

A Year Like No Other

Lessons and Opportunities

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Annual Report 2020 - 2021



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Message from our CEO

During a year that has been constantly evolving, where people and organisations have had to adapt and rethink how we engage with our communities and neighbours Healthwatch Waltham Forest has tried to reach communities that may be even more isolated due to the pandemic.

This year we have successfully engaged with:

Ethnic minority groups

Carers

People with disabilities

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Queer people

Refugees / asylum seekers

People who are homeless

Younger people

People with language barriers

Our main project is a mixed methods study of Covid-19 on the Health and Social Care experiences of disabled people and carers. In the first stage, regional North East London Healthwatch partners produced a survey to understand experiences of services. In the second stage, we will conduct focus groups and interviews in Waltham Forest to co-produce policy recommendations. We will then present these findings and recommendations to Health and Care commissioners.

We have continued to engage with over 2000 people to understand their experience of service provision and conducted 4 enter and view studies.

The service additionally provided a report on GP and Primary Care Networks. This report reflects the experiences of residents in Waltham Forest. The information was captured via our Patient Experience feedback form, through face-to-face visits taking place at GP practices and other health and community locations in the borough, through direct telephone and online engagement and through feedback left on other online platforms such as nhs.co.uk

About us

Here to make health and care better

Healthwatch Waltham Forest are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in **Waltham Forest**. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals



1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



2 Providing a high quality service

We want to provide a high quality service for everyone who shares an experience or seeks advice from us and to understand the difference their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



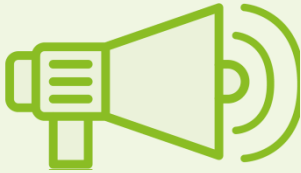
“Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone's views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people's lives.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Highlights from 2020 -21

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



We heard from

2470 people

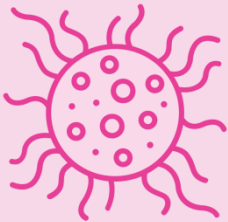
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

2278 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported more than

2000

people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

Making a difference to care



We published

4 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made recommendations for improvement.

Health and care that works for you



15 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work.

We employ 5 staff

1 full time, 4 part time equalling to 3 full time equivalents.

We received **£133,000** in funding from our local authority in 2020-21, the same as the previous year.

Officer Updates

Then and now

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Annual Report 2020-21





Joyce Osei: Enter and View and Virtual Visits



Enter and View

This year saw a significant change to the way we deliver the Enter & View programme. We followed government guidelines and stopped face-to-face engagement from March 2020.

We created a Virtual Visit framework that allowed us to complete all of the elements of an Enter and View virtually. This allowed us to continue capturing peoples experiences of Health and Social Care services and learn about the experience of care home providers during the pandemic.

Our Care Home programme is themed around specific aspects of care provision. Visits involve the provider hosting a detailed virtual tour of the facilities using a tablet/ mobile device, enabling us to speak to residents.



Impact

Together with our Enter and View reps we have;

- Delivered **five** virtual visits to local care homes.
- Made a number of practical recommendations that providers have started to implement; e.g. purchased tablets to enable residents to have virtual visits with family and friends in a comfortable and accessible way.
- Put in place offer of dementia care support information to enable a provider to improve their service to residents living with dementia.



2021 -2022

Our vision for the coming year includes continuing to successfully develop our Enter and View and Virtual Visit programme using an approach that can adapt to meet the changing needs of communities. We look forward to safely delivering our Enter and View programme and continuing to work with providers to improve service user experience. We intend to continue building and developing our volunteer team to make a significant difference to people using health and social care services.

Dementia Care

Our goal is to continue to improve the delivery of dementia care within Waltham Forest. We are working in partnership with the Dementia and Delirium Team at Whipps Cross Hospital in order to deliver successful projects that will provide training and guidance to providers to better support people living with dementia.

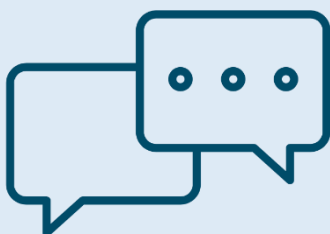
Share your views with us

What is your experience of Health and Care services in Waltham Forest? Please share your experiences with us.

www.healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

020 3078 9990

info@healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk





Sophie De Val: Community Research



Community Engagement

Since starting as Research Officer at the end of March 2021, I have engaged with dozens of local organisations to promote our research activities and to invite organisations to partner with us on specific projects.

I have worked with the local authority to identify local and grassroots organisations working with resident and service user groups and attended Community Participation Network meetings.

My engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector highlighted the wealth of knowledge, creativity and devotion to residents' welfare in the borough. However, it is also evident that many organisations are working to capacity in this sector. As the Research Officer at HWWF, this reemphasises the imperative to deliver impactful and reciprocal research which builds on community strengths.



Impact: Covid-19, disability and Health and Social Care services in Waltham Forest

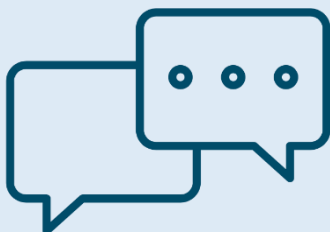
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The interim report highlights the key findings related to representation, diminished access to GPs and mental health:

- White-English residents were overrepresented in the sample and none of survey respondents were of South Asian, non-English white, or mixed-ethnic backgrounds.
- GP access became harder for most respondents, a trend observed more widely by Healthwatch by the surge in enquiries from residents unable to speak to their GP.
- Many respondents indicated they had experienced adverse mental health but only a small minority had accessed mental health services over the pandemic.

We are in the process of scheduling focus groups and interviews to co-produce policy recommendations. We hope to present the report to commissioners and publish in accessible formats this summer.

Contact us and share your views



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Next Steps for 2021/2022

Volunteer Engagement

I started working with a new team of six research volunteers. Our research volunteers are highly skilled with a keen interest in social research and patient and service user experiences. I have developed new ways of working together online using Microsoft Teams. I hope to continue to foster a collaborative team dynamic which utilises volunteer skillsets and unique insights to produce quality and impactful research projects.

In 2021 /22 I hope to;

- Develop inclusive strategies which increase research participation particularly among diverse ethnic communities and digitally excluded people - which can be adopted in and out of lockdown periods. /
- Create self-evaluation tools assessing the inclusivity and equality of outcomes of our research activities, using reflections to inform an evolving set of practices.
- Work with GPs to find patient-focussed solutions to improve accessibility.
- Investigate health disparities and launch a longitudinal, co-productive Black Health project.
- Identify perceptions of mental health services and thresholds for access.
- Explore social determinants of health in the borough and co-produce findings with patients and service users.



For more information about our community research projects please contact:



0203 078 9990

info@healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

www.healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk



Charlotte Bradford and David Hastings; Patient Experience



Your story

Our patient experience data shows that 10 out of 11 service areas received a majority of 4-5 stars. Mental Health was the exception. Waltham Forest received a very small amount of reviews for Mental Health services for 2020/2021, and they are largely negative (68%). Dentists received the highest positive reviews with 496, followed by GP practices with 426. GP practices also received the highest negative reviews, with 1-2 star ratings.

	4-5 stars	3 stars	1-2 stars
Community	25	5	24
COVID-19	54	1	4
Dentist	496	3	62
Emergency Care	5	7	1
GP	426	92	265
Hospital	176	20	91
Maternity	59		4
Mental Health	7	1	17
Opticians	172	7	33
Pharmacy	249	17	101
Social Care	44	1	1
	1713	154	603

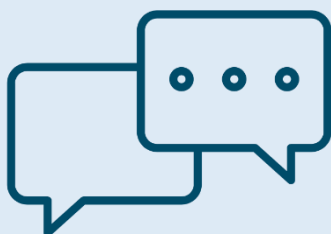


Key Trends in 2020 - 2021

On review of the GP patient experience, negative reviews are largely a result of not being able to get through on the phone and appointment availability. GP services also received a considerable amount of positive reviews relating to Treatment & Care. Understandably, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on the traditional GP experience, how these services are managed, and how both the provider and patient perceive these changes. Our data suggests that the Treatment & Care provided by GPs within Waltham Forest is on the whole improving.

People that were able to access dental services complemented the staff and the Treatment and Care. It is excellent to see that Facilities & Surroundings received 100% for Cleanliness (Environment, Infection Control & Staff). Our patient feedback suggest that Waltham Forest dentists have prioritised provider and patient safety by implementing high levels of infection prevention measures.

In the final quarter of the year we also took into consideration Covid-19 Centres. The reviews are largely positive (92%) with the majority of patients expressing their satisfaction with the vaccine treatment.



Share your views with us

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, contact us.



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Monitoring Data 2020 - 2021

Female	353
Male	176
(blank)	1941

18 – 24	5
25 – 34	3
35- 44	30
45 – 54	40
55 – 64	70
65 - 74	162
75 - 84	130
85 +	83
(blank)	1947

Ethnicity Data

Asian/Asian British - Any other background	5
Asian	5
Indian	1
Indian, British	2
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African & Caribbean	29
Black, African	6
Phillipino	1
West Indian	1
White - Any other background	22
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	348
(blank)	2050

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



32% on GP services



25% on Dentistry



12% on Hospital Care



15% on Pharmacies

NHS Advocacy and Complaints Service




We operate a very busy NHS Advocacy and Complaints Service. The service is part time and from the 1st September 2020 to 31st March 2021 we;

- supported 40 clients with their complaints
- Had 60 enquiries asking for our help
- Had a waiting list of 40 clients



Contact us

 www.healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

 **0203 078 9990**

 info@healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk



Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and borough partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we helped more than 2000 people by:

- Providing up to date advice on the COVID-19 response locally
- Linking people to reliable up-to-date information
- Supporting the vaccine roll-out
- Supporting the community volunteer response
- Helping people to access the services they need



Volunteers

At Healthwatch Waltham Forest we are supported by volunteers, interns and placement students who help us capture patient public voice locally.

This year our volunteers:

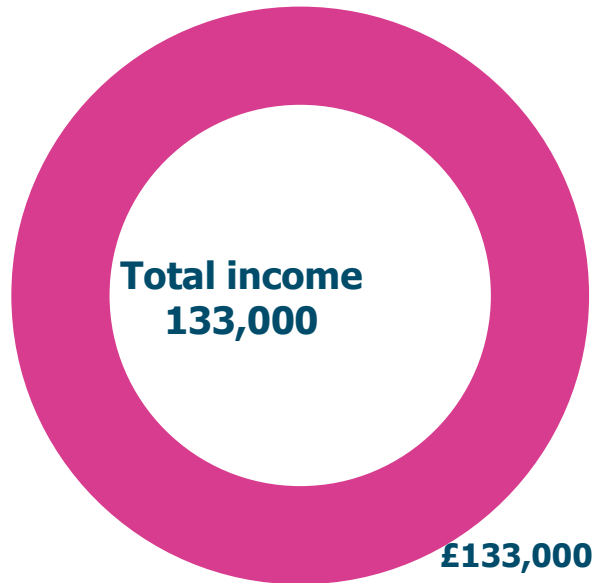
- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.
- Created digital content on our websites and social media.
- Supported virtual engagement.
- Promoted local Covid response services and support.

Finances

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

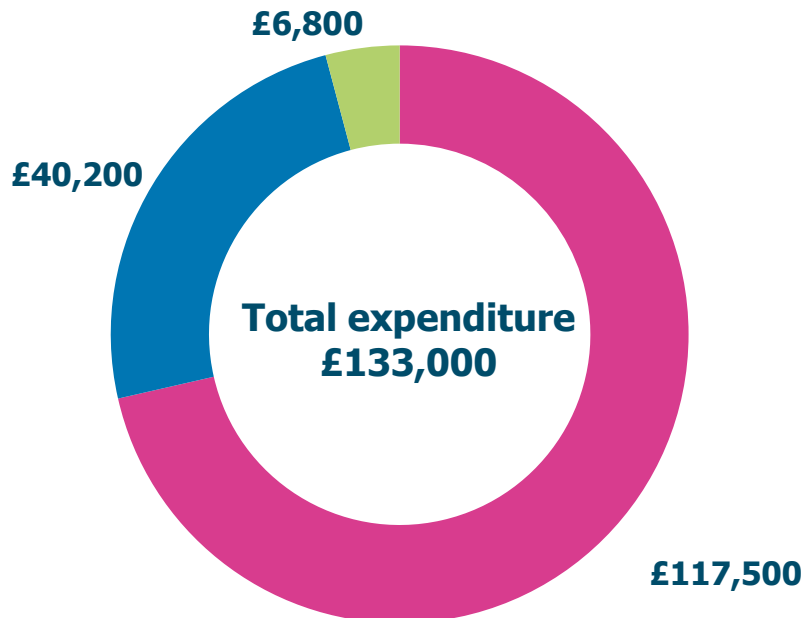
Income

- Funding received from local authority
- Additional funding



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs
- Support and administration



Next Steps

Top three priorities for 2021-22

- Access to Mental Health Services Support and Service Transformation
- Supporting Patient Participation Groups and Improving Access to GP Appointments and Services
- Working with partners to address health inequality in Waltham Forest

Next steps 2021 -22

Healthwatch Waltham Forest is committed to working with local residents and providers to develop and deliver quality, safe, and accessible health and care services for all residents.

In 2021-2022 we plan to develop the capacity with the organisation to meet new challenges in a changing Health and Care system.

We propose to develop new mechanisms of engagement that allow us to hear the voices of the seldom heard and most excluded communities in the borough.

Thank You

Healthwatch Waltham Forest would like to thank everyone that has helped us and who continue to support us in delivering a quality credible service in Waltham Forest.



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Waltham Forest

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0203 886 0839
info@yvhsc.org.uk

Healthwatch **Waltham Forest** 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 Waltham Forest committee consists of **12** volunteers who take a lead on specific work areas to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met **6** times and gave direction on:

- Patient Public Involvement in local health and care systems
- PPG engagement and development
- Adopting a Theory of Change and Impact focused way of working.

How we engage

We adopt a proactive approach to engagement. We aim to use a wide range of approaches to ensure that we make it easy for people to share their views with us.

This year our face to face activities were suspended due to the Covid pandemic. Despite the challenges, we continued to deliver support by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website. We also provided a feedback centre/rate and review system that enabled residents to share their views of health and care services directly with us. We attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.

We make this annual report available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch **Waltham Forest** is represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board by **Althea Bart, Operations Manager**. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by **providing resident insight and feedback on health and care services in the borough**.



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