

Annual Report 2018-19





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Message from our Chair

2018/19 has been one of significant change and challenge for Healthwatch Halton.

When I took up my role as Chair at the beginning of July last year, members of the Healthwatch Advisory Board (HAB) and the staff team were working to develop a whole new set of relationships with Engaging Communities Staffordshire who had been commissioned to manage the Healthwatch contract for Halton in April 2018.

When a change like this happens board members move on, volunteers look for other challenges and staff changes take place. In addition to that we moved to new premises in December 2018, but given those issues the small staff team should be congratulated on their incredibly hard work and positive approach to moving things forward.

So, almost a year into my tenure as Chair I am pleased to be able to say we have succeeded in building on the already strong relationships we have with local partners and organisations.

Our volunteers have undertaken their responsibilities for enter and view, engagement and listening with professionalism and teamwork. The members of the HAB are working closely together to identify the important issues facing Healthwatch.

The results of this have been the acquisition of valuable information from Halton residents about their experiences of health and care services which will be set out in the body of this report.



Nothing is more certain in Health and Care than change. It is therefore vital that the views and needs of the public and patients are listened to when developing services. We will continue to rely on you to keep us informed so that we can continue this extremely important work with commissioners and providers on your behalf.

Kathy~ Parke

Kath Parker Healthwatch Halton Advisory Board Chair

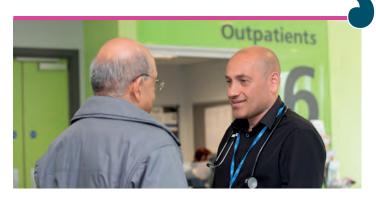
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Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from almost 900 people who told us about their experience of a number of different areas of health and social care. Here are some examples of the changes that you want to see.



+ Make it easier to see a doctor or nurse quickly



 Healthcare professionals should have a positive attitude and be empathetic



+ Staff should take the time to speak to people about what to expect next



 Services should provide information so that people can make informed decisions about their care



Make it easier to contact mental health crisis services by phone



 People want more consistency when being cared for at home

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About us

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

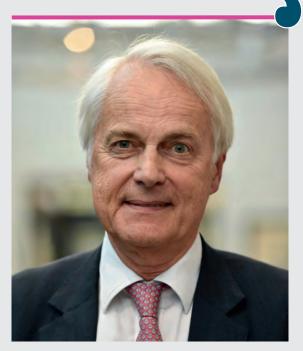
As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.

If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.

If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch Halton, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.

If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.



Sir Robert Francis QC Healthwatch England Chair

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Our vision is simple



Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.

Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.

Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest

difference to you.

People at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.



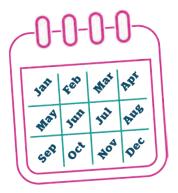


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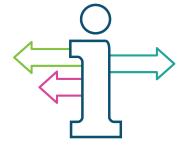
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. **Our resources:**



875 people shared their health and social care story with us, 39% more than last year.



We have 8 volunteers helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up more than 600 hours of their time to help us



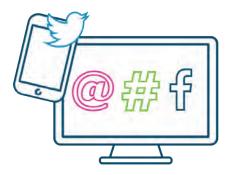
1,975 people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, 50% more than last year.



We visited 12 services and 141 community events to understand people's experience of care. From these visits, we made 50 suggestions for improvement.



31 improvements we suggested were adopted by services to make health and care better in our community.



17% more people engaged with us through social media.

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Changes made to your community

Find out how sharing your views with your local Healthwatch has led to positive changes to health and social care services in Halton. We show when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

Improving Children's Services

In July 2018 we published a report¹ on services provided by Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust from the Woodview Child Development Centre in Widnes. The report called for a 'major rethink' in children's health services in Halton.

Children's services provided from the Centre include Community Paediatric, Child Development Team, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy.

During the previous 12 months we had noticed a rise in the number of concerns and complaints from parents whose children were accessing Woodview services. They often faced very long delays for referrals and follow up appointments, with some young patients waiting longer than a year for their first appointment.

As concerns continued to trickle in we contacted Bridgewater to gather some more information on the services provided and to gain the Trust's view of the issues.

After an initial meeting with the Clinical Services Manager at Woodview, we arranged to visit the

 $1\ https://healthwatchhalton.co.uk/download/woodview-child-development-centre/$

Centre to gain a view of the wide range of services provided and some of the issues facing it, including:

- Long waiting times for referral
- + Staff shortages
- + Poor communications
- + High DNA's

To gather feedback from more parents we decided to carry out a short survey to hear what people felt was good and what could be better about the service. The survey launched in late December 2017 and ran until mid March 2018.

The survey was promoted:

- + to a number of online parent support groups
- + to the public through the Healthwatch Halton e-bulletins and outreach sessions
- + through local special needs schools
- + through the local press

In January and February 2018 we had a short pause on the project due to preparations for Healthwatch Halton's move to a new contract provider form 1 April 2018.



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The service commissioners, NHS Halton Clincal Commissioning Group (CCG), were kept involved and informed as our project progressed, through our seat on the CCG's Quality Committee. The CCG also carried out an in-depth review of services provided by NHS Bridgewater across Halton which highlighted a range of wider issues.

81 people responded to our survey, with more families providing their experiences to us via email, phone and social media.

The responses received pointed to many areas where parents felt let down by the service:

- + Poor communications
- Long waits, sometimes more than one year between appointments
- + Lost patient records
- + Staff shortages

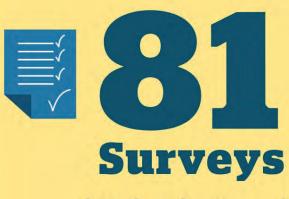
Our report suggested seven main areas for improvement.

- + Communication
- + Introduction of a case co-ordinator
- + Handling of complaints
- + Introduce a drop-in session for parents
- + Improved staffing
- + DNA rates
- + Satisfaction rates

Following the publication of the report in July 2018 and the review carried out by NHS Halton CCG, the Trust produced a 'Woodview Improvement Plan' which addressed the recommendations made in our report and the improvements required by the NHS Halton CCG.

WOODVIEW

Child Development Centre



completed and returned





64%

waited more than 5 months from referral to first appointment:



1in 5

waited more than a year from referral to first appointment

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As part of the improvement plan the service reviewed 916 case records, out of which:

- + 15 children and young people had been discharged from the paediatric medical service but were still on repeat prescription medication for ADHD
- 141 children & young people were to be discussed in additional panel meetings throughout July 2018 and the children that had full assessment completed would be given a diagnosis
- + 315 children and young people required a review appointment to review the care plan that was currently in place

In December 2018 we received an update from the new Clinical Services Manager at Woodview, on the progress against the recommendations in our report. At the time, 60% of the actions in the improvement plan had been completed.

In March 2019 we helped Bridgewater organise a Parent Partnership Event for Woodview parents to feedback on the improvement plans.

We will work closely with the service over the coming months to ensure parents are kept informed and involved in the plans for improvement.

'Thank you for giving us a voice!'

A Woodview Parent

Red Bags - Improving hospital stays for care home residents

During our Enter & View visits to local care homes we were hearing that the Red Bag scheme wasn't working as smoothly as it should at one of our local hospital trusts.

When a resident becomes unwell and is assessed as needing hospital care, care home staff pack a dedicated red bag that includes the resident's standardised paperwork and their medication, as well as day-of-discharge clothes and other personal items.

It's a simple initiative but one which, if it runs smoothly, provides better communication between care homes and hospitals at all points of the resident's journey into hospital and back home again.

We were told that sometimes the red bags didn't return immediately to the care home with the resident or may come back with information missing or incomplete.

We raised this issue with the Hospital Trust through our attendance at the regular Healthwatch Quarterly Catch-up meeting at the Trust. This led to a change with a prompt being included in the new discharge planning checklist to ensure patients, who have been admitted with a red bag, had all discharge documentation completed and a copy placed in the red bag.

The checklist was implemented on wards from September 2018. Following further feedback that there were still some issues, the Trust carried out a 24 hour audit on patients at the hospital and cross referenced this with care homes.

Admission and discharge forms were also altered to include the red bags.



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Schools Flu immunisation

In October 2018 we promoted Bridgewater's School Nursing Team schedule of dates for flu immunisation in all Halton schools, through our social media account.

By promoting it through Facebook the information reached 829 people within the first two days, with 151 people then accessing the list of schools vaccination dates

We were contacted through social media by some parents with concerns and questions about the plans for immunisation.

They told us they were unaware of when their children would be immunised at school and therefore could not inform staff if their child was unwell before or after the spray.

We spoke with the schools nursing team and were told that schools had been asked to share the date of the flu sessions with parents.

The service acknowledged that this may not have happened in all cases and agreed that they would use the information we had given them to help inform their planning for the following year.

There was also a concern raised by some parents around some schools not being immunised until December, which was not within the recommended dates.

The service responded and said they would feed our concerns into the plans for the next programme.



Care at Home

In December 2016 we produced a report, 'Who Cares?', looking at the provision of Domiciliary Care services in Halton and including a number of recommendations for change based on NICE guidance QS123¹

At the time of our report we were aware that the local authority were carrying out a review of the provision of domiciliary care services across the borough.

Through the 'Transforming Domiciliary Care' project the local authority proposed to changes to domiciliary care provision which were agreed and implemented in November 2017.

The changes saw the contract awarded to a sole provider.

During the next few months we were contacted by service users and family members with concerns over aspects of the service they were receiving.

With support from Halton Borough Council we decided to carry out a follow up project from our original 2016 work. Questionnaires were sent to people receiving home care services and a number of service users agreed to take part in more indepth telephone interviews.

We received 129 responses to the survey.

At the time of publishing this annual report, work is ongoing on the final draft of the report.

Once the report is published it will be available on our website - www.healthwatchhalton.co.uk

https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs123

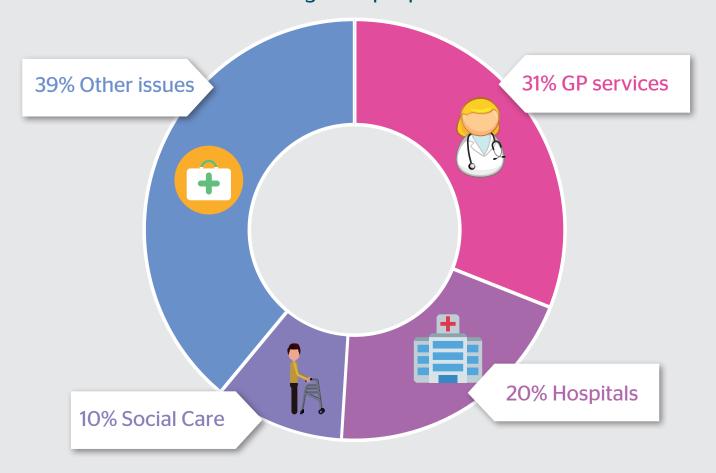


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What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

Here are the most common things that people ask us:





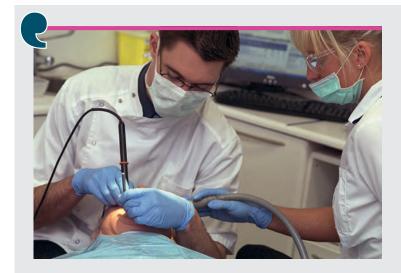
How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look.

Last year we helped over 1900 people access the advice and information they need.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + Talking to us at community events
- + Specific advice and information online
- + Our 'contact us' form on our website
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone



Emergency Dental Care

Darren: I needed urgent dental treatment as I was in severe pain, but I'm not registered with any local dentist. I'd tried ringing around all the local dentists was unable to get an appointment at any of them for at least two weeks. Healthwatch Halton put me in touch with the Cheshire & Merseyside Urgent Dental Care service and I was able to get an appointment for the following day.

'Thanks to Healthwatch Halton I was able to get treatment quickly'

Access to support

We were contacted by a family with a child with special needs. They had faced delays in getting appointments and assessments with a local service and were struggling to get replies from them.

With the family's permission we contacted the service to help resolve the issue. The family received an update on the assessments and new appointment dates.



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'I am so grateful for all your help, obviously they need someone checking up on them and the fact they jump into action as soon as you contact them, well, to me that speaks volumes!

I really appreciate all your help with all this. It's nice to be treated as a human with feelings and not just told we expect too much!'

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Making sure people get the right information about their health care options

The aim of our Community Outreach team is to reach as many residents as possible, to ensure residents voices are heard in the design and delivery of health and social care services locally including the often seldom heard and hard to reach individuals families and communities living in Halton.

Over the past two years, Irene our Community Outreach Lead has built up a positive working relationship with our local Syrian refugee community, for which she received an award from local housing association. By building up a trusting relationships with the families and working collaboratively with the facilitators of the 'A Better Tomorrow' (Syrian Family Support Group), the opportunity arose to raise awareness of the role of Healthwatch.

Through the group's facilitators and interpreter, Irene provided the families with information on the various role, functions and how to access health care services such as Care in the Chemist, GP Surgeries, Urgent Care Centres and Accident & Emergency. This enabled us to engage with the group constructively and document the individual and collective experiences of group members accessing health and social care services locally.



Are you looking for help?

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.

w: www.healthwatchhalton.co.uk t: 0300 777 6543 e: enquiries@healthwatchhalton.co.uk

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How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch Halton we couldn't make all of these improvements without the support of our volunteers who give up their time to help us make care better for our communities.

- Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Support our day to day running e.g. governance, attending meetings etc.,
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports



Volunteers visiting the Widnes Urgent Care Centre

Volunteers help to encourage patients to get involved and have their say

Thanks to the feedback from our volunteers, services have made changes so patients have a better experience

Our volunteers continue to engage and build relationships with residents and community groups across the borough of Halton to collate and document residents' experiences of the health and social care services they use.

Our volunteers have visited services in the past year to see how care is provided, and made suggestions for improvements.

Thanks to their feedback

- + a local hospital made changes to its follow-up phone calls after appointments
- + a long stay ward at a local hospital now has a gentle exercise group three times a week
- + Feedback from patients visiting the Urgent Care Centres formed part of the proposals for the new Urgent Treatment Centres

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Meet our volunteers

We caught up with a few of our wonderful volunteers to show you how their work truly makes a difference to the lives of people in our area.

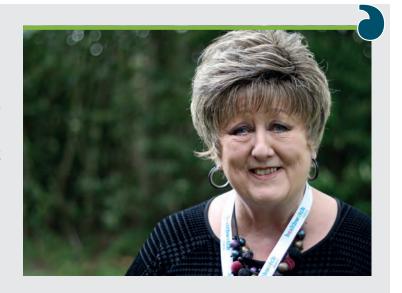


Roy

In January 2010, I had open heart surgery at Liverpool Heart and Chest hospital. My treatment at the hospital and post hospital rehabilitation was excellent. I decided I would like to give something back to the community. I've volunteered for Healthwatch for over 5 years now. I do it because I want to help make a difference and improve services for people in our community.

Diane

I started volunteering with Healthwatch Halton in autumn 2018. I enjoy volunteering with them to help to ensure that patients are fully engaged with their care and have the opportunity to ask questions as well as give feedback on any issues/compliments on the NHS service they receive in either primary,community or secondary settings.





Jane

I first got involved with Healthwatch Halton after attending a local volunteer recruitment event and speaking with a very enthusiastic member of the staff team. I decided immediately that it would be worthwhile volunteering. I've been able to help by gathering people's experiences of local services at community events. As a member of the Healthwatch 'Enter & View' team I've visited many local care homes to view the care and support offered to residents.

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Our finances for 2018-19

Income	£
Healthwatch Income	121,530
Other Income	985
Total Income	122,515
Expenditure	
Salaries	70,418
Salaries Recharge	18,145
Staff Expenses	642
Training & Development	750
Volunteer Expenses	100
Governance	4,194
Premises	4,125
IT & Systems Licences	5,003
Marketing & Communication	1,070
Room Hire and Refreshments	565
Insurance	700
Stationery, Postage & Printing	546
Governance Recharge	12,371
Total Expenditure	118,630
Net Profit / Loss	3,885
Less Corporation Tax 19%	738
Profit / Loss	3,147

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How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority.

In 2018-19 we spent £118,630.

We also received:

- + £635 of additional income from Healthwatch England for our engagement work on the NHS Long Term Plan in March 2019
- + £350 of additional income from Bridgewater Community NHS Healthcare Foundation Trust





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Coming Soon!



The next 12 months

We have quite a busy time ahead of us. In this section you'll read about a few of the pieces of work we're aiming to get involved.

We are helped very much in all this work by our small but dedicated team of volunteers. If you'd like to join us and help make a positive difference to health and care services in Halton, please give us a call on 0300 777 6543 or drop us an email at enquiries@healthwatchhalton.co.uk

Care Navigation

Care Navigation, is one of the top 10 high impact actions in the GP Five Year Forward View. It encourages patients to self-refer to local community services where they do not need to see a GP first. This takes place when a patient contacts the GP Surgery to arrange an appointment, trained practice staff have been given the information to advise and direct patients to an alternative service, providing their needs fit within the agreed exclusion and inclusion criteria for each participating service.



Care Navigation was launched in Halton in late 2018 and currently focuses on navigating patients to:

- + Community Pharmacy
- + Health Improvement Team
- + Minor Eye Conditions (MECS)

- + Sexual Health
- + Musculoskeletal Triage Service
- Wellbeing Access

Our project will focus on people's experiences of making appointments through Care Navigation. It will form part of a robust assessment of the care navigation system across Halton carried out in partnership with NHS Halton CCG and the Primary Care Network

Maternity

The National Maternity Review Better Births Report set out a five-year view for maternity services across England. Better Births outlines a vision for safe and efficient models of maternity care – reflecting women's choices and offering continuity of care.

NHS maternity services provide care and support to women before giving birth (antenatal care), during the birth and in the 6 to 8 week period following the birth (postnatal care).

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Our project will look at the support and information available to women in Halton during the antenatal and postnatal stages.

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Mental Health information and support for young People

We will be looking at where young people go to find information on mental health support and what type of information and support works best.



Transforming Cancer Care in Halton, St Helens, Knowsley and Warrington

During the past year we have been actively involved, along with our neighbouring local Healthwatch in Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington, in the project group looking at the proposals for a new Eastern Sector Cancer Hub.



It's expected that the public consultation stage will start in late 2019. We will be working to ensure that the people of Halton are kept informed and involved on the proposals as they develop.

Urgent Treatment Centre Development

The way Halton's Urgent Care Centres (UCCs) operate will change this later year to align with national guidance. The two centres will transform into Urgent Treatment Centres which should provide a more integrated primary and secondary care model which enables patients to access same day urgent health care.



We've been regular visitors to the UCCs over the past 18 months, carrying out outreach sessions at both centres. Feedback we gathered from more 240 patients helped inform NHS Halton CCG's consultation around the new model.

When the Urgent Treatment Centres are up and running we will be carrying out some more outreach at both venues.



Have your say

If you have a query about a health or 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.

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And finally...

Reading through this review of the past year I'd echo many of the comments made by our HAB chair, Kath Parker, at the start of the report.

It has very much been a year of change!

April 2018 saw the biggest change, with the contract to deliver Healthwatch in Halton passing over to Engaging Communities Staffordshire CIC. Some of our long term volunteers also decided to step down at this time. I'd like to thank them all for the superb help they'd given us over the previous 5 years.

In July we were able to add another part-time member of staff to our small staff team, one of our volunteers, Jane, joined us as Community Outreach Lead.

July also saw the appointment of Kath as our new Healthwatch Advisory Board Chair.

Kath and the other members of the HAB have had a very positive influence on the way we've worked as a Healthwatch. They've helped drive us forward and have given the staff team help, support and advice whenever needed throughout the year.

In December we moved offices from St Marie's where we'd been based for over 5 years, to our new base at Foundry House in Halebank, Widnes.

Despite the upheaval and changes that happened this year, I look back with great pride on the work the team has carried out.

We published our report on services provided from the Woodview Child Development Centre, which has led to a complete review of the service and an improvement plan being put in place by the provider.

Over 130 people gave us their experiences of Domiciliary Care Services in Halton and the completed report on this is due to be published shortly.

In March 2019 we joined with Healthwatch across England to ask people their views on the NHS Long Term Plan. At the time of writing, almost 300 people



in Halton had taken part in the survey. Nationally the figure is likely to be more than 28,000.

- + We've engaged with more people than ever before
- + We've gathered more feedback from patients than ever before and reported this information back to the commissioners and providers of services

Our volunteers have undertaken their responsibilities for enter and view, engagement and listening with professionalism and huge enthusiasm.

I'm looking forward to all the work we'll be involved in during the next 12 months and beyond which has been highlighted in this report

Our volunteers leading the Care Navigation project are building a good relationship with the Primary Care Network and the CCG. I'm sure they'll produce an excellent piece of work on Care Navigation in Halton.

We're reviewing and updating the way we carry out our Enter & View visits to local care homes with the support of the council's Quality Monitoring Team.

Our website will also undergo a major makeover in the next few months. It will contain a lot more information on local services and where help is available. There will also be a much improved feedback system to allow people to give their experiences of local services. This will allow us to report back to commissioners and providers on any themes and trends in much more depth than before.

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Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + All the members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + Our amazing staff team, Irene, Jane and Jude
- + Our Healthwatch Advisory Board
 - + Kath Parker (Chair)
 - + Paul Cooke
 - + Sue Ellison
 - + Diane McCormick
 - + Roy Page
 - + Jane Pritchard
- + Our dedicated volunteers
- + All the voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work and given us such great support
- + NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group
- + Halton Borough Council
- + Warrington & Halton Hospitals NHS FT
- + St Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- + North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS FT
- + Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS FT
- + The support team at ECS



Dave Wilson

Healthwatch Halton Manager



Contact us

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- + 0300 777 6543
- + enquiries@healthwatchhalton.co.uk
- + @HWHalton
- + www.healthwatchhalton.co.uk

Address and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2019.

Engaging Communities Staffordshire CIC

Unit 42, Staffordshire University Business Village

Dyson Way

Staffordshire Technology Park

Stafford

Staffordshire

ST18 OTW

+ contactus@ecstaffs.co.uk

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Call us: 0300 777 6543

We're Healthwatch

Tell us what you think of local services.

We're here to help make it better

- **Care homes**
- **Community services**
- **QP** Surgeries
- Mental Health services
- Pharmacies

- Carers at home
- **•** Dentists
- Hospitals
- Opticians





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