

Annual report and accounts 2022-23



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Message from our Chair

Healthwatch Hackney has continued to carry out excellent work collecting the views of local people about our health and social care services and bringing them to the attention of the providers. This excellence was recognised by Healthwatch England who gave our work on improving access to GP services for local refugees, asylum seekers and other residents its Impact Award for 2022.

The Chair of Healthwatch England, Sir Robert Francis KC, summed up the important role we play in his statement:

The award recognises Healthwatch Hackney for having a positive and tangible impact on people in their local area. Everyone at Healthwatch Hackney should be proud of how they've helped to ensure more vulnerable people in their borough can see a GP.

We have returned twice to the same surgeries to see if they have changed their policies on patient registration. This year has also seen the publication of reports on a wide range of issues, from the experiences of the Chinese and Vietnamese communities in accessing health care to Enter and View at the Sexual Health Clinic at Homerton University Hospital and the experience of maternity services in the borough.

We have had a focus on pharmacies with two reports, one on accessibility to the premises and another on the availability, or lack of, free emergency hormonal contraception. This survey exposed some poor practice that is being addressed by Public Health Hackney.

As Healthwatch celebrates its tenth birthday I look forward to a new phase of Healthwatch Hackney. We will be finalising our strategy for the next two years. One of the areas we will be focusing on is mental health and in the pipeline is Enter and View into the acute mental health wards. We will be strengthening our relationship with our partners, in particular the London Borough of Hackney, the new integrated care board, NHS North East London, and other Healthwatches in North East London.

In addition, Healthwatch Hackney will engage with more local organisations to expand the collection of experiences from communities whose voices are seldom heard. We hope to secure new premises that are street facing and accessible to all.

As the new Chair of the Board I would like to thank the inspirational and hard-working staff team, our great volunteers and supporters, my fellow board members and the colleagues that we collaborate with in the voluntary and statutory sectors.



Deborah Cohen
Chair, Healthwatch Hackney
(appointed February 2023)



About us

Our vision

Our vision is of a borough where the provision of health and social care is equal and accessible to all; where services are of a high quality and meet the needs of all communities in Hackney and where residents are at the heart of the design, delivery and improvement of health and social care services.

Our mission

Our mission is to improve health and social care provision and outcomes for people in Hackney by working to ensure that treatment and care is provided with respect and dignity, valuing diversity, encouraging participation and working together.

We do this by being the independent champion for residents and users ensuring that the voices of people across the borough are heard and influence decision makers.



Healthwatch England Impact Award

In 2022 Healthwatch Hackney won a national award for improving access to GP services for local refugees, asylum seekers and other residents. The national Healthwatch Impact Award celebrates the difference made by local Healthwatch staff and volunteers to improve NHS and care services.

When patients feel unwell and need help, the GP is often the first place they turn to. For refugees, migrants, and people who are homeless, getting access to basic care can be difficult if services ask to see documents such as passports or proof of address to register.

Healthwatch Hackney found this issue was affecting people, with some telling us the NHS had refused them Covid-19 vaccinations because they were not registered with a GP.

As a result of this feedback, Healthwatch Hackney contacted 39 practices in their area to ask about their registration requirements for new patients. We did this in March 2021 and October 2021. This second review showed a huge improvement, with over 80% of the practices changing their patient registration policy. It also led to GP staff receiving training on the registration process to ensure consistency in the approach.

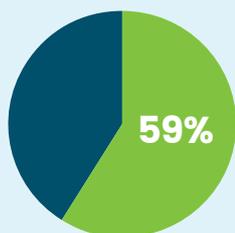


Thanks to this work, most local practices now have the correct registration policy, making it easier for patients to access a GP.

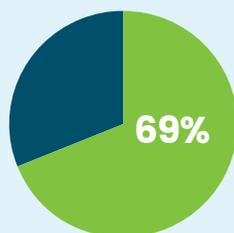
Healthwatch Hackney also worked to increase people's understanding of their rights to access primary care services and interpreting support.

We focused on groups with recent arrivals to the UK, such as the Chinese, Turkish and Somali communities, and organisations that work with migrants, refugees and homeless people.

March 2021

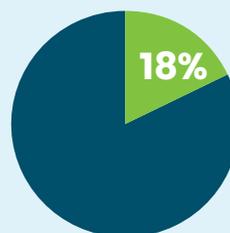


Practices asking for proof of identity

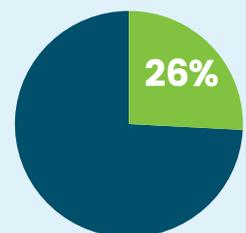


Practices asking for proof of address

October 2021



Practices asking for proof of identity



Practices asking for proof of address

Highlights of the year

We identified **16,246** issues from **4,491** people and shared this feedback with local providers and commissioners



53 volunteers helped us to carry out our work by providing an estimated **2,424** hours of unpaid support

We published Enter and View reports into:

Lea Surgery



Homerton University Hospital Sexual Health Services at the Clifden Centre and Ivy Centre

We produced special reports into:

- Accessibility audit of Hackney's Community Pharmacies
- Access to emergency hormonal contraception through Hackney pharmacy services
- Analysis of patient experience of maternity care in Hackney, Chinese and Vietnamese Communities experience of health and care services in Hackney
- GP registration in Hackney, the right to access care Third review



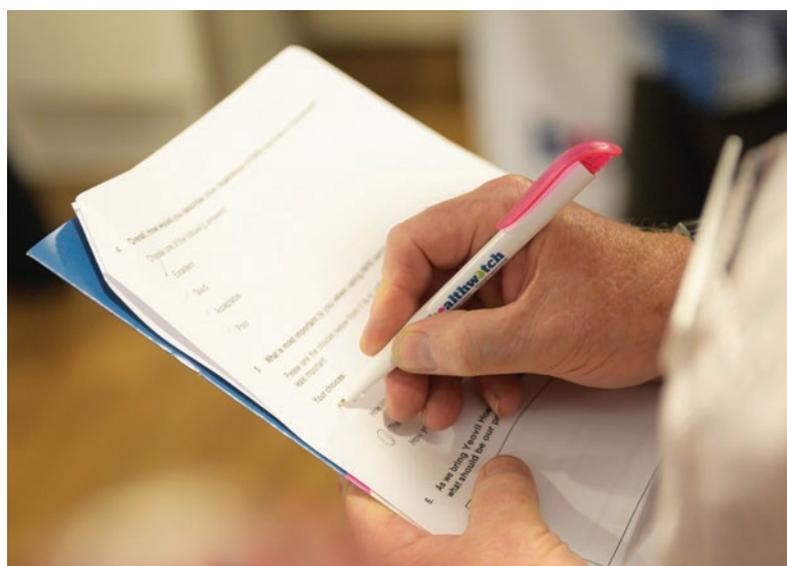
Your views on health and care

2022 was the year that Healthwatch Hackney returned to going out into the community to collect the experiences of residents of health and care services. We went regularly to Homerton Hospital, GP surgeries, libraries and community events. We also captured comments made on social media, online meetings, and focus groups.

Trends and insights

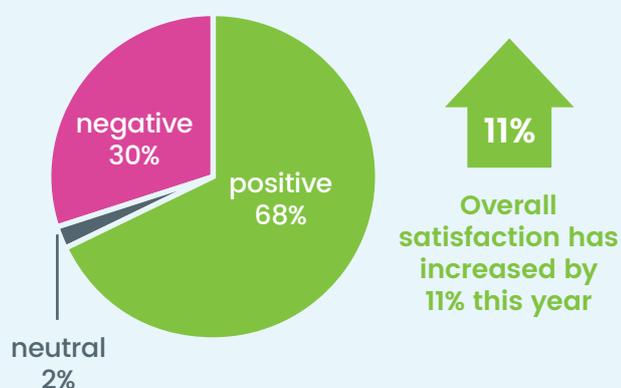
In 2022-23 we identified and analysed 16,246 issues about local health and care services based on feedback from 4,491 people.

- 56% was collected from social media
- 30% was collected by Healthwatch Hackney
- 14% was collected from providers' reports and websites

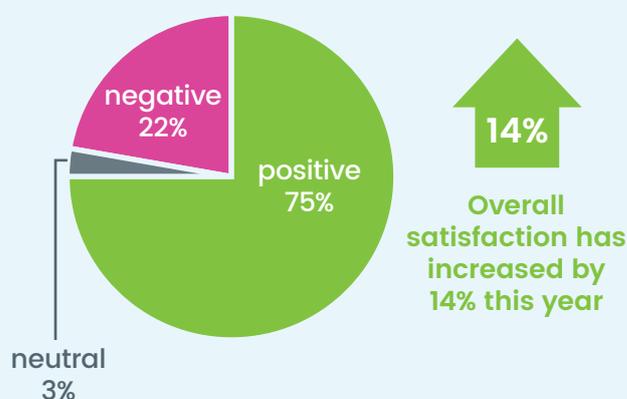


© Healthwatch England

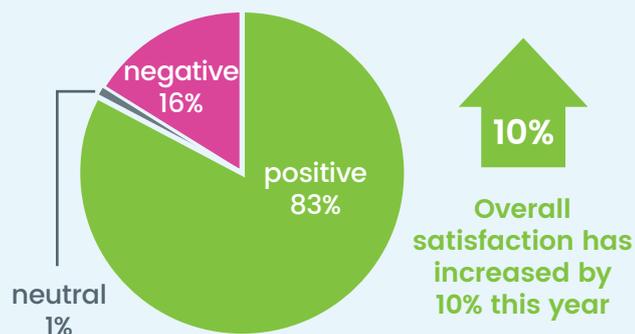
How do people feel about health and care services in general?



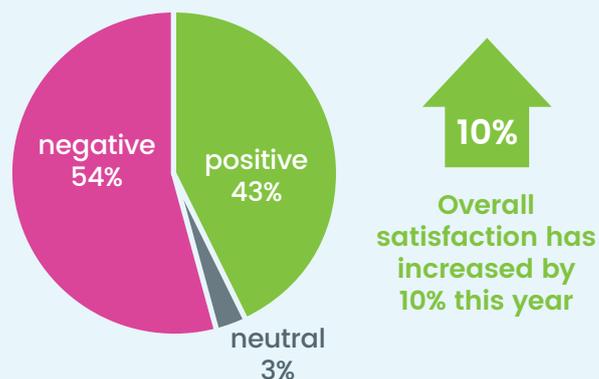
How well informed, supported and involved do people feel?



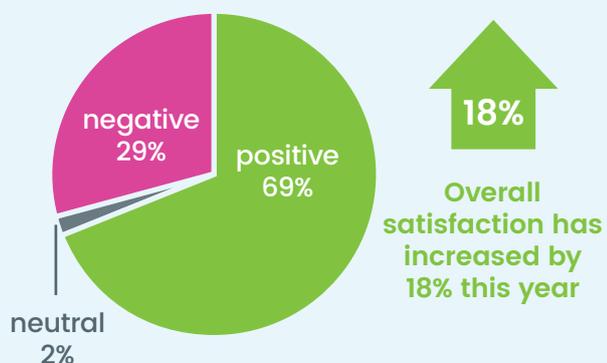
Quality and empathy



Access to services



General Practice



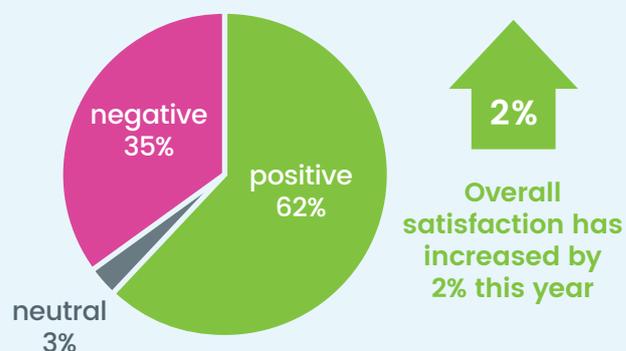
POSITIVES

- + The vast majority of patients receive good quality, compassionate treatment and care, with good levels of involvement and support.
- + Patients are broadly complimentary about all staffing categories – receptionists, doctors and nurses. Certain practices are praised for being well-organised and efficient.

NEGATIVES

- Satisfaction with service access is marginally negative overall. While appointments are generally on time, patients complain of congested telephones, difficulties with online systems, and longer than expected waits for appointments.
- Other issues include choice (seeing a preferred GP, or a GP in-person), training for reception staff, translation/language support and ability to obtain test results.

Homerton Hospital



POSITIVES

- + The vast majority of patients receive good quality, compassionate treatment and care, with good levels of involvement and support. Clinical staff (doctors and nurses) are widely praised and experiences at Maternity and Physiotherapy are broadly positive overall.

NEGATIVES

- Communication is at a good level but could be better – especially at discharge.
- Patients say that reception and administrative staff could be more supportive, informative and compassionate.
- There are varied administrative issues, such as a lack of information and poor telephone access.
- As a department, A&E receives the largest volume of negative feedback, with waiting times in particular criticised.

Neighbourhoods

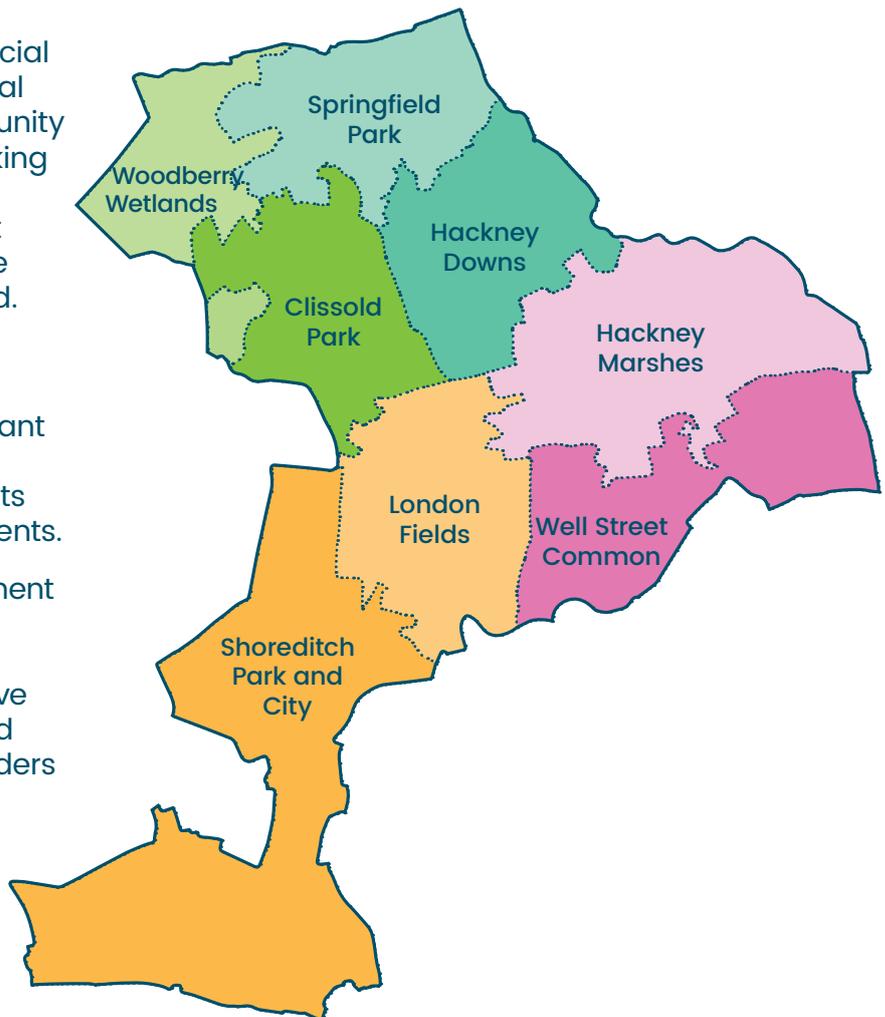
City and Hackney has been divided into eight Neighbourhoods for the delivery of health and care services. The Neighbourhoods model aims to bring health and care services closer to where people live, and help people take more control over the factors that affect their health and wellbeing.

Each Neighbourhood brings together community services such as adult social care, adult community nursing, mental health, and the voluntary and community sectors. Healthwatch Hackney is working in partnership with Hackney CVS and Volunteer Centre Hackney to connect people with opportunities to influence developments in their Neighbourhood.

We secured funding to develop a video explaining the purpose of Neighbourhoods and why it is important that residents are involved. The video and the [Neighbourhoods website](#) it sits on were both co-designed with residents.

The Neighbourhood Resident Involvement Group has been involved in the development of the Neighbourhoods programme from its inception over five years ago. Activities they have worked on include working with service providers to develop a [coproduction tool kit](#) which has been widely promoted.

One of the new services being delivered at a Neighbourhood level is called Proactive Care. This service will focus on providing additional support to people over the age of 55 with three or more long-term health conditions. Residents have been involved in the development of this service from the pilot stage and will continue to be involved as it is rolled out across all eight Neighbourhoods.



The ability to meet face to face in 2022 opened new opportunities for resident engagement. We went to community venues such as libraries, children's centres, and leisure centres to ask people about their priorities and feedback on services. This included attending summer festival events.

As a resident I want to shape the Forums as they develop and I believe my feedback is vital for this.

The online community conversations that took place in each Neighbourhood during the pandemic became Neighbourhood Forums in 2022. We worked hard to bring residents to these meetings, sending them text reminders and rewarding attendance with goody bags. We also worked with Hackney CVS, who facilitate the forums, to make sure they were as resident friendly possible. We have for example produced guidelines for running hybrid online and face to face meetings. Attending these meetings has allowed residents to have their say about the issues that are important to them and find out information about local services such as cost of living support.



Everyone was very nice and they seemed to be putting great effort and trying to help everyone.

Forum members also voted on which local projects to fund to support residents at risk of frailty. Five Neighbourhoods funded a mini health budgets pilot and three Neighbourhoods funded bespoke frailty awareness training.

Many professionals are hesitant about how to best engage with residents to ensure that all community members have the chance to get involved, whether they are online or not. Healthwatch Hackney has been hosting monthly surgeries for professionals working in Neighbourhoods. These sessions have enabled skills sharing and confidence building in involving residents in service development.



Community Voice

Community Voice in health and care is a patient-led project to bring people together to discuss the issues that matter to them. The Community Voice steering group plays a key role in ensuring Community Voice addresses the issues that are relevant to residents. In 2022–23 we expanded the membership of the steering group to include our Public Representatives, many of whom are under 25.

Activities

The ending of Covid restrictions meant that activities could be delivered using a mix of face-to-face meetings, surveys and online meetings. Different ways of participating suit different people and this flexibility enabled us to maximise participation.

Examples include:

Spirometry consultation

We undertook a consultation on the introduction of a Spirometry testing mobile unit by means of a survey and online focus group.

We received 1,862 responses to the survey with a clear majority (91%) currently receiving testing. Hospitals (33%), GPs (25%), and community clinics (24%) were the most popular venues, while a minority (10%) visited a mobile unit.

The majority of respondents (60%) were happy to access testing at another GP practice or nearby health centre, while a significant proportion (58%) were happy to access testing at a mobile clinic.

The focus group emphasised the importance of having testing facilities close to homes to save time and effort, especially for those with disabilities, elderly parents, or other commitments. The idea of a mobile clinic visiting nearby GP practices or other community settings was seen as a positive solution that could improve accessibility and increase the number of people who come forward for testing.

As a direct result of our engagement work mobile spirometry testing will run as a two year pilot programme. The NHS plans to have the new service up and running by the end of September 2023.

Virtual wards

A virtual ward is a way of monitoring care provided away from a hospital ward. This means patients receive regular checks and interactions with doctors and nurses while at home. We worked with carers and older people's groups to investigate their concerns.

They told us they were worried virtual wards would cut patients off from quality care, leaving them at home unable to access the support needed. They also had practical concerns, for example how would the basic needs of patients be taken care of for such as cooking, cleaning, bedding changes. Recommendations included:

- Clear, detailed fact sheets provided to allay fears before any of the residents we spoke to would feel comfortable accepting or supporting care at home via Virtual Wards.
- Residents need to know how the care will be delivered, how patients will be monitored and how the service can react swiftly to a sudden need or deterioration.
- Residents need to be reassured that the service will meet basic needs like hygiene and cooked food.

Community Voice forums

The Community Voice forums meet quarterly and provide a space for residents to discuss issues that are impacting their lives. Themes included:

Living with Covid

Residents talked about a mistrust of the government and a feeling that the government is giving mixed messages. This makes communication and building trust locally even more important. It was suggested engaging with community groups and in particular faith groups, contacting those that had been most affected by the pandemic, would be a good way to go about this.

People expressed concern around mask wearing and commented that people often do not wear masks effectively. Many people said they were worried about the relaxation of Covid rules because they have health conditions.

The group noted the end of free testing could be a problem for young people as they do not have access to free tests and cannot readily afford to buy tests.



This work fed into a Community Voice led collaboration with Homerton CoRe Long Covid services, exploring barriers preventing certain groups by age and ethnicity accessing the service. Our engagement work with residents will be implemented in 2023 to allow more people to use the service.

Patient transport

Staff from the ERS Medical who hold the contract for delivering patient transport at Homerton Hospital came and spoke at the forum. The forum made the following recommendations:

- A poster to remind people that they need to arrange their return journey and to avoid people getting missed.
- Information about eligibility, contact details and bookings to be circulated by ERS and for details to be put on the Healthwatch Hackney website. Homerton to similarly make it available on their website and have paper copies available in the hospital.

Engagement and Coproduction

The Engagement and Coproduction contract, funded by the NHS, helps the City and Hackney place-based partnership involve residents in decision making about health and social care services.

The City and Hackney place-based partnership is a collaboration of planners and providers across the NHS, Hackney Council and the wider community, who take collective responsibility for improving the health and wellbeing of residents. Healthwatch Hackney is one of the partner organisations that form our local place-based partnership.

Our Engagement and Coproduction Manager works closely with a group of people called Public Representatives. They are local people from a wide variety of ages, backgrounds and ethnicities, with lived experience of using health and care services in City and Hackney. Many of the Public Representatives are living with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

The Public Representatives attend many of the meetings at which decisions are made about local health and care services. They can see things from a patient's point of view and help decision makers to keep patient experience at the heart of all their plans and ideas. Here are just a few examples of the activities they have taken part in:

In December 2022, London Borough of Hackney was looking for a provider to deliver vital advocacy services in the Borough. To decide who will deliver the service, London Borough of Hackney looked at bids and proposals from several organisations (this is called a procurement process). Three of our Public Representatives were part of the panel.

Their scoring was given equal weight to that of the health and social care professionals in the room, representing the voice of local people in the process.

In April 2022, NHS North East London recruited to the senior role of Chief Participation and Place Officer. One of our Public Reps joined the interview panel of three as an integral part of the recruitment process, ensuring the patient perspective was represented, and was instrumental in the successful appointment of Rethink Advocacy.

One of the groups that sit within the decision making structure in the City and Hackney place-based partnership is called People and Place Group. The purpose of the group is to look at the main programmes of work (i.e. Mental Health, Children and Young People) and to consider how well they listen to and involve residents in their services. Our Public Representatives regularly participate in this group. The Public Representatives inputted into a review of the way the group functions, resulting in a standing agenda item allowing the Representatives to influence decisions, a new format for the meeting, and updated terms of reference.



System Influencers

The System Influencer Programme was managed by Healthwatch Hackney via the Engagement and Coproduction contract. The programme supported ten Hackney based young people to work alongside System Mentors to coproduce work for Public Health, Homerton Hospital and Neighbourhoods. Examples of projects they were involved in include:

- Working with Homerton hospital to co-design communications for young people about services to help them engage better with younger service users
- Working with the Neighbourhood teams to design focus group engagement sessions to find out what services young people are aware of and what they feel is missing

- Worked with Public Health to design focus groups and workshops to understand residents' perceptions and experience of obesity and healthy weight.

As a direct result of their involvement in the project, two of our System Influencers have been able to take the skills and experience they gained through the programme forwards to join the health and care workforce as paid employees. Healthwatch Hackney will again manage and deliver the System Influencer Programme in 2023.

Healthwatch investigatory reports

Healthwatch have a legal power to visit NHS, NHS funded and adult social care services and see them in action. This power to Enter and View services offers a way for Healthwatch to meet some of their statutory functions and allows them to identify what is working well with services and where they could be improved.

Last year we visited the [Lea Road Surgery](#) and [Homerton University Hospital Sexual Health Services](#) at the Clifden Centre and Ivy Centre. These reports can be found on our website.

We also undertook four special investigatory reports. These included:



Chinese and Vietnamese Communities experience of health and care services in Hackney

Together with Hackney Chinese Community Centre, we developed a questionnaire to look at the experience of the Chinese and Vietnamese communities in Hackney accessing Primary care services, including GP, dentistry, optician, and pharmacy as well as hospital services.

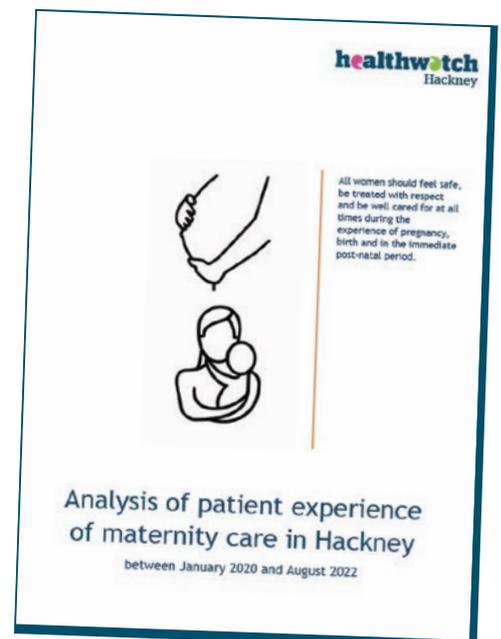
The majority of the people we spoke to said they find it difficult or impossible to understand the information they receive, or to express

themselves and explain symptoms while accessing services, especially GP services. This highlighted the importance of services proactively offering interpreter services.

Analysis of patient experience of maternity care in Hackney

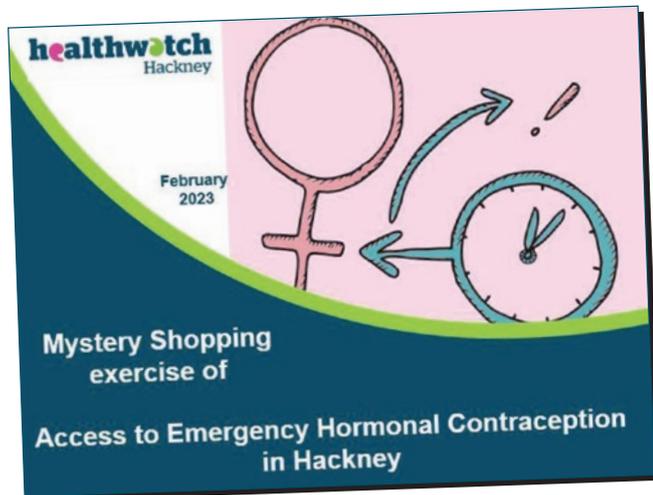
This report into the maternity experiences of women in Hackney came out of a larger piece of work commissioned by North East London Local Maternity and Neonatal System Equity to develop an equality strategy and action plan.

We reviewed and analysed patient feedback received between January 2020 and August 2022. We found midwives' antenatal care at the hospital received generally good feedback. There were also several positive mentions about being seen by the same midwife throughout pregnancy.



The negative comments were mainly about poor administration, such as appointments cancelled at short notice and the offhand and rude attitude of some of the reception staff.

Homerton University Hospital Trust responded positively to the recommendations made in the report, detailing changes they had put in place.



Investigation into access to emergency hormonal contraception through Hackney pharmacy services

Hackney residents aged 16 and over can access a wide range of free sexual health services locally through Homerton sexual health services. Healthwatch Hackney explored how accessible and young people friendly local pharmacy services are. We did this with the help of some young volunteers and support from Public Health Hackney.

All the pharmacies we visited had signed up with Public Health to provide free emergency hormonal contraception. Worryingly only 7 out of the 16 pharmacies that we visited said they could provide free Emergency Hormonal Contraception to our mystery shoppers. We are working with Public Health on measures to improve access.



Accessibility Audit of Hackney's Community Pharmacies

This report was planned following feedback from residents that access to pharmacies was not always possible. In recognition that everyone's accessibility needs are different we conducted an audit of all pharmacies, so that residents could make decisions about using a pharmacy as well as encourage pharmacies to improve their accessibility.

People's Feedback Panel, Information Exchange

People's Feedback Panel

We held 31 panel meetings between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023. 108 pieces of feedback were flagged as being of concern during the panel and raised with the service providers.

Darren Morgan, who developed the People's Feedback Panel (PFP) and has been running sessions at various Healthwatch for over ten years said:

The panels are a great opportunity for local people to get involved in scrutinising their local services. They are essential in helping us to understand the feedback we receive - what has worked well, and what could have worked better. As well as staff and volunteers, we are sometimes joined by professionals such as Patient Experience Leads, GPs and Practice Managers, and they clearly see the value and the benefit of the sessions, in helping them to understand individual issues and wider trends.

Feedback from service providers following an email with flagged feedback

6 Thanks for your constant help and support. Just so you know it is very much appreciated. As you can imagine this is a sensitive one which we have actually been dealing with. I can assure you your feedback is being taken seriously and will seek HR advice ASAP as to how to best to address the issue with the said receptionist. I will keep you inform as we go along.

GP practice

6 Thank you for flagging this further incident. We are looking into this and will update you on the outcome as soon as possible.

Hospital services



© Healthwatch England

Information Exchange Meetings

Our online information exchange meetings bring together experts with residents, to provide information and give the opportunity for questions to be answered. Last year the topics discussed include:

[Support for unpaid carers in Hackney](#)

[London Ambulance Services Next 5 years strategy](#)

[Your right to complain about the NHS](#)

[Let's talk about sex and how to stay safe!](#)

[What support on mental health is available in Hackney](#)

[Healthwatch Hackney Information Session](#)

[Dementia](#)

“I really appreciate these events and find them really useful. Love the follow up recording and presentations for reference and the chairing is calm and respectful.”

“I always find the information exchange session really useful and the follow up information enables me to share relevant information with others. You keep them to time appropriately, whilst allowing space for those who need to share personal experiences and offering a full comprehensive follow up.”

Signposting

Our Information and Signposting service helps support residents to identify the services and support they need. Last year we supported 168 residents with complex needs to access the services they needed.

“Healthwatch Hackney helped me deal with the attitude of some staff at my GP practice. I also had problems with my repeat prescription, and they dealt with this too. Now everything works well after their involvement.”

“The patient is really appreciative of your contact with her GP and asked me to thank you many times because you listened to her and that had a big impact on her life.”

“Thank you for your help with my surgery and ensuring the doctor calls me about my review and inability to get my prescription for a long time. Thanks to your involvement, this was sent to me, and I got my medication.”

Our Board



Malcolm Alexander
Chair until May 2022



Deborah Cohen
Appointed January 2023,
Chair from February 2023



Yas'ina Christopher
Vice Chair



Lloyd French
Interim Chair until
February 2023



Maggie Gibbons
Appointed
December 2022



Anthonia Onigbode
Treasurer



Saleem Siddiqui



Terry Stewart
Appointed
September 2022



Rebecca Thomas
Appointed January 2023



June Wiggan
Appointed
December 2022



Cassandra Lovelock
Resigned
December 2022



Sarah Oyebanjo
Resigned
December 2022



Philip Jones
Resigned
July 2022

Our staff



Catherine Perez Phillips
Deputy Director



Sally Beaven
Engagement and
Coproducton Manager



Fabien Decodts
Community
Voice Manager



Sabrina Jantuah
Neighbourhoods
Involvement Manager



Kanariya Yuseinova
Enter and View and
Volunteer Coordinator



Liya Takie
Finance and Office
Coordinator



Our volunteers

Volunteers play a vital role in enabling Healthwatch Hackney to reach out to communities and collect their experiences of health and social care. Volunteering also supports volunteers to develop skills, gain experience and make a difference to your community.



24 Core
Volunteers
and interns
contributed
1,760 hours



5 System
influencers
contributed
200 hours



24 Public
representatives
contributed
464 hours

6 The best part of my internship was meeting and talking with people. By talking to all these different people with many different backgrounds I learned a lot about life in London, what it is like getting care through the NHS, what can be improved and what the NHS is doing well. Talking with people at Healthwatch helped me learn more about how the NHS than I could ever learn in a lecture.

Intern 2023

6 You put so much trust, belief and confidence in your staff even in the least experienced one. Every time I complain about not been good in certain areas you point out my strengths instead of dwelling on the identified weakness. We achieved this because of your kind of leadership and management strategy/skills.

I think the best part of this internship is knowing the meaningful impact that everything I work on will make.

Intern 2023

Finances

INCOME	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Funding from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	150,000	150,000
North East London NHS	268,309	204,724
Other income	8,814	14,117
Total Income	427,123	368,841

EXPENDITURE	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Operational costs (including project direct expenses)	111,224	69,848
Staff costs	256,407	267,934
Premises / office costs	55,784	30,295
Total expenditure	423,415	368,077
Balance brought forward	3,708	764



healthwatch Hackney

Healthwatch Hackney
1st Floor, Block A, St Leonard's Hospital
Nuttall Street, London N1 5LZ

020 3960 7454

info@healthwatchhackney.co.uk

www.healthwatchhackney.co.uk

[f @HWHackney](#) [@HWHackney](#)

[@ HealthwatchHackney](#)

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