

Healthwatch Lincolnshire Update Report

October - December 2024

Published March 2025

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Key Performance Indicators Overview

Under LCC monitoring we have five measured Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

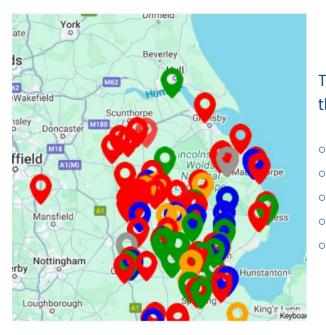
	KPI area	Comment
1	Healthwatch Lincolnshire delivery report Quarterly	Complete. A Healthwatch delivery report will be produced quarterly, providing an overview of performance, activities, and plans for the upcoming quarter which will be completed by the end of next week. You are reading the delivery report for October to December 2024.
2	Number of people sharing their views and experiences with us. 1,000 half-year target	On Target. In this period, 304 people shared their views and experiences on Health and Social Care, 217 directly with our Information Signposting Team and 87 through our Mental Health Survey.
3	Number of people provided with information and signposting. 1,750 half-year target.	Exceeding Target. 1,479 people have been provided with information and signposting. 106 people have been provided with information signposting directly with the team and an additional 1,373 have accessed information signposting articles on our website.
4	% of positive feedback 90% target	We are implementing a feedback loop to gather and report on feedback from the Oct-Dec quarter in the following quarter.
5	% of people responded to within three working days 95% target	Exceeding Target 100% of people have been responded to within 3 working days during Oct – Dec 2024.

Target 1 – Healthwatch delivery report

A Healthwatch delivery report will be produced quarterly, providing an overview of performance, activities, and plans for the upcoming quarter. You are reading the delivery report for October to December 2024.

Target 2 – Number of people sharing their views and experiences with us on health and social care in Lincolnshire.

Number of people sharing their views and experiences with us on health and social care in Lincolnshire	Quarter 1 Oct 24 – Dec 24	Quarter 2 Jan 25 – Mar 25	Total
Half year target – 1000	304		304
КРІ			ON TARGET



The map points are coloured according to the sentiment

- Positive green
- Negative red
 - Mixed orange
- Neutral blue
- Unclear grey

This quarter, **217** people shared their views and experiences directly with us on Health and Social Care in Lincolnshire, through our Information Signposting Team.

An additional **87** people shared their experiences through our mental health survey focussing specifically on new fathers, veterans, military families and those working in farming, agriculture, horticulture or other allied industries.

The service areas commented on* the most this quarter were:

- All hospital services (50%) (10% of all comments were about A&E)
- GP services (42%)
- Mental health services (12%)
- Social care (10%)
- Dentistry (7%)

^{*}Some comments relate to multiple service areas.

45% of all comments were negative and 24% were positive. The remaining were neutral, mixed or unclear.

The main themes patients contacted us about were:

Not so good:

- Difficulties in getting a face-to-face appointment when felt it was needed
- Patients accessing NHS dentists in Lincolnshire
- EDD (Electronic Discharge Document) being provided from hospitals in a timely manner to GP surgeries
- ADHD / autism difficulties in getting an assessment
- NHS app information being deleted or incorrect

Where we have been able, we have signposted to PALs, complaints or Practice Manager to get these resolved.

On the positive side:

During October - December 2024, **54** compliments were raised, which include:

- Lincolnshire Community Health Services Grace Swan Centre in Spilsby
- Urgent Treatment Centres in Grantham; Boston; Sleaford and Louth
- Butterfly Hospice
- Spilsby GP Surgery
- Sleaford Medical Practice
- Greyfriars GP Surgery
- Stickney GP Surgery
- Grantham Hospital cardiology

To name a few.

GP services

Access to GP services in the East Coast area continues to be an issue. Individuals said they struggle to get appointment when using either the phone or online booking systems. There are often long waiting times on the phone despite ringing at the earliest opportunity. By the time they get through all the appointments have gone. Two individuals shared that as a result of not being able to get an appointment at their

surgery (note this related to two separate surgeries), they instead went to the Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre.

Dentistry

During this quarter we continued to hear from individuals who are struggling to access both routine and emergency NHS dental care. Some of these individuals were especially vulnerable. One lady was pregnant, and others shared they had learning disabilities. A care home shared their struggle to access dental services for their residents. They said that access is difficult both for preventative and emergency treatment. Staff and relatives spend hours trying to get emergency appointments. NHS II is often unhelpful and when an appointment is offered, it is a long distance away and this is a challenge then to get the person to that practice. They enquired about what services are available for care home residents, is there a dental hygienist service that visits care home residents as part of the oral health campaign and preventative dental care? One attended the Spalding care home they manage regularly but they can't find someone to come to the Boston care home.

Mental health

There was praise for the OP Courage service and the care it provides.

"Within a few days they had an appointment with a very sympathetic and resourceful nurse from the Op Courage Team. They were seen face to face as they were finding getting out was a real issue. This nurse spent at least three hours with them, assessing them and their situation, including getting support for their dog. This was an appointment at the vet, food parcel and a volunteer dog walker, who was also a veteran. They needed to sort out finances, debt, food, and their flat. The nurse put them in touch with the right people at the right time. To some, getting the dog sorted was not in the remit, but the nurse recognised that getting the dog better was important as the dog was their lifeline. By getting what was important to them dealt with first helped them to help themselves. They agreed to the care plan put in place and we as a family see them going from strength to strength. They still have bad days, but most of the time we see a difference. This is such a great service for veterans. Thank you for saving my adult child."

Access to defibrillators

A relative was a referee at a local walking football match played at Haven High School in Boston last week. One of the players, who is in their 70s, collapsed on the pitch and suffered a cardiac arrest. An ambulance was called via 999, stating that the individual had collapsed and was in cardiac arrest. One player immediately started CPR and chest compressions as the individual was not breathing and had no pulse.

Two other team members went to find the defibrillator (defib) located within the school. While maintaining contact with ambulance control, they attempted to access the defibrillator but were given five incorrect access codes, preventing them from opening the defibrillator cabinet. After repeated failed attempts, they resorted to breaking the cabinet door to retrieve the defibrillator, resulting in one of them sustaining an injury. This process delayed the use of the defibrillator by approximately 10 minutes.

Once retrieved, the defibrillator was used, successfully resuscitating the individual. However, the ambulance team had not yet arrived. From the time of the emergency call to their arrival on site, approximately 20 minutes had elapsed. Upon arrival, the ambulance crew encountered additional delays due to difficulties in accessing the pitch-side area. The individual was eventually transported to A&E at Pilgrim Hospital, stabilised, and then transferred to the Cardiac Unit at Lincoln County Hospital. They remain in hospital recovering.

Key Concerns:

- Delay in defibrillator access due to incorrect codes provided by ambulance control.
- Physical injury sustained while attempting to access the defibrillator.
- Ambulance response time of 20 minutes for a cardiac arrest.
- Challenges faced by the ambulance crew in reaching the pitch-side location.

This case highlights critical issues in emergency response, access to life-saving equipment, and ambulance service efficiency, underscoring the need for improved systems to ensure timely and effective care in emergencies.

Neurological Health Research Campaign



During the third quarter of 2024, 375 people shared their views on accessing care for neurological conditions including fibromyalgia, myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome, multiple sclerosis (MS), chronic pain, brain injury and many more. A presentation covering a summary of the findings from this work can be watched on the HWLincs YouTube channel.

The full report will be published shortly once we have received responses/additions to the report from several national neurological charities which have expressed interest in the work.

Overall key findings:

Regardless of the specific neurological condition(s) there were several recurring themes present in individuals experiences:

- Patients not feeling they were listened to, and their symptoms were dismissed.
- Patients felt there was often a lack of understanding of neurological conditions amongst healthcare professionals both in terms of knowledge of the symptoms of conditions but also a lack of empathy.
- It was common for individuals to present to their GP practice multiple times over months and even years before they got a diagnosis. In the meantime, symptoms were left unmanaged and often deteriorated. In some cases, not getting a timely diagnosis and support resulted in some having to give up their jobs.
- Due to these issues some individuals sought a diagnosis privately.

Symptoms were mainly managed by medication. However, struggles were shared about its effectiveness, particularly pain medication and its often-unpleasant side effects. Signposting and referrals to support other than medication appeared to be inconsistent. From the data collected this variation could not be explained. For example, variation did not appear to be accounted for by location in the county or whether or not say someone was a carer, it appeared to be more random and a lottery.

There also appeared to be a lack of awareness amongst individuals of what support is available and what would be useful. It was clear however was that support needed to be holistic encompassing mental health support as well as that for physical symptoms.

Those who were able to access specialist care, including multiple sclerosis nurses and consultants, praised the care they received. However, not everyone was able to access specialist care. Other areas identified as needing to improve included:

- Listening to patients and showing understanding
- Increasing healthcare professionals' knowledge of neurological conditions
- Establishing local specialist neurological centres, hubs, or clinics
- Improving access to pain clinics and better pain management strategies
- Providing clear information for patients on diagnosis, prognosis, and management
- Offering holistic support, recognising that individuals are affected in different ways
- Reducing waiting times for specialist support and offer interim support while patients wait



MENTAL HEALTH

Share your experiences...

We want to hear from:

- New fathers
- Farmers
- Military families and veterans



Mental Health

Our final campaign for 2024, which ran from October till December, focussed on the mental health needs of new fathers, veterans, military families and those working in farming, agriculture, horticulture or any other allied industry. 86 individuals shared their experiences of accessing mental health support.

We heard from:

- 33 veterans
- 15 individuals part of a currently serving military family
- 10 individuals working in farming/agricultural/horticultural industry
- 15 new fathers
- 13 undisclosed

Key findings from the experiences shared identify a stigma around individuals from these groups seeking mental health support:

"Due to military service I have difficulties accepting my own mental health issues as there was always a stigma around it."

"Mainly males in agriculture who still feel it is taboo."

"Farmers are too busy."

"Military veterans are not disposed to asking for help when many think that there are more deserving people."

"It's seen as a macho environment and men shouldn't struggle."

- A veteran

Barriers to accessing support included long waiting times, not meeting the criteria and a lack of information.

Another key issue raised through the work was around from support to uncertainty, with several individuals sharing their experience of the often sharp transition out of support.

"Services were great when accessed. It felt a little disjointed and would have been nice to be weened off the counselling onto another support system as you would do with medication."

"Confusing processes. Constantly aware of a time limit to my support. Focused on what happens when my support ends."

"I would love to see a clear system for de-escalating support. It is clear as it escalates but coming out of the services leave you alone and vulnerable to more poor mental health."

The full analysis of the findings is due to commence shortly.

Target 3 - Number of people provided with information and signposting

Number of people provided	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Year to Date Total
with information and	Oct 23 -	Jan 25 – Mar 25	
signposting	Dec 23		
Annual target: 2,000	1,479		1,479
KPI EXCEEDING TARGET			

Exceeding Target. **1,479** people have been provided with information and signposting. **106** people have been provided with information signposting directly with the team and an additional **1,373** have accessed through the Information Signposting articles on our website.

Outreach

Healthwatch Lincolnshire signposting and information team arrange to go into different areas of Lincolnshire for the community to access in-person signposting and to gather feedback.

We are aways looking for other areas in the county to support and offer this service.

Please call 01205 820 892 or email info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk

October:

- Mablethorpe Coastal Centre
- Skegness Storehouse
- Spalding Citizens Advice
- Sutton On Sea Tideturners Community Hub

November:

- Gainsborough Bearded Fishermen
- Spalding Citizens Advice
- Skegness Storehouse
- Grantham Citizens Advice

December:

None taken place during December due to annual leave and short month.

There were no safeguarding concerns or poor practice concerns raised during October –December 2024.

Quarterly case studies

Access to Urgent Dental Care

You Said:

A patient in Mablethorpe was struggling to find an NHS dentist. They had loose teeth, pain when brushing and were experiencing significant discomfort. No NHS dental places were available locally.

We Did:

Healthwatch contacted several practices in the Skegness area and secured a place on the waiting list at Park Dental Studio, which also releases emergency appointments daily. We provided the patient with this information, and they were able to book an appointment that same afternoon. The patient later called to say thank you, relieved to finally access care.

Urgent TB Testing and GP Access

You Said:

A vulnerable patient received a letter from Peterborough Hospital advising them to monitor for Tuberculosis (TB) symptoms following a hospital stay. The patient was experiencing concerning symptoms but was caught in a loop between their GP, NHS 111, and the Urgent Treatment Centre, unable to get the necessary tests. The uncertainty was affecting their health and ability to attend vital medical appointments.

We Did:

At the patient's request, we contacted their GP practice manager. As a result, the patient was seen by a doctor, referred to an infectious diseases specialist, and scheduled for TB testing. The GP also arranged a full blood test. This intervention provided clarity and reassurance, ensuring the patient could move forward with their care.

Supporting ADHD Diagnosis Through Right to Choose

You Said:

A parent was struggling to access an ADHD assessment for their 16-year-old child. They were unaware of all the available NHS-approved pathways and were facing delays while waiting for responses from the GP and ICB.

We Did:

Healthwatch provided the parent with information about ADHD 360, an NHS-recognised provider in Lincolnshire. We also contacted the ICB and Practice Manager to help move things forward. As a result, the child received their assessment within eight weeks, was diagnosed with combined ADHD, and is now receiving the support they need. The parent thanked Healthwatch, stating, "Without you, we wouldn't have got anywhere."

Advocacy for Autism Needs in Hospital Care

You Said:

A patient in Dixon Ward at Lincoln County Hospital, also receiving care for an eating disorder, felt their autism-related needs were not being understood in their treatment

plan. They requested advocacy to ensure reasonable adjustments were made to support their recovery and discharge.

We Did:

Healthwatch contacted the hospital's safeguarding team for adults with autism. A specialist was assigned to liaise with the ward and ensure the patient's needs were recognised. As a result, the patient received personalised support, improving their experience in hospital and their overall care.

New Information Signposting Articles this quarter

- 1. Free structured diabetes education to help you live well with type 2 diabetes https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-10-04/free-structured-diabetes-education-help-you-live-well-type-2
- 2. NHS referrals and your right to choose https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-11-06/nhs-referrals-and-your-right-choose
- 3. How can your pharmacy help you?

 https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-11-06/how-can-your-pharmacy-help-you
- 4. How to get the most out of your GP appointment

 https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-12-20/how-get-most-out-your-gp-appointment
- 5. What help can you get to pay for your NHS prescription?

 https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2024-12-20/what-help-can-you-get-pay-your-nhs-prescription

Volunteers

This quarter has seen an increase in volunteering hours, with 393 hours compared to the last quarter (278.5 hours).

	Volunteering Hours Oct-Dec 2024		
	Number of Activities	Number of Hours	
TOTALS	63 activities	393 hours	

29 volunteers and 7 Trustees were registered with HWLincs as of 31st December 2024

The table below shows the activities volunteers engaged within the quarter:

October	November	December
Health Fair Event - Grantham	QA of Neurological Report and Mental Health Survey carried out by Readers Panel	E&V at Lincoln County Hospital
Library engagements in Sleaford and Spalding.	Newshound	Newshound
Nottingham Air Ambulance event	PALs meeting	2 x PALs meetings
Newshound		QA of Infant Feeding Report carried out by Readers Panel
YourVoice@Healthwatch event in Boston		
QA of Respiratory Report and Funding Pathway Leaflet carried out by Readers Panel		

Future Engagements

- February HWLincs VOICE Conference at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln.
- Continue to seek public engagement, encourage volunteers to pair up for activities to increases the social aspect of volunteering with HWLincs.
- Focus on asking volunteers to support Warm Hub and GP engagement in the community.

Website & social media stats

	Quarter 1 Oct 24 – Dec 24	Quarter 2 Jan 25 – Mar 25
Website page views	11,208	
Facebook post reach	58,173	

Across this quarter we have had **11,208** website page views. We have reached **58,173** people on Facebook.

With our social media scheduling software we are able to provide and plan a variety of social media content. We will be looking to produce more video content with updates and interviews. We will also be Increasing our promotion of information and signposting advice which we share on our website.

Engagement and involvement

Engagement and Involvement Activities (Involvement Officer)

Seldom Heard Community:

•	4 September	Voices for All ((disability	/ forum))
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• 16 September Disability Action Group

• 18 September Boston Learning Difficulties Support Group

2 October Wellbeing Event at ATC Grantham (military families)
 3 October Long Term Health Conditions Support Group (Sleaford)

• 10 October Wellbeing Group

• 14 October Lincolnshire Veteran Network

• 30 October Veteran and Family Open Day Event

• 21 November Bourne and Stamford Wellbeing Network

• 29 November Long Term Conditions Support Group (Spalding)

• 3 December VoiceAbility Healthy Lifestyle Group

Main Themes: Access to services and adapting methods of engagement and communication (e.g., use of interpreters, visual aids, easy read formats). Lack of support for adults with learning disabilities on admission to hospital.

Community Engagement Activities

Over the past quarter, our Involvement Officer has actively engaged with local communities to gather insights into their experiences of health and care services. Key engagement activities included:

- 11 September Wellbeing Event, Skirkbeck Court Care Home
- 12 September Sleaford Aches and Pains HUB
- 17 September & 30 September Blood Pressure Programme
- 19 September & 19 December Bourne and Stamford Wellbeing Network
- 29 October Community Engagement in Donington
- 19 November Welland Senior Forum
- 2 December Relatives Meeting, Skirkbeck Court Care Home
- 6 December Community Engagement in Woodhall Spa

Key Themes Emerging

From these engagements, several recurring themes have been identified:

- Access to face-to-face appointments Patients struggle to secure timely inperson appointments, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment.
- **Communication barriers** Some patients feel that clinicians do not always communicate in an accessible or appropriate way, with concerns around language used, methods of communication, and overall approachability.
- **Transport challenges** There is a lack of information on alternative transport options when non-emergency transport is unavailable.
- Access to dental care for care home residents Many care home residents face difficulties in securing dental treatment, raising concerns about their oral health.

YourVoice@Healthwatch Public Event



Held at Jakeman's Community Stadium in Boston, YourVoice@Healthwatch hosted discussions with more than 50 people about how health and social care services can better engage with the people they serve.

The lively round-table discussions covered hospital admissions and discharge, access to GPs, specialist rehabilitation services, carers, social care and much more.

The points raised on the day were collated by the Healthwatch Lincolnshire team and will help to place Healthwatch Lincolnshire as a system leader that can help to guide other services to improve public engagement.

The Healthwatch Lincolnshire annual report was presented by Healthwatch Lincolnshire Contract Manager Dean Odell. A video overview can be watched below.

https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/news/2024-10-29/annual-reports-launched-public-voice-event

Enter and View

Summary of Emergency Department Quality Visit – December 2024

On 10 December 2024, representatives from Lincolnshire ICB and Healthwatch Lincolnshire visited the Emergency Department at Lincoln County Hospital to assess patient experiences and service quality. A scheduled visit to Pilgrim Hospital, Boston, was postponed due to infection prevention measures.

During the visit, Healthwatch representatives engaged with patients to gather feedback on their experiences. While many praised the professionalism and care provided by staff, concerns were raised about long wait times, lack of access to food and drink, and communication challenges for those with hearing impairments or learning difficulties.

Despite high patient numbers and ongoing construction, the department remained calm and well-managed. Initiatives such as comfort packs, sensory packs, and visual information boards were observed as positive contributions to patient care.

Recommendations from the visit will be shared with stakeholders to support ongoing improvements in emergency care services across Lincolnshire.

Representation

During this quarter Healthwatch has contributed to a range of meetings including:

- Health & Wellbeing Board/ICS Partnership Board
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Health Scrutiny Committee
- Primary Care Co-commissioning Group PC3
- Lincolnshire System Quality Group
- System QPEC
- Health Protection Board
- Primary Care operational, quality, performance oversight Group (PCQP)
- Patient Experience Group (PEXG)
 ULHT
- Patient Panel ULHT
- Service Quality Review (SQR) LCC
- Patient Voice EMAS
- Lincs Veteran Network
- Regional Healthwatch Dentistry Meeting

- Lincolnshire Digital Inclusion Meeting
- Health Inequalities Programme Board
- Primary Care Access Working Group
- HWL,HWB, ICP, HSCFL & CQC Liaison Meeting
- Healthwatch CPL Pharmacy
- Healthwatch LCC
- Patryk and Dean LCC Contract Update
- East & West Midlands HW Network Meeting
- Co-Producing Health and Care in Lincolnshire Working Group
- Our Shared Agreement
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- Disability Action Boston (as required)
- Ed Baker Adult Social Care LCC
- Healthy Lifestyles VoiceAbility
- LinCA Care Managers Meetings

- Carer First Events
- Family HUBS LCC
- Catch up with CEO's and Chairs across Trusts and LCC

Looking forward January - March 2025

Healthwatch Information and Advice - Outreach

The Healthwatch Lincolnshire Information Signposting Team will hold outreach clinics across Lincolnshire so the community can access us face-to-face.

We provide information and guidance to the public and record their comments.

Upcoming Outreach Clinic locations

- The Storehouse, Skegness
- CAB, Spalding
- Learning Centre, Louth
- Natural World centre, Whisby
- CAB, Grantham
- Aging Well event, Ruskington

HWLincs VOICE Conference 2025: Elevating Public Voice - February 2025

HWLincs is preparing to bring together health and social care professionals, community leaders, and engagement experts for its first-ever VOICE Conference in Lincoln. The event will focus on celebrating and amplifying public voice, fostering collaboration, and driving positive change across Lincolnshire and beyond.

Attendees will hear from three keynote speakers who will offer unique insights into the role of public voice in shaping services:

- Rebecca Curtayne, External Affairs Manager at Healthwatch England, will discuss how local voices influence national decision-making and policy.
- Martin Samuels, Executive Director for Adult Care and Community Wellbeing at Lincolnshire County Council, will explore how adult care services are designed around public engagement.
- Charley Blyth, Director of Communications and Engagement at NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, will share how the ICB is working to improve health outcomes through effective public involvement.

Alongside the keynote presentations, attendees will have the opportunity to network, exchange ideas, and take part in three interactive workshops:

- Engaging with Seldom Heard Communities Hosted by HWLincs and NHS Lincolnshire ICB's Health Inequalities Team, this session will share findings from recent engagement projects with underrepresented groups, including people who sell sex and Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities.
- Engagement to Insight This session will explore how public voice research leads to meaningful change. Healthwatch Lincolnshire's Contract Manager, Dean Odell, will highlight key projects, and Sarah Bustin, Lincolnshire Maternity and Neonatal Programme Communications and Engagement Lead, will discuss how research has shaped new NHS maternity and neonatal materials.
- Elevating Public Voice Led by HWLincs CEO Navaz Sutton, this interactive session will encourage attendees to make pledges to strengthen collaboration, expand community engagement, and ensure lived experiences shape future decision-making.

A Platform for Collaboration

The HWLincs VOICE Conference is set to be a dynamic day of discussion, learning, and action. Attendees will have the chance to connect in the marketplace, where networking and collaboration will take centre stage. By the end of the event, HWLincs hopes to have inspired new partnerships and practical commitments to ensuring public voice remains at the heart of health and social care.

Snap Survey - Access to GP services

Healthwatch Lincolnshire will be running quarterly short surveys on different aspects of health and care to gather public feedback and experiences. The first of which will explore access to GP services.



healthwatch Lincolnshire

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