions that are pictorial, words can get confusing". The use of sign videos in pharmacies was suggested, as well as providing an interpreter when visiting the pharmacy.

Young People and Mental Health Services

In February 2017, we worked with Waltham Forest Young Advisors and Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) to facilitate a youth led focus group for young people in the borough. The topic for this focus group was mental health services. This was a pilot to assess the needs in this area.

We are concerned about the lack of involvement of children and young people in health and social care provision locally. The focus group made three key recommendations:

- Improve the marketing and information around Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Improve patient pathways including referrals and access to CAMHS services
- Develop mechanisms for Children and Young People to have greater involvement in health care services.



GP Answerphone and Website Mystery Shopping

We carried out Mystery Shopping of Waltham Forest GP practices' answerphones and websites from December 2015 to September 2016. We wanted to know if they were correctly advising people how to seek treatment and make appointments when the surgery was closed. The project was prompted by the large amount of feedback from the public regarding problems knowing what time they could contact the surgery, the limited availability of appointments, and patients telling us that they are unaware of alternatives when their GP is closed, with many going directly to A&E in these cases. We were also particularly interested in whether information had been adapted to local service changes, such as the new extended hour GP surgeries, and whether information was accessible.

Three key recommendations were made on how local GP's answerphones and websites can be improved to provide the public with helpful and up to date information:

1. Standardisation: Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (WFCCG) should issue a standard script to all surgeries with key information that needs to be included in GPs' answer machine messages. This should include information such as 111 and 999, GPs' opening hours and phone line hours, and information on the extended hours GP surgeries.

2. Updating local changes: All GP surgeries should be regularly notified and guided to update their answer machines and websites when changes in local services occur, such as the Extended Hour GP hubs and the closure of walk in centres.

3. Accessible Information: All information from the answer machines should be consistently duplicated on the website and provide Accessible information standard compliant options. Good practice examples we found included options to enlarge the website's fonts, options for Dyslexia friendly versions of the website, and one website included the NHS 111 number for deaf people.



We use various methods to capture people's views.



Events

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Annual Event - The Power of People

In October 2016, we held our 3rd annual event, titled 'The Power of People' at Waltham Forest College. The focus of this event was public involvement across all services in Waltham Forest. It was an event for local residents, professionals, voluntary sector and individuals who all work, volunteer or provide public involvement in the borough. We wanted to create an opportunity for people to share their successes and ideas to increase public involvement.

The event was very well attended with over 90 local residents, voluntary and community organisations, service user representatives and health and social care professionals.

Julie Bailey (Cure the NHS) spoke about her experience campaigning for a safer NHS as the keynote speaker, and speakers from NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) spoke about how patient and carer involvement is part of everything they do.

We produced a report to summarise learning from the event and provided practical principles that can be applied across groups and different public and service user engagement activities in Waltham Forest.

The principles for good public engagement were also incorporated in the Waltham Forest Strategic Partnership Board's Community Engagement Approach: Principles for Community Engagement section, which would support all engagement activity in Waltham Forest, to enable all voices to influence the work of the four Strategic Partnership Boards and its member organisations.

Health & Wellbeing Forum

We held quarterly Health & Wellbeing Forums. The purpose of the Forum is to provide a service user and community sector voice to the Health & Wellbeing Board meetings, which cover a range of health & wellbeing topics.

Among topics this year were:

- The Quality of Mental Health services in Waltham Forest
- The Health & Wellbeing Scorecard and specifically cancer survival rates in the borough
- The Whipps Cross Hospital redevelopment Action Plan, with a focus on staffing & recruitment issues
- Social prescribing pilot
- Childhood obesity, specifically on the need to create an environment that promotes healthy eating and running education programmes for families
- The Better Care Together programme and how it can reach isolated groups of people, and better meet the needs of older people.

With the overarching climate of transforming services, such as with the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), people stated that it was crucial that communication and engagement was done well in order to make sure people understand changes and use services appropriately. People were concerned that not enough time was allocated to engagement, and that more effort needed to be made. There was a strong view that the public wanted to be involved throughout the transformation process instead of just being informed of decisions.



Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs)

We ran four public engagement events around the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) in February and March 2017. The aim of the events was to give people a chance to find out what the STP was, ask questions, and hear different perspectives. The discussions involved local councillors, and representatives from Waltham Forest Save Our NHS, and Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). A lot of concerns were raised, including whether the cuts in health and social care budgets could be challenged, as well as concerns about the lack of focus on mental health, ethnic minorities, and gender issues. People also raised concerns about patient safety because of a lack of risk assessment and questioned the ‘unrealistically short’ amount of time allocated for proposed changes to happen.

There was consensus that the STP for north-east London needs more local engagement, which we will continue working on with the North East London STP team and other local Healthwatches.



We always ensure different perspectives are represented, including local residents, patient representatives, CCG and many more.

Whipps Cross pre & post-inspection public engagement

In July 2016 a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection was carried out at our local Whipps Cross University Hospital. The CQC were keen to engage the public & patients’ voice throughout the process, and worked together with us to ensure this. Prior to the inspection, we supported the CQC in their engagement, by sharing local intelligence on patient experience of Whipps Cross Healthwatch gathered through Enter & View reports, research reports and patient stories received. We also publicised opportunities for local residents to get in contact with the CQC if they wanted to provide specific information which would help the CQC decide when, where and what to inspect.

We also held a meeting on the 27th June 2016 with the CQC inspection team and local patient representatives, to gather input in preparation for the upcoming inspection of the hospital. The meeting was attended by over 20 people including Healthwatch Waltham Forest and Healthwatch Redbridge, members from the Whipps Cross Patients Panel, Save our NHS members and local residents. CQC representatives came and explained their role, their approach to inspection and how they work together with Healthwatch in order to ensure that patients and the public are engaged at all stages of the inspection.

After the inspection report was published in December, we held a follow-up meeting in January for the CQC team to feed back to the same group on how their input has helped shape the inspection, and to maintain a two-way dialogue with the patient and service user representatives that were engaged.



Volunteering and training

The Patient Experience Panel

The Healthwatch Waltham Forest Patient Experience Panel (PEP) is where local people come together each week to review experiences of local services. In doing so, we are able to evaluate services individually and as a whole - spotting key trends (such as access to services and waiting lists), and assessing whether people have been treated safely, fairly and equally.

Meeting 48 times over the year, the panel reviewed 2,059 residents' experiences, identifying 6,494 issues in the process. This has enabled us to produce many evidence based reports, which we share routinely with partners including NHS Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group, Barts Health NHS Trust, North East London NHS Foundation Trust and the Care Quality Commission.

The panel has an open door policy - all residents are able to take part (there is no application process) and the members this year have been from all walks of life, from across the borough, with varying interests. This year, we held additional 'open sessions', giving staff at Whipps Cross Hospital and other frontline organisations the opportunity to hear about issues, good and bad, first hand.

We also welcomed Public Health and Social Care students, who learned about the leading trends and gained insight and knowledge that will prove valuable to their future careers. Feedback from students this year includes:

“Healthwatch has helped me to develop - I learned much at the Patient Experience Panel, including how to code people’s experiences. Moreover I have also gained a lot of confidence in working as part of a team.”

“My work experience with Healthwatch has helped me to know what goes on at local health and social care services. I have also learned a lot through the team and I am now confident to speak up when working as part of a group. The experience has been a pleasure, and has made me think a lot about the NHS.”

“I can say that coming to Healthwatch has really helped me to enhance my knowledge, as well as my communication skills.”

“I have learned how to express my views effectively and also how to respond to people’s opinions positively.”

Volunteer celebration lunch

We held our annual volunteer celebratory lunch in January 2017. This was a great opportunity to thank our volunteers for all the great work and the support that they continue to give us throughout the year, also a chance to socialise with other volunteers.



We had a great time at our annual volunteers celebration lunch!



Patient Representative Training

We ran two training workshops for Patient and Service User representatives. The purpose of the training is to support the learning and development of new representatives, and those interested in taking up these roles. The training outlined the local health and social care context, used local case studies and equipped participants with skills to enable them to carry out their Patient representative roles well. Both sessions were very well attended, and the providers did a great job of using interactive and creative ways to look at effective collaboration and communication for patient representatives, and how these can help tackle health inequalities in Waltham Forest. Participants' comments included; it was "Interactive & a good opportunity to work together" and another person said "full of information, ideas, and ways to do the patient representative role well."

Recruitment and training of Enter and View Representatives

We recruited 6 new Enter & View Authorised Representatives. They have received comprehensive training, including Enter & View for Authorised Representatives, Safeguarding and Dementia training. Our team conduct Enter & View visits, which gives Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Waltham Forest the right to enter and observe publically funded health and social care services in the borough. Enter & View visits are used to get a lay perspective on the service concerned and are an opportunity for service users to talk about their experiences with the service. Reports on our visits are made public and can be found on our website.



We're very proud of our Patient Representatives who completed the training and can now go out and represent their communities!

Working with other Healthwatches

Healthwatch Waltham Forest has shared interests with neighbouring Healthwatch organisations. We work with other Healthwatches on areas including Barts Health NHS Trust who operate across East London, and the NHS led ‘Sustainability and Transformation Plan’, which aims to change the way health services are delivered regionally.

We have always worked closely with our neighbours and this year we developed this further. Working with Barts Health, we aspired to compare the service user experience of Whipps Cross University Hospital with that of Newham University Hospital, Royal London Hospital and Mile End Hospital. This would give us the opportunity to identify how our local hospital is performing in relation to its peers. Collaborating with Healthwatch Newham and Tower Hamlets we examined many thousand patient stories, and took a lead in combining this large volume of feedback into a single reporting framework.

You may be aware that Whipps Cross University Hospital is in special measures, however we found that the quality of care on the wards, and in maternity, compares very well to the other hospitals. We have also identified a long term trend, showing improvements in patient sentiment across all the hospitals, particularly so at Whipps Cross.

This independent collective scrutiny is helping Barts Health, at Board level, to recognise challenges and also successes across the Trust. Our intelligence has greatly augmented their existing feedback measures (Friends and Family Test and iWantGreatCare) and demonstrates that Healthwatch is a key partner, across the Trust, in identifying key trends in service user experience.



We've enjoyed working together with other Healthwatches and partner organisations.



Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)

In the past year HWWF has assisted the SAB in recruiting for lay people to join the Board, which we did twice, a total of 2 full days work. We hope that this will help to raise the voice of service users in its work. We included a workshop on Safeguarding at our Annual Engagement Event, and got some critical comments from people who had used the service. These were fed back to the Board via the Independent Chair and we hope they will be used to improve the service. We have trained all our volunteers and staff and undertaken Adult Safeguarding Awareness Training with them on 2 separate occasions during the year.

We have also encompassed the Dignity in Care principles into the work of our Enter & View reports, as discussed with the Safeguarding Board. We are in the process of reviewing and updating our own policies on Adult Safeguarding.

We presented to the SAB the previous series of Enter & View visits to care homes and discussed future similar initiatives. We are planning another series of Enter & View visits to care homes this summer. We continue to undertake Enter & view visits at Whipps Cross to represent service users' views.

In the coming year, we will work with the SAB partners to initiate a user engagement group or forum, hopefully connecting it to the work of the lay people already on the Board. We will also be offering an advocacy service regarding NHS complaints.





Our people

Staff Team

Jaime Walsh:	Healthwatch Manager (Waltham Forest)
Althea Bart:	Healthwatch Manager (Waltham Forest)
Rebecca Waters:	Healthwatch Manager (Waltham Forest) Maternity Locum
Daniela Muenzel:	Engagement, Outreach and Research Officer Communications Marketing and Press Officer
Joyce Osei:	Volunteer and Enter & View Project Co-ordinator



Our team members: Daniela, Althea and Joyce.

Our finances

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	160,000
Additional income	25,980
Total income	185,980
Expenditure	
Operational costs	75,905
Staffing costs	84,239
Office costs	9,117
Total expenditure	169,261
Balance brought forward	16,719



Contact us

Healthwatch Waltham Forest

Waltham Forest Resource Hub (Central)

1 Russell Road

London

E10 7ES

Phone number: 0203 078 9990

Email: info@healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

Website: www.healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

Twitter: @Healthwatch_WF

Address of contractors:

The Forum for Health & Wellbeing

St Mark's Community Centre

218 Tollgate Road

Beckton

London E6 5YA
