

Adapting to the pandemic

Healthwatch Lewisham Annual Report 2020-21



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Message from our Chair



Michael Kerin

Chair

**Healthwatch Lewisham
Committee**



Through our ongoing engagement with the Council and the local NHS, our data and intelligence have helped them better understand people's needs and concerns.

The impact of COVID-19 and subsequent changes to health and care services means that representing the voice of local people is more important than ever.

We have had to change our ways of engagement. Face-to-face discussions and visits have given way to telephone and internet contact and to virtual meetings with local providers.

Despite the difficulties, we managed to gather over **4,000** experiences about local services in the last year – both favourable and critical. We have continued to support people to make complaints. We have undertaken important surveys, notably on the impact of COVID-19 on different parts of our community and on services.

The rapid shift to telephone and online delivery of many services has caused real problems for people who do not have reliable, private access to smartphones and the internet, or who find using the technology difficult.

Our current research is seeking to identify their needs and to give them a voice. It is important that they are not overlooked or further disadvantaged as services are reconfigured.

Even without COVID-19, 2020-21 would have seen changes for Healthwatch Lewisham, with Your Voice In Health and Social Care (YVHSC) taking over the contract for providing the service. The pandemic has delayed our planned move to the Carers Centre at Waldram Place in Forest Hill, also run by YVHSC. We look forward to the opportunities provided by the move for engaging with carers.

We are grateful for the energy and commitment of our small staff team and our volunteers in rising to the challenges of the last year. We look forward to welcoming more volunteers – we have a range of roles to offer – so that we can continue to represent the voice of our diverse local population.

Statement from Your Voice in Health and Social Care

I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the inaugural annual report for Healthwatch Lewisham under Your Voice in Health and Social Care to reflect on what has been a hugely successful and ultimately challenging year.

A year that has seen health and social care services respond magnificently to extreme circumstances with the onset of COVID-19 and voluntary sector services work together to achieve the best possible outcome to support local efforts.

Healthwatch Lewisham have continued their statutory responsibility to:

- obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services
- make those views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services
- provide reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved
- promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services.

Healthwatch Lewisham received **2,961** stories through our Patient Experience Programme from which services across the borough were commended for their overall quality of treatment and care, staff professionalism, attitude and professional advice.

This year Healthwatch Lewisham pioneered our approach to engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic which became standard practice across all of our Healthwatch service provision. Staff and volunteers continued to directly contact residents of Lewisham to understand the community's response to each lockdown.

Through this process we were able to identify not just people's experiences of a lockdown but also additional needs that required signposting and coordination. Staff and volunteers were able to liaise with local community organisations to support individual needs and were able to set up referral pathways to ensure the community received support from local community resources.

This year **46** volunteers helped us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services, contributing a combined **1,030** hours, the equivalent of **147** additional working days.

Throughout the year Healthwatch Lewisham published a total of **9** reports which focused on the impact of COVID-19 on our community, patient experience of local health services and the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

As we look forward to recovery and the opportunity to meet and greet friends and family I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Healthwatch Lewisham staff and volunteers, who have continued to work with dedication to ensure a responsive and vital service continues to support the local community.

Tim Spilsbury,
CEO, Your Voice in Health and Social Care

About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Lewisham. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you 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 everyone who shares can experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service 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

Our Values

By being part of the Your Voice in Health and Social Care family we embody five key principles:

Inclusive

Effective

Independent

Trustworthy

Reflective

Our Committee

The change in service provider of Healthwatch Lewisham has brought with it a new governance strategy and structure.

Under YVHSC, the role of our sub-committee is to be an advisory body made up of local community members who bring unique knowledge and skills, which supplement the experience of the YVHSC Board of Directors in order to more effectively guide the organisation.

We were pleased that **five** members of the previous Workplan Committee chose to remain involved with the organisation. They have played a vital role in supporting the new staff structure in responding to the significant challenges presented by the pandemic and a new model of delivery and expectations.

The local and regional response to COVID-19 has been the primary focus for the majority of strategic and operational meetings in 2020-21. Alongside this we are seeing the development of the Integrated Care System in south east London to align with the White Paper which sets out the legislative proposals for a Health and Care Bill.

Our members continue to play an important role in ensuring that the voices of patients are at the heart of the new structures and that a culture of meaningful co-production is embedded to enable services to meet the needs of local communities.

We have represented patients on a range of local committees and groups including the Health and Wellbeing Board, Healthier Communities Select Committee and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust's (LGT) Patient Experience Committee.

Through our representation we have:

- **Ensured the findings from our COVID-19 research were heard at a borough-wide level and incorporated into the Lewisham Recovery Plan**
- **Shared insight and monitored the delivery of the new community Phlebotomy service provided by LGT**
- **Supported the development of the Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme by reviewing the submissions for the delivery of a co-produced healthy poster campaign**

We would like to thank each member of our Committee for their sustained commitment to offer guidance and advice to shape our plans and maximise impact for the benefit of local residents.

Our Workplan Committee

Agnes Agyepong, Nigel Bowness, Carolyn Denne, Catherine Jenkins, Michael Kerin and Geraldine Richards

Partnership and Representation

We are part of many strategic and operational meetings, groups and networks providing feedback on experiences of health and social care. Through our representation at **61** meetings, we were able to voice the views of Lewisham residents, encourage public involvement and share our intelligence

Partnership Groups and Meetings	
BAME Health Inequalities Working Group	Lewisham Council
Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme Steering Group	Lewisham Council
Digital Poverty Action Alliance	Lewisham Council
Healthier Communities Select Committee	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Adult Safeguarding Board	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Borough Based Board & Lewisham Health and Partners Executive Board	SEL CCG/Lewisham Health and Care Partners
LGT Inequalities Steering Group	LGT Trust
LGT NHS Trust Patient Experience Committee	LGT Trust
LGT NHS Trust Oversight Panel: Overseas Charging	LGT Trust
Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board Agenda Steering Group	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board Leaders Forum	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Obesity Alliance Meeting	Lewisham Council
Lewisham Primary Care Operational Group	SEL CCG
Lewisham Public Engagement Forum	SEL CCG
Local Healthwatch Leaders Group	SEL Healthwatch
SLaM and HW meeting	SLaM

Our influence at a regional level



On 1 April 2020, the six Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in south east London all merged to form a new CCG at the regional level.

The joint CCG is responsible for planning and buying healthcare services and ensuring that good provision of care.

The merged CCG sits within the Integrated Care System (ICS).

Local Healthwatch and the CCG jointly created the post of South East London (SEL) Healthwatch Director to ensure visibility and voice for local people in the new regional governance and operational structures.

The SEL Director participated in over **192** governance, strategy or operational meetings during the year including representation at the CCG Governing Body. They are also a voting member on the Engagement Assurance Committee which monitors and assures that the CCG is engaging patients and the public in developing its plans and commissioning services.

Our organisation works closely with the SEL Director to ensure that the needs and experiences of Lewisham residents is heard at the regional level and contributes to service development.

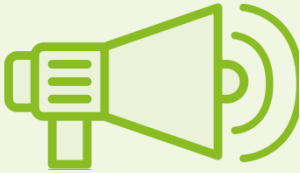
Some of our achievements included:

- Our intelligence was included in a presentation on the experiences of Black communities during COVID-19 which highlighted the challenges faced by residents
- Sharing Healthwatch insights on myths and beliefs circulating among African and Caribbean communities to help the ICS counter inaccurate views on vaccination. Healthwatch pushed for urgent engagement with faith leaders to support informed faith communities
- We were able to shape the development of the 2-year action plan for the South London Mental Health Partnership through membership of the COVID-19 Mental Ill-Health Prevention Taskforce
- Our reports were used to inform the content of the ICS COVID-19 vaccination website as part of the SEL vaccine hesitancy campaign
- The HWL Accessible Information Standard report was shared with the Equality Committee to support understanding of the current picture across SEL
- Creating the South East London Healthwatch Patient Group to champion the diverse voices of patients, carers and the general public within the ICS

Highlights from our year

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

Reaching out



We heard from

4,231 people

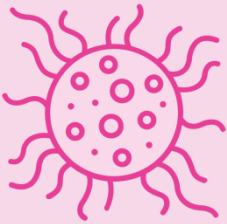
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

292 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

1,478

people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

2,803 people viewed our COVID-19 Information and Support webpage.

Making a difference to care



We published

9 reports

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

The findings and themes from our engagement about the impact of the pandemic on Lewisham residents were embedded within the borough's COVID-19 recovery plan

Health and care that works for you



46 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed **1,030** hours number of hours which is the equivalent of **147** additional working days..

We employ 6 staff

We received


£140,000 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21.

Changes to Healthwatch Lewisham services

The change of service provider on the 1 April 2020 meant that the new contract and staff arrangements started in the middle of the first wave of COVID-19.

In order to abide with national guidelines our service had to quickly adapt the way we engaged with residents by transitioning from face-to-face community outreach to a flexible digital model.



Patient Experience Programme

At the heart of our work is the commitment to a comprehensive Patient Experience data collection programme.


During 2020/21 we heard the experiences of **2,961** residents through our programme.

We capture the issues and themes emerging from conversations with patients/residents in our quarterly reports which are shared with local providers.

Information & Signposting service

We continued to offer our signposting service to support residents get the information they needed during the pandemic.

Our website (www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk) has a dedicated COVID-19 resource which is regularly updated to provide information about the vaccine, testing and other key messages.

Feedback Forums

From April – July, we offered weekly Feedback Forums through Zoom where residents had the opportunity to share any experiences of local services or raise any health or care issues.

We provided signposting and offered guidance and support to residents worried about the outbreak of COVID-19.

Spotlight: Feedback Forums

Due to the popularity of the weekly sessions, we continue to hold a monthly Feedback Forum and have covered topics including COVID-19 vaccinations, mental health of unpaid carers and access to services.

A combined total of **175** people participated across 23 sessions. A few examples can be found below:



Ethnic Minorities Feedback Forums

We carried out targeted engagement with our African and Caribbean communities to understand their experiences of COVID-19 focusing on access to primary care, communication from services and impact on their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Our intelligence helped to inform the BAME Health Inequalities Working Group's strategy and workplan.

The findings were also published in a local study which assessed and explored the impact of total triage and remote-by-default primary care on vulnerable patient groups.

Our report can be found at www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

South London Listens

In February, we worked with South London Citizens to deliver a session which explored the impact COVID-19 has had on the mental health of residents with a focus on the experiences of unpaid/informal carers.

18 people attended the session and the findings were included as part of the South London Listens campaign, an initiative looking to understand how mental health services can better support residents.





Patient Experience: Then and now



A Digital Approach to Patient Experience

We use a variety of methods to understand people's needs and experience. Engagement through outreach activities is key to what we do and how we make sure voices are heard.

Prior to the pandemic, under the previous provider, Healthwatch Lewisham would carry out weekly engagement hubs at local hotspots within the community such as local festivals, libraries, GPs, hospitals and shopping centres.

From the beginning of April, our staff team and volunteers had to adjust to working from home and the delivery of a target driven Patient Experience Programme. We were able to adapt our engagement approach from a face-to-face model to a comprehensive digital model which saw us make direct telephone calls to residents and gather online reviews. As mentioned previously, we were also able to set up weekly Feedback Forums which gave people the platform to talk about the issues that mattered to them and ask questions about COVID-19.

Our Patient Experience team also took on the added responsibilities of providing information & signposting to people in need and conducting follow up case work to ensure that people's requests for access to services were being met.



A Digital Approach to Patient Experience

In addition to gathering feedback via direct telephone contact, our Patient Experience team developed a variety of different ways to capture the views of residents and service users during the last year:

- Worked with the Lewisham Homes Independent Living Scheme to distribute **482** patient experience forms to residents within their sheltered housing scheme
- Holding targeted engagement sessions at virtual community events
- Collecting online feedback via our Feedback Centre and other sources of online reviews
- Working with partners to deliver focus groups to their members
- Creating an online Patient Experience survey to provide an additional way for residents to share feedback
- Increasing our digital and social media presence to promote and encourage participation with our online surveys



“As Chair of my surgery PPG I have worked with Healthwatch for some time now. We liaise with them on visiting the surgery and have a space in our waiting area. There they can talk to people about their experiences of health services received and obtain information about health and social services.

Healthwatch Lewisham have been holding monthly online Zoom forums since the beginning of Covid, where residents can talk about their experiences of health services received, and as our PPG Chair I regularly take a part in these forums, which have proved to be an extremely useful way of learning about the various issues and problems of our different nationalities and abilities. This has proved to be an extremely useful learning platform, which I am able to take and utilise for our PPG, along with my work on patient and public reference groups.”

Alexandra Camies,
Chair of South Lewisham Group Practice Patient Participation Group



To share your experiences of health and care, visit our
Feedback Centre:

<https://www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk/services>



Lewisham Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service

Our organisation continues to provide the Lewisham Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service.

Between April- June, NHS England advised NHS Trusts to put their complaints processes on "pause" for three months. The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman also were not accepting new health service complaints nor progressing existing ones that require contact with the NHS.

During this period, our advocates provided additional support for the Information & Signposting service.

We have supported **129** residents in making a complaint against a local NHS service this year.

A dedicated complaints resources page can be found on our website which explains the NHS Complaints process and how residents can be supported by us. We have created complaints letter templates and guidance to help empower residents in making a complaint.

Our advocacy pages were visited **630** times during the year. More information can be found at <https://www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk/complaints-advocacy/>

Analysis of our advocacy cases enables us to understand key issues which are causing people to register an official complaint.

From speaking with clients, we recognised the following issues for Lewisham residents during the last year:



Early or poorly planned discharge from hospital



Access to GP appointments



Challenges with the community Phlebotomy service booking system



Reduction of benefits following information shared by mental health services

Feedback about our advocacy service

"Thanks for that update, and for your kind wishes. I am keeping the faith and hope that we get there with a good outcome. You guys have been my extra shoulder to lean on.

Can I say a huge thank you for all you have done..."

"Thanks for your email. I feel completely at unease and powerless regarding this situation.

And, it is heart-warming to know that you understand what I'm going through and will continue to do your utmost to ensure that my voice is heard and taken into consideration regarding decisions affecting my mental health care."

"I really can appreciate the letter draft - how you managed to capture the essence and true nature of the issues just in a few paragraphs!!!

This is absolutely admirable, and it sounds so cool and smart - but just the humble way as well!!!"

"I am really pleased with the way everything has gone and I thought I should tell you that, thank you."

"Thanks for taking the time to talk with us, it really helps to have someone "in our corner."

Ms A was very complimentary about our service and voiced her sincere appreciation.

She said we were the people that 'went the extra mile' and that the letters written were always very good.

Feature Case Study – Lack of informed consent

Problem

Mr X has a learning disability. He had undergone foot surgery at University Hospital Lewisham but had not understood the implications of the surgery when he was asked to consent to treatment.

Actions

The advocate worked closely with an advocate from Lewisham Speaking Up, who had an established relationship with Mr X. They had a number of collaborative telephone conversations with the client to gather information and understand what they wanted to gain from a complaint.

It became apparent that Mr X was alone and frightened when he attended the outpatient department at the hospital. The doctor had asked him if he understood the implications of the surgery and he had said yes because he was scared. He was not provided with support or given a follow up contact to assist with information.

The advocate drafted a letter in Easy Read to ensure Mr X's full understanding and approval before sending the complaint.

Outcome

The response from the hospital was incredibly positive. As a result of the complaint several initiatives have been put in place.

These include:

- The provision of staff training to support patients with a learning disability and/or autism
- All information on a patient passport to be uploaded onto the electronic system to provide continuity of care
- Creation of Learning Disability Champions within Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust
- Information has been sent to all GPs to ensure that referrals would reflect if a patient had a learning disability

The response from the Trust was not written in Easy Read so required the advocate to share the contents of the letter on the phone to Mr X. However, the client was delighted that the hospital had acknowledged his experience and said it was really important that those with a learning disability were listened to.





Responding to COVID-19

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

This year we helped 4,281 people by:

- Adapting our own ways of working to ensure that we continued to represent the people's voice and notify health and social care partners about the issues people were facing
- Enabling the voices of **1,030** Lewisham residents about the impact of COVID-19 to be embedded within the borough's COVID-19 recovery plan
- Supporting the local vaccination roll-out by regularly promoting information and sharing insight from the experiences of residents. We collected **273** reviews about vaccinations in February and March
- Delivering a weekly virtual Feedback Forum during April-July which gave **175** residents a platform to share their issues and ask questions about the virus and local response
- Creating a dedicated COVID-19 resource which provided national and local information about the vaccine, testing and other key messages
- Directly providing people with the information that they needed to access services during this time

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



24% on GP services



10% on Mental Health



20% on Hospital Care



16% on COVID-19

Case Study

Accessing Health Services Webinar
 Date: Thursday 10 December 2020
 Time: 6.00pm – 7.00pm (1 hour)
 Venue: Online (laptop or desktop computer)

Throughout the pandemic, we heard from residents about the lack of clear information about GP arrangements within the borough.

We organised an 'Accessing Health Services' webinar in partnership with Public Health Lewisham to address this issues.

The session saw over **30** residents learn more about the access arrangements for GP services, dentists, pharmacies and sexual health services allowing them to share it with their networks.



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.



www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

020 3886 0196

Info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

Signposting enquiries

Enquiry:

Local services informed us that refugees and asylum seekers were encountering barriers when trying to register with a GP practice.

GP practices were requiring them to provide identification such as a proof of address and/or photo ID.

The services wanted information they could share with residents about their GP access rights.

Response:

Our organisation provided LewCAS foodbank and Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network with 100 'GP Access Cards' to support residents in accessing GP services within the borough.

Enquiry:

Ms A needed advocacy support to escalate a complaint to the Social Care Ombudsman.

The original complaint related to a care home where their mother previously lived and covered several issues including discrimination and how the service communicated with the family.

The resident explained that they to articulate their thoughts, an advocate would help them draw together the complaint.

Response:

Our service worked closely with a commissioner at Lewisham Council to identify a local organisation who could support the resident.

Due to the resident having a mental health diagnosis, they were eligible to receive help from the Lewisham Community Wellbeing service.

We supported the resident with a referral into the service.

Enquiry:

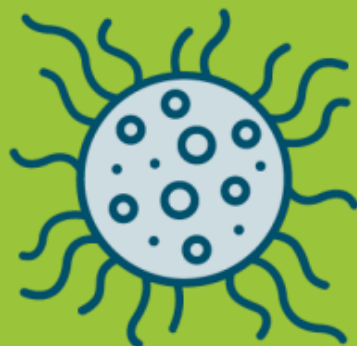
Three residents contacted our Information & Signposting service after being unable to register with local dental services.

They had varying levels of tooth pain, but all received the same response that dental practices were not currently accepting new NHS patients.

The residents sought advice on what options were available to access the treatment they needed.

Response:

We contacted the Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham Local Dental Coalition who identified a dental practice that was accepting NHS patients and were able to register the residents.



Supporting the vaccination programme

SEL HW have helped support the vaccination programme across the region by hosting events, disseminating information and sharing feedback on residents' experiences of being vaccinated

We created the promotional materials for the first COVID-19 webinar organised by Public Health Lewisham and SEL CCG to provide residents with further information around the vaccination programme

Lewisham Pensioners' Fayre



We held an engagement session at the Lewisham Pensioners' Forum Health Fayre to facilitate a discussion about the COVID-19 vaccine programme, experiences and vaccine hesitancy

Whilst many attendees had received the vaccination and were satisfied with the process and efficiency, they highlighted that many people within Black communities particularly had mistrust towards the vaccine.

These findings were shared with SEL CCG and Public Health Lewisham who are overseeing the vaccination programme.



Vaccine Opinions



In partnership with Healthwatch England, we promoted a national research project which looked to understand the opinions of Black and Asian communities about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Six Lewisham residents were selected to be involved with the project.



How we have made a difference

As well as providing people with the information they need, we conduct a minimum of two research projects each year to better understand issues which are of local interest.

Through our research we are able to provide local stakeholders and service providers with findings, key recommendations and potential next steps to ensure services are considering patient experience when developing services.

This year we published a total of **9** reports including:

- 4 Quarterly Patient Experience Reports
- Patient Experience Spotlight: Dental services July-December 2020
- Patient Experience Spotlight: Pharmacies October - December 2020
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Lewisham residents
- COVID-19 Vaccination Survey: February - March findings
- Snapshot Study: Experiences of Lewisham Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities during COVID-19

Spotlight: Impact of COVID-19 on Lewisham residents

We carried out a research project during June and July to hear people's experiences during the first COVID-19 lockdown.



Our focus was on understanding issues including access to services, mental health impact and communication/ information provided by services.

A survey was co-produced with the Lewisham Primary Care Commissioning team and saw **1,030** people tell us their stories.

Findings:

- There remained a considerable reluctance by residents to access services because of the fear of catching COVID-19 or not wanting to be a burden on the NHS
- Residents were predominantly happy with their experience of using GP services and the availability of phone consultations
- However, respondents strongly feel there is a continued need for face-to-face appointments. It was felt that the main limitation of using a tablet, computer or smartphone is the digital exclusion for those who cannot use or afford to use the technology
- The COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown has had a substantial emotional impact on residents, with residents' experiencing issues such as bereavement, financial worries, isolation and anxiety

Recommendations

- Patients want written confirmation that services are safe and have adequate capacity. There is a need for a local communication campaign across the borough which covers the current primary care offer in view of the different access arrangements and informs patients about what services are available
- Wide provision of mental health support services must be included in services' recovery plans to help those with existing conditions but also for those who have never previously sought support
- While it is acknowledged that digital services are effective and resourceful, we feel there should always be an alternative. Services need to ensure that there is still equity of access for residents who cannot engage with the digital offer

Impact

We presented our findings at various operational and strategic meetings including the Health and Wellbeing Board and Borough Based Board. Our project has received significant local attention and appreciation from local stakeholders.

Findings were included within the Lewisham COVID-19 Recovery Plan and have informed future engagement and communication activity around recovery planning.



Digital Exclusion

We are currently undertaking a research project to understand the impact of a “virtual by default” access model (with a focus on primary care) implemented by health and social care services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project will engage with the different communities and residents who would have no access or limited access to digital technology.

Our research will be in partnership with North Lewisham PCN who will enable us to gather the experiences of health professionals.

Through our recruitment we have identified **40** residents to participate in the project.

Interviews will be carried out between April and June 2021.



COVID-19 Vaccination survey

We developed a survey to understand residents’ experiences of being vaccinated to inform the delivery of the local vaccination programme.

The project will also look to identify the reasons which encouraged hesitant residents to book their appointments.

We received **273** responses to our survey during February and March. Our initial report can be found at www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

We found that the overwhelming majority of respondents had positive experiences of receiving their first COVID-19 vaccination across the different vaccination hubs in Lewisham

Responses will continue to be collected, analysed and shared as the COVID-19 vaccination programme roll-out widens across the borough.



What they said

“Healthwatch Lewisham have been great collaborators for the work we are doing on improving access to GP services within North Lewisham Primary Care Network. They helped us to understand some of the key issues following the introduction of increased remote consultation and triaging during the pandemic.

They worked with us to include questions in their community forums and report back to us in a timely and efficient manner. They worked closely with us on their project of digital exclusion, and we look forward to reviewing the results to help further inform our programme of improving access within our PCN.

Dr Aaminah Verity
North Lewisham PCN Fellow for Health Inequalities



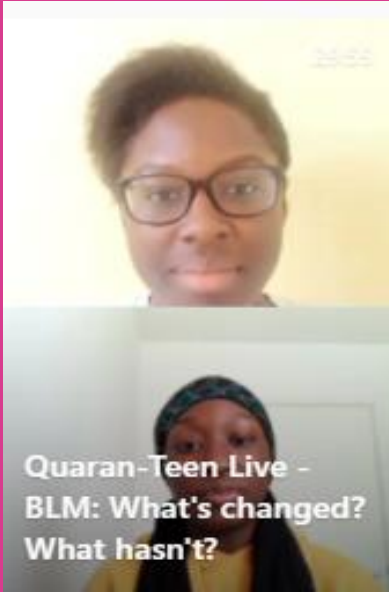
“As a carer and carer's rep I often look to Healthwatch Lewisham to engage my carer groups on updates regarding health and social care.

Healthwatch Lewisham are user friendly, respond as fast as possible and involving of the community.

Matthew Mckenzie
Carer Consultant

Youth Board

We continue to support the development of our Youth Board which represents the voices of young people in Lewisham in relation to health and social care services.



Quaran-Teen

Our Youth Board delivered a series of Instagram Live sessions called "Quaran-Teen" where they have 20-minute discussions about topics that matter to them.

In July and August, they produced six shows which focused on:

- Transitioning out of lockdown
- Black Lives Matter Movement
- School exam results and online studying

Over **150** residents have so far watched the "Quaran-Teen" series which can be found at:

www.instagram.com/hwl_youthboard

CYP Mental Health and Wellbeing

In January, Our Youth Board carried out a research project exploring what support young people in Lewisham would like to manage their emotional wellbeing needs.

The project was shaped to align with local priorities and the interests of our members. In total, **44** young people shared their experiences through a digital survey.

The report will be published in the next financial year.

Analysis of feedback from Black African and Black Caribbean respondents will be shared with the Birmingham and Lewisham African & Caribbean Health Inequalities Review



healthwatch Lewisham
YOUTH BOARD

Participants will be entered into a prize draw for a £50 voucher!

Logins to Kooth went up by **58%** during lockdown

School/college worries are up **144%** from 2019

SHARE EXPERIENCES OF MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Logins to Kooth from BAME young people went up by **44%** during lockdown

Experiences of sadness have gone up by **128%** from 2019

June 2020 Data, Kooth

Want wellbeing services to better support you? Fill out our survey to have your say
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YTWL7BL>

@hwl_youthboard | sophie@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

Enter and View

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 gives us the statutory power to carry out Enter and View visits to publicly funded health and social care services to hear the views of service users, their families and carers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic local care home providers stopped allowing visitors into care homes as an infection prevention measure. In response, we introduced a new digital approach to delivering our Enter and View Programme.

As part of the new approach, services provide a virtual observation by streaming footage of the communal areas while answering the questions of our Authorised Representatives. The virtual tour would be supported by interviews with residents, staff, family members and online questionnaires for those who were unavailable on the day of the visit.

Swallows Care Home

We carried out a pilot virtual Enter and View visit to the Swallows Care Home in January 2021.

The purpose of our virtual visit was multifaceted; we wanted to better understand the experiences of residents and family members during lockdown. We also liaised with the local authority who suggested the care home as a potential location because of a recent refurbishment and change of management in September 2020.

Technological and communication difficulties impacted on the delivery of the Enter & View visit to the Swallows Care Home. However, we do recognise the additional pressures that local services have been under during the pandemic.

From talking to staff and residents' family members, our Authorised Representatives found that the service appeared to have a robust infection control procedure and has managed to support residents and family members to regularly communicate despite the lockdown.

Family members feel that their relatives are safe and staff felt protected from the virus. 'New Year's celebration' videos indicate that there is a good relationship between staff and residents.

Through observation and interview, Healthwatch staff feel improvements could be made around communication relating to visiting arrangements, safeguarding training and staff compliance to infection control measures.

Impact

We are waiting upon a response from the service provider to our report and recommendations



CQC Annual Regulatory Review

We shared feedback about **11** GP practices to inform the CQC’s new transitional regulatory approach to monitoring practices in the borough.

We highlighted experiences which have been shared through the Feedback Centre and from our advocacy service.


Healthwatch Involvement Panel

We are supporting an independent study carried out by King’s College London (KCL) to explore and enhance the local operation and impact of Healthwatch in England.

We are represented on the Healthwatch Involvement Panel which is composed of 16 representatives from the Healthwatch network.

The Panel contributes to the analysis of the data collected from five study sites and enables KCL to gain a broader perspective on their findings and how Healthwatch works.

The study has been extended to understand how the role of Healthwatch has changed during the pandemic. A report will be published next year.




Quality Accounts

We submitted our response to South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust’s (SLaM) Annual Quality Accounts for 2019/20.

In our responses, we make sure to hold local Trusts to account in relation to their performance and quality.



Learning Disability Big Health Day

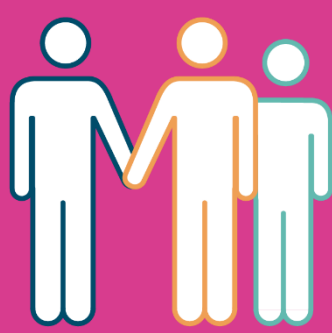
Following on from a successful event last year, we held an engagement session focusing on access to services for people with learning disabilities at the virtual South East London Learning Disability Big Health Day.

The event gave people with learning disabilities the chance to learn more about cancer and get involved in workshops and fun activities.

Patient Carer Race Equality Framework

We continue to work closely with South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

We held an engagement session with residents from ethnic minorities in partnership with the Lewisham BME network, Bromley, Lewisham and Greenwich Mind and SLaM to inform the mental health trust's Patient Carer Race Equality Framework.



LGT Overseas Charging Panel

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust (LGT) set up an overview panel in response to controversy about their implementation of statutory requirements that related to charging patients not eligible for NHS services.

Our organisation is represented on the Panel and worked with Healthwatch Greenwich and Lewisham Migrant and Refugee Network to recruit patients to share experiences of being charged by LGT to inform the review.

Have you had to pay for treatment at University Hospital Lewisham or Queen Elizabeth Hospital but couldn't afford it?

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust has set up an independent panel to look at the Trust's charging policy.

Tell Healthwatch your experience and help to improve the care and treatment of patients not eligible for free NHS services.

Your name will not appear in any documents and you will not be identified.

Interviews take up to an hour and can be done remotely. We will give you £50 as a thank you for your time.



For more information call 020 3886 0196 or text 07309 736617
 Email info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk or find us on social media.





Volunteers

We were supported by a fantastic team of 46 volunteers who helped us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

This year our volunteers:

- Contributed a combined **1,030 hours**, the equivalent of **147** additional working days
- Helped people to have their say, carrying out Patient Experience surveys over the telephone and online
- Provided up-to-date health and social care information via our social media channels.
- Co-produced a research project focusing on the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of young people
- Represented us at a variety of different operational and stakeholder meetings across the borough
- Supported the delivery of focus groups by capturing the experiences of participants
- Carried out data analysis for our COVID-19 research project
- Took advantage of a bespoke training programme developed by YVHSC's Volunteer Hub which offers a variety of courses to help personal and professional development
- Were recognised at a joint 'Volunteer End of Year Celebration' in partnership with Healthwatch Bromley



Engaging residents- Karla

“I have always been passionate about supporting others’ health and wellbeing, so when the opportunity to volunteer as a Patient Experience volunteer with Healthwatch came about I jumped at the opportunity.

Being able to reach out to patients and have their voices be heard was important for me now more than ever with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some patients may struggle to engage with technology and others might not have the time to provide feedback on their experience, so being able to be that bridge between the user and service improvements, has made the work I am doing fulfilling.

Patients’ willingness to share feedback has really been eye-opening and has confirmed just how important this work is.

Rebuilding confidence - Hope

Wanting very much to be kept busy during the current crisis, volunteering was a great opportunity to work as part of a team of people supporting others.

Volunteering with Healthwatch has been empowering as I can contribute to making a difference in the lives of patients and service users.

I found it enjoyable to speak to patients over the phone gathering their experiences. Hearing similarities to my own experiences has helped me develop the empathy it takes to better understand and represent the views of patients and service users in the borough of Lewisham.

The role has helped build my confidence for re-entry into work and let me develop valuable skills.



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch at:



www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

020 3886 0196

Info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

Finances

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

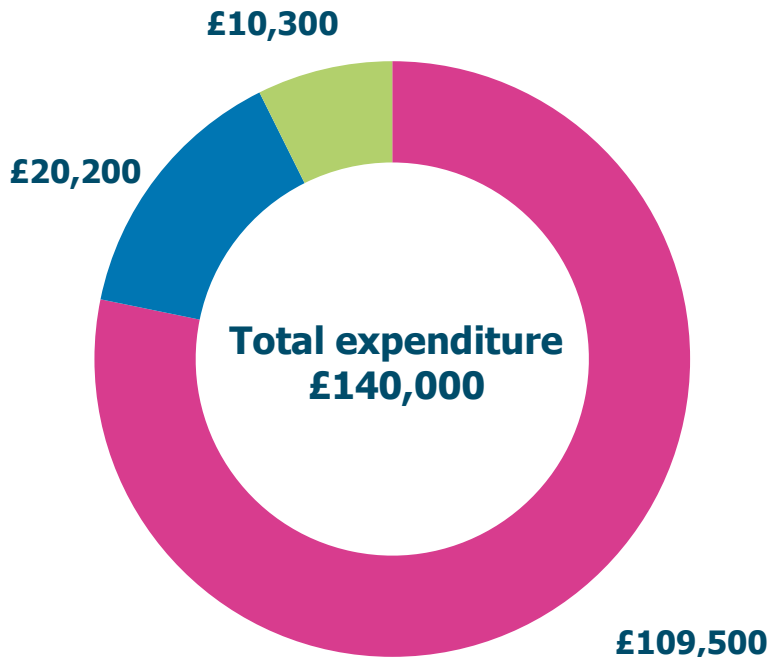
Income

- Funding received from local authority



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs
- Support and administration



Next steps & thank you

Priorities for 2021-22

From the beginning of April 2021, we will be undergoing an organisational restructure and during the transitional period will continue to focus on priorities including:

- **Access to services for digitally excluded residents**
- **Experiences of the COVID-19 vaccination programme**

We will engage with residents upon the lifting of the lockdown to understand the issues that matter to them to help shape our long-term priorities and activities.

Next steps

- In line with guidelines and the recovery roadmap we will look to return to our office in Waldram Place and take a stepped approach to resuming face-to-face engagement in our community
- A hybrid approach of digital and non-digital engagement will be at the heart of our delivery to ensure our reach is as wide as possible
- Delivery of a Feedback Centre pilot which will see us work closely with Primary Care Networks and individual GP practices to increase patient feedback. Our pilot was included in the borough's GP Practice Resilience Programme 2021/22
- Carry out recruitment to widen the membership of our local committee
- Continue to identify opportunities to engage and understand the experiences of seldom heard groups
- Following up on the recommendations that we provided during the pandemic to understand their impact and support health and care partners in their implementation
- Work with SEL Healthwatch and other local partners to ensure that the patient voice is central to all new structures developed as part of the Integrated Care System



"2020-21 has been a year that has seen our community united and resilient in the face of extreme adversity. The voice of patients and residents has never been more important with the changes to services in response to the pandemic.

We are thankful to everyone who has shared their views and look forward to working with partners to ensure that local services understand and meet the differing needs of our population as we come out of lockdown. "

Mathew Shaw, Operations Manager, Healthwatch Lewisham



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Lewisham, Waldram Place, Forest Hill, London, SE23 2LB

Company holding local Healthwatch Contract

Your Voice Health and Social Care, 45 St. Mary's Road, Ealing, London W5 5RG

Healthwatch Lewisham 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 and guidance around our work programme. Our committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the committee met **5** times and made decisions on matters such as strategies to maximise impact and reach of our COVID-19 report as well as the need to work in partnership with the community sector to engage with digitally excluded residents.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Our priorities are informed by a combination of local intelligence, system priorities and issues or gaps which are identified through the Patient Experience Programme, research projects and advocacy/signposting services.

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, working with the Lewisham Homes Independent Living Scheme to distribute **482** patient experience forms to digitally excluded residents within their sheltered housing scheme. We also partnered with the Africa Advocacy Foundation to understand the experiences of residents with HIV accessing primary care services as part of our Feedback Forums aimed at Black African and Caribbean communities.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk

2020-21 priorities

Project / activity area	Impact
Impact of COVID-19 on Lewisham residents report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings were included within the Lewisham COVID-19 Recovery Plan and have informed future engagement and communication activity around recovery planning. Experiences of residents from our Black and Asian communities informed the workplan of the BAME Health Inequalities Working Group

Responses to recommendations and requests

We recognise the pressures and challenges that local service providers and commissioners have faced in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring the immediate and ongoing needs of our population are met.

During this year we received positive responses to our recommendations outlined in our **"Impact of COVID-19 on Lewisham residents"** report from Lewisham Health and Care Partners. We look forward to engaging with them and other local stakeholders in the coming year to understand the impact of our reports published in 2020-21 and explore how our recommendations and the voices of residents' can influence service change.

We carried out one Enter & View visit to the Swallows Care Home and are waiting upon a response from the provider.

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

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Lewisham is represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board by Michael Kerin, Healthwatch Lewisham Committee Chair. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by presenting our COVID-19 research and highlighting the importance of support for digitally excluded residents. He continues to ensure that the experiences of residents remain a priority in the discussions and decision-making processes.

Healthwatch Lewisham
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 www.linkedin.com/company/healthwatchlewisham
