

# Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Lincolnshire  
Annual Report 2021-22





# Contents

Healthwatch Steering Group	4
Message from our chair	5
About us	6
Highlights from our year	7
Listening to your experiences	8-20
Advice and information	21-23
Volunteers	24-26
Finances and future priorities	27
Statutory statements	28-29

# Healthwatch Steering Group

The focus of this group is to guide, support, steer and advise our work to deliver the Healthwatch contract. This, along with group members being our critical friend, listening ear and evaluator, as well as formal representatives at meetings, ensures that we have a body of volunteers having oversight of our work.

## Representation

In line with our core representation requirements, all meetings that were attended during the last year were held virtually in response to the pandemic.

During this year Healthwatch have contributed to many meetings including:

- Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) - Governing Body Quality Patient Experience Committee and 1:1 with Chief Nurse. At the CCG we have been able to raise a number of big issues and as a result, CCG staff have been liaising with us to look at ways in which we can contribute and support their work, currently this includes reviewing patient access to GP Services
- Health Scrutiny Committee
- Health and Wellbeing Board, including being part of the HWBB small group review
- Primary Care Co-Commissioning Group
- Quality Patient Experience Committee (QPEC)
- Health Protection Board
- United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT) Board
- Meetings with Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust, Council of Governors and 1:1 Chief Nurse
- V.E.T. – Voluntary Engagement Team, supporting the voluntary and community sector

## Quality Accounts

Annually Healthwatch Steering Group members also take part in the Quality Accounts process. A Quality Account is a report about the quality of services offered by an NHS healthcare provider. Quality Accounts are an important way for local NHS services to report on quality and show improvements in the services they deliver to local communities and stakeholders. It is also an opportunity for us as Healthwatch Lincolnshire to ensure the patient voice is at the heart of quality improvement.

# Message from our chair

We are very proud of the work we as Healthwatch Lincolnshire have achieved over the past 12 months and I hope you will find reading this report both interesting and informative. Our charity HWLincs is responsible for delivering the Healthwatch Lincolnshire contract, and this contract is extremely important to the charity and a privilege to deliver.

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has continued to develop an excellent reputation and remains focused in our key roles of: Watchdog; Signposter and Influencer. You will see many examples of this throughout this report.

However without our Public, our Stakeholders, and our Staff and Volunteers we would not be able to achieve what has been an excellent 12 months' worth of activities, which I'm sure you will agree upon reading this report.

Therefore firstly we would like to thank the public of Lincolnshire for continuing to engage with Healthwatch over the past 12 months, and although we have seen the government lifting restrictions these still remaining challenging times for us all.

Secondly we would like to thank all the stakeholders in Lincolnshire that work with us and value our input into providing a public voices into the Health and Social Care systems. As these develop further into an Integrated Care System, we as local Healthwatch have a vital role in ensuring the public continues to be heard.

Finally we would like to thank our dedicated team of staff and volunteers, without our staff and volunteers we would not be in a position to not only meet all our contractual obligations but be recognised as a well performing Healthwatch both locally and nationally.

The Healthwatch Steering Group that I am privileged to chair, is responsible for overseeing the work of the Healthwatch contract. I feel honoured to drive this agenda forward and will ensure we keep the public's voices at the heart of what we do.



Liz Ball  
Healthwatch Lincolnshire  
Steering Group Chair



"The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities."

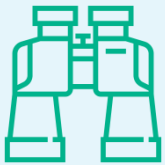
Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England



# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Lincolnshire is your local health and social care champion. We make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



### Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



### Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.



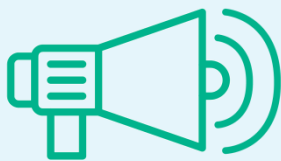
### Our values

- Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Including everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- Analysing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- Acting on feedback and driving change.
- Partnering with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

# Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

## Reaching out



**Over 5,528 people**

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

We have seen **35,050** page views on our website and have reached an incredible **543,557** people through Facebook.

## Making a difference to care



**1,702 people**

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

We published **471 reports** about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

**100% of experiences**

were closed or resolved at the end of the year

## Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have **40** outstanding volunteers, who gave up **1,053 hours** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by Lincolnshire County Council. In 2021-22 we received:

**£299,600**

Which is in line with grant funding from previous year.

We also currently employ

**3 full-time and 5 part-time staff (5.6 FTE)**

who help us carry out this work.

# Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feedback to services to help them improve





## Public Engagement: YourVoice@Healthwatch

Our YourVoice@healthwatch Events information meetings are free to attend, aimed at the public in Lincolnshire to listen, learn and discuss specific health and care services. Each YourVoice@healthwatch Event has a different health or care theme and to help guide discussions around this theme, we include a Panel of Experts to provide answers to questions raised by the public.



### How do we decide our themes?

We decide our themes on an annual basis for the YourVoice@Healthwatch events through:

1. Information being raised with us by the public or
2. Information raised through our own Healthwatch Lincolnshire work within health and care systems or that of Healthwatch England.



### What difference did this make

An opportunity for the public to raise concerns directly with decision makers and for NHS and Care Service staff to meet service users, the public and colleagues to "hear first hand" what the public are talking about. Opportunity for service users to "Tell Us their Story" and to raise our profile as an independent source of unbiased information and advice that can be shared across the whole community.



*"The NHS and care services have a language that as a member of the public I do not always understand. Using the Healthwatch Lincolnshire Acronym Buster I am able to understand some of the terminology used to make sense of what everyone is saying."*



## Public Engagement: YourVoice@Healthwatch

During 2021 to 2022 we held four YourVoice@healthwatch Events and we adapted our format due to COVID-19, we put the health and safety of staff, Trustees, volunteers and the public as a high priority.

Our 3 online Events were:

April 2021 Maternity Services

July 2021 Social Care

March 2022 Dental Services.

### YourVoice@Healthwatch Dentistry March 2022

Leading up to our March Dentistry themed YourVoice@healthwatch we shared signposting and advice content across our social media. We produced three videos: one giving an overview to the situation with dental services in Lincolnshire, two interviews with two Lincolnshire Dentists and a representative from Public Health.

Over 200 people took part in the Quick Polls, more than 50 questions were submitted under seven different themes with over 50 people signed up to attend the live Event.

#### What difference did this make

Understanding the challenges faced by the dental service in recruiting and retaining NHS Dentists. Raising the concerns with NHS England and Healthwatch England. Challenging the effective use of additional funding and how this can make a difference to Lincolnshire residents.



### YourVoice@Healthwatch Community Wellbeing November 2022

Our first face to face Event in over two years took place at Boston United Football Club, Jakemans Stadium and focused on community wellbeing.

The Panel representing Community Pharmacy, Dentists and Primary Care with a Market Place raising the profile of community and voluntary providers / groups.

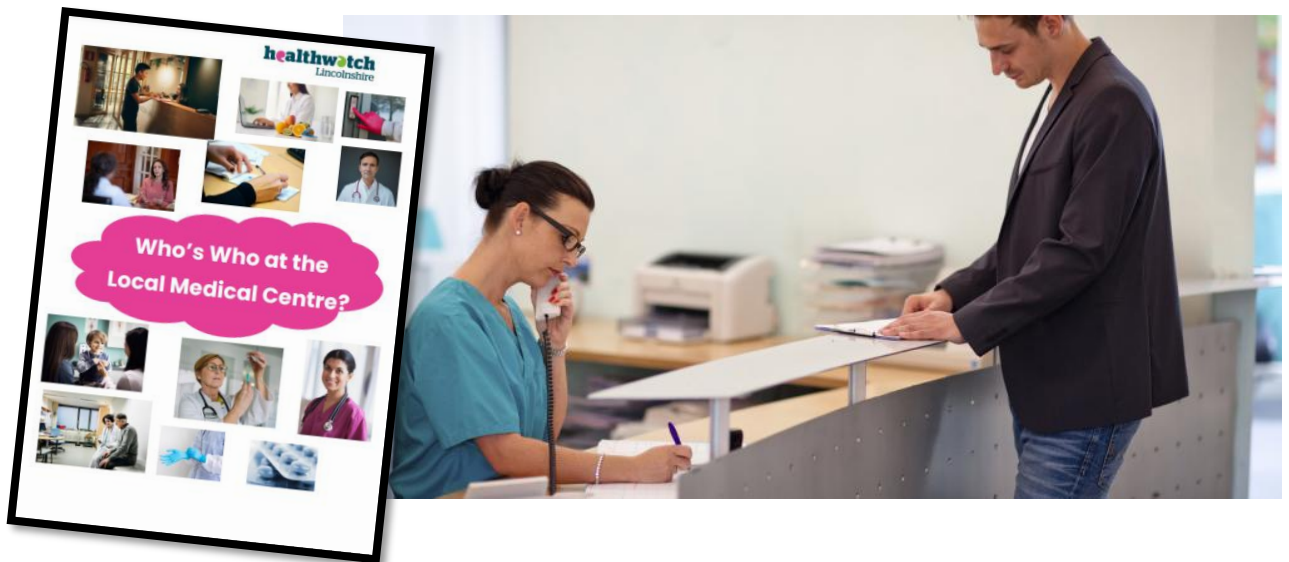
#### What difference did this make

Over 60 attendees contributed to a Healthwatch Lincolnshire Top Tips for Wellbeing which was shared with partner organisations and the wider community. Initiating direct contact between Lincolnshire Dental Council and Community Leaders of the Lithuanian Community in Boston.



*"I took part in the YourVoice@healthwatch on maternity services. As a member of the Traveller community, I don't always feel that people in health understand me and being new to Lincolnshire I felt a bit lost. I asked for help at the session and was followed up after the Event by a lovely health visitor who reassured me and helped me to deal with some issues I was having, including getting registered with a local GP in the Skegness area."*





## General Practice – Who's Who?

The primary healthcare system acts as the 'front door' to the NHS and includes community pharmacies, dental, optometry services and local medical centres (which may also be known as local medical practices, general practices or general surgeries). The primary healthcare system in England is ever changing.

The ongoing rise in demand for primary care services, especially local medical centres, has led to the Government and NHS England introducing new healthcare professional roles into this setting. These new roles aim to improve patient experience and ensure they are getting the best quality care from the most appropriate healthcare professional. This may not necessarily be a GP/Doctor.

Following on from a piece of work between Healthwatch Lincolnshire and a number of Patient Participation Groups (PPG) in 2019, together we developed a Toolkit. We identified the need to inform patients what each role was in their local medical centre.

We were especially keen to include an up to date document explaining these different roles to reflect the changes since 2019, as we frequently hear from individuals who are unable to get an appointment with a GP. The aim of this document is to highlight and reassure the public, that in many cases, other healthcare professionals such as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner or a Pharmacist are often able to and more suitable to deal with your concern. The document should also empower you by providing you with the knowledge of the roles of different healthcare professionals and how they are able to help you.

Not all local medical centres will employ all these different professionals, but patients may encounter them as they access health services.

Download the FREE Guide here: [www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-06-22/general-practice-whos-who-free-guide](http://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-06-22/general-practice-whos-who-free-guide)

## Seldom Heard

### Healthwatch England Communities of Interest Pilot: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community June to September 2021

The Pilot was an opportunity to work in a different way with colleagues across the Healthwatch Network. The method used was Facilitated Peer Learning, from the beginning, the participants are both learners and a donor of knowledge. For many in the Group, it was an opportunity to do something in a different way and learn from each other. Local Healthwatch involved were Healthwatch Blackburn and Darwen, Healthwatch Cornwall, Healthwatch County Durham and Healthwatch Wiltshire.

The Pilot consisted of four workshops (for participating local Healthwatch) facilitated by the Healthwatch Lincolnshire Involvement Officer, Oonagh Quinn and two sessions with Healthwatch England (for the facilitators). The intention was to support the local Healthwatch in learning from one another and identifying approaches that work for their individual areas. During this period, each local Healthwatch would create an Action Plan to develop methods to improve engagement with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community within their own community and report on what worked well and what could be improved.

### What impact did this way of working have?

We saw great examples of how through using this approach, local Healthwatch have started to build trust with key people within the communities they were trying to reach.

Working together, we helped to identify challenges, opportunities and develop plans for each local Healthwatch on how they can listen to and speak with people in the specific communities.

*“A great motivator to be part of the Pilot and have a dedicated time slot to focus on this Community” HW Durham*

*“On reflection, working with this particular community, the Pilot has made me realise that it is more challenging than anticipated. It is important to build meaningful relationships and invest time and effort” HW Blackburn and Darwen*

### Learning from the sessions about engaging with communities of interest

**Top Tips for Engaging** with specific communities that can also be used in all engagement activities:

- Go back to basics - use all methods of engagement especially face to face.
- Do your research - understand the community and identify the key people.
- Show the value of Healthwatch by providing useful information.
- Work backwards from where you want to be. (Theory of Change)
- Take time to build trust - long term investment in the community.



## CQC on becoming more flexible and responsive

Five interviews undertaken with Lincolnshire residents on the way that the CQC rates services. There is so much information out there it is a bit overwhelming for the public to take on board. It is quite complicated. Healthwatch Lincolnshire supported this project by interviewing Lincolnshire residents living with complex and long term conditions to discuss how the CQC rates services within our county.

*“At the end of the day, as a patient I want to know that the professionals that are supporting me to manage my condition are highly trained and knowledgeable and have access to services that I need at a time when I might need them.”*

- Patient with Complex Medical History / conditions including Congenital Heart Condition / Sight Impairment and Fibromyalgia.

Patients felt that it was a complicated system and that it needs to be easier for the public to understand. Findings were reported back to CQC.

As this work was part of a longer term consultation and the finding fed in to the overall outcomes we noted the similarities between local messages and those of the whole population.



As a result of the work CQC stated

*“We’ll make sure we publish information that explains clearly how we’re regulating and rating services as we develop our approach, so that everybody understands the changes we’re making following our consultation. Information will be updated regularly so that it is clear to all how we’re assessing and rating services.”*

More development on the flexible and responsive regulation is expected later this summer. For more detail on the whole piece of consultation activity please look here:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/our-strategy-plans/responding-our-consultation-changes-more-flexible-responsive-regulation>

### Have Your Say

Share your experiences of health and social with us, so please get in touch today.



• [www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)



• 01205 820 892



• [info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)

## CQC: Continuous Engagement Project Adults with Learning Difficulties and Autism February to March 2022

Healthwatch Lincolnshire undertook a small project working with adults with Learning Difficulties and Autism. The Project was investigating: *the process of engagement with the targeted groups and what the participants had to say*. Linking with organisations that work on a day to day basis to support this community, three face to face Focus Groups were set up and two virtual Focus Groups gathered the information from the participants.

In all the focus groups, the organisations and support team identified adults who were able to vocalised their opinions, use technology and were able with support to complete a short survey. The three settings for the face to face Focus Groups were: a residential setting (autism), a day centre (Learning Difficulty) and a college setting (Learning Difficulty / autism). The virtual focus groups were mixed both Learning Difficulty and Autism.

**Key Findings:** Within the Learning Difficulties and Autistic Community, the majority of people prefer a face to face opportunity to share their opinions. Depending on ability many could complete the survey themselves with a range of support. In the day centre, the Focus Group supplemented their Life Skills Programme. The demographic information was difficult to extract from the individuals as their understanding of the concepts were not always developed. e.g., man / woman, was enough everything else complicated it for them.

The two groups that participated in the virtual focus group expressed that it felt impersonal doing it virtually. The group expressed that they know they have to adapt and having the technology means that they have been able to stay in touch.



### Cuppa With

Our digital engagement programme took off this year with our open forum ‘Cuppa With’ events and ‘YourVoice@Healthwatch’. The ‘Cuppa With’ is a forum for the public to attend to discuss any aspect of health and social care. One of our volunteers attended to note take and other volunteers attended to share their experiences and to join in the discussions.

These ran from September 2020 to January 2021. At each session, we had our Signposter and Advice Officer supported by another member of staff and a Volunteer. The public did not respond as well as we thought to an online session with attendance averaging 2 to 3 per session and were mainly representatives from organisations in attendance.

## COVID-19 One Year On

Between March and July 2020, Healthwatch Lincolnshire invited the public to share their experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic, and how it was affecting them, both in terms of accessing healthcare services and personally with their emotional and mental health needs. The results were shared locally and nationally with statutory healthcare organisations to help them better understand the impact Covid-19 was having on people.

One year on and we revisited this work to ask how our communities have adapted to new ways of accessing healthcare, between April and June 2021 we gathered **1,359** public voices.

- Much of the public shared that they were feeling fine and optimistic and returning to some level of normality. Yet around 20% of people were anxious about leaving the house.
- There was a need for continued promotion and development of tools for resilience and self-care, and to stay ever mindful of those with new and existing mental health conditions who are experiencing challenges in accessing care and support.
- There was a consensus that people wanted more access to face to face appointments. This may demonstrate the very literal and physical way people see and use primary care services irrespective of digital developments.
- Over 60% of respondents said the pandemic had negatively impacted their general wellbeing a little or a lot – The ongoing and much publicised delays in getting appointments, referrals, assessments, diagnosis, and ongoing treatment are all cited as reasons for the negative impact.

The Covid-19 pandemic has long term effects on the NHS and social care across the country and in Lincolnshire we will continue to monitor these long term effects through our work.

**Tackle waiting times:** Make sure the NHS delivers its plan for tackling the backlog of care, including improving communications and support for patients while they are waiting. However, the NHS also needs to maintain the quality care and service levels in other areas like emergency care.

**Review access to GP and Dental services:** With the way people access GPs having changed during COVID-19, NHS England should review access to GP services to make sure they work for everyone. Set a clear objective around resolving the long-standing issues of dental system reform.

**Improving hospital discharge:** The NHS should ensure that services implement the updated guidance on being discharged from a hospital.

**Learning from complaints:** NHS leaders should use the opportunity to design a national system to help NHS learn from complaints about care.

## Pharmacy services in Lincolnshire



We heard from **210** people via an online survey during July to September 2021.

**90%** of respondents visited their pharmacy primarily to collect prescriptions. Over **60%** of respondents found their pharmacy very easy to access. However, there were several shared issues for those who struggled to access their pharmacy:

- lack of public or private transport made getting to local pharmacies difficult
- issues with opening times; not being open at the weekends or being closed during the week due to no pharmacist was a common problem
- specifically due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the social distancing rules, many complained of having to queue outside their pharmacy for long periods of time.

*“Only allowing one person in at a time meant waiting outside in all weathers for up to 45 minutes.”*

*“No longer open at the weekend which is difficult when you work full-time.”*

*“It is often closed due to no pharmacist.”*



### Summary

Whilst many were pleased with the services provided by their local pharmacy several suggestions were made on how services could be improved even further.

- Improving opening hours during the week and reintroducing opening on the weekend was a common suggestion.
- Be able to receive their COVID booster and flu vaccines at their local pharmacy.
- The provision of more information on weight management.

It was also clear from these results that Pharmacies are under utilised with the vast amount of people only using them to pick up their prescriptions. More could be done to promote and encourage the use of other services pharmacies have to offer such as medication reviews, cholesterol and blood pressure checks and free health checks and advice.

Confidentiality was an issue for some people which may also be why they don't want to speak up about these additional services. Pharmacies can be constrained to the physical space they have on offer which makes confidentially difficult, but it must be made clear that patients can speak confidentially if needed.

These results have been used to inform the Lincolnshire Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2022.





## Social Care in Lincolnshire

Over the past year, we received 56 comments relating to social care in Lincolnshire. Over 40% of these comments were in relation to domiciliary care, followed by care homes and family/relatives who are carers for a loved one.

The most prevalent problems were poor communication between services and patients, carers not turning up on time or completing contracted tasks and long waiting times for support to be implemented.

### How we have helped you

Over the past year we have supported you with your queries surrounding social care by:

- ✓ Getting you answers
- ✓ Contacting providers on your behalf
- ✓ Raising concerns
- ✓ Signposting you to the correct information and services
- ✓ Listening to you
- ✓ Being an ally.



*"All I can say is a huge, huge thank you and send you a massive virtual hug. 4 years we have been looking for help with this and you have sorted it in less than 4 weeks. I feel very humbled by your kindness and the work you have done to help our dependent."*

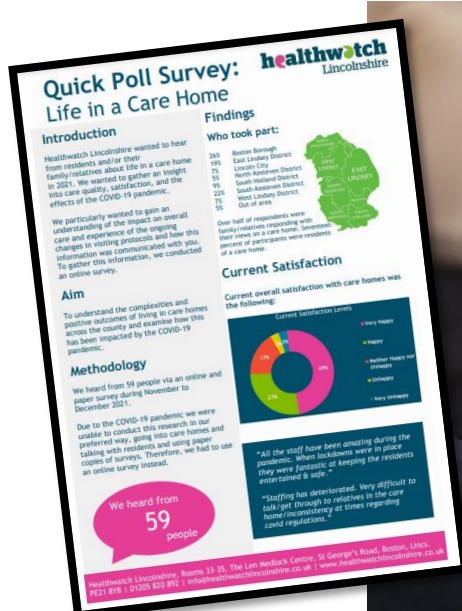
*"Many thanks for your help and advice. Really appreciate a friendly voice to talk to."*



## Unmet need – Case Studies

With the aim of highlighting unmet needs within social care, Healthwatch Lincolnshire developed three case studies with members of the public whose experience with social care had caused problems. These included an elderly woman caring for her husband who'd suffered a stroke, a young autistic man who struggled to engage with care and a woman whose father's dementia made living alone impossible but the right level of care wasn't available.

The case studies have been provided to Healthwatch England. A national campaign will highlight these shortfalls in social care with the hope the system will see change.



## Life in a care home, what's it really like?

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on care homes, both here in Lincolnshire and across the UK. We spoke to Lincolnshire residents to find out what life is really like for people living in care homes.

Overall satisfaction with the quality of care saw 76% being very happy or happy with care quality. The quality of care had also for the majority (70%) remained constant over the past 12 months. On the whole, care home staff were praised for their rallying efforts to adapt to the ever-changing situation, provide high quality care and entertainment for residents. However, this was not a universal experience, with 6% reporting the quality of care had worsened over the past 12 months. This was attributed to declining staff levels.

Our new report explains what we found.

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/report/2022-01-26/life-care-home-2021>

## GP Access – Lakeside Stamford

We worked with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to share patient experiences of accessing GP services at Lakeside Healthcare at Stamford.

We provided two surveys and had in total **3,083** responses from patients of the surgery, this is the most patient feedback CQC have ever received ahead of an inspection.

This has been used by CQC to inform their inspection and better understand what impact and improvements have been made for patients, and to share these findings with the practice as well as CQC and the Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We await the publication of the report.



## Collaboration with THIS Institute on daily challenges faced by GPs

**THIS**.Institute The Healthcare Improvement Studies Institute

We collaborated with the THIS Institute to recruit patients into a study exploring operational failures in general practice. We successfully recruited 6 individuals to take part in the two part survey.

Whether it's searching for a missing piece of equipment, dealing with an achingly slow computer, or trying to figure out what medication to prescribe to a patient whose discharge letter hasn't arrived from the hospital, GPs face multiple challenges in going about their work.

Everyday problems in the working environment – often known as 'operational failures' – are very common. They can have very negative effects on a GP's ability to deliver effective patient care and on their experiences of work.

Researchers at THIS Institute recently surveyed GPs on Thiscovery, THIS Institute's platform for remote research, to ask which of these operational failures they would most like to target for improvement.

*"We're just as keen to hear patients' voices on what's important to them too. So, we're very excited to be collaborating with Healthwatch, the independent national champion for users of health and social care services, to recruit a diverse group of patients. We know the views of patients will be hugely valuable in understanding the whole problem from multiple perspectives and in helping to find solutions."*

## Using people's experiences to inform future

With growing pressure on the care services, big questions need to be answered to ensure everybody gets the support they need. We continue to engage with Lincolnshire people to help the NHS understand what they can do make future services better.



### Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for the NHS and social care services to step back and see the bigger picture, through hearing personal experiences, and the impact on people's lives. This provides a deeper understanding than using data alone, can challenge assumptions and motivate people to think and work more creatively.

Maria a parent carer of a young adult living with autism presented her story at YourVoice@healthwatch Event July 2021. The family had moved to Lincolnshire just before the COVID pandemic and was struggling to access mental health provision for her son. She was contacted directly by the Mental Health Team and arrangements made for her son to have a face to face appointment with a mental health professional following the Event.



### Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with health and care services to consistently raise issues and push for changes.

We have known about NHS dental problems for a long time. In 2016 we published our report highlighting that some people were struggling to access dental care. Over the years we have continued to hear from the public about access problems. Last year we called for reform of NHS dentistry, co-signing a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer calling for NHS dentistry to be accessible and affordable for everyone.



### Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

By sharing your experiences and ideas with Healthwatch you can influence the way health and care services are run.

# Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Lincolnshire is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need.



## Signposting people who needed additional support

### Case Study – Daisy

#### Healthwatch Engagement Success – Life-saving equipment arranged for local woman

We recently received some wonderful news in from our Information Signposting and Safeguarding Officer Julie Evans on a recent success for the Healthwatch team who have been able to help a local young woman with some life-saving equipment.

Daisy said:

*“Thank you so much for helping me, kindness is such a precious gift to give.”*

Read the full case study here:

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/news/2021-09-29/healthwatch-engagement-success-life-saving-equipment-arranged-local-lady%E2%80%A6>



## Mental Health consultancy secured for local family

Our Information Signposting and Safeguarding Officer Julie Evans was approached by Carers First on 17 January 2022 who were requesting support for a woman who was experiencing difficulties in accessing mental health psychiatry for her two sons.

Sandra said:

*“Thank you so much Healthwatch! I'm crying with relief; the team there have been amazing.*

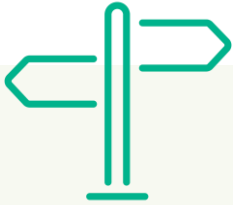
*“I felt like I was going around in circles and no one was listening. Healthwatch took time to listen and I cannot tell you how much a relief it was when it was sorted. We are forever grateful to Julie and the team.”*



Julie replied, “I am so pleased that I was able to assist and the outcome was positive not only for Sandra, but for Andrew and Simon.”

Read the full case study here:

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/news/2022-02-24/mental-health-consultancy-secured-local-family>



## Top Information Signposting Articles

During 2021 –22 year we have shared **9** information and advice articles on our website, to help people find and access the support they need to live well.

### Children's guide to Coronavirus

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2020-04-02/childrens-guide-coronavirus>

### Lincolnshire NHS Covid-19 update

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2020-04-03/lincolnshire-nhs-covid-19-update-tuesday-31-march-2020>

### How to get an NHS dentist appointment during COVID-19

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2020-06-22/how-get-nhs-dentist-appointment-during-covid-19>

### Top tips to get the most out of your GP appointment

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2021-07-27/top-tips-get-most-out-your-gp-appointment>

### What to expect when waiting for care

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2021-09-09/what-expect-when-waiting-care>

### What should I expect after being referred for mental health support?

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2021-09-10/what-should-i-expect-after-being-referred-mental-health-support>

### How to look after your mental health while self-isolating with COVID-19

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-01-11/where-go-support-when-you-have-eating-disorder>

### Where to go for support when you have an eating disorder

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-01-11/where-go-support-when-you-have-eating-disorder>

### The Accessible Information Standard – what you can expect from services

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-02-17/accessible-information-standard-%E2%80%93-what-you-can-expect-services>

# Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of Healthwatch. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in the NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Created digital content on our website and social media.
- Conducted website and telephone research.
- Completed surveys and assisted with input into our information centre.
- Assisted as part of our Reader Panel – checking ours and local services' publications to make them more people focussed and easier to read.
- Attended local vaccination sites to gather feedback from the public.
- Attended in person, our AGM, YourVoice@Healthwatch Events and community events.
- Attended virtual and in person volunteer coffee mornings and lunches.
- Took part in our social responsibility programme, logging steps and miles for our challenges.
- Assisted with taking notes and representation at internal and external meetings.





# Volunteers Contribution

During the time period, April 2021 to March 2022, volunteers gave a total of 1,053 hours to Healthwatch Lincolnshire. This time was made up taking part in 180 activities including research, reader panel work, events, coffee mornings, steering group meetings and representation activities.

## Volunteer Survey 2022

In our annual survey we asked volunteers to tell us what is most important for them when volunteering. A brief summary is detailed below:

- **57%** of volunteers rate 'using my skills and experience to make a difference to the community and organisation'.
- **42%** rated 'recognition and being valued' as least important as a reason for volunteering.
- **47%** felt that 'acquiring knowledge, skills and experience' as most important or somewhat important.
- **62%** valued having 'flexible volunteering opportunities'.

Additionally, we asked if volunteers would recommend volunteering with Healthwatch and **90%** said they would.

Our annual survey provides insight and understanding of our volunteer team and allows us to plan future engagement and training opportunities using the knowledge gleaned from the survey.



## Our Volunteers say:

Sue:

*"I started volunteering for Healthwatch last year. Although I've only been volunteering for a short while it has been extremely rewarding. I have met a huge range of people from different backgrounds, communities and organisations and although people have different experiences of services and different views of how things need to change, what has been clear from all, is the desire for good quality care that is accessible for all in Lincolnshire and people wanting to support the people delivering services, even when things have not gone right for them. In what are unprecedented times. What has really struck me, is just how important it is for people to talk about their experiences. It's made me understand just how important the role of Healthwatch is."*



Helen:

*"After lockdown prevented face to face community engagement, I was delighted to have the opportunity offered by the Vaccination Centre at the Lincolnshire Showground to attend and talk to people whilst they were waiting fifteen minutes after their vaccination. It proved to be an ideal time to talk to a whole range of people, of different ages and from across a wide geographical area about their experience of the health care service during lockdown. Much of the feedback focused on the introduction of online access to GP practices which had occurred during the previous two years. Having a 'captive audience' proved very useful and people were keen to share their experiences. It was very rewarding to be meeting the public, in person, again and so valuable to gather their thoughts on health services on behalf of Healthwatch."*



### Do you feel inspired?

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



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



01205 820 892



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

# Finance and future priorities

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

Income		Income	
Funding received from local authority	£299,600	Staff costs	241,654
		Operational costs	5,493
		Support and administration	50,725
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£299,600</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>297,872</b>

## Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Finding out about people’s experiences of hospital discharge
2. Finding out about people’s experiences of support while they wait for mental health services
3. Continuing to encourage the people of Lincolnshire to share their experiences of social care with us..

## Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that’s because of where you live, income or race.

# Statutory statements

## About us

Healthwatch Lincolnshire uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

Healthwatch England, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, E20 1JQ



## The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Lincolnshire Steering group consists of members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. The Steering Group ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. By using insight from information and signposting enquiries other patient experience activities such as surveys and focus groups help facilitate when priority setting.

### Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2021/22 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible.

## Thank you

Finally we would like to extend a very big thank you to our volunteers, Trustees and employees, without you all Healthwatch Lincolnshire would not be the excellent organisation that is it.

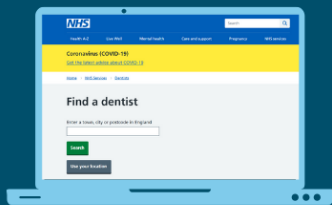
We take this opportunity to dedicate this annual report to our volunteer Sandie Simonson who sadly passed away in 2022, Sandie was a much-valued volunteer who will be sadly missed by us all.

# Finding it hard to get a dentist appointment?

Dental practices are recovering from backlogs due to strict hygiene measures to minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19 to patients and staff. The situation is improving but we are hearing that Derbyshire residents without a regular dentist are still finding it difficult to get an appointment. Read our steps below on accessing NHS dentistry.

**1** If you have a dentist you usually visit phone them to make an appointment. Appointments will be available according to your individual situation and dental need. Be prepared to **wait longer** than usual for a routine, non-urgent appointment. You can also **take personal steps** to maintain healthy teeth.

**2** Unlike registering at a GP practice, NHS dental practices are available to everyone to attend a course of treatment regardless of where they live. Visit the [NHS Find a Dentist website](#) to search for a dentist in your area. You should also consider **widening your search area** to where you can travel to.



**3** Is your dental need urgent? Phone or go [online to NHS 111](#) to check your symptoms and see if you need urgent help. You will be advised if you need to visit your hospital emergency department (A&E) or advised of your nearest NHS dentists providing urgent appointments. The number of urgent appointments available each day is limited. When phoning a dental practice, clearly describe your symptoms, any pain or swelling and the impact it is having on your daily living.



**4** If you can't find a dentist for urgent treatment, call [NHS England's Customer Contact Centre](#) on 0300 311 2233 stating your situation. Keep **sharing your experiences with us**, positive and negative, the more information we have the more we can help.



**What is Healthwatch Lincolnshire doing about this issue?** We regularly monitor the access to NHS dentistry in Lincolnshire sharing our findings with dental commissioners to **influence positive change**.



**Share your feedback  
on health and social  
care**



**Because we all care**

<https://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk/have-your-say>

**healthwatch**  
Lincolnshire



# healthwatch

Healthwatch Lincolnshire  
Rooms 33-35  
The Len Medlock Centre  
St Georges Road  
Boston  
Lincolnshire  
PE21 8YB

[www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)  
T: 01205 820892  
e: [info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)

 @HealthWatchLinc  
 [Facebook.com/healthwatchlincolnshire](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchlincolnshire)