



# Together

we're making health  
and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23

**healthwatch**  
Manchester

# Contents

---

Message from our Chair	3
Message from our Chief Officer	4
About us	5
A year in review	6
Information and signposting	7
Our Projects	8
Listening to your experiences	11
Enter and View	14
Hearing from all communities	16
Advice and information	18
Volunteering	20
Statutory statements	22
2022–2023 Outcomes	25



**"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."**

**Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director**

# A message from our Chair



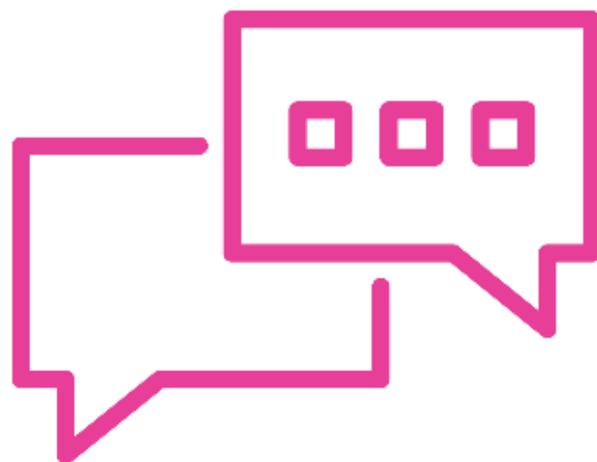
*It is now my tenth and final year as Chair of Healthwatch Manchester and it's been a period of transformation. As we came to the end of the pandemic and put social distancing behind us we entered the new health and social care landscape. The formation of the new health and social care structures has meant the loss of some old faces and the need to embrace reform, the new normal, its terminology and ways of working. I'm pleased and proud to be able to say that through this our board have remained consistent in their focus and direction on vision and mission.*

*In this year we saw the effect of increased inequities for our local people in Manchester, chief amongst which was poverty in the cost of living crisis. Our areas of focus and our yearly plan of action were informed by these inequities and the health inequalities they continue to bring with them. The Healthwatch Manchester team of staff and volunteers have delivered admirably, as always, delivering on our plan. In my representative role I've valued the support of my colleagues in health and care commissioning who have listened to our findings and recommendations.*

*On reflection Healthwatch Manchester has followed an often difficult ten-year journey. Back in 2013 I met with Neil our Chief Officer for the first time in our new roles and we both made a promise we'd get the organisation into a better-resourced place than we found it. That's been achieved – and it's a legacy I'm proud of. What I'll remember most is the fun we had on the journey and the friends and colleagues I met along the way.*



**Vicky Szulist**  
**Healthwatch Manchester Chair**



# A message from our Chief Officer



*This year we saw some of the large scale changes to the health and care structures in Manchester and Greater Manchester formalize and take effect. It's been a year of change as we've geared up to meet the challenge of the new normal and take our place in the new health and social care landscape.*

*At the same time we moved into our new office in Castlefield between the canal and the railway and welcomed our new staff team to the organisation. I'm also very pleased to announce the launch of our Men's Health & Care online forum and a successful bid to set up our Women's Health & Care Forum – both much needed by our citizens.*

*And we say goodbye to Vicky Szulist our Chair of ten years and hello to our new Chair Amanda Smith who took up the reins on 1st April. It's been a remarkable and often challenging decade together for Vicky and I and I'll remember our time together fondly.*

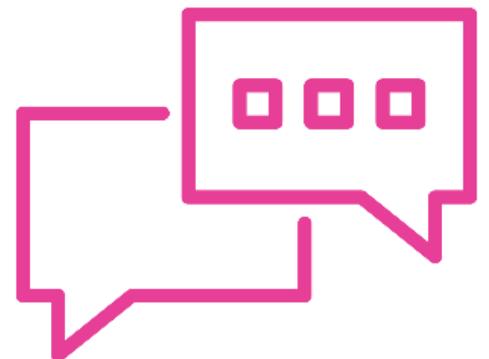
*Once again we've been there to support you, putting you in touch with services and championing your rights in health and care.*

*This report provides more detail but the main issues around poor access to day-to-day health services remain a priority. Myself, our Chair and our board will continue to use the powers and functions of Healthwatch to improve the situation for you.*

*And as usual I'd like to thank our staff team: Eamon, Morgan, Philip, James, Lyndsey, and Tom; our interns Katie and Zahra and of course our volunteers for making the year run smoothly and getting the job done.*



**Neil Walbran**  
**Healthwatch Manchester Chief Officer**



# About us

---

## Healthwatch Manchester 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

To enable real and long-term improvements to the health and social care of the people and communities of Manchester



### Our mission

Healthwatch Manchester is an independent not-for-profit organization driven by National government policy, mandated by legislation and its local membership and supported by Local Authority. Through engaging and informing the people and communities of Manchester as their consumer champion, and influencing the design and commissioning of services; Healthwatch Manchester seeks to improve their access to and experience of health and social care.

### Our values are:

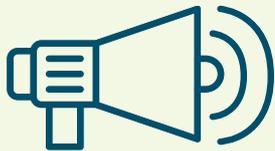


- Be independent, non-political and impartial in our activities.
- Be non-judgmental, open and transparent, and seek the trust of local people.
- Actively engage with seldom heard communities.
- Value the people and communities of Manchester and their contributions.
- Act as a critical friend and always challenge constructively.
- Reflective of a strong evidence-base.
- Realistic and influential.
- Innovative and adaptable.
- We are a local listening service.
- We provide information and signposting.
- We work with local people to improve health and social care services.

# Year in review

---

## Reaching out



**826 people**

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

**125 people**

came to us to enquire about making a complaint regarding a healthcare service in Manchester this year.

## Making a difference to care

We published

**16 reports**

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



Our most popular report was our

**Mystery shopper review of access to Patient Participation Groups**

which highlighted the struggles people face when trying to access their patient participation groups.

## Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

**9**

outstanding volunteers who gave up **26 days/640 hours** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

**£155,199**

which is a **£15,199 (10.78%)** increase from the previous year.

We currently employ

**4 staff**

to help us carry out this work

# Information and signposting

## Raising a complaint with HWM

This year our top three complaint topics were:

1. **GPs** (48% of complaints)
2. **Hospital** (17% of complaints)
3. **Dentists** (12% of complaints)
4. **Healthwatch Manchester** (0% of complaints)



## Out and about

This year Healthwatch Manchester Staff and Volunteers interviewed:

**32** Pharmacists and/or pharmacy staff on our AIS visits in different **6** postcode areas across Manchester

**16** Care Home Staff on our Enter and View visits to **6** Care Homes in Manchester

**13** Care Home Residents on our Enter and View visits to **6** Care Homes in Manchester

## Conversations with our colleagues

This year Healthwatch Manchester worked with **3** different Healthwatch organizations outside of Greater Manchester on numerous different projects such as PPG reviews and signage in Hospitals. The different Healthwatch are as follows:

- **Healthwatch Cornwall**
- **Healthwatch Derbyshire**
- **Healthwatch Buckinghamshire**

## Freedom of Information Requests

Over the last year Healthwatch Manchester have submitted **2** Freedom of Information Requests.

## Healthwatch Bulletin

Healthwatch Manchester Sent out **22** bulletins since June 2022. **12** monthly bulletins and **10** special bulletins.

## Healthwatch Manchester Social Media

Healthwatch Manchester have posted on social media **206** times

- **117** Twitter posts
- **46** Facebook
- **43** Instagram



# Our Projects April 2022–March 2023

Spring	 <p>Access to sexual health - We created and promoted our sexual health and birth control videos to students and young people across Manchester.</p>	 <p>Inclusion Health- access to Health and Care Services for socially excluded people.</p>
Summer	 <p>We began checking pharmacy compliance with the AIS checklist, going from postcode to postcode producing a report after each practice was visited.</p>	 <p>We designed and created an online Men's Health Forum for men in Manchester known as Manchester Men Speak Up.</p>
Autumn	 <p>Healthwatch Manchester conducted a Mystery Shopper investigation and produced a report regarding public access to Patient Participation Groups.</p>	 <p>Maintaining our Enter and View program visiting Care Homes and Hospital sites across Manchester.</p>
Winter	 <p>Healthwatch Manchester completed a mystery shopper investigation into Dental practice admissions, producing a report that showed the lack of practices accepting new NHS patients.</p>	 <p>Reviews of GP websites across Manchester using several different access methods and a set of questions to score each one individually and each practice will receive their own report.</p>

# 10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch Manchester. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. Here are a few of our highlights:

## How have we made care better, together?

### Walk-in Centre access

Healthwatch Manchester produced a report which looked at access to the walk-in centre at Manchester Royal Infirmary. Our report leveraged change to the hospital walk-in centre with the creation of a far more visible and accessible entrance being built to help the public find and use the centre.



### Lost in Crisis

Our 'Lost in Crisis' report brought to people's attention the difficulties that homeless men faced accessing mental health services in Manchester. Local Manchester health & care commissioners used the recommendations from our report to run a pilot scheme to develop specialist mental health care for homeless people via GP practice 'hubs'.



### NHS Dentists

Thanks to people sharing their experiences of dentistry we were able to help commissioners adapt to sudden changes in need and ensure that patients had access to simple, clear information about their treatment.



### Overseas students

We investigated the understanding of access and entitlements to healthcare by overseas students across the City. We used this report to increase awareness of access and entitlement for their students. This report was also chosen to feature in the Patient Library's national publication 'Twenty Reports to Make You Think'.



### Extended Access Service

We completed two mystery shopper reports in 2017 and 2019 regarding how many GP frontline staff were aware of the Extended Access Service. When compared with the data from our original investigation, the improvement was striking.



## Healthwatch Hero



### **Celebrating heroes in our local community.**

Healthwatch Manchester have had many Healthwatch heroes pass through our office over the last decade and so it would be unfair to select only one. The work done by Ken Hsu, Hannah Walker, Andrew Houghton, Rossella Romeo and Cally Soon has helped Healthwatch Manchester champion people's healthcare rights. From recruiting volunteers to building our marketing strategy, each of these people have had a hand one way or another in making Healthwatch Manchester what we are today.

Thank you all for your important and valued contribution to Healthwatch Manchester.



# Listening to your experiences

Members of the public have helped Healthwatch Manchester uncover previously unreported areas of work. From problems accessing Patient Participation Groups to the unavailability of wheelchairs in a major Manchester Hospital, Healthwatch Manchester have listened to your experiences to help improve health and social care across the city.

# Access to Patient Participation Groups in Manchester

In December 2022, Healthwatch Manchester (HWM) were tasked with conducting a review of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) of each GP practice in Manchester by our board. The review was conducted as a 'Mystery Shopper' exercise whereby our staff and volunteers would each contact a set number of practices spread out across Manchester to enquire about their PPG's. Ultimately, our aim was to present an analysis of access to PPGs through review methodology and key findings whilst also providing recommendations regarding areas for improving access to PPGs.

## Methodology behind the investigation

As previously mentioned, the HWM team conducted a 'Mystery Shopper' exercise whereby each person involved would call each practice individually and inquire about their PPGs. This was done to provide an opportunity for HWM to understand the actual, everyday experience of contacting to enquire about PPGs.

Once the practice answered our call we asked four questions to determine if a practice indeed did or did not have an active PPG. The questions are as follows:



1. Is there a Patient Participation Group?
2. How would I go about joining?
3. How often do they take place?
4. Are they accessible?

These phone calls took place over a period of two weeks. During this time, **83 practices** were contacted by the HWM team.

Once all of these practices had been contacted, we collated the data and produced a report outlining our findings. The key findings were:



1. Overall, 70% of the practices we contacted had evidence of a Patient Participation Group either on their website or via the calls we made to them.
2. However, only 19% of the overall number of practices were able to provide clear details on how to join, where they would be and when they would be.

## Outcome of this report

After this report was produced, HWM Chief Officer Neil and HWM Information & Communications Officer Tom were both invited to present the findings from this report the Health Scrutiny City Committee meeting. The committee approved all recommendations, making this area of work a success.

# Wheelchair access at Manchester Royal Infirmary

## Background to this report

In November 2022, Healthwatch Manchester performed an Enter and View investigation at Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital to:

- Review access to wheelchair provision
- Review the ease of wheelchair use within the infirmary excluding its exterior grounds.

We determined that the ease of wheelchair use includes the availability of guidance on how to use one of the wheelchairs provided through mediums such as visible information and staff signposting.

Once our staff had entered the hospital, we began investigating :

- The location of wheelchairs in the infirmary
- The location of information on how to use wheelchairs provided
- Reviewing the ease of movement within the infirmary for the wheelchair user and handler

## Our findings



1. Access to a wheelchair in Manchester Royal Infirmary is poor.
2. Information regarding use of a wheelchair is unavailable.
3. Access around MRI is good for wheelchair users.

## Results from our report

Once the report was completed, we submitted our findings to Group Chief Nurse Professor Cheryl Lenney OBE at Manchester Foundation Trust.

Following this, Professor Lenney OBE provided a response which informed us of the changes Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital plan to make following our report.

Manchester Royal Infirmary will be organizing their porter staff to ensure that wheelchairs are regularly collected and distributed to allocated points across the site as well as providing signage at the Reception Desk directing the public to the wheelchair bay. Moreover, an additional 25 wheelchairs were made available at the hospital following our report.



*“MFT welcomed the findings of the HWM Team visit on 28th November as an opportunity to make further improvements to accessibility of wheelchairs on the MRI site. We noted the positive findings in the report and were pleased that the work undertaken to ensure good access to the MRI by wheelchair was evident. However, we also noted areas where improvements are required to ensure availability of wheelchairs.”*

# Enter and view

This year, we made 7 Enter and View visits. We made 28 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Seymour Care Home	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Allendale Residential Home	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Laurel Court	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital	Alarm raised by citizens	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Acacia Lodge Care Home	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Brocklehurst Nursing Home	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.
Chestnut House Care Home	Collaboration with commissioners	A report was produced with recommendations – the service followed up on these and patient safety improved.

## Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Manchester is represented on the Manchester Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chair. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by raising issues uncovered by investigations through Healthwatch Manchester as a critical friend and amplifying the citizens voice.

Healthwatch Manchester is represented on the Health and Social Care executive by our Chair.

# 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



The pioneering use by Healthwatch Manchester of three devices to review GP practice websites: mobile phone, laptop and PC – has been adopted as the standard requirement for research of this kind by the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR).

## Getting services to involve the public



Healthwatch Manchester reported the shortcomings of St Lawrence pharmacy to the General Pharmaceutical Council. Shortly after this the pharmacy was relocated to a branch where it now provides an acceptable level of service.

## Improving care over time



Healthwatch Manchester reviewed 26 pharmacies for their compliance with the NHS Accessible Information Standard and put each one in touch with the local services they needed to contact in order to gain successful compliance.



# 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.

This year we have reached different communities by:

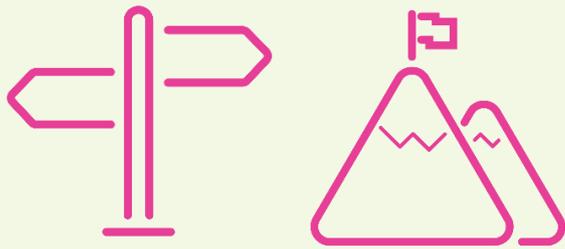
- Collaborating with with Jain Samaj Manchester on a Jain food project
- Outreach sessions with Learning Disabled people at Manchester People First
- People in poverty through our local care organization MLCO in a winter warm event
- A cost of living event for people with chronic illness MLCO

# Working with different communities

## Signposting to mental health and wellbeing services for prisons leavers and the homeless community

HWM worked with ARC who are a community hub helping people in Manchester who are recovering from drug and alcohol abuse including prison leavers and the homeless community. Our outreach officers worked with the people at ARC to help signpost the community to mental health services and housing support groups such as **#AndysManclub** and **CoffeeWithCraig**.

We also put them in touch with primary care services such as GPs and dentists. Moreover, we recruited these people into our Healthwatch Manchester Men's Health and Care Forum to provide them with a place to talk about their mental health with others in a judgement free online space.



## Designing learning disabled friendly hospital symbols

This past year we have worked closely with the fantastic people at Manchester People First (MPF) to design symbols for the different departments in Manchester's hospitals.

Based in Cheetham Hill, MPF is a self advocacy group for learning disabled people. They informed us that in the past, many members have found navigating through hospitals to be difficult due to the very wordy department names, think of Rheumatology for example! They suggested using descriptive symbols instead of words to help people find their way around hospitals easier.

Therefore we took this advice on board and held a focus group with members of MPF and helped them design these symbols in a way that made it easy for them to understand.



Healthwatch came along and did some work with our Learning Disabled members about making their hospital visits more accessible to help our members when they go to hospital and the work was around signage - thanks to the Healthwatch team for coming along listening to our members ideas and then putting them into action.

- Andy Needle, Project Coordinator at Manchester People First



# Advice and information

At Healthwatch Manchester we pride ourselves in championing people's rights and as a critical friend, we will always challenge constructively.

## This year we've helped people by:

- Visited pharmacies in Manchester to assess and report on their compliance with the Accessible Information Standard.
- Consulting and holding a focus groups with the people at Manchester People First to design learning disabled friendly signage for hospitals in Manchester.
- Provided information and signposting to members of the public towards various health and social care projects such as [#ThisVanCan](#) and [CoffeeWithCraig](#).
- Our Enter and View report at Manchester Royal Infirmary lead to the Head of Facilities Management providing 25 more wheelchairs to the hospital site for patients to use.

# How have Healthwatch provided advice and information to the people of Manchester?

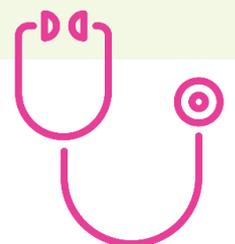
## Information about mental health support

At a community event for older people, one individual notified Healthwatch that she was experiencing poor mental health due to a car accident a number of years ago but didn't know how to get any support with this. Healthwatch advised to have a conversation with her GP if this was something she felt comfortable doing in order to potentially access talking therapies, medication etc. She was also directed to SelfHelp for Manchester & Trafford to explore support options in her local area.



## Raising concerns about a GP

During outreach at a 'cost of living' event at an over 50's accommodation, an individual with chronic illness who had been avoiding her GP (and self-managing her diabetes) due to feeling unfairly treated and unheard. Healthwatch were able to advise her on how the NHS complaints procedure worked and advise to communicate her concerns to the practice manager in the first instance, and what the next steps would be if this was unsuccessful. We also notified her of her right to move to a new GP and helped locate other practices near her home address. This ensured she was able to make her concerns heard and she is able to get the treatment and care she needs.





# 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 have:

- Accompanied HWM staff on regular Enter and View visits to numerous Care Homes and Hospitals across Manchester, observing the environment as well as speaking with service users and staff alike.
- Attended our visits to more than 20 pharmacies, assisting us when checking pharmacy compliance with the Accessible Information Standard.
- Formed a Citizens Reading Panel to support our report writing process. Their valued feedback has helped make our reports more user friendly and coherent to the public.

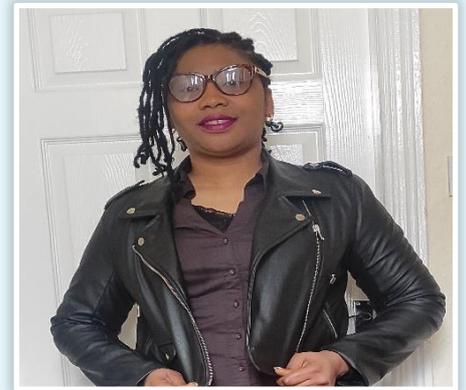
## Ngozi Grace Knemchor

I started volunteering for Healthwatch Manchester early this year and it has been amazing. My experience volunteering at Healthwatch Manchester has been tremendously rewarding. I have had the chance to actively contribute to increasing health and well-being within the community during my time spent volunteering. Seeing the beneficial effects that Healthwatch Manchester has had on people and society as a whole has been motivating. This volunteering experience has been incredibly important to me because of the knowledge I have learned, the relationships I have established and the gratification of helping others.



## Alero Udorahaa

I have the opportunity to work as a volunteer at Healthwatch Manchester. It has been a great experience so far. The research project I am currently working on has revealed evidence on how GP websites need to be improved so as to serve the people of Manchester better. I am looking forward to working on more projects with Healthwatch Manchester in the near future.



## Janet Wiseman

As a new member of the HWM Citizen Readers Panel, I've found it very interesting to read many reports about recent visits and resulting recommendations. I hope my objective feedback ensures all the publications are easily understandable, informative for all service users and therefore contribute to the quality of health and social care in Manchester.



### Do you feel inspired?

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

 [www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk/volunteer](http://www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk/volunteer)

 **0300 078 0669**

 [info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk)



# Statutory statements

Healthwatch Manchester, First Floor, Railway Cottage, 33 Collier Street, Manchester, M3 4NA.

Healthwatch Manchester uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the license agreement.

# 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	
Core Contract from Manchester City Council	£140,000	Expenditure on pay	£103,406
Additional income	£15,199	Non-pay expenditure	£36,594
		Office fee	£9,465
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£155,199</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£149,465</b>

## Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work to tackling inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless whether that is because of where you live, income or race.

## Our priorities for 2023–2024

- Annual health checks review
- Extra Care service review
- GP website review
- Public health information review
- Mental health services access
- Access to cancer pathways
- Long COVID services uptake
- Innovation in self care review
- Information and Signposting
- Outreach
- Men's Health and Care Forum
- Women's Health and Care Forum
- Accessible Information Standard Checks
- Enter and View
- Unmet Need in Care

# The way we work

---

## Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making

Our Healthwatch Board consists of eight 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. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met six times and made decisions on matters such as appointing a new Chairperson and 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 have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

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, the British National Library for prosperity and the Healthwatch England website.

## Responses to recommendations

In this year we sent two Freedom of Information requests to two Hospital Foundation Trusts. We received comprehensive responses on each occasion. Our reports were sent along with correspondence requesting clear actions to meet their recommendations. On most occasions a response was received from the provider apart from our Accessible Information Standard compliance reviews of pharmacy.

## Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example, we brought our report on Public access to Patient Participation Groups in front of a Health Scrutiny Committee at Manchester City Council. At this meeting, all councilors agreed to our recommendations.

Our new locality board which feeds into the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Service has recently been formed with a place for our Chair. As this board was only recently formed there has not as yet been the opportunity to share any findings or recommendations there from Healthwatch Manchester investigations.



# 2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
CAMHS and Transition to AMHS	Improved connectivity and signposting between all related services.
Access to Sexual Health	Website contacts updated and rationalized to provide a single point of contact for Manchester's sexual health services
Hospital video access	Production of multiple hospital navigation videos which were welcomed by our hospital trust
Compliance reviews of the Accessible Information Standard(AIS) among Manchester pharmacies	Increased awareness of the AIS and the means to achieve compliance
Enter & View programme	Incorporation of recommendations to care home activity leading to service improvement



**healthwatch**  
Manchester

Healthwatch Manchester  
Railway Cottage, behind Bass Warehouse  
Castle Street  
Manchester  
M3 4LZ

[www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk)

t: 0300 078 0669

e: [info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk)

 @HealthWatchMcr

 [facebook.com/healthwatchmanchester](https://facebook.com/healthwatchmanchester)

 @healthwatchmcr

 Healthwatch Manchester