



Our Achievements

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Message from our Chair



I'm sure you'll agree we have all been through a year like no other in living memory.

The dramatic impact of COVID-19 on health and social care and the subsequent restrictions on social contact have put an enormous strain on people and services. Oldham's local services adapted well and continued to provide care in ways that would have seemed unthinkable before. We wanted to acknowledge this and announced our inaugural People's Choice Awards to celebrate the hard work that people throughout all health and social care services deliver to the people of Oldham.

Healthwatch Oldham has had to adapt too. We were pleased to appoint our new Manager – Tamoor Tariq and we have continued to work with you - to share your views on health services during COVID-19, your experiences of using dental services and the results of our work around digital health. Our survey last June that focused on people's experiences of Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) procedures in the Oldham area was very timely and one of the first in the country. This prompted the Care Quality Commission to commission a further piece of work with us, around DNAR, with a focus on obtaining the views of those hard to reach groups within our area.

None of this work would be possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers and I want to thank them all. I would also like to thank our funders and partner organisations and our Board volunteers. We look forward to continuing to work with you over the next year. Please continue to let us have your views and to join us in events, either online or in person, as a participant or a volunteer.



J. Starkey

John Starkey, Chair of Healthwatch Oldham

About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Oldham. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals



1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



2 Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares their experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



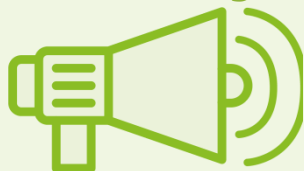
"Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone's views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people's lives."

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out and listening



We heard from

1153 people

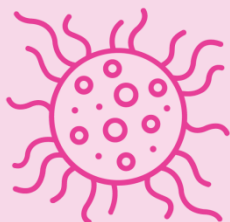
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

1885 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

1603

people during the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

Making a difference to care



We published

10 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. From this, we made 52 recommendations for improvement.

Approx. 70% of recommendations

we made last year have been acted upon and/or been recognised, at the point where we reviewed progress.

Health and care that works for you



13 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed over 8 hours of their time. This is usually higher, however - a lot of our volunteers are classed as clinically vulnerable and we wanted to ensure they were safe during the pandemic.

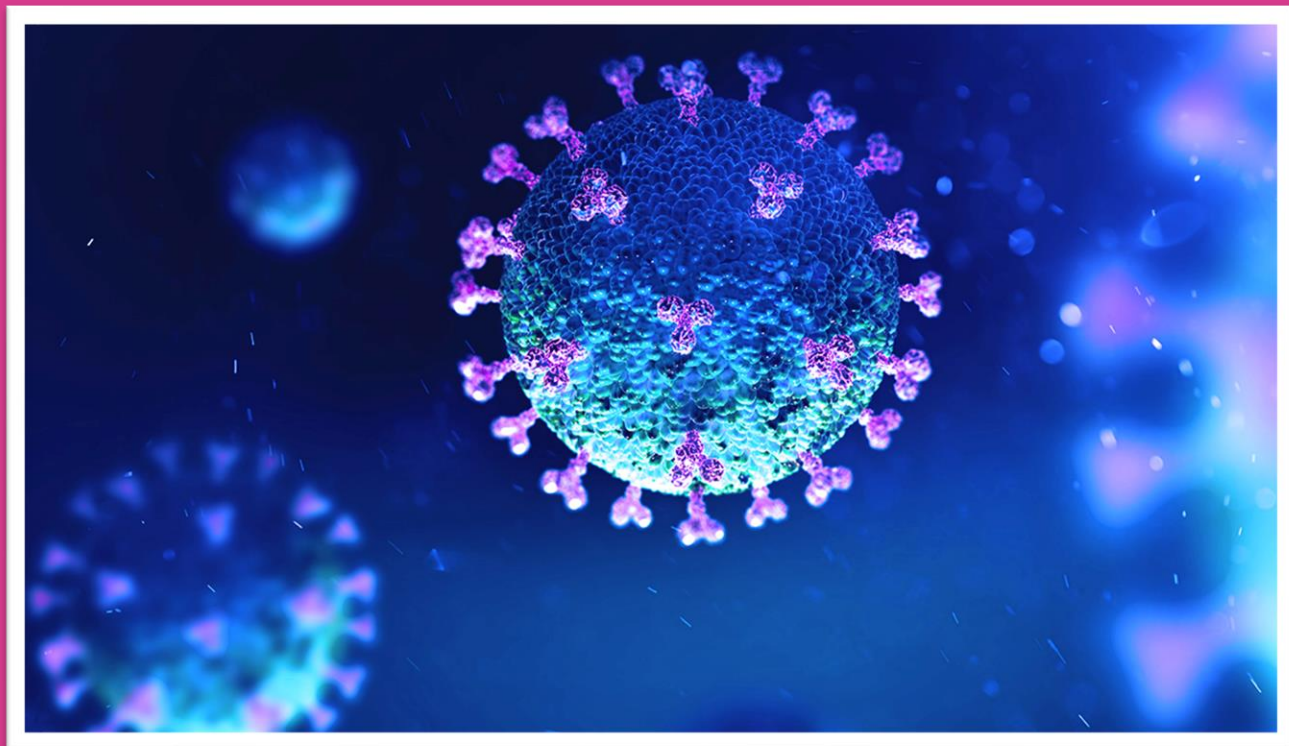
We employ 5 staff

2 are full time and 3 part time, this is equal to 3.85 full time equivalent, which is an 9.5% decrease from the previous year. 60% of Healthwatch Oldham staff are part time.

We received

£163,000 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21, which is the same as the previous year.



Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we helped 1603 people by:

- Providing up to date information on the COVID-19 response locally and nationally with clear messages of restrictions and guidance for people to follow.
- Producing a series of wellbeing guides to help support people during lockdown. The guides included important information to assist families in managing their wellbeing whilst being in lockdown restrictions.
- Completing a specific COVID-19 project which allowed us to obtain peoples views and opinions of their own health and care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally:

- We supported our parent organisation Action Together to help map out all support groups available during the pandemic to help the local COVID-19 response teams in Oldham.
- We supported Action Together to ensure staff wellbeing was being monitored and support measures being put in place – we did this by creating a wellbeing survey for staff and putting together support information based on the issues and areas they felt they needed assistance with during lockdown.

Jo's Story – Cancer Services and Living with Cancer during COVID-19

As part of our COVID-19 report, we spoke to many people and Jo agreed to share her story to help highlight the realities people have faced during this pandemic and to show the importance of continuing to work with our health and care partners in the future.

"My reality on the 2nd April I was at The Christie having an MRI to my brain. I wasn't really worried, but my Oncologist thought it would be a good idea to check. I was waiting for the radiologist to come to get me as they "just needed to check something", 45 mins later I asked what was happening and they asked me to go wait in a side room as someone was coming to see me.

Panic. They asked if I wanted a cup of tea. The warning sign, tea. Panic.

*The fear had already hit being escorted into a room and I sat there saying 'oh s**t' texting 2 close breast cancer friends whilst I was on my own, tears falling onto my face mask on. I heard the doctor on the corridor ask which room I was in. He came in, "Jo they've seen something on the MRI it's a small tumour, in the cerebellum" and whatever he said next, it didn't really process but tears came.*

I just remember him saying "I'm sorry but I can't hug you" and we walked out of the room, sanitizing our hands, walking a distance apart. We were talking and I was asking a few questions I can't even remember now. He also said I wasn't allowed to drive "for at least a year". Bang goes the independence.

I've never felt so alone in a clinical setting. I walked out with another changing diagnosis... Aside from being told you have secondary breast cancer which bad enough in itself. To be told you have secondary breast cancer in the brain i.e., breast cancer that has travelled to my brain is horrendous. All thoughts going through my mind. Friends who had it prior to me who died of it. I walked to the car where my husband was waiting to collect me and had to tell him this news, news he really wasn't expecting. I had no chance to speak to him prior to being told and didn't want to ring him. I was in shock and stunned. It was a long drive home... in somewhat silence. Crying, anger, rage, worry, many emotions.

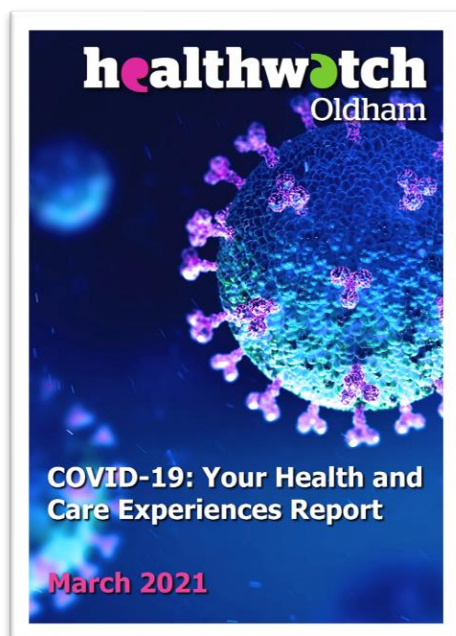
Things moved fast and I had to see a Doctor at Salford Christie Unit whose the head of neuro there. I was there all alone. No one to hold my hand. No one to turn to and say, "what else do I need to ask?". My husband was sat in the car park waiting for my return after dropping me off at the door. 2 weeks later I had another MRI and CT scan and then the next day I had another scan which both were put together to create a 3D version of my skull and brain.

In between this, I had a biopsy as the previous scan had come back that I had some nodes which looked suspicious. I was scheduled for surgery on the left axilla (under arm area) and once it was completed, it indicated that 15/22 lymph nodes had metastatic/secondary disease in them.

On the 27th June I went to the Spire Private Hospital in Didsbury which was set up as an NHS "COVID free" clean hospital. Myself, husband and the children had to self-isolate for 2 weeks and I had to have a COVID test 2 weeks before and another test 3 days before to make sure I was safe to have surgery. Another strange day with my husband dropping me off and going in alone. It was a day case so was told I would be out later that afternoon/evening.

When I eventually went down for surgery a few hours later I was walked straight into the operating theatre. It was odd having implements being laid out at the side of you that you know are going to be used. I just want to feel better and have some normality again. To get exercising again and not to live with the constant problems. Anyway, all this is a pain to deal with but really the least of my worries. The hardest thing to do was to tell my two children about the brain metastasis but they know now."

COVID-19: Your Health and Care Experiences



In July 2020, we undertook a project to better understand people's experiences of health and social care services in Oldham during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have captured the experiences of local people in order that their experiences can help shape our health and care services, learn and move forward post the pandemic.

Greater Manchester has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in comparison to the rest of the UK: Oldham is one of GM's local authorities that have been in the top 20 local authorities across the UK by all-time case rate. Oldham has sustained enduring levels of COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, with high numbers of people infected with COVID-19 and sadly over 690 reported deaths to date.

There is now a substantive body of evidence proving that more deprived areas have experienced higher mortality rates from COVID-19. COVID-19 has had a more severe impact on people with existing health conditions and factors such as older age, ethnicity, disabilities and income levels have increased the prevalence and severity for some people.

The demographic make-up of Oldham's population, comparatively high levels of poverty and deprivation have meant that some Oldham residents have been at increased risk throughout the pandemic.

Analysis of the feedback has identified a series of key themes which people spoke about in relation to COVID-19. These themes are:

- Communication
- Access to services
- Cancelled appointments
- Experience within services

From these key findings, we were able to compile the following recommendations:

Communication

Recommendations to strengthen the communication to patients throughout the pandemic include:

- Produce clear and regular communication and maintain regular contact with people receiving treatment and/or managing long term conditions.
- Ensure communication is as inclusive as possible, using simple language, available in multiple languages and accessible formats.
- Clarify what is / what is not classed as an emergency and what the criteria is for receiving treatment. This was particularly raised in relation to access of emergency dental treatment, but applies across other health and care services.

Access to Services

Recommendations to improve the access to services suggested by local people include:

- Offer in-person appointments for those people who are unable to access remote appointments.
- Provide time slots for patients for remote GP appointments
- Provide information in hard copy or video format to help people to understand new patient applications and how to book GP appointments.
- Work with local people who consider themselves to be digitally excluded to better understand what would help to make remote appointments more accessible.
- Work with carers and vulnerable adults or young people who require social care support to capture the longer term impacts and identify the support required.
- Continue to promote and develop the mental health support offer with additional emphasis placed on reaching seldom heard communities.

Patient experience

The following recommendations are made in response to people who have accessed a service within the pandemic. The recommendations include:

- Increase the promotion of any hospital loan options for tablets and phones to help keeps patients connected with their family/friends.
- Produce clear visiting guidance information in an accessible format that can be shared widely across a range of platforms and different messaging apps.
- Work with patients to minimise infection risk but where at all feasible, allow people attending important appointments to have support from a family member/friend.
- For online consultations, make patients aware prior to the appointment that they can have a family member/friend present.
- Throughout the pandemic and following it, encourage patient/clients to offer feedback and publicly share information on how improvements will be made.

Cancelled appointments

The recommendations in this section are in areas where people have expressed that there has been a negative impact on the cancellation of appointments. Recommendations include:

- Take urgent action to tackle the increasing demand in accessing dental services, particularly for those people who are unable to register with an NHS dentist.
- Increase the guidance and support for people living with long term conditions and/or a new diagnosis and provide access to treatments in accessible community settings.

Living with COVID-19

Given the enduring nature of the pandemic, and increased risk factors for some residents in Oldham there is a need to address the longer term impacts of COVID-19. This recommendation builds on the insight we have collected that indicates people are concerned about the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on their health, reducing the risk factors within their control and how to stay physically and mentally well.

- Increasing awareness and providing support for people to stay well, help manage their long-term conditions and keep active.
- Work together across the system to tackle health inequalities and ensure people who most need support can develop and access the appropriate provision.

Next Steps

The published report from this project has been shared with local commissioners, service leads and partner organisations. The Oldham Care Organisation has formally responded to the report and would like to work with Healthwatch Oldham in ensuring that the recommendations are acted upon moving forward.

Healthwatch Oldham will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and how this is affecting Oldham residents.



HEALTHWATCH OLDHAM PRESENTS...

THE

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS



2020 was a difficult year and Healthwatch Oldham wanted to find a way to thank and celebrate the work delivered across the Oldham Borough. Therefore in December 2020, we announced our inaugural People's Choice Awards.

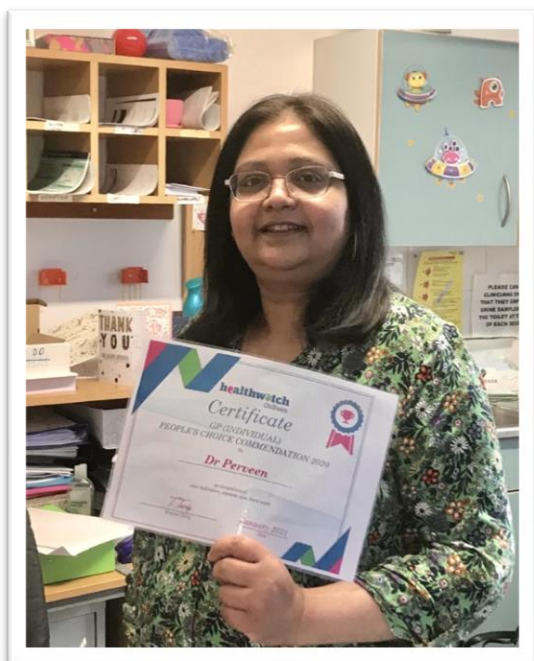
Oldham residents were able to nominate individuals who had helped them during the past year with their health and care. We had an overwhelming response, and we would like to say a massive thank you to everyone for taking the time to share their stories with us.

Our Governance Board reviewed the nominations and made their selection of winners and commendations:



Lucy Livesey Care Provider (Individual) Commendation:

"Wow, I cant believe I have been nominated for this award. I believe we are all here to make a difference in some form. My drive is through my own experience of loss and difficulty, I just want to help. If we all helped even just a little bit wouldn't the world be a nicer place to be? As a Mental Health Nurse its my duty to provide care, going the extra mile is something that I have always been passionate about, not to get recognition but to make a difference. To be nominated for this is an absolute honour, thankyou so much to everyone who voted."



Dr Perveen GP (Individual) Commendation

"I feel extremely happy to have received this honour . To be appreciated by my patients gives me great satisfaction and makes my job extremely rewarding. I have always considered myself to be very fortunate to be in a position where I can make a difference to people's lives be it their health or social circumstances.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my team at Littletown Family Medical practice who are absolute stars and without whom I would be lost.

I will strive to continue to serve my patients and our community in my capacity as a General Practitioner and hope to make a positive impact on people's lives."

Gail Sutcliffe Homeless Support Commendation:

"I was very surprised and honoured to receive the certificate from Healthwatch Oldham in recognition of the support that I offer to people who are homeless. Please may I thank whoever has voted for me, I love my work and I feel that now is my time to help others and Homeless Friendly enables me to do this."



Other winners and commendations:

- Care Provider Corporate Award – Community Physiotherapist Team
- Care Provider Corporate Commendation – Butler Green House
- Care Provider Individual Award – Dr Jaco Nel
- Care Worker Individual Award – Nazma Ali
- Care Worker Individual Commendation – Louise Kelso
- Carer Individual Commendation – Julie McCallion
- GP Individual Award – Dr Murray Stewart
- Volunteering Corporate Award – Volunteering Team at Royal Oldham Hospital
- Volunteering Individual Commendation – Max Leigh
- Pharmacy Corporate Award – Cathedral Pharmacy
- Pharmacy Individual Award – Seema Kubavat
- Pharmacy Individual Commendation – Chloe Williamson
- Service Provider Corporate Award – MioCare
- Service Provider Corporate Commendation – Community Mental Health Team
- Social Care Corporate Award – Longwood Lodge
- Social Care Individual Commendation – Victoria Howcroft

A massive congratulations to everyone who was nominated and thank you for your efforts during this difficult time.



Dentistry Services in Oldham

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we were receiving regular contact from Oldham residents who were expressing concern that they were unable to register with an NHS dentist. However, during the pandemic, these contacts have become more frequent.

Between July 2020 – March 2021, over 100 Oldham residents have contacted us to obtain assistance in finding an NHS dentist that is taking on NHS patients and at the time of writing, we are currently being contacted numerous times a day about these concerns.

Initially, capacity concerns were explained by COVID-19 restrictions. However, since dentists have re-opened following the first lockdown, patients have told us that they have been told that they can receive treatment as a private patient but not as an NHS registered patient.

Therefore, between November and December 2020, we released our Dentistry survey to better understand the experiences of people who have been able to access dental care during COVID-19 and/or the struggles people have had in accessing an NHS dentist. 67 people took the time to complete this survey and we would like to thank everyone for their contributions to our review.



A review of dentistry services in Oldham



Key Findings from the review:

- **Access** - People stated that they were unable to access an NHS dentist. This still seems to be an issue as dentists started to re-open after the first lockdown.
- **Private Treatment is the only option** - People expressed their concern that they were in some instances able to receive treatment as a private patient but not as an NHS patient.
- **Affordability** - For those who only have an option to pay for dental treatment as a private patient, the cost for some people is too high.
- **Lack of Waiting List** - The most common reason people have been unable to join a waiting list is that their practice does not do them. Lesser examples have been that waiting lists are used but are full or they are not given any guidance on waiting lists at all by the practice. This inconsistency has caused concern for people.



"Families should not be being forced into joining a private dentist that they cannot afford."

The following recommendations based on the experiences and feedback of people who completed this survey were made:

National Shortage of Dental Provision: All the issues raised in our local survey are themes in the recent Healthwatch England report on dentistry, which points to a shortage of dental provision. Healthwatch England asked for feedback from all local Healthwatch organisations on any ongoing dental issues being faced by local regions. Healthwatch England has produced their report based on those national findings and urged the Government to recognise and address the concerns raised. We recommend that local commissioners and dentistry service providers review this report in conjunction with this local survey. <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/2021-02-08/warnings-dentistry-crisis-public-concerns-continue>

Private Treatment Vs NHS Treatment: People raised the issue of being able to access treatment privately rather than on the NHS. During the first lockdown, people expressed that they understood the impact that closing services would have on accessing health and care. However, once dentists reopened, people stated that they were only able to access services at certain dental practices if they were willing to have their treatment done privately. From the responses, it demonstrates that people are frustrated and confused by only being given an option that does not match the issues about capacity previously stated by practices. We recommend that NHS patient registration quotas within the current system are reviewed to ensure that people have fair access to an NHS dental provision rather than only being offered private treatment.

Affordability to be Reviewed: Many people in Oldham are facing financial hardship, and for some people, COVID-19 has exacerbated this. We would recommend that the Government and the NHS review the pricing structure of NHS treatment to ensure that it is fair and open to all.

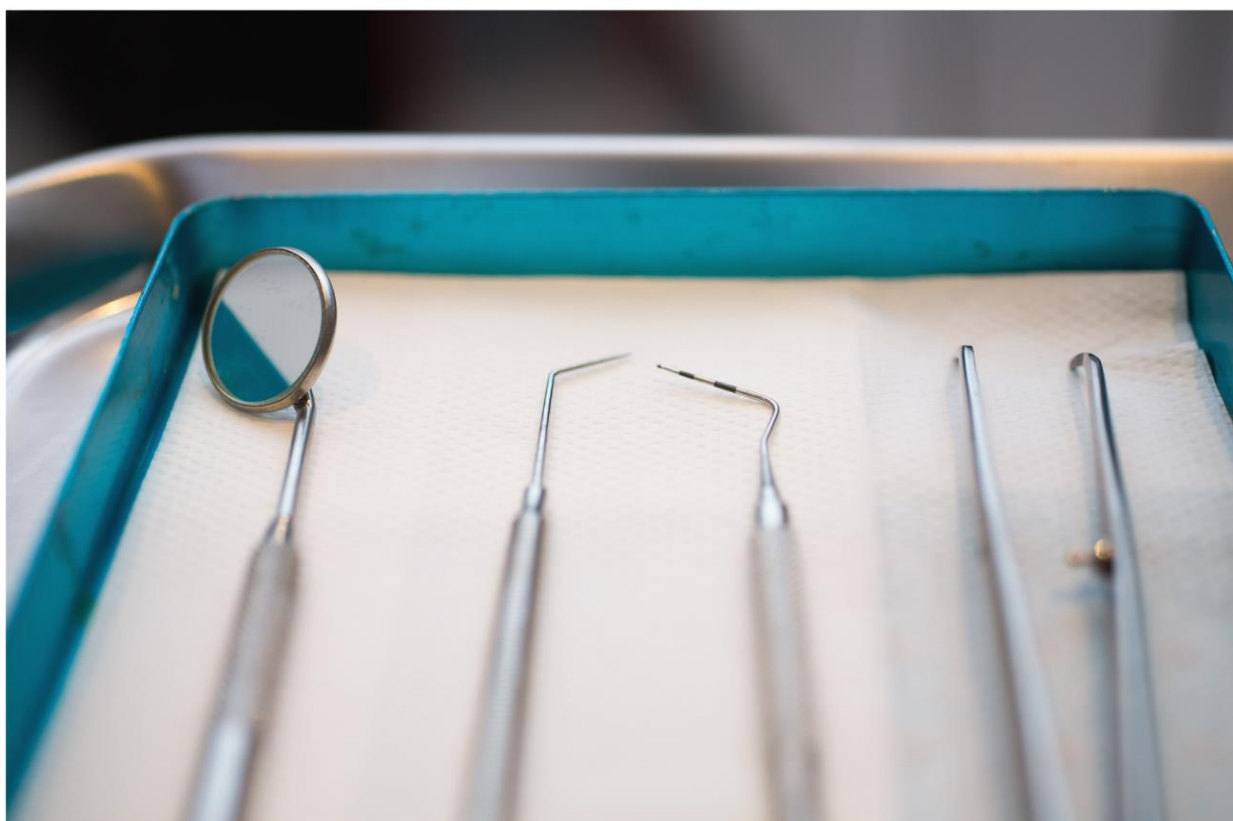
Waiting Lists: Where NHS patient lists are full, patients want to be able to have their name put on a waiting list. This is reassuring for the patient to know that they do not have to ring all dentists on a near-daily basis to try and register as an NHS patient and that they will eventually be able to see an NHS dentist. We recommend that dentistry providers are encouraged to allow people to add their name to a waiting list.

Communication and Transparency: Patients would like to understand and be told the reason why their dentist cannot offer the service as an NHS patient and where feasible, provide information about the likely timescales if they want to wait to access treatment as an NHS patient. People would like to have more information about the charges they will incur. In a couple of instances, patients mentioned being charged for PPE on top of the cost for the appointment. Dental practices should be able to access their COVID-19 PPE free of charge through the DHSC portal. We recommend that dentists share information about their policy about NHS patient lists and information about timescales and charges. Clarity on all charges should be explained before any treatment begins.

Address backlog and return to services: Some people have expressed a concern that prolonged limited access to services will lead to conditions being undetected until they become more acute and other serious conditions not being identified earlier. With continued limited access to services, and the current backlog we recommend that work is done across the system to ensure access is available for those that need it and that inconsistencies of practice do not widen health inequalities.

Next Steps

We are now working with the Oldham and Glossop Dental Committee as well as the Greater Manchester Dental Committee, and the Dental Team from NHS England to reflect on the patient feedback that has been received. In addition, Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network have published their own report reflecting the issues across Greater Manchester, and Healthwatch England have produced their report reflecting on national concerns. We look forward to working with everyone involved, in order to help shape dental services and reflecting on the learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.





Some of our work across the previous year



Digital Health Review

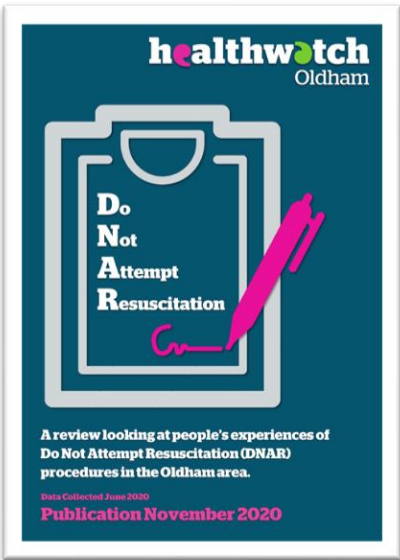
This review raised recommendations to tackle digital exclusion. We found that many people had concerns over their own ability to use technology, their understanding of how to make it work for them and potential data risks that people might not understand or find intimidating.

This report has been to Oldham CCG's Statutory Duties Committee, who concur that there is a real desire and willingness amongst patients to access Healthcare through non-face to face means, and they expect this to continue post-pandemic. They also agree with the importance of ensuring that the growth of digital services does not lead to the exclusion of sections of our population. We are continuing to work with Oldham CCG to address issues around digital inclusion and digital exclusion.

DNAR Review

This report has been presented at the End of Life Transformation Board. It raised concerns over many aspects of implementing DNAR on patients including, the requirement of specific training for staff in this area, producing a clear pathway on reviewing a DNAR decision and the importance of clear communication.

It has been agreed that a task and finish group will be established on behalf of the End of Life Transformation Board to agree and implement actions to address the recommendations within the report. We are awaiting for the End of Life Transformation Board to produce an Action Plan which will show how best our recommendations can be implemented.



To find out more > > >

<https://www.healthwatcholdham.co.uk/news-and-reports>

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



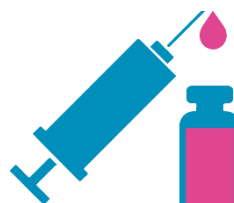
77% on GP services



50% on Dentistry



85% on COVID-19



85% on Vaccines

Your stories



Mrs A – a lady in her 80's was admitted to ROH in April 2020. We were contacted by her daughter saying she couldn't visit her mother who didn't speak English, was seriously poorly, had minimal hearing, poor eyesight (needed cataract surgery) and dementia. We identified that the governments guidelines stated that patients with dementia should be allowed visitors in hospital. This guidance was shared with the hospital who stated they were unaware of this update and had been working to the previous guidelines. Mrs A's daughter was eventually allowed to visit her mother for one hour a day who was very distressed by the time this was granted.

Healthwatch Oldham (HWO) raised this with silver command, and it was escalated to gold command. HWO also contacted senior management within secondary care to raise this as an issue and highlight the inconsistencies with how the hospitals had adopted the initial 3 exceptions for visiting that the government had released but not the 4th one. After HWO raised this, a decision was made by the PAHT management to speak to neighbouring hospitals and decide on one streamlined approach rather than each hospital interpreting the guidance differently and how best to implement this.



Contact us to get the information you need

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.



www.healthwatcholdham.co.uk



0161 622 5700



info@healthwatcholdham.co.uk

Your stories



A lady called Healthwatch Oldham, she had taken the day off work to support her Father (Aged 79) whom she is a Carer for, he lives alone and had a telephone consultation arranged with a Cardiologist based 9am-1pm. Despite her calling the receptionist at the clinic twice it was now 4pm and nobody had contacted them, her father was getting tired and fractious and she wondered if we could help. We called the clinic and no reply, it appears the reception closes at 4pm.

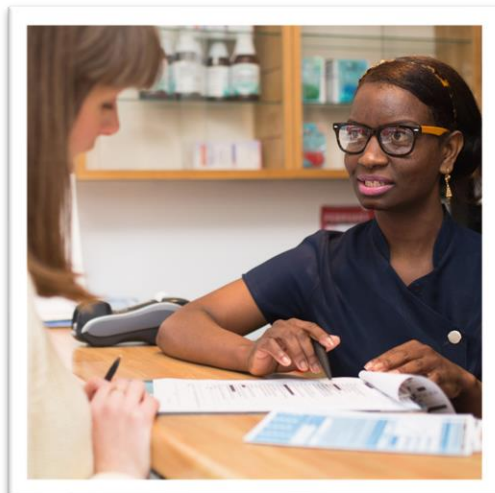
At 4:30pm that day the Consultant called her Father's landline (she had then gone home as they were meant to call her mobile number as she has consent to speak on his behalf), he took the call then rang her with limited information, (half a story as she describes it) which as he had not been well and had a recent stroke left her concerned.

She spoke to Healthwatch Oldham, they called the clinic the following day and spoke to the receptionist who was insistent that the matter had been resolved. Healthwatch Oldham had to be quite firm to ensure indeed it had not, and that the lady needed to speak to the Consultant as soon as possible. The Consultant's Secretary returned Healthwatch Oldham's call and explained they had spoken to the lady, forwarded her a copy of the letter being sent to the GP (advising that they would make a further appointment in 12 months to see her father), and that they would ask the consultant to call her. He called later that day, she explained her Dad's symptoms which 'no surprise to her' he had not shared during his consultation call, (hence why she wanted to be with him during the call), as she explains he is a proud man and not one to ask any questions or clarify things.

The Consultant explained that her Father's condition had worsened as indicated by his last scan, however, now that he had become aware of him being symptomatic, that an operation was required as a matter of urgency. He advised that the recent stroke was due to a progression of this illness. Her Father was given an appointment for the following week to have tests done in readiness for the operation, if this were not carried out soon his life expectancy would be 6-12 months.

The lady called back to thank Healthwatch Oldham, she feels that had they not intercepted quickly and got the Consultant to speak to her, that her Father may not have been alive by the next consultation in 12 months' time. If he has the operation it is likely to increase his life span to around 10 years. Healthwatch Oldham advised the lady that they have been commissioned by the Northern Care Alliance to carry out research around remote appointments and asked if she would be involved, she said yes as she would not want this situation to happen to anyone else.

Your stories



A man whose first language is not English and had been in the country for 12 months, had dental pain and could not register with a dentist as no one was taking on new patients. He contacted the emergency dental service and due to the language barrier, he could not arrange an appointment.

The pain got worse, so he took drastic action and removed the tooth (back molar) himself using pliers. He advised a lady who voluntarily supports him, and she was worried about contracting an infection. She rang the emergency dental service who advised her that as the issue was self-inflicted, they could not see him and advised him to visit accident and emergency. She took him there and after waiting 4 hours they could not help and said that he needed to see a dentist.

It was then becoming apparent that the continuing pain and discomfort the man was feeling was due to a second tooth that needed extracting. The lady volunteer eventually managed to make an appointment with the emergency dental service and the second tooth was removed. The gentleman still requires further dental work, however, is still unable to register with an NHS Dentist or even get onto a waiting list.

This information was included in our dental report and this gentleman's story attracted the attention of local news outlets.

Mrs B – a lady in her 50's contacted Healthwatch Oldham stating she started with Bells Palsy in November 2019 and felt that her condition wasn't improving as quickly as she had hoped.

She explained that she was also experiencing some other symptoms and wondered if during the pandemic, it was possible or appropriate to get some help for facial physiotherapy.



Healthwatch Oldham advised that she could refer herself online for physiotherapy and that albeit limited, the service was operating in Oldham.

Healthwatch Oldham did the referral on behalf of the lady and the following day a physiotherapist named Shelley rang her and completed an assessment advising that it appeared she had developed Synkinesis (a known complication of Bell's Palsy).

She advised that she would benefit from treatment at a specialist facial physio clinic (The Linden Clinic in Sale), that she would apply for funding for the NHS to pay for this and a panel would need to approve the application.

Two days later Shelley rang to advise the funding had been approved and the following day the Linden Clinic made contact and an assessment via video link has been set-up – "What a wonderful service all arranged within less than a week".



Our board members

During 2020, Healthwatch Oldham were delighted to welcome another new member to our Governance Board:

Saira Khan

I am a Quality Monitoring Officer, within Adult Social Care at Oldham Council. I have worked at the council for the past 16 years within a number of different departments of Adult Social Care, including Learning Disabilities. In my current role, I work with commissioned care providers who support people to be more in control of their lives working within a health and social care system that is geared towards wellbeing, the prevention of ill health and ensuring that there is access to health services at home and within the community.

My role also involves monitoring and co-ordinating information from a variety of sources including safeguarding concerns and visits to providers, to inform the overall quality of service delivery. Being a member of Healthwatch has enabled me to further provide a positive influence within the community to ensure the professional standards of care are maintained and continuously improved.

The Healthwatch Oldham Governance Board has 8 members; John Starkey, Norma Bewley, Yvonne Lee, Mary Edwards, Saira Khan, Stephanie Doherty, Lorna Philip and Jacqueline Wood. You can learn more about our Governance Board by looking at our board page on our website: <https://www.healthwatcholdham.co.uk/our-board>



Volunteers

At Healthwatch Oldham we are supported by 14 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

This year has been different for us all due to the COVID-19 pandemic and our volunteers have been unable to work in community venues due to local and national restrictions.

However, this year our volunteers:

- Continued to work virtually as members of our governance board.
- Attended virtual strategic meetings as a Healthwatch Oldham representative.
- Assisted by virtually promoting and working with the team on specific projects.

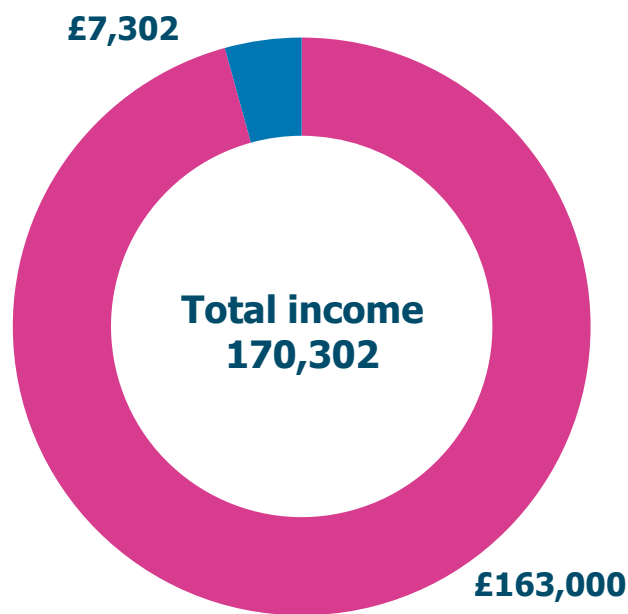


Finances

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

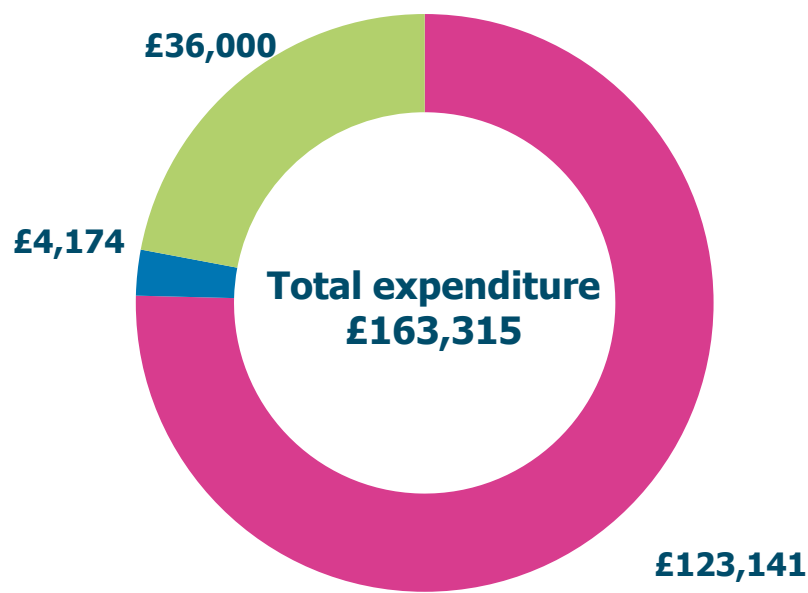
Income

- Funding received from local authority
- Additional funding



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Direct Delivery
- Management and Overhead



Total contracted income received for the Financial year ending 31 March is £163,000 which is as per budget. In terms of cost our total expenditure was £163,315 which is below our budgeted spend of £184,824.

Much of the saving comes from staff costs following the reconfiguration of the team this year. Direct Delivery costs are slightly below budget at end of the year as some of our activities have been necessarily cut this year.

Message from our Manager



The last year has been unique in so many ways and has really challenged our Health and Social Care Services like never before. I was delighted to be appointed as the new Manager for Healthwatch Oldham, it certainly has been a busy and challenging time since I started my role in August 2020.

The Board, Staff team, Volunteers and everyone in our parent organisation (Action Together) have been so welcoming. I am delighted to have joined Healthwatch Oldham, where we are playing an important role in ensuring patient voice is at the heart of all health and social care services.

There has never been a more pivotal time to ensure patient voice is heard, COVID-19 and the global pandemic has shone a light on the critical health inequalities that are prevalent across society. The time is now to mark a new beginning in ensuring the patient experience and voice is at the heart of service delivery and service redesign, Healthwatch Oldham will continue to be at the heart of this.

My special thanks to our hardworking team who have adapted amazingly to working remotely and kept the core business of Healthwatch Oldham continuing, through a significant period of change in the past year.

Moving forward Healthwatch Oldham will be focused on building on the successes of this year. We will continue to respond to the challenges that are presented by COVID-19 and the global pandemic. In doing so we will also ensure we are at the heart of championing patients' voice, as the NHS goes through another set of significant national changes.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has worked with us and helped us deliver on our work plan over the past year. Our amazing team work so hard to ensure Healthwatch Oldham is at the heart of change and influence but none of our work would be possible without colleagues in Action Together, our Healthwatch Oldham Board, the residents of Oldham who participate in our surveys or the many partners and stakeholders across Oldham who work with us to deliver on the needs for the good people of Oldham. This past year has been tough on so many, however, a key lesson for us all is we can only affect or make a change by working together in collaboration and partnership.

I am determined that we continue to make a difference in how health and social care is designed and delivered in Oldham and that patients, service users and their families are at the heart of this.

If you would like to know more about what we do, or about our work that is planned for the year ahead, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



T. Tariq

Tamoor Tariq, Manager of Healthwatch Oldham

Next steps

During this last year there has been a lot to share and celebrate, and as we review our work of the last 12 months, it is important to look ahead at the issues and challenges facing us. Below, you will see some of the areas we will be focusing on over the coming year;

National NHS Changes (Health and Social Care) White Paper

- Influencing and leading the response to forthcoming Integrated Care System changes expected next year. We now have the benefit of the ICS design framework which has developed our understanding of what the significant challenges ahead will be to achieve the triple aim of reducing inequalities, improving outcomes and enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in health and care services. We are working jointly with Action Together and Oldham CCG, focusing on Patient Voice and how this will fit into the new reforms.

Improving Local Services

- Help to improve Primary Care and access to GP services, building on work in the past year, where we have been highlighting the patient experience journey within Oldham's GP practices.
- Engagement work around hospital discharge process and experiences.
- Working with Oldham's Adult Safeguarding Board to engage with the experience of wheelchair users and those with a learning disability, through this co-production piece of work we aim to look at gaps in the service, we hope to do this via forums and wider engagement.
- Work with the Northern Care Alliance to improve patient experience of remote appointments.
- Delivering a maternity voices partnership, in conjunction with Healthwatch Rochdale, to serve both Oldham and Rochdale.

Following through on our Reports and Recommendations

- Working with the End of Life Transformation Board via their action plan to monitor the implementation of our recommendations in our DNAR report published in June 2020.
- Following through our COVID-19 report which was published in March 2021, working with partners and stakeholders to ensure our recommendations are implemented.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is a key focus across all work programmes. A specific focus to ensure we are reflecting and listening to the voice of our seldom heard groups, including the LGBTQ+ community, the learning disability and the BAMER community to name but a few.

Wider Partner and Stakeholder Engagement

- Actively contributing to the Greater Manchester Healthwatch network and collaborative work.
- We look forward to continuing to work with partners and stakeholders who will help us to deliver on our priorities. Including Action Together, Oldham Council, Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Oldham Cares, Royal Oldham Hospital, Pennine Care, Northern Care Alliance, local GP's, local care homes, the CQC, and so many other faith, community and voluntary groups across all parts of Oldham.
- There are exciting opportunities ahead of us, to help shape local health and social care services, and ensure the patient voice and engagement is at the heart of reducing health inequalities. With the continued insight and input from our local communities, we can work collaboratively to influence change, and make a difference to the way services are commissioned and delivered. It is our intention to seek to include and widen the level of participation and involvement of the diverse communities in Oldham, in order to seek better outcomes. In doing so, we will reduce demand, deliver better services locally and tackle some of the pressing challenges around reducing health inequalities, whilst also empowering our communities.



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Oldham, 12 Manchester Chambers, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1LF.

Part of Action Together CIO (Registered Charity no: 1165512), Healthwatch Oldham uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch board consists of 8 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met 3 times and made decisions on matters such as signing off our workplan and approving and commenting on our COVID-19 report.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. An example of this is, over the last year we received a lot of soft intelligence about the experience of Primary Care and GP Practices, we set this as a key priority over the last year and our work culminated in Healthwatch Oldham submitted a GP Intelligence Report to Oldham CCG. One of the outcomes of this, is we are working with them to reflect on the contributions patients leave on Care Opinion (on line patient feedback platform) and we provide this data to GP Practice Managers on a regular basis. We are pleased following our engagement with Oldham CCG they have now taken a joint subscription with us for Care Opinion so they can access patient input and feedback quickly.

In terms of public forums, we were able to facilitate four focus groups remotely, looking at people's experiences of remote appointments, this is helping us deliver on our priorities linked to the Digital Health Report, where we are using the information from the focus groups to help produce a patient guide, which will help patients better understand how to access remote appointments. This fulfils one of our priorities around Digital Inclusion.

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 2020/21 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 and assisted people through our information and signposting functions.

We are committed to taking additional 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 we have done this by, for example, through our COVID-19 survey where we were collecting feedback on patient experience of local health and social care services, we used the community researchers model to obtain a more reflective sample of quantitative data, that gave us a better idea of what the BAMER community experiences were during the pandemic, especially as they were disproportionately affected by COVID-19. We were pleased to work with community groups within the South Asian Community, and were able to reflect the views of our local Pakistani and Bangladeshi Community.

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
GP Intelligence Report	Primary Care Team in the CCG is more reflective of patient feedback via the Care Opinion platform
DNAR	Issues have been accepted and acknowledged by Royal Oldham Hospital and the End of Life Transformation Board, an action plan is being drawn up to implement changes. An immediate change already implemented is training for staff around cultural and religious needs of families
Digital Health Report	The statutory duties committee of the CCG noted and agreed there was real desire and willingness amongst patients to access Healthcare through non-face to face means, and they expect this to continue post-pandemic. They also agreed with the importance of ensuring that the growth of digital services does not lead to the exclusion of sections of our population. Therefore, inclusive expansion forms the basis of the CCG's approach to digital health—looking to identify new ways of working but making sure no one is left behind.
New Year Blues-Mental Health	In January 2020, we ran a survey to better understand people's mental health during the winter months. We decided to run this survey again in January 2021 to see how people's opinions and experiences may have changed due to COVID-19. We will be presenting this to the Oldham Mental Health Programme Board in July 2021 and look forward to receiving feedback and views on recommendations then
Eastern European Report	This went to the Statutory Duties Committee of the CCG, and they responded with recognising communication and language barriers, and lack of awareness of how to use and navigate the NHS as a specific issue and one they would look to address moving forward.
DNAR Engagement Project, commissioned by the CQC	We were commissioned by the CQC on behalf of the Department of Health to engage with seldom heard communities, to find out their experiences of DNAR. In order to carry out the engagement to complete the DNAR surveys within the local Oldham Community we subcontracted three local community organisations with whom we have a very good relationship with. They are the Ghazali Trust, BAME Connect and Opal. The first two organisations work predominately within the BAME community of Oldham and helped us reach the population group that identified English as a second language. Opal are a local learning disability charity and they helped us reach one person from the learning disability/ autism population group. In addition to this a member of staff from the Healthwatch Oldham team was able to use some of our contacts from our previous engagement work on DNAR to carry out several surveys over the phone.

COVID-19 - 'Your Health and Care Experiences Report'	The report was published at the start of April. We have captured the experiences of local people to help shape our health and care services, learn, and move forward post the pandemic. This report has been presented to the Integrated Care Delivery Board and the Health and Well Being Board, there is a commitment from the CCG to draw up an action plan to implement recommendations contained within the report.
Dentistry Healthwatch 100	This has become a national issue. Healthwatch England engaged with local Healthwatch throughout England to obtain feedback on the dental situation in their regions. This showed a similar pattern throughout the country and they have urged the government to take action to resolve these issues. We had our survey which was available between November and December last year. The findings have been analysed and a report has been published on our website. This has been followed up with our local dental committee, and we are looking at following this report alongside the Healthwatch England to best see how the local GM system can bring about changes, whilst recognising this is very much driven by a national contract.
NHS Complaints Annual Report 2019-20	As Oldham does not have a generic advocacy provider, we have seen increasing numbers of people contact us. As the criteria has become more stringent for accessing mental health (MH) support services, this has also had an impact on the service. We have had a significant number of people presenting with MH symptoms, both diagnosed and undiagnosed, they have contacted us for support which has put additional demand on the service. Cases are also increasingly becoming more complex and time-consuming. The report has been shared with partners such as the CCG.
Northern Care Alliance- Remote Appointment Project	In February we met with the Northern Care Alliance to look at how we could work in partnership to gather people's feedback on remote appointments to produce a report whereby the recommendations would shape a patient guide to accessing and attending your remote appointment (Remote being either by telephone or video call) and to provide valuable insight to NCA on how services can improve the patient experience as we move forward. A survey was produced and put in the public domain from the end of March and four focus groups have been held and facilitated looking at feedback from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from BAME Communities • People with a Learning Disability • Open focus group • People living with cancer The first focus group took place on 31 March with people from BAME Communities and the rest took place in April.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had 0 providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Oldham is represented on the Oldham Health and Wellbeing Board by Tamoor Tariq, our Manager. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by providing an influencing role around patient voice and patient experience around a whole range of important issues and topics that have come before the Health and Well Being Board in the last year. Given the Health and Social Care challenges due to the pandemic a lot of issues were in response and linked to COVID-19. This included a robust discussion around Oldham's 6 month Plan for COVID part way through the year, the local outbreak plan, the Oldham perspective of the NHS White Paper around 'integration and innovation', the impact of covid on the health and care system, and also a robust discussion on the annual report from the Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board. In terms of our own submission to the board for discussion, we were pleased to present the Healthwatch Oldham Report - COVID-19: Your Health and Care Experiences Report.



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**Your
Healthwatch Oldham Team**