

The value of listening

Healthwatch Bolton
Annual Report 2023–2024



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Throughout the past year, we have demonstrated the impact of community voices on health and care services. By listening to people's experiences and feedback, we are assisting the NHS and social care in harnessing the valuable insights of those who face significant health disparities.

Julie Darbyshire – Chief Officer



Message from our Chair

It has been another very busy year for us...

We have worked on some very interesting projects this year. For our Menopause and Me work, we explored experiences of knowledge, information, support, symptoms and the impact on day-to-day life. We engaged with many groups and organisations and we also focused on Black and minority ethnic groups who had very little knowledge or information about this subject. Health inequality barriers are higher due to cultural stigma around women's healthcare needs.

We also engaged with Bolton Deaf Society, gathering feedback about their experiences of using health and care services in Bolton. We heard all about the struggles they have and the barriers they face in everyday life, and accessing health and care services. We made a series of recommendations to help improve services for them.

We worked with our Integrated Care Partnership Board, ensuring we are in the right spaces so we can ensure our work and the voices of our community are heard. We presented two GP Access reports to them this year, as this has been the top theme that people contact us about. We will continue to monitor GP Access in the coming year and continue to present the feedback from what our community is experiencing and sharing with us.

We have also been working with our Healthwatch colleagues across Greater Manchester. We started our first piece of work as a Greater Manchester Healthwatch network. We looked at children's mental health and the pathway into Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. The work had a huge response from young people, parents and carers and professionals from across Greater Manchester. The report will be available later this year.

We have also focused on maternity services this year as many people/parents in our community were sharing their experiences. The work focused on the journey through antenatal care to post-natal care, looking at experiences of using maternity services in Bolton. The report will be available later this year.

Our Information, advice and guidance service continues to deliver a top quality service. Our dedicated staff deal with a great many enquiries from the public, some of which are very complex and concerning. I am proud of the service our staff provide which makes a huge difference to people's lives.

I would also like to pay tribute to one of our long-serving trustees – Jim Sherrington, who sadly died earlier this year. Jim has a long history of working with communities to help improve services for people. He was a very valued member of our trustee board and we miss him.



I want to thank our dedicated Trustees, volunteers and staff. Without them we could not do this important work. I also want to thank our community for sharing their views and experiences with us. I hope we can continue to support our community in ensuring their voices continue to be heard.

Jim Fawcett - Chair



About us

Healthwatch Bolton 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 are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



Year in review

Reaching out:

1,586 people

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

223 people

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



Making a difference to care:

We published

7 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Experiences of GP Access

which highlighted the struggles people face accessing their GP practice and getting an appointment.



Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

10

outstanding volunteers (including Trustees), who gave up their own time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority.

In 2023 - 24 we received

£125,000

We currently employ

3 staff

who help us carry out our work.



Your voice heard at a wider level

We collaborate with other Healthwatch teams across Greater Manchester, to ensure the experiences of people in Bolton influence decisions made about services at Greater Manchester Integrated Care System (ICS) level.

This year we've worked with Healthwatch across Greater Manchester to achieve:



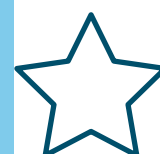
Gathered opinions from across our local communities and used our knowledge to contribute towards the development of the Greater Manchester Dementia United Quality Standards, the Greater Manchester ICS People and Communities Engagement Strategy and the Shanley Report.

Undertook a Greater Manchester Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health Project, with a focus on pathways to mental health support. This project gathered peoples lived experiences of existing service provision across Greater Manchester. Recommendations and findings will be fed back to Greater Manchester and local commissioners and providers to help shape future service delivery.



The appointment of three key roles to the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester partnership. These include an Independent Chair of the Network, Chief Coordinating Officer and Administration and Data Officer. These roles will drive forward the leadership, coordination and delivery of the All Age Strategy 2022-2025, alongside partnership working across the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network.

Worked in collaboration with Greater Manchester Patient Services to co-produce ongoing reports throughout the year which identify challenges and share the lived experiences of the people of Greater Manchester. We have and will continue to ensure their voices are heard throughout the Greater Manchester ICS, through their Quality and Performance Committee.





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.

Access to Dentistry – Impact on Cancer Care

We were contacted by health professionals who were supporting people with a cancer diagnosis, who needed chemotherapy treatment, whose patients could not access a dentist

There are patients who require a dental checkup before they can commence a certain type of chemotherapy treatment (bisphosphonate). If these patients do not have access to a dentist, to get a check-up, then their treatment cannot commence.

We received **7** enquiries of this nature

What We Did

We raised this issue with the Chief Executive of Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board as a matter of urgency. We informed them about the problems patients are having accessing dental treatment, and the detrimental impact this was having on their ongoing cancer treatment.

What Difference Did this Make?

- The Practice Access and Quality Initiative, adapted the national contracting arrangements to provide stability to NHS dental providers enabling them to open access for new and urgent patients. The proposals focus on priority patient pathways e.g. Cancer, diabetes, cardiology and children's care, and prevention (delivering better oral health), that would help address the dental care needs of patients on bisphosphonate treatment. This will give access to around 80,000 new dental patients this year across Greater Manchester.
- The Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance Team and dental networks are working to develop solutions to support people due to start bisphosphonate treatment. They are also revising a letter to be shared with cancer patients at the appropriate point in the cancer treatment pathway, instructing them to contact their dentist to secure an appointment for assessment and any necessary treatment.
- The Cancer Alliance will support NHS Greater Manchester colleagues in communicating information, to ensure all primary and secondary care teams supporting patients through cancer treatment, are given the same information in relation to access dental care. The Alliance are discussing with oncology colleagues how objective data can be collected about access to dental services for this group.

Access to Dentistry and Impact on Health and Wellbeing

We published our report which explored how lack of access to adequate dentistry was impacting the health and wellbeing of patients.

Over the past few years, we have had constant feedback from the public about difficulties accessing an NHS dentist. We looked at the wider impact on health and wellbeing, of not having adequate access to NHS dentistry.

52% of people said No access to either NHS or Private dentist

45% of people said Yes it had impacted on both their physical & mental health

45% of people said they had difficulty getting the treatment they needed

What did you tell us ?

- You said you were struggling with anxiety and confidence issues
- You said you were suffering from dental pain and discomfort and worry about taking too much pain medication
- you told us you were struggling with tooth infections that were not being treated
- You told us about your disabilities and how you have struggled to get any access
- You told us that your children were also unable to get access to an NHS dentist
- You said your older children were unable to access timely orthodontic care
- You told us that you had an exemption certificate for pregnancy, but you could not access dental care
- You told us you could not afford private dental care

What Difference Did This Make?

- NHS Greater Manchester (GM), does seek to ensure access to meet urgent treatment need and have sustained additional urgent access capacity post the pandemic to meet the urgent care requirements of the population.
- The Greater Manchester dental community (commissioners and providers working together) have developed a number of toolkits and initiatives to seek to support practices to provide holistic care for patients.
- NHS GM continues to invest into oral health improvement and prevention for children and young families. Access for children and young people continues to be an identified priority, with commitment to services from Child Friendly Dental Practices and the Looked After Children scheme.
- All NHS Dental Practices are asked to prioritise children and young people.

Improving Information and Support on Peri/Menopause

We published our report 'Menopause and Me', which explored your experiences of sharing lived experiences, and finding good support and information in your communities

You shared with us where you had accessed information and support, you told us what you thought was useful and you also told us about some of the barriers you have faced when trying to access good support and information.

57% of respondents said they found particular websites and the internet as the best source of information closely followed by

52% said family and friends were the best source.

65% felt there were barriers to accessing information and support

72% said peri/menopause had impacted on their mental health

64% said peri/menopause had impacted on their physical health

We also found that **37 ladies from ethnic minority backgrounds**, were not aware they were going through the peri/menopause

What you told us

- You didn't feel that GPs and some health professionals had the necessary knowledge and training to offer good support and information.
- You felt there was too much stigma attached to accessing reliable information and support, and not enough education on the subject.
- People from ethnic minority backgrounds had very limited knowledge of what peri/menopause is and how to go about finding the right support.
- You wanted more accessible information that is available in community settings such as menopause cafes.
- You wanted better information on Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), and alternative treatments (such as holistic pathways).
- You wanted information to be more accessible and available on GP websites
- You wanted supportive employers and workplaces who understood peri/menopause, with up-to-date policies in place.
- You wanted more normalisation and less sexism on the subject.

Improving Information and Support on Peri/Menopause (continued)

Experiences of people from ethnic minority backgrounds

Fifty ladies from South Asian communities took part in an information session which was led by two local GPs. The group was made up of 24 Indian, 23 Pakistani, 3 Bangladeshi backgrounds.

Several ladies have been struggling to complete their exercise programs and reported feeling tired and described their bodies as broken, feeling like they are going crazy, and not feeling like themselves and not understanding what is happening to their bodies.

When asked about possibility that they may be going through the menopause, **none of the ladies had any understanding of what menopause is.**

Out of the 50 ladies taking part - **37 were not aware that they were going through the menopause**, 17 did, however have never discussed this with family members or their GP. Ladies reported that they feel embarrassed and ashamed.

What Difference Did This Make?

through the Women's Health Hub Strategy Group:

- A network of menopause champions will be set up, using existing networks of community champions
- A booklet will be developed together with community training sessions
- Continue to deliver content on menopause through GP training, linking in with the NHS Deanery (a regional organisation responsible for postgraduate medical and dental training).
- There is to be a women's health hub link on every GP practice website, with up-to-date information on HRT treatment, with communication to GPs on how to talk to women about HRT
- Community connectors will be equipped with information on how to set up menopause cafes
- There will be consistent messages for GPs to inform patients about pre-payment prescription certificates
- Bolton Talking Therapies will be starting Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) sessions on managing menopause
- Discussions will take place to get menopause added into the sexual health curriculum

Your Experiences of Access to GPs In Bolton

Access to GPs has been the top theme why people contacted us this year.

We developed a simple survey to collect feedback on GP access. From this we produced two snapshot reports which showed:

- Nearly 500 people shared their experiences with us.
- The majority said they had difficulty getting through to their GP on the telephone.
- Many people said they went elsewhere for treatment or self-cared because they were unable to get a timely appointment with their GP
- A majority of people said they only 'sometimes' received their preferred appointment type.

What difference did this make?

- Our reports are being used by NHS Bolton, as part of the primary care review process.
- The locality Primary Care Contracts & Commissioning Team has commenced a piece of work, using data at practice level from GP Patient Surveys, Friends & Family Test, Complaints, Incidents, Enhanced Access monitoring, BQC Access Audits, and Healthwatch Bolton reports, to provide a fuller picture of access across Primary Care Networks and to identify those practices who require additional support.
- One GP practice which we shared feedback about, has been working to make improvements which include:
 - Offering a range of appointments for patients – routine and urgent and offer these on a 50:50 split
 - These appointments are offered on both a face to face and telephone basis and are offered for both urgent and routine appointments
 - Requests for appointments by third parties are assessed by the duty doctor who will determine the need for an appointment based on clinical need.
 - This process is repeated as and when correspondence is received requesting an appointment for a patient, i.e. a hospital clinician requesting a patient be seen in primary care.
 - The practice now allows for booking of appointments up to six weeks in advance especially for long term condition reviews and aging well clinics etc.

Next Steps

- We will continue to monitor GP Access on our next workplan, and we will continue to ensure your experiences are fed back to commissioners.

Three ways we have made a difference in the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.

We have worked with our local D/deaf community to listen to their experiences of using health and social care services. In partnership with them, we produced a video to allow them to communicate with us using British Sign Language (BSL) and WhatsApp. We have produced a report with recommendations. Link to video: [BDS video](#)



Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

We have worked with our mental health trust to look at a young person's health passport. This is to ensure young people can receive the right care whenever they may go into a hospital. One of our clients and their child worked with the Trust to help advise and shape the passport.



Improving care over time

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

We have been receiving intelligence about difficulties accessing GP practices for some time, and it still remains the top theme why people contact us. We work closely with our primary care colleagues to ensure the intelligence is constantly fed back so plans can be made to improve services for patients. Our Integrated Care Partnership use our intelligence to feed into their primary care access review.



There's a summary of other outcomes we've achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.



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.

We have collaborated with colleagues in our community which has enabled us to reach further into our communities.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Engaging with our local D/deaf Society
- Engaging with young people with a learning disability to hear their feedback
- Engaging with support groups for men
- Reaching out to schools and colleges, places of worship and food banks
- Working closely with community leaders
- Establishing links with community partners across Bolton



*The relationship between yourself and our engagement team has been invaluable and has hopefully enhanced both parties to effectively engage with a wider community audience. There is definitely more to be had in sharing information and working more collaboratively, especially when we are working towards the same goal and resources are sometimes limited. **AT***
– Local Authority



Connecting our Diverse Communities

For our work on our menopause project, local GPs volunteered their time to attend community events and present on menopause, sharing their expertise. As the project gained momentum through word of mouth, places of worship were identified as safe spaces for information sessions. Two local mosques hosted well-attended sessions with GPs providing information and answering questions. These sessions fostered open discussion, with women sharing their experiences and forming supportive friendships.



I am interested in learning more about the menopause before it starts so that I can take steps to improve my health and wellbeing, I would like to implement support in my workplace



Working with Schools

At parent day events in several Bolton schools, the focus was on addressing the cost of living and its impact on health and wellbeing. Positive outcomes included:

- Directing a cancer patient to a local Ageing Well Centre for support.
- Helping a family register with a local GP practice.
- Collecting feedback on health and social care concerns.
- Encouraging attendees to highlight good services and share feedback.
- Promoting participation in surveys about health and social care services.
- Sharing information about local events, including menopause training sessions, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for menopause, and volunteering opportunities with the Sapphire Partnership.



Connecting with Carers

Having a presence at Bolton Carers events enables us to hear the voices of carers, the feedback and the challenges. Often when people start caring for a loved one, they may often feel isolated and unaware of support available.

Throughout our community engagement work we have:

- Signposted carers to community events
- Signposted to Bolton Carers Support groups
- Took time to listen to peoples caring roles
- Helped people with information and advice
- Contributed to shaping the carers strategy for Bolton residents

Hidden Voices – Listening to the Experiences of our D/deaf Community

We worked and will continue to work, with our D/deaf communities to ensure their voices were being heard. We also wanted to open a communication channel to make it easier for them to share their experiences of health and social care with us.

What we did

- Working in partnership with Bolton Deaf Society advocates, we developed a promotional video using British Sign Language (BSL). The video explains what Healthwatch is, how it can help people, and how people can share their experiences. Link here: [BDS video](#)
- We also had meetings and an engagement session with society members, where they shared their experiences with us. We will continue to have regular engagement sessions with the group. Their experiences will be shared with Bolton Integrated Care Partnership on a regular basis.

Working with People with Additional Needs

We worked with a group of young people, to hear their experiences of using health and care services. This group used arts and crafts to incorporate the Five Ways to Wellbeing Initiative. From the feedback, we heard from people who have been struggling to access appropriate health and care services

Case Study

- We heard from one service user who was very anxious about some surgery they were due to have. Because of the long wait lists, the service user was becoming more and more anxious.

What We did

We liaised with the relevant medical teams, who were able to provide the support and reassurance to the service user, which brought about a positive outcome.



Healthwatch Bolton has been a valuable partner, supporting our team's work strategical priorities which includes mental health awareness, community insight and aligning with Bolton's public health priorities. Their contributions, including facilitating community focus groups and sharing insights on service user experiences, have led to positive outcomes in service improvement and increased community engagement. We appreciate their collaboration and the difference they make in our community. – Yusuf Atcha – Public Health Active Lives Team



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Bolton 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.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Signposting people and empowering people to help themselves
- Helping to unpick complex issues so people can move forward
- Helping people navigate the NHS Complaints system

Helping you find the answers...

Assisting a patient to access patient transport and hospital treatment

The issues: The patient has been bed-bound for five years. She is a bariatric patient, who is living with a visual impairment, she stated, *"I am almost completely blind."*

She has been unable to attend her hospital appointments-the hospital Eye Unit because:

- Patient transport informed them that they only have three bariatric ambulances, which can only be used in an emergency: not for outpatient appointments.
- Patient transport do not have the equipment: "a scoop stretcher" to transfer the patient from her house to the ambulance.
- The patient had **multiple appointments cancelled** due to the above issues

What we did

- Escalated the issue with patient transport. Patient did not want to pursue matters further because *"What's the point, we've tried everything already."* Healthwatch Bolton asked for consent to raise the matter with the Trust because we were concerned about the patient's welfare.
- We escalated issues with the Trust, who involved the patient transport and the Eye Unit Division Manager.

Outcome

- A doctor, Anesthetist, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, and a member of the pre-assessment team attended the patient's home to provide an assessment.
- These actions were agreed with the patient and their social worker, who will also be in attendance.
- The decision regarding an appropriate treatment plan was then made following this visit.



Thank you so much for your help, you have been amazing!!

Helping you find the answers...

Highlighting issues with the use of Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) orders

The issue:

A patient was discharged from Royal Bolton Hospital with a Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) order, which neither the patient nor her Next of Kin (NoK) were informed about. Despite the patient's frailty and serious health conditions, she has the mental capacity to participate in her care decisions. The DNAR form was discovered only when the patient opened an envelope given by paramedics, causing her distress. The NoK contacted Healthwatch Bolton, unsure who to address this issue with.

Concerns raised include:

- Lack of communication about the DNAR with the patient and NoK, potentially impacting the coordination of palliative/end-of-life care with her GP and other health professionals.
- The patient's unawareness of the DNAR not allowing her to arrange her affairs or inform family members.
- Possible additional distress if the patient dies at home without a Statement of Intent (Sol), as the police would need to be involved.

What We Did

- Healthwatch Bolton advised the NoK to file a formal complaint with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at Bolton Hospital, and to consult the patient's GP about a Statement of Intent.
- Healthwatch Bolton discussed the case with stakeholders, who confirmed the appropriateness of the advice given. A stakeholder noted that while Do Not Attempt Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) discussions should involve the patient, a Statement of Intent is not always necessary, unless death is imminent.
- **Healthwatch Bolton's intervention led to the inclusion of this patient's experience in a Bolton Hospital frailty workshop, addressing DNACPR issues in end-of-life care discussions.**



Thank you so much for your help, it is much appreciated



Our Bulletins and Newsletters

We send out 4 newsletters each year. Each one is packed with information about what we have been working on, and where we have been out and about in our community. We also provided many pieces of information regarding updates on:

- New health and care initiatives
- Meetings and events you can get involved in
- Opportunities to get involved in research projects
- Community information
- Recruitment of new volunteers

You have told us how much you value these newsletters and how useful they are to you, which is pleasing to hear. We thank everyone for their feedback!

Thank you for a very comprehensive & informative newsletter. Lots of useful information. PL



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.

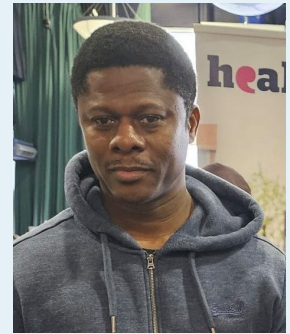
This year our volunteers:

- Assisted with our IT development
- Collated news articles to keep us up to date with local news
- Assisted at events, and meetings
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views



Thank you very much for making my first day of volunteering special. Introducing me to different charity groups and allowing me to network with them.

You are really knowledgeable about every topic, and willingness to listen. Working with you would help me learn a lot.



Ben



My main objective has been to make a contribution to our community's well-being by engaging with Healthwatch Bolton initiatives. The chance to apply my skills in practical situations, particularly to improve access to healthcare information and services, has been incredibly fulfilling.

The welcoming and supportive team has greatly enhanced my experience, allowing me to develop a greater awareness of healthcare concerns and solutions, which is essential for my career in the future.




Thank you for this rewarding opportunity.

Falak

Do you feel inspired?



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

-  www.healthwatchbolton.co.uk
-  **01204 394603**
-  info@healthwatchbolton.co.uk



Our Staff Team

We are lucky to have a fantastic staff team – Leah our Information, Advice and Guidance/Communications Officer, Yasmin our Community Engagement Officer, and Julie our Chief Officer. We work very hard to ensure that we hear the voices of our community. We are proud that we have people who have the skills, expertise and personalities to carry out our important work.

We also strive to work alongside others in our community, to help share resources and knowledge and to connect with others who are doing similar work to help improve services for people and ensure people have a voice.



*Our community engagement team has been able to share valuable public health messages and campaigns with local communities and residents at events and workshops thanks to working collaboratively with you. You seem to be extremely well connected and every meeting we have you always know of another event that is coming up soon. It is also really nice to work with someone who is open and willing to share information. **EK, Local Authority***



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	£125,000	Expenditure on pay	£107,401
Additional income	£682	Non-pay expenditure	£25,358
		Office and management fees	£4,052
Total income	£125,682	Total expenditure	£136,811

Additional income is broken down by:

- £182.00 bank interest
- £500 for Bolton Digital Skills Programme

ICS funding

Healthwatch across Greater Manchester also receives funding from our Integrated Care System (ICS) to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
Strengthening local Healthwatch Chief Officer capacity funding	£1,345

Next steps

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

1. Experiences of Primary Care
2. Mental Health – Focus on dementia
3. Patient Choice – Experiences from patients

We will also be focusing on men’s health, seldom heard groups, and working closer with our newly formed neighbourhood teams.

We will continue to work with the Greater Manchester Healthwatch network, working on topics that matter to you.

We will continue to support you with advice and information.



Statutory statements

**Healthwatch Bolton, PO Box 822, Wigan, WN1 9XF
Managed by VOICE LOCAL, charity no. 1157070**

Healthwatch Bolton 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 Board consists of six members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the Board met 6 times and made decisions on matters such as escalating areas of concern, and advising on recommendations in our reports.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

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 can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023/24, we have been available by phone, and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums. We have also developed a video using BSL as a way that our D/deaf community can share their feedback with us.

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: www.healthwatchbolton.co.uk

Responses to recommendations

We had 0 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 insights and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to our Adult Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. We also share our information with partners from Public Health

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. For example, we share information at our Bolton Locality Board, Strategy, Planning and Delivery Committee, Voice and Influence Group and Place-based Quality Group.. We also share information together with our Greater Manchester Healthwatch colleagues to the Quality and Performance Committee at Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Bolton is represented on the Active, connected and Prosperous Board (Health and Wellbeing Board) by Jim Fawcett – Chair.

Ann Schenk, Trustee is represented on the Adult Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where she presents our annual report and provides insight to discussions. She is also a Bolton Hospital governor, attends the Quality Patient Experience Forum and Adult Safeguarding Board.

Healthwatch Bolton is represented on Greater Manchester (GM) Integrated Care Partnerships (Bolton Locality) by Julie Darbyshire, Chief Officer, and Leah Payne. Julie Darbyshire also sits on the GM Equality Impact Assessment Panel representing Healthwatch in Greater Manchester. Leah also sits on the Placed Based Quality Group, Health Inequalities Group and Carers Strategy Group. Jim Fawcett sits as a lay person on the Continuing Health Care panel.




2023 – 2024 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
Community Development	<p>We have assisted two organisations to access funding by signposting them to funding opportunities:</p> <p>One for Every Mind Matters campaign to improve mental health.</p> <p>One was for funding for a women’s resource centre, to improve the health of women from Black Minority Ethnic Communities.</p>
Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust Independent Enquiry into the Edenfield Unit	We contributed to the review of the Edenfield Unit, using intelligence with the Greater Manchester Healthwatch network. Our intelligence has helped to shape recommendations included in the review.
<p>Urgent Care Review - The review was established to ensure Bolton residents have access to a simple way to navigate a joined up urgent care system which meets their needs.</p> <p>In order for the system to work effectively, it involved co-production to develop an ideal model of care</p>	<p>Three of our reports have contributed to the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to primary care – enhanced care arrangements – (Sept 2022) Accessing Care & Your GP Practice Survey – April 2022 Bolton GP ‘Out of Hours’ Service (Waters Meeting Road) – Jan/Feb 2014 – Corridor event
Experiences of Using Maternity Services in Bolton	We will be reporting on this piece of work in 2024. the project gained over 60 responses and 2 case studies
Supporting Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service by creating a pathway to the Greater Manchester Professional Dental Advisor, for NHS England and NHS Improvement – North West England..	We ensured that patients who needed dental care before cancer treatment, were able to access NHS dentistry

healthwatch



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