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All our research reports, which we refer to in this document, are available at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

If you would like a paper copy of a report, please call 01865 520520 or email hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Message from the Chair

I am very proud of the way the Healthwatch Oxfordshire team worked last year. They rose to the challenge of working under lockdown and focused on what our local communities needed.

The team was constantly adapting and developing new ways to ensure your voices were heard during the pandemic. This meant creatively using social media channels, hosting webinars, raising awareness of our work through newspaper articles, press releases and interviews in the local media, and, importantly, working hard to maintain relationships with our communities.

The pandemic highlighted many issues that were already impacting local people and communities before COVID. We heard about a lack of reliable, accessible, and up-to-date information on COVID-19 in community languages, and growing issues of 'digital exclusion' as health care consultations shifted rapidly online. We also heard of increasing need for wellbeing support, and access to emergency food banks.



The pandemic highlighted many issues that were already impacting local people and communities.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire reported what it heard about the impact of COVID-19 to the boards where local politicians and service providers meet to deal with health and social care issues. We passed on your experiences of accessing care and dental and pharmacy services during the pandemic thanks to your feedback, from our work with local Patient Participation Groups, and from face-to-face contact with residents in the Didcot area between lockdowns.

We were also able to carry out one Enter and View project, a review of the Kassam Stadium vaccination site, along with surveys on people's experiences of vaccination centres.

We did manage to grow our team, by welcoming a new community outreach worker, and we also grew our board thanks to links with an Oxford Hub initiative to grow and develop young trustees.

At the end of a strange and eventful year I step down from my role as Chair and I hand over to Sylvia Buckingham. I wish Sylvia, the team, and the trustees all the best for, hopefully, a less eventful coming year.

Tracey Rees

Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Chair 2019-2021



About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Oxfordshire. We are here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the services 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 aims



1 Supporting you to have your say

We know that health and social care providers can best improve services by listening to people's experiences.



2 Ensuring all voices are heard

We know that everyone in society needs to be included in the conversation – especially those whose voices aren't being listened to.



3 Working together to help improve health and care services

We know that comparing lots of different experiences helps us to identify patterns and learn what is and isn't working.

Contact us

Website: www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Twitter: @HealthwatchOxon

Facebook: @HealthwatchOxfordshire

Instagram: @HealthwatchOxfordshire

Call us on **01865 520520** or email us at **hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk**



Our year at a glance

Despite spending most of the year unable to work face to face in the community, our team has worked incredibly hard and creatively to reach out and hear from so many of you. Thanks to all of you who took the time to share your experiences and views to enable us to help inform and influence local services. Please keep your feedback coming - we can't do our job unless we hear from you!

Hearing from you



We heard from **7,697** people this year about their experiences of health and social care.

161 people posted a review of their experience of using health and care services via our Feedback Centre.

We provided in-depth advice and information to **147** people.

Reaching out



We had **33,408** hits on our website.

We reached **130,726** people through our Facebook and Twitter social media channels.

We sent our fortnightly news briefing to **1,192** supporters, partners, and stakeholders.

We provided translated materials about us in **10** languages.

Reporting what we heard



We published **28** reports based on our research and engagement, which set out what we heard and what improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. You can read all our reports at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

How we work



6 volunteers and **6** trustees gave up their time to help support and steer our work.

7 members of staff were employed, one of whom is full time, which compares to 6 members of staff the previous year, two of whom were full time.

We received **£247,908** in funding from our local authority in 2020-21, 2% more than the previous year.

How we work

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insights on their experience of health and care services.

In 2020-21 we carried out outreach work in Didcot, including talking to people face to face at a shopping centre, food bank, and local community centre. Despite the impact that COVID-19 had on our ability to visit services, we carried out an Enter & View visit to the NHS Vaccination Centre at the Kassam Stadium. However, much of our research during the year was conducted using online surveys, with paper copies and translations available, as well as the option of having a member of staff fill out the form over the telephone.

Throughout the year we enhanced our research by conducting follow-up telephone or online conversations with individuals who responded to initial research. This has given us a depth of understanding and added detail to our reports to the wider health and care system. Individuals were then offered the opportunity to attend round table discussions with commissioners and service providers, which have given our reports a greater impact.

We heard from people by phone, by email, and via our Feedback Centre on our website. We ran virtual events, including webinars and online Zoom events on different topics, which enabled us to hear in more depth about key issues, such as how easy people had found accessing their GP during the pandemic. In addition, we attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums and engaged with the public via social media.

We are committed to hearing from people who we don't reach through the website or questionnaires. Building relationships with members of Oxfordshire's communities and working to create an ongoing relationship and two-way dialogue means people have more confidence to speak to us when issues arise. This need for 'continuous and ongoing dialogue' was highlighted in our joint work with Oxford Community Action around wellbeing in Oxford's diverse and multi-ethnic communities.

Other ways of discovering people's views are through our support of Patient Participation Groups, our participation in the Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network, and our attendance at a range of different theme-focused forums. This enables us to keep abreast of the broad issues facing different groups and communities, and to identify areas of concern.

All of the above helps inform our areas of focus. For example, through COVID we had ongoing enquiries about access to NHS dentistry, as well as comments on our Feedback Centre, and this led us to do a more in-depth survey across the county - identifying and understanding more about the gaps in dentistry provision.

Digital exclusion has also been highlighted this year - as people tell us they face barriers to accessing health services that are increasingly online or have faced language barriers to information on health.





A focus on social care

One of the areas that we concentrated on this year was social care – the care and support people receive in their home or in residential homes.

To help focus this work we began the year by asking people to tell us their top three issues around social care. More than 200 people and organisations responded, helping us to identify the three main areas of concern - how social care is organised, how it is delivered, and who is delivering it.

As part of this work this year we have:

- Carried out two surveys of care home managers in the county to ask how they were coping during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Sought the views of relatives of care home residents about what it was like visiting and keeping in touch with their loved ones during the pandemic.
- Listened to employed and voluntary carers to try to understand how care at home affects people receiving and delivering care.
- Published a report on people's experiences of changes in Oxfordshire County Council's policy on adult social care contributions.

Learning COVID lessons from care home managers

We passed on crucial insights into how care home managers in Oxfordshire were coping with COVID to social care decision-makers locally and nationally.

In May and October, we contacted all care home managers in the county to find out about the pressures they had faced because of the pandemic. We submitted our reports on what we had heard and our suggestions for improvements to local care commissioners, health bodies, and local authorities, with the findings and recommendations widely welcomed.



Thank you to Healthwatch Oxfordshire for this report and its rapid turnaround. I am really pleased discussions have already begun from the learning. We will ensure we take things forward across the system.

Diane Hedges, Deputy Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

We sent our initial report to members of the Government's Social Care Sector COVID-19 Support Taskforce, which was carrying out reviews of how well health and social care service providers worked together during the pandemic. One member of this taskforce, Kate Terroni, the Chief Inspector for Adult Social Care at the Care Quality Commission, described our report as "excellent" and thanked us for sharing it.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire was twice invited to attend the county's system-wide Care Homes Bronze Cell meetings to discuss the findings of the reports. We will continue to monitor the outcome of these discussions over the coming year. A presentation of our report to Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's Primary Care Commissioning Committee led to a briefing for care homes to include a focus on the legal framework and safeguarding in response to concerns about visiting restrictions at some care homes.

As a result of this work, our Executive Director was invited to be a keynote speaker in a Green Templeton College, University of Oxford event discussing COVID-19 and care homes. The report was also covered widely in the local news, including on BBC Oxford and BBC South as well as in the Oxford Mail.



The Healthwatch Oxfordshire survey of care homes that we report on today is an absolutely excellent piece of work, and demonstrates exactly why this organisation exists.

The Oxford Mail

Listening to the relatives of care home residents

One of the themes that emerged in our surveys of care home managers was their concern about the impact of COVID visiting restrictions on the wellbeing of residents. As a result, we carried out a separate project to listen to the experiences of people with loved ones living in a care home. Following the publication of a report on this work we will call together organisations involved in commissioning and regulating care homes in the county, along with local care providers, to initiate work on how Oxfordshire care homes can become examples of good practice in valuing the role of families of care home residents.

All our reports can be read at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

Hearing the voices of unpaid carers



We heard from 160 unpaid adult carers about their experiences of caring and the challenges they faced in accessing support services and getting the help they need.

We published a report calling for a more coordinated and accessible approach to the provision of advice and support for unpaid carers, including more personal, practical support and better promotion of the support that is available.

We then held a round table event bringing together carers and support agencies to talk about how support for carers can be improved in the county. This meeting also discussed a new Carers Pathway service launched in April 2021, which is based around a one-stop-shop model. The service should help fill gaps in carer support and personalise the services offered to carers, reflecting many of the recommendations of our report.

We will monitor this new service over the next year and have asked for carers to be involved in its evaluation.

Hearing the voices of employed home carers



We reached out to people who are paid to care for someone in their home – to hear what this is like, how COVID-19 has impacted their work, and how well the wider health and social care system has supported them.

We heard that home care workers are proud of what they do, want to be valued both financially and by other professionals, and would like more time to provide quality care.

Following the publication of this report Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers expressed a commitment to working with us to conduct an annual survey of employed carers as recommended in our report. We will follow up on this work, and other recommendations.

Seeking views on social care contribution changes



Following a change in Oxfordshire County Council's policy on social care contributions in 2018, the Council commissioned us to ask people who pay towards their social care about their experiences of the policy change. We sent out a survey to 1,500 people and reported back to the council the concerns we heard, which included understanding the information sent to service users, the impact of changes to individual financial contributions on their social care, and an apparent lack of an appeals process.

The council welcomed our report and has pledged to work with us to involve service users in making sure that information about social care policy and contributions is more accessible and concise, and easier to understand.

All our social care reports have been presented to the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board and Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and both carer reports were taken to Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's Quality Committee. We plan to present these reports to Oxfordshire County Council's Performance Scrutiny Committee in summer 2021.



Working together on wellbeing

We have worked closely with Oxford Community Action (OCA) over the last 18 months to find out what Oxford's new and emerging communities think about wellbeing.

Collaborative research work together with OCA led to three focus groups and the design of a questionnaire that community volunteers helped distribute to Oxford's East Timorese, Pakistani, Sudanese, Syrian, Nigerian, Palestinian, and East African communities.

In total, 152 people completed the survey, describing what supports their wellbeing, where they turn for support and what makes it difficult to get support.

We published a joint report in January setting out what we had heard. This highlighted:

- Family, friends, faith, and community are most important in supporting wellbeing.
- The challenges people face when seeking or using support for health and wellbeing from some services in Oxford - these include difficulties finding services to meet cultural and spiritual needs, and a lack of information in translated and accessible formats.

The research also revealed that 60% of people who completed the survey said they would like help with managing stress, and yet only 4% said they would seek mental health support.

You can read our report in full at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

Members of the communities involved worked with film maker Nicola Josse to produce a short film about their views on wellbeing, called 'A Problem Shared'. This can be watched via our website at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-work/our-videos



Two community volunteers representing OCA presented the film, along with the report, to the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in March 2021. Following the meeting the Chair of Oxford University Hospitals met with the two community members to discuss points raised about services at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

The film was a very powerful way of making sure that the voices of those people who shared their views with us are heard by key health and care decision-makers in Oxfordshire.

The report shows there is a huge appetite within the community to work with others to improve health and wellbeing. However, it also shows that there are significant barriers to getting the necessary support.

The message is loud and clear – that to improve access, build trust and create culturally-appropriate services, communities want to see support designed and delivered with their input and within community settings.

We will continue to work with Oxford Community Action and the community volunteers who have been so supportive of this project, to push for practical solutions and the sort of support that people told us they would like.

Mujahid Hamidi, a Director of Oxford Community Action, said: "We're immensely grateful for our collaboration with Healthwatch Oxfordshire. It has allowed us to amplify the voices of some of Oxford's diverse and multi-ethnic communities on important topics related to mental health and wellbeing.

"Much work remains to be done on that front, however, and we are looking forward to continuing to work alongside Healthwatch Oxfordshire to advocate for the needs of our communities."

We plan to continue work in this area by holding an Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network event around community wellbeing in the summer of 2021.



Thanks for this fantastic report – I found it really powerful and insightful - Vicki Galvin, Oxford City Council Sport & Physical Activity Team

This is so helpful. I had started to read the report, but the film helped me cut to the chase - Katharine Barber, Chief Executive, Homestart Oxford



Oxford Community Action supports new and emerging, as well as more established Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.

Listening and influencing

Back out and about – in Didcot

When COVID restrictions allowed we made three outreach visits as part of a project to find out what it is like living in the Didcot area. Between October and December, we attended SOFEA Didcot Community Larder, and visited East Hagbourne Village Hall, and Great Western Park to ask people for their views and experiences of accessing local health, care, and community services. We also held our first virtual drop-in on this topic.

Overall people were positive about living in the area and being able to find information on how to access services. However, almost a quarter of respondents complained about access to GP practices and appointments, and we heard concerns about the impact of housing growth on infrastructure and the capacity of health services, particularly primary care.

Our report on this work includes a call to action to those public bodies and partnerships responsible for planning and delivering services to the Didcot communities. We ask that they work together with local people to ensure that population growth in the area is sustainable and supported with adequate infrastructure. We will call together these stakeholders to a meeting in summer 2021 to build on existing discussions and develop relationships.



This year we also:

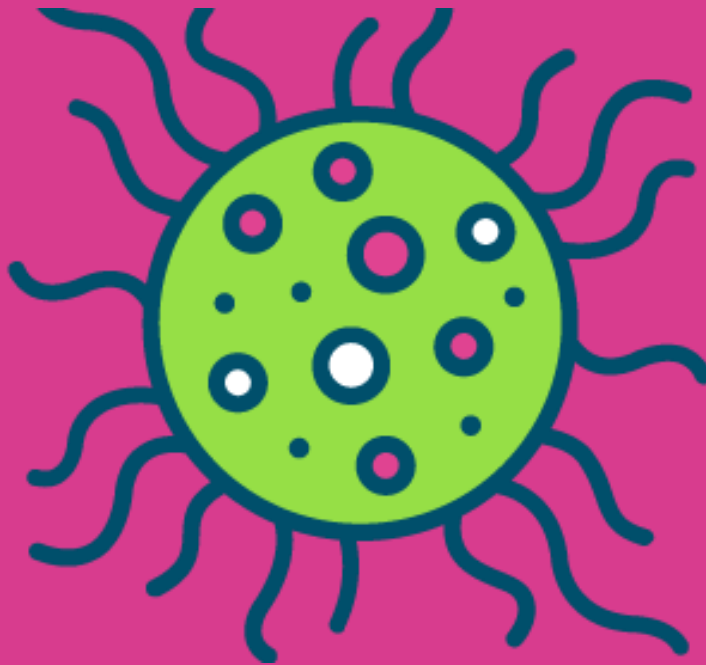
- ✓ Carried out research and published a report on the emotional wellbeing of 0-5 year-olds. This work focused on the views of parents and carers on understanding and support for mental health and wellbeing of pre-school children, including awareness of the support available, and gaps in provision. We sent this report to the commissioners of early years support services, as a snapshot of parents' and carers' understanding about this issue.
- ✓ Produced a report for Oxfordshire Children's Trust Board about what help and support parents in Oxfordshire receive, including what works well and where there are gaps. The Board accepted our recommendations and agreed to review the reinstatement of services, as COVID restrictions allow, to see how they are 'catching up' on supporting families.
- ✓ Worked with local Healthwatch organisations to produce reports summarising what people in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West had told us about accessing care during COVID, and of the health and care inequalities they had experienced. Both reports have been presented to the Senior Management Team of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS).



All our reports can be read in full on our website
www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports or please
 get in touch if you would like us to send you a copy.

Other ways in which we've made a difference

- ✓ We helped members of the asylum community access a COVID-19 vaccination after asking Luther Street Medical Centre if they could attend a vaccination clinic the practice was already running for homeless people.
- ✓ We supported Oxford Community Action (OCA) to navigate emergency food networks early on in the pandemic as they established a weekly food distribution point. We also worked together with OCA and Replenish Oxfordshire to produce translated leaflets on food labelling for use by food bag recipients.
- ✓ We informed members of Oxfordshire's boating community about national research being carried out by NHS South England and Ipsos Mori, focusing on inequalities in health, enabling them to share their views on how access to health services could be improved.
- ✓ Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group implemented changes to its phone system after we alerted it to the problems people were having getting through to seek advice or make complaints.
- ✓ Our report on the emotional wellbeing of under-fives was used by Homestart Oxfordshire to help develop its support for families during the pandemic.
- ✓ The General Pharmaceutical Council asked for a copy of our report about people's experiences of using pharmacies during COVID-19 to help identify ways in which it could, as a regulator, improve people's experiences.
- ✓ At our recommendation, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust updated its website so that content about maternity services, including partners being able to visit and be present at birth, was more accessible.
- ✓ We responded to concerns from members of the public about an image in a Public Health Oxfordshire NHS Health Checks poster displayed in bus shelters in Oxford, which resulted in the poster being removed.
- ✓ We expanded the scope of our Didcot town project following comments on social media from people in neighbouring villages who used health services in Didcot and who wanted to contribute to our research.
- ✓ We helped Patient Participation Groups across the county to help them develop working relationships with GPs and ensure that patients' voices are heard.
- ✓ We continued to seek responses from service providers for patients who submitted a review via our Feedback Centre, and followed up with providers on reviews of concern.
- ✓ We updated our website to improve the content, structure, and design to make it easier for people to use. We also added a range of translated materials and information.



Responding to COVID-19

Throughout the year the Healthwatch Oxfordshire team have worked incredibly hard to continue listening to and supporting communities during the pandemic.

Despite COVID restrictions, we were determined to continue hearing from people about their experiences and how the pandemic was affecting them and their ability to access services. The team rose to the challenge, working flexibly and creatively to reach out to people and keep in touch.

We raised awareness of some of the issues we were hearing about and took action to address them – from ensuring people had access to translated information, to letting members of Patient Participation Groups know how they could support the vaccine roll-out.

We also provided and promoted reliable, up-to-date information about COVID, and helped people to access the services they needed. In addition, we carried out research projects assessing the impact of COVID, sharing the findings with local health and care commissioners and providers.

In the early days of the pandemic, two members of the team were seconded to Oxfordshire All In and Good Food Oxford to help in their work supporting the community.

Providing reliable and 'trusted' information

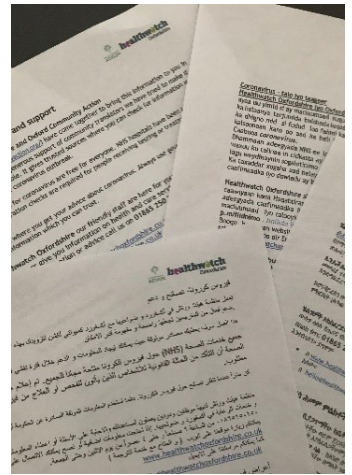
We provided and promoted up-to-date local and national information and advice about COVID via our website, social media channels and news briefing, as well as a fortnightly COVID bulletin at the start of the pandemic. Oxford University Hospitals listed our COVID web page as one of six trusted sources of information to which they linked people.

We also helped people to access the services they needed and answered their queries on a range of COVID-related issues - from shielding and delayed operations, to the lack of face-to-face appointments and the vaccination.

Ensuring translated information is available

After hearing that new and emerging communities lacked access to trusted information about COVID-19 in their own languages, we worked closely with Oxford Community Action (OCA) to translate and deliver a COVID-19 information sheet in five languages to 700 homes in Oxford.

We worked with OCA and Replenish Oxfordshire to produce translated leaflets on how to interpret food labels. The leaflets were distributed, via food parcels, to 300 homes. We created and promoted accessible and translated information on our website and via our newsletter and on social media. We also responded to requests from health organisations and local authorities for information to be translated. As a result, we carried out an investigation into access to translated information from local authorities and health services.



Thank you very much. It makes a huge difference to be able to use resources in a language that our clients understand most clearly, they definitely feel valued (African Families in the UK - AFiUK)

Highlighting the digital divide

We worked to raise awareness that not everyone is digitally connected, or keen to receive services, support and advice electronically.

We highlighted this in reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Health Improvement Board, and the Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee, as well as in a press release, newspaper articles, and television and radio interviews.

We were also careful not to just rely on digital methods of getting our messages across. We continued to ensure that paper copies of our surveys and reports were always available and used the local media to promote our work, including securing regular space in the Oxford Mail for our Chair to write about key issues.

We also developed new ways of communicating our work, including submitting regular articles to parish and community magazines to help reach more people.



Oxford Mail - August 2020

Reaching out in new ways

While recognising that not everyone is online, social media did become an increasingly effective way for us to engage with communities – to keep connected with groups we knew about and to link up with new ones.

Virtual meetings and events became a valuable way of getting people together. As part of our support for Patient Participation Groups we introduced monthly webinars on topics of interest, with almost 100 PPG Chairs and members attending our first event about the roll-out of the COVID vaccination programme.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire board meetings also moved online, with members of the public encouraged to attend. We also held virtual drop-in events for the first time – inviting members of the public to a Zoom meeting in which they could share their views on topics such as accessing GPs during the pandemic or visiting relatives in care homes during COVID.

We continued to think imaginatively about how to seek people's views. For example, as part of work to hear about the impact of visiting restrictions on care home residents we produced a letter writing pack to help residents share their views with us.



Hearing about the impact of COVID

An important part of our response to the pandemic was to hear about the impact that COVID was having on health and care services, and people's access to these services.

- **370** people shared their experiences of using pharmacies in Oxfordshire. People told us that they valued the role, service, and presence of community pharmacies, particularly during the pandemic, but had experienced delays in getting medicines and queues at pharmacies, and that social distancing was not always adhered to.
- **221** people shared their experiences of finding and accessing NHS and private dentists for routine and urgent treatment during the pandemic. We heard that restricted access had meant that some people were left in pain or with worsening oral health, and how wealthier people were able to access treatment by paying privately. Following this work, NHS England announced additional dental appointments in Oxfordshire.
- We heard from people who were struggling to access GP and acute care services, with some reporting problems getting appointments, long delays for hospital treatment, and concerns about when services would return to normal. Given that patients were increasingly being directed to online services we carried out a review of how easy it was to use GP practice websites. Following this, we recommended that all surgeries review and update their websites by the end of July 2021. We will carry out a follow-up review in August 2021.

Supporting the vaccine roll-out



We also carried out a survey asking for people's views of the COVID-19 vaccine to help understand what might stop people from having it. By the end of March, 460 people had shared their views with us, which we shared with those in charge of managing the vaccine roll-out in Oxfordshire.

Enter and View visit to the Kassam vaccination centre

Our planned programme of Enter and View visits was seriously affected by the pandemic. Restricted access meant we were only able to carry out one such visit over the last 12 months, which was to Oxford's NHS COVID-19 vaccination centre at the Kassam Stadium in February.

Our visit followed strict COVID protocols, which included not talking directly to patients, but instead distributing a paper questionnaire, and a link to an online survey for them to complete about their experiences.

Feedback from 87 people who completed our survey was overwhelmingly positive and praised the organisation, safe environment, and efficiency of the centre, as well as the attitude of staff and volunteers.

Read our report and the recommendations we made for improvements at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-work/enter-and-view-reports



Enter and View visits are carried out to find out how services are being run. Based on the feedback of people who use and work in these services, areas of good practice are highlighted, and recommendations made for improvements.



Share your experience with us

Please tell us about your experiences of using local health and care services – including GP surgeries, hospitals, pharmacies, dentists and care homes – by leaving a review via our feedback centre at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/services





Helping you find the answers

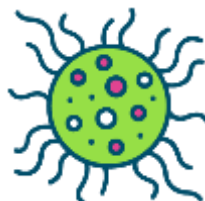
This year we helped 147 people get the advice and information they need about local health and care services by answering their queries over the phone, by email and letter. The top three themes people contacted us about were:



Dentistry - 28%



GP services - 20%



COVID-related queries - 19%

Help on how to register with a GP



We were contacted by a gentleman in Oxford who was having health issues and was trying to register with a GP practice.

The practice was asking him to provide proof of address, in the form of a bank statement, which he was unable to do.

Without this proof of address the GP practice was refusing to register him.

We provided the gentleman with a copy of our Access to Health card which states people's rights when registering with a GP practice. After showing the practice staff this card, he was able to register with the practice without further problems.

Advising on accessing dental treatment



We heard from lots of people who were finding it very difficult to access both routine and urgent dental treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One caller had a very painful mouth with potential wisdom teeth coming through and had tried several dentists, asking if they were taking on new NHS patients to no avail.

We suggested the caller ring back their local dentist, and explain the issue was about urgent dental care and not routine care.

The caller followed our advice and was able to access the urgent dental care needed after their local dental practice arranged for a phone consultation, and prescribed some antibiotics, with the option to see the dentist if the problem persisted.



Got a question? Get in touch!

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, please get in touch.

 www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

 **01865 520520**

 hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk



Our volunteers

At Healthwatch Oxfordshire we are supported by six volunteers who give up their time to support our work, including carrying out a range of outreach, admin, and research tasks.

This year our volunteers:

- Assisted with a survey of Oxfordshire's 67 GP practice websites to assess the ease of use for patients and the clarity of information on the site.
- Reviewed and updated content on our website.
- Researched and collated contact information on local organisations to help expand our network.

Two of our volunteers represent Healthwatch Oxfordshire at external board meetings. They are:

- Amier Alagab, who volunteers as an Ambassador for the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board.
- Dan Knowles, who serves as an Ambassador on the Children's Trust Board together with Healthwatch Oxfordshire Trustee, Sylvia Buckingham.

We are also supported by a board of six trustees who share their experience and expertise to help determine the charity's strategy and provide valuable oversight.



Joan

I joined the Patient Participation Group at Abingdon Surgery and often received information with links to Healthwatch Oxfordshire. On one occasion when I looked at the website, I found a volunteer vacancy which just happened to match my skills, many of which I had previously used while working for a local charity.

My tasks generally focus on admin and research, such as populating spreadsheets with research information from websites and social media, gleaning information from GP surgery websites and checking content for the website.

“I really enjoy being able to use my skills to help with various projects and being invited to team meetings to hear what is going on.”



Amier

I am a pharmacist and work at a community pharmacy in Oxford. I was already volunteering regularly in the community but the Healthwatch Oxfordshire role to serve as an Ambassador for the Health Improvement Board really attracted me. I am particularly interested in the way Healthwatch Oxfordshire works as a messenger between the public and the health authorities.

The topics Healthwatch Oxfordshire discuss are interesting and relate to the situation on the ground. It's a good challenge for me and I am looking forward to gaining more knowledge and experience and understanding of health and care.

“I think it's very important that people can raise their voice and that their comments can be sent on to the local health authorities - and this is what I can do in my role as the Health Improvement Board Ambassador.”



Carolyn

I've always enjoyed volunteering. I spent most of my adult life as a volunteer and trainer for an early years charity, and since developing diabetes I have volunteered as a speaker, events organiser and also contribute to research into Type 2 diabetes.

I started to volunteer with Healthwatch Oxfordshire because it looked as if it would be an interesting role that involved interaction with different people. And so it has proved to be. In this role I have found that Healthwatch Oxfordshire staff have the knack of making volunteers feel part of the team.

“The key benefits for me are feeling part of the team, the training I have received, meeting different people and learning about their lives and stories and being able to use my previous experiences to contribute to others.”



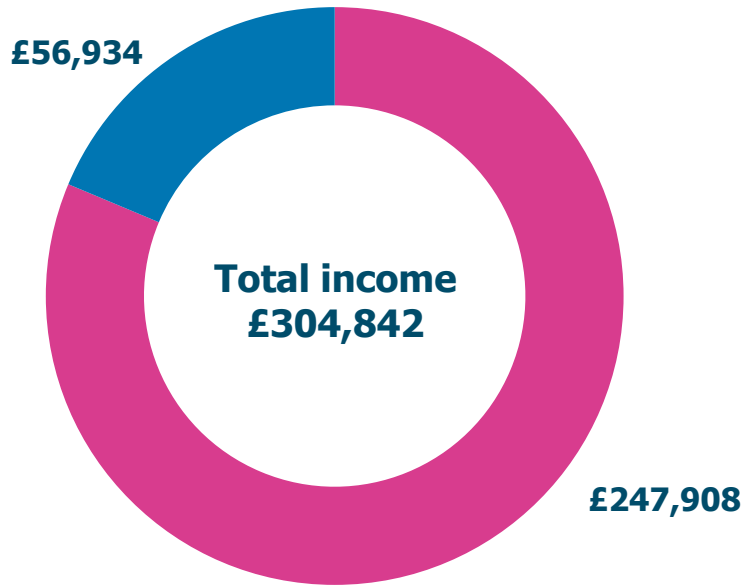
We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. To find out more about volunteering for us, please get in touch on 01865 520520 or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Finances

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. In addition to the Healthwatch Oxfordshire grant in aid agreement, we have received additional income to deliver a small number of projects in line with our charitable objectives.

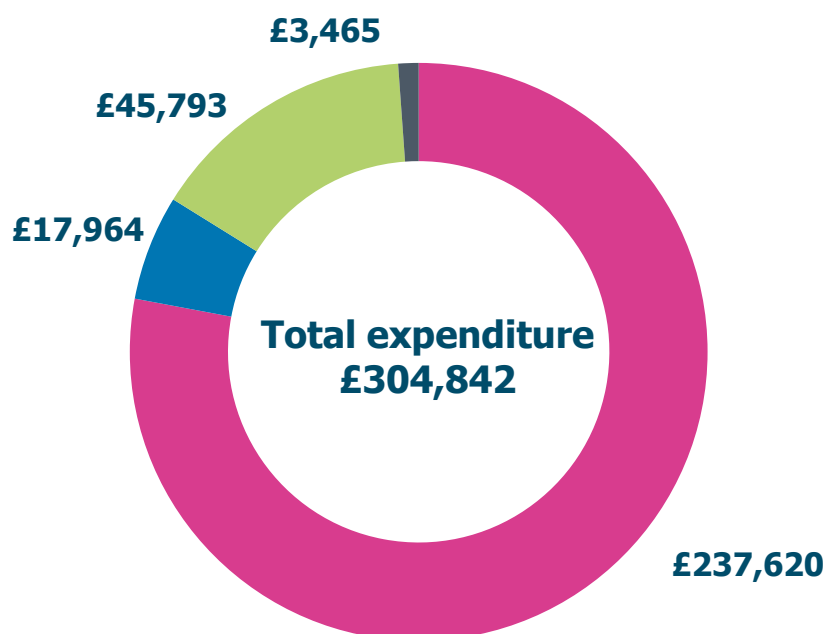
Income

- Funding received from Oxfordshire County Council
- Other income



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs
- Support and administration
- Carried forward



Please note these figures are subject to an Independent Examination.

Next steps

Priorities for next year (2021-22)

- Increase the voice of seldom heard communities – through our ongoing involvement with and reaching out to community groups and voluntary organisations, and working with community researchers.
- Increase the influence of Healthwatch Oxfordshire in ensuring that the voices of patients and public are heard by the health and social care system – by attending Committees and Boards, and through our support to service user groups, Patient Participation Groups, Primary Care Networks and the Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network.

Read our strategy in full at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/about-us/our-priorities

Next steps

In 2021-22 we will continue to focus on making sure that the voices of people from communities that do not generally engage with surveys, or who are digitally excluded, are heard. It often takes time to build connections and earn trust within these communities, but we are committed to working in this way. We have recently appointed an outreach worker in Oxford, and we are supporting five community researchers to expand our reach and listen to people from different communities.

Hearing from individuals and communities that are digitally excluded for whatever reason is another focus. With more health and social care services moving 'online', hearing the voice of those who do not use digital means is key to informing commissioners and service providers of the importance of continuing to provide access to all services for all people.

We will continue to monitor actions taken against recommendations in our research reports and outcomes from round table events. This ensures the voice that was heard is acted upon. We commit to keeping the public informed of the impact their participation in our research has had on services.

Again, Healthwatch Oxfordshire will focus on being present in communities to hear from local people. 2020-21 was a challenging year for this approach, but we continued to maintain relationships at a community level. We are hopeful that in 2021-22 we will continue to find creative ways to reach out and support strong links with community-based activity.

Rosalind Pearce
Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Executive Director



We will continue to explore different ways of sharing what we have heard – written reports have their place but stories, videos, diaries, spoken word, art are often more powerful.

We will continue to support communities to be 'round the table' with commissioners and service providers – the decision makers.



Thank you

We would like to thank everyone who has helped us over the last year, including:

- Members of the public who took the time to share their views and experiences with us.
- Our brilliant team of staff, trustees and volunteers for their hard work.
- The voluntary organisations we worked with for helping to ensure more people's voices are heard.
- The providers and commissioners of health and social care in the county who have listened and responded to the voices of Oxfordshire residents.

Sign up to receive our news

healthwatch
news Oxfordshire

We produce a fortnightly news briefing, which brings together our news and events as well as other relevant health and care news and information. Sign up to receive your copy at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk or by calling **01865 520520**.



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Oxfordshire, The Old Dairy, High Cogges Farm, High Cogges, Witney, Oxon, OX29 6UN. Registered in England and Wales as a Company Limited by Guarantee, No: 8758793. Registered Charity number 1172554. Healthwatch Oxfordshire uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Our Healthwatch board consists of six Trustees who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight, and scrutiny of 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 11 times with four of those meetings being formal board meetings making decisions on matters such as social care being the theme for 2020-21. In September 2020, the board agreed to recruit an Outreach Worker specifically to work with seldom heard communities in Oxford.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities in many ways - we make sure that we constantly keep an eye on the conversations, comments, enquiries, and website feedback on services, so that we can pick up on new and pressing issues that residents are bringing to us. We identify any major changes that are planned in the health and care system, and these are considered at the start and throughout the year, to steer our work priorities. At the end of 2019 we asked the public what they thought we should focus on in the coming year and this contributed to our social care theme for 2020-21.

2020-21 priorities and projects

Social care	Outcomes so far
<p>Hearing how local people experienced the council's 2018 change in contributions policy</p> <p>(published September 2020)</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council accepted our report:</p> <p>We will use the information in this report and any subsequent feedback as part of any future policy reviews.</p> <p>...We look forward to working with them [Healthwatch Oxfordshire] to develop more accessible and concise documentation for people who are expected to make a contribution towards the cost of their care. This will include ensuring people know how to request an individual assessment and access the complaints procedure if they need to, which were highlighted as areas of concern in the report.</p>
<p>Listening to care home managers about their experiences during COVID</p> <p>(July 2020 & March 2021)</p>	<p>We received responses to the report from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS England and NHS improvement • Oxfordshire County Council • Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust <p>Much of the response referred to the time lag between research and publication and that most of the issues raised had since been addressed.</p> <p>Following on from this report Healthwatch Oxfordshire carried out research into the experiences of family and residents in care homes. This report will be published in April 2021.</p>
<p>Listening to the voices of employed home carers</p> <p>(March 2021)</p>	<p>Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers responded:</p> <p>Conduct an annual survey of paid homecare workers to understand the challenges and successes of this service from the worker perspective. <i>We would be pleased to be co-commissioned to support you in doing this and dive deeper into this essential and valued role. This feels like a HWB responsibility.</i></p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council agreed that <i>'OCC and the providers should work together to ensure we achieve this, and we will be working on a campaign over the next couple of months'</i>.</p>
<p>Listening to the views of adult unpaid carers and asking if they are getting the right support when needed?</p> <p>(March 2021)</p>	<p>Carers attended a system-wide meeting to discuss the report's findings.</p> <p>Carers to be involved in monitoring, development, and evaluation of the new carers service.</p>

2020-21 priorities and projects

Seldom heard communities	Outcomes so far
<p>Exploring Oxford's new and emerging communities' views of wellbeing (joint project with Oxford Community Action) (January 2021)</p> <p>'A Problem Shared' video (February 2021)</p>	<p>Community presented to Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Meeting of community representatives with Chair of Oxford University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Community engaged with COVID-19 vaccination programme.</p> <p>Fourteen members of the community completed the Mental Health First Aid training course established to respond to the initial findings of this report.</p>
<p>Access to COVID-19 information and vaccination programme</p>	<p>Communities received COVID-19 information translated into five languages. We also produced and translated leaflets on how to interpret food labels into four languages.</p>

Responses to recommendations and requests

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. 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 Oxfordshire was represented on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board by Tracey Rees, Healthwatch Oxfordshire Chair, during 2020-21. She effectively carried out this role by attending meetings, taking an active part in the meetings by scrutinising reports presented and, in some cases, asking for clarity and improved presentation, and speaking to our reports.



You can read an easy read version and a summary of this report on our website at www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

Please get in touch if you would like this report in an alternative format.

Appendix 1

Reports published April 2020 to March 2021

Research reports

- Listening to care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic – July 2020
- Patient Participation Group activity during COVID-19 – July 2020
- Social care in Oxfordshire – how did local people experience the council's 2018 change in contributions policy? – September 2020
- GP surgeries supporting patients during COVID-19 – September 2020
- Let's talk about mental health – September 2020
- Emotional wellbeing in 0-5 year-olds in Oxfordshire – September 2020
- Oxford's new and emerging communities' views of wellbeing – January 2021
- Adult unpaid carers in Oxfordshire – are they getting the right support when needed? – March 2021
- Listening to the voices of employed home carers – March 2021
- Listening to care homes during the COVID-19 pandemic follow-up report – March 2021

Annual report

- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Annual Impact Report 2019-2020

Enter and View report

- Kassam NHS Vaccination Centre – February 2021

Reports to external bodies

- Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board – June, October and December 2020 and March 2021
- Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board – May and September 2020 and February 2021
- Oxfordshire Children's Trust Board – September and December 2020 and March 2021
- Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – June, September and November 2020 and February 2021
- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS)
 - Different outcomes, different access to care – December 2020
 - COVID-19 – people's experiences of access to care – March 2021



These reports are all available on our website
www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports

If you would like a paper copy of a report, please call
01865 520520 or email hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Appendix 2

Reaching out





Although we have been unable to get out and about as we usually would to attend community groups or events in person, we have worked hard to keep in contact with groups and reach out to new ones, via social media or online events and meetings. Here are some of the groups and organisations we have met with, heard from or worked with over the last year. There are many others we have linked with or heard from via social media.

- Action for Carers Oxfordshire
- ACKHI
- Afrikan Heritage Community Association
- ARK T Centre
- Aspire
- Asylum Welcome
- Banbury Lighthouse
- Banbury Mosque
- Carers Oxfordshire
- Chinese Community Advice Centre
- Chinese Day Centre
- Didcot Town Council
- Doctors of the World UK
- East Hagbourne Parish Council
- East Timor Community Association
- Good Food Oxford
- Great Western Park Residents Association
- Homestart Oxfordshire
- Kurdish Women Union in Oxford
- Oxford Against Cutting
- Oxford Brookes University
- Oxford City Council
- Oxford City Farm
- Oxford Community Action
- Oxford Diversity Football League
- Oxford Hub
- Oxfordshire Achieve
- Oxfordshire All In
- Oxfordshire Mind
- Oxfordshire Syrian Community
- Oxfordshire Voluntary Community Association (OCVA)
- Oxfordshire Youth
- Refugee Resource
- Replenish Oxfordshire
- Rethink
- Restore
- SOFEA
- Syrian Sisters
- SYRCOX
- Sunshine Centre, Banbury
- Victims First

Providers and commissioners of health services in Oxfordshire

- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Follow us on social media at:

-  www.twitter.com/HealthwatchOxon
-  www.facebook.com/HealthwatchOxfordshire
-  www.instagram.com/healthwatchoxfordshire
-  www.linkedin.com/company/healthwatch-oxfordshire



Appendix 3

Connections in the county

The following is a list of some of the organisations, groups and statutory bodies that we have met with or worked with in the last 12 months. This is not an exhaustive list.

- Arabic and Kurdish women Zoom meetings
- BAED Worlds Group
- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) Population Health Management Development Programme
- Canal and River Trust
- Care Homes Bronze Cell
- Community First Oxfordshire
- COVID Vaccine Hesitancy Sudanese Community Zoom meeting
- Early Years Network
- East Oxford Community Association COVID Vaccine Inequalities Zoom meeting
- Equality Reference Group
- Fit for the future – Strategic Development for Oxfordshire
- Health Inequalities Commission Implementation Group
- Healthwatch Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) Management Group
- Healthy Aging Public Advisory Group
- Horton Joint Overview Scrutiny Committee
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Steering Group
- Maternity Voices Partnership
- Mental Health Prevention Concordat Partnership Group
- NHSEI Health Inequalities Workshop
- Oxford City Thriving Communities Forum
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust – CEO
- Oxford Analyst Networking meeting
- Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – CEO; Council of Governors; Patient Experience Liaison meeting
- Oxfordshire All In Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance
- Oxford Analyst Network
- Oxfordshire Communications Network
- Oxfordshire County Council Quarterly Liaison meeting
- Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Forum
- Oxfordshire Children’s Trust Board (Healthwatch Ambassadors x2)
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group – Board; Quality Committee, Primary Care Clinical Commissioning Committee; OCCG led Phase 2 Calm Clinic Task and Finish Group; Diane Hedges, Deputy Director and Julie Dandridge, Head of Primary Care and OCCG led COVID Vaccine Uptake and Outreach to Diverse Communities meetings

Appendix 3

- Oxfordshire County Council – Adult Social Care
- Oxfordshire County Council Co-production Board
- Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board (member)
- Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board (Healthwatch Ambassador member)
- Oxfordshire Integrated Care Partnership – Population Health Management Action Learning Set
- Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) (reports to)
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (member)
- Oxfordshire Wellbeing Network planning group
- Oxfordshire Youth Forum
- OxIS-Health Thematic Workshop (Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy)
- Patient Participation Group meetings – attended several virtual PPG meetings and met with various PPG Chairs on an individual basis
- Quality Care Commission
- Quality Matters Oxon Learning Disability Network
- South Central Healthwatch Network
- Thames Valley Cancer Alliance Allies meeting
- Syrian Women Zoom meeting
- Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership



healthwatch

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