

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Warrington
Annual Report 2021-22



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Message from our chair

FIRSTLY, I would like to say what an honour it is to have been chosen to be Chair of Healthwatch Warrington since joining the team in December last year.

In a town the size of Warrington, with a population of more than 200,000 residents, it is no easy task, especially when we are a small team.

But we have taken some simple steps to raise our profile using existing networks, including our local bus company, which now displays Healthwatch publicity on buses, advertising our services.

We have also embraced social media across various platforms, helping raise awareness while also working in partnership with many community organisations.

The team has also been very busy visiting local GP practices and getting patient feedback, while we have also been working hard to recruit new volunteers within our local communities so we can address issues at a grassroots level.



The pressure on our health providers and mental health services is probably at an all-time high, so it is more important than ever for us to be here to help those who have issues accessing services.

Gary Skentelbery
Healthwatch Warrington Chair

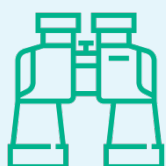
“Over a challenging period, the CCG has valued the work of Healthwatch as an independent agency in highlighting both good practice and areas which need attention. This has helped the commissioning team and health care providers to improve services to better meet patient needs. An improvement journey which will always be ongoing as our communities need change and evolve.”

**Andy Davies- Clinical Chief Officer
Warrington CCG**

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Warrington, your local health and social care champion. From North to South Warrington and everywhere in between, 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 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 to make health and care better.



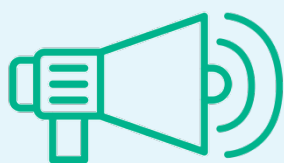
Our values

- 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.

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



1934 people

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

2841 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

Making a difference to care



We published

6 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Rapid Community Response

which highlighted the struggles people have.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

20

outstanding volunteers, who gave up **20 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received:

£147,000

Which is **4% more** than the previous year.

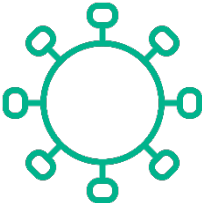







We also currently employ

5 staff

who help us carry out this work. **2 more** than previous year.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are the biggest projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring			<p>We helped engage over 3000 residents to get their experiences of the vaccination services and make changes to benefit all to services.</p>	<p>We helped care home residents and their families understand the changes to Primary Care Networks and GP alignment services in ALL care homes across Warrington.</p>
Summer			<p>In line with our Children & Young Peoples work, we helped parents understand their emotional wellbeing and how to access support during the summer holidays.</p>	<p>.Our 2021-2022 priorities included Carers feedback, we held an event to listen to their views to see if they were in line with the carers strategy.</p>
Autumn			<p>We worked with Cheshire & Merseyside Cancer Alliance to create a video to send to all patients about what to expect and how they can get help to fill out the Cancer Quality of Life Survey.</p>	<p>We collated all the residents feedback about dentistry and how they were unable to access a NHS Dentist and submitted this to our Local MP to present to Parliament.</p>
Winter			<p>We worked with the Deaf Centre to listen to the views of how those who suffer with 'hard of hearing' access medical appointments and the challenges they experience and fed this back to the Hospital and CCG.</p>	<p>We spoke to 79 people who (or another family member) had accessed the Rapid Community Response (RCRT) and listened to their views and experience of the service and completed an independent report.</p>

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 feedback to services to help them improve



Children and Young Peoples Mental Health & Wellbeing

In 2020 Healthwatch undertook research around Children and Young Peoples (CYP) mental health services in Warrington and met with them to gather their views and experiences.

This priority was chosen as a result of the Public Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which identified a rise in self harm Accident and Emergency presentations for young people. As part of our recommendations Warrington CCG asked us to complete further independent research to identify a larger sample of information and to review support available for CYP utilizing mental health and well-being services and to research how they were affected through the Covid 19 period. We recruited a part time 12-month post and our Children and Young People Lead is a qualified integrated counsellor/psychotherapist and advocate.

What we did

Healthwatch designed online and paper versions of four separate surveys for CYP, Parents, Teachers and school staff, Professionals and GPs.



1083 surveys

From **26 Children**, **554 Young People**, **384 Parents**, **87 Teachers**, **School Staff**, **11 Professionals** and **21 GPs**

127 interviews

69 Parents, **16 Teachers / Mental health teams** **42 CYP Professionals**

What difference did this make

We listened to the views of everyone with experience of Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing services with lots of feedback received on what's good and what needs further improvement. From this we are aiming to develop a targeted list of recommendations on areas to prioritize.



"Parents are at a loss as how to access certain services. Practitioners are aware that the waiting lists are so long that they feel informing parents will add to their stress."

School Nurse= Warrington School



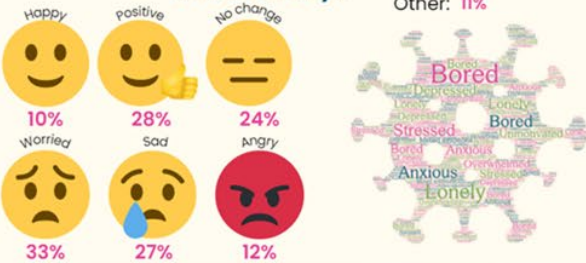
Young Peoples Survey

OVERALL, **554** RESPONDENTS COMPLETED THIS SURVEY. STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE QUESTIONNAIRE ATTENDED A RANGE OF DIFFERENT SCHOOLS INCLUDING PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, BIRCHWOOD, KINGS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, BEAUMONT COLLEGIATE ACADEMY, CULCHETH HIGH SCHOOL, SIR THOMAS BOTELER, BRIDGEWATER HIGH SCHOOL, AND UTC WARRINGTON.

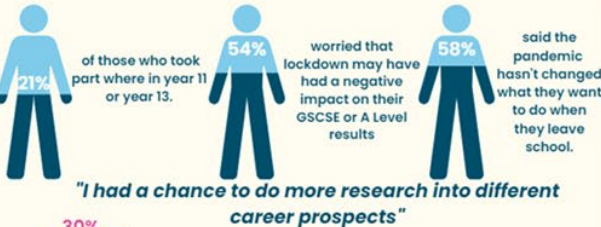


healthwatch Warrington Children & Young Peoples Wellbeing Report 2022

How did the pandemic make you feel emotionally?



What did you do to stay happy during lockdown?



Returning to school after lockdown

31% OK
31% Nervous
21% Happy
20% Excited

Exhausted
50/50 nervous & Excited
Apprehensive
Angry
Stressed
Terrible
Drained

Social Media



Who would you talk to?



Other:
External Family, therapists, boyfriend/ girlfriend

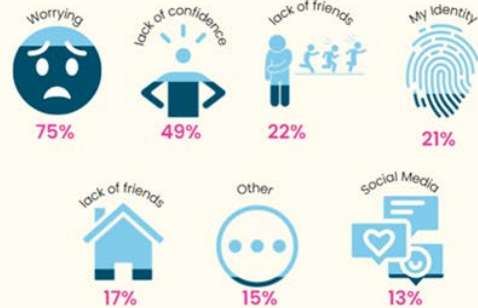
Services to provide support



Providing Support for peers



What are the things that upset you?



Overthinking
Friendships
Bullies
Bereavements
School work
Poor mental health
not seeing family & Friends

Are you a Young Carer?

Do you look after or care for anyone such as your parents, brothers or sisters?



Understanding Children's Mental Wellbeing.

Thanks to the feedback from Children, Teachers, Parents, Professionals and GP's we were able to get a better understanding of the issues children face and how we can help to improve services that will benefit all.

From our findings we found that most children (52%) will talk to their friends about any issues they are having and 49% will speak to their parents or family member rather than a trained professional. With this in mind, we propose that children and family members are equipped with the knowledge of how to identify and help anyone who is struggling.

30% of those we spoke to said they wouldn't talk to anybody if they were struggling. We recommended that teachers and school staff are made aware of the signs of changes in mental wellbeing so that they can intervene.

Many young people made it clear that they wouldn't talk to their GP or medical practitioner about issues due to being in the room with a parent and feeling as though the practitioner doesn't speak to them but the parent.

46% of teachers said they feel that there are gaps in the services being accessed by young people. A positive result, the vast number of teachers stated that they felt confident in recognising students presenting with emotional needs. However, 59% said they would not be confident signposting parents/carers to appropriate services.

A very concerning result is that 75% of teachers have said that students have self-harmed and 68% said that students have presented with suicidal thoughts. Teachers feel they need extra support with this. 80% of teachers said that they had concerns for their colleague's mental health/emotional wellbeing. Only 54% said that they would feel confident in supporting a colleague. 28% of teachers did not receive support, even though the pandemic had caused a higher negative impact



"There is a desperate need for MHS with students, families and staff involved."

Teacher from Warrington School



What difference did this make

Our hope with the recommendations we have made is that all those that deal with CYP will have access to support and training to deal with the issues they face.

Schools having access to counsellors or advice and support whilst waiting for a referral for CAMHS. Training for parents to gain an understanding of how to understand and support CYP who have neuro-diverse disorder or suspected.

The full report will be issued at the end of July with our full findings.

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

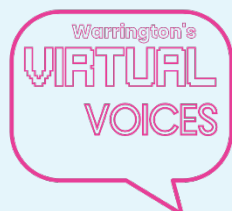
Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.



Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for the NHS and social care services to step back and see the bigger picture through hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives. This provides a deeper understanding rather than using data alone, it can challenge assumptions and motivate people to think and work more creatively.

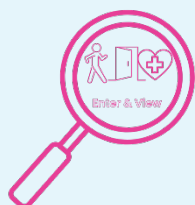
As part of our priorities for 2021-2022 we wanted to listen to Carers and how the pandemic has affected them. We held a listening and feedback event, hearing first hand what can be helped to improve services and be fed into Warrington Borough Councils carers strategy.



Getting services to involve the public

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

Our Virtual Voices gives the public the chance to have their say on Health & Social care services in Warrington and the chance for our stakeholders to get feedback from our 330+ members. This year we have helped shape the new Health & Wellbeing hub, get valuable information on GP Access post COVID and vote on our priorities.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with health and care services to consistently raise issues and push for changes.

We have been hearing complaints and feedback about accessing medical centres and GPs since the beginning of the pandemic. Through this intelligence we decided to focus our Enter & View visits around GP Medical Centres. We have collated feedback on 25 surgeries and are completing Enter & View visits on those we see need improvement and those which have great feedback to see how we can improve and learn.

Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need

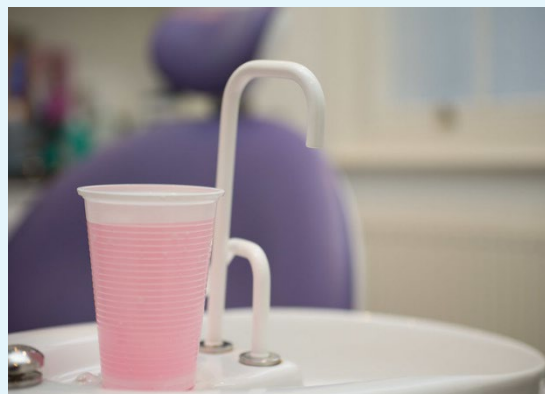


Support for Dad who needed urgent treatment.

Dentistry is an issue across the country and Warrington is no different. We received a call from a dad who was suffering with a dental issue and had been taken off his dentists' books.

Michael had already sourced an emergency appointment- but during this appointment was told he needed more work they could not do. Struggling to make another appointment and with a daughter who attends a special needs school in Lancaster, Michael had to drive her 60 miles a day and was unable to arrange her collection if he was to get an appointment.

He contacted Healthwatch Warrington looking for some help- We were able to arrange to get the treatment he needed working around his commitments for his daughter. Micheal was extremely grateful and was no longer in pain.



Helping Deaf patients have a voice.

We met with a local organisation called Signing Solutions to discuss the challenges that the deaf community are experiencing in Warrington when accessing Health Services.

As an outcome we decided to hold focus groups to invite members from the deaf community to feedback. We enlisted the help of several BSL users who translated the attendee's experiences.



During our outreach we heard experiences of patients not being able to access interpreters during appointments and either having their appointment cancelled or not fully understanding what the practitioner had said to them.

This will be collated into a recommendation report for Warrington Hospital which will be presented at the Hospital Patient Experience Feedback Committee for review and response.

Volunteers

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

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, carrying out surveys over the telephone and online.
- Proof read our reports.
- Carried out valuable Enter & Views on GP Practices
- Assisted as part of 'Readers' Panels' – checking local services publications to make them more people focused and easier to read.





Veronica –Peoples Panel Chair

“I became involved with the panel as a volunteer in March 2020. At first I was curious to find out what the panel actually did! I have learnt so much from the other panel members and from our monthly guest speakers. I am now vice chair and I do believe that the panel and Virtual Voices are really building momentum and providing a voice on health services for the people of Warrington.”



Abbi- Virtual Voices

“I have been a volunteer on the virtual voices since the beginning as I really wanted to feedback about local Health and Social Care Services. I am 19 and work full time so I found it difficult to attend the public engagement events during the week so this is perfect for me. The quick poll format is great, and I even encouraged other young people like myself to get involved. ”



David- Enter & View Authorised Rep

“Enter & view is extremely interesting. I have enjoyed seeing the various GP premises & also find out how they are coping (or not) with all the pressures in general practice post Covid.

The staff form an integral part of the practice team-they are all different. It is a very worthwhile part of Healthwatch to be involved in.”



Do you feel inspired?

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



www.healthwatchwarrington.co.uk/volunteer

01925 246 893

contact@healthwatchwarrington.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.

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from local authority	£147,000	Staff costs	£126,167
Additional funding	£26,300	Operational costs	£7,213
Balance b/f 2020-2021	£1,546	Support and administration	£33,881
Total income	£174,845	Total expenditure	£167,262

Top three priorities for 2022-23

1. GP Access
2. Dentistry
3. Adult Mental Health

Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Warrington The Gateway, Sankey Street WA1 1SR

The contract to deliver Healthwatch Warrington is held by Engaging Communities Solutions CIC (ECS). Corporate Head Office: Blakenall Village Centre, 79 Thames Rd, Walsall | WS3 1LZ

Healthwatch Warrington 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 6 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met 4 times and made decisions on matters such as collating a long list for 2022-2023, priorities and the decision to escalate NHS Dentist Access

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities each year and our board list the priorities from feedback we have received. We then share this with the public through our social media platforms. Virtual voices and through a priorities workshop so that the public can have their say on what matters to them.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

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 health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, 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. This year we have done this by, for example, Outreach with the Deaf centre and working with Signing Solutions to allow us to communicate efficiently.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it online, share with our partners and have them printed in various forms depending on demand.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had 0 providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.



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