

Healthwatch Oxfordshire report to Health Improvement Board (HIB)

13 June 2024

Presented by Healthwatch Ambassador for the HIB **Robert Majilton**

Purpose / Recommendation

- For questions and responses to be taken in relation to Healthwatch Oxfordshire insights.

Background

Healthwatch Oxfordshire continues to listen to the views and experiences of people in Oxfordshire about health and social care. We use a variety of methods to hear from people including surveys, outreach, community research, and work with groups including Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), voluntary and community groups and those who are seldom heard. We build on our social media presence and output to raise the awareness of Healthwatch Oxfordshire and to support signposting and encourage feedback. We ensure our communications, reports and website are accessible with provision of Easy Read and translated options.

Key Issues

Since the last meeting in February 2024, our current work focus includes:

- **Health and wellbeing in Ambrosden, Arccott, Blackthorn, and Piddington** (May 2024), available here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/report/health-and-wellbeing-in-ambrosden-arcott-blackthorn-and-piddington-may-2024/>

This report was produced by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) on behalf of Healthwatch Oxfordshire, with a focus on understanding health inequalities, and health and wellbeing in a rural area of Oxfordshire. CFO carried out discussion groups, had one-to-one conversations with people living in the four communities and distributed a survey, collecting the opinions of 162 residents in total. Key themes included:

- The four villages have assets for people's health and wellbeing including access to green space, community groups and local shops – but there are differences between villages and demographic groups in how easy it is to access these.
- Challenges around isolation and accessing healthcare services, partly due to limited transport services and infrastructure, and a lack of resources to support community projects.

Together we will present what we have heard to Health and Planning Group in July.

Forthcoming reports: (**Note:** The publication of the following reports will be delayed until the end of the election Purdah period as per Healthwatch England guidance)

- We heard from caregivers in Banbury Neithrop and Ruscote, and caregivers of children with special educational needs and disabilities, about their experiences of looking after their **children's oral health**. This was supported by Core 20 Plus 5 funding, working with local community connectors to reach a wider range of people. Our five community connectors shared what they had learned with decision-makers at a learning event at the Hill Community Centre, Banbury. We will publish the report in July, along with a joint overview report on learning across the BOB ICB Core 20 Plus areas, in conjunction with Healthwatch Bucks and Healthwatch Reading.
- We heard from people involved with **Patient Participation Groups** (PPGs) across Oxfordshire about how groups are working and what their support needs are. We heard from 78 people representing 35 PPGs and GP practices across Oxfordshire – amounting to 53% of the 66 GP practices in the county. There was a clear voice that patients and PPGs would like more opportunities and pathways to hear from and feed into local health policy, communicate and engage directly with decision-makers. They would also like more clarity and structure around the role of a PPG, support to engage with a wider range of patients, and to be kept up to date with news and information about health and care in their local area.
- Our **community research** project, part of the NHS South-East Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR2) Programme Phase 2 culminated in a showcase event in London on June 6th the two community researchers from Oxford Community Action (OCA) have taken part in a year long programme, with HWO as host. They reached 166 members of OX4 Food Crew to hear about experiences of food insecurity and the cost of living. The report highlighted the significant impact of cost of living on people's ability to meet basic household expenses and the difficult choices made to make ends meet. It indicated underlying drivers - including challenges faced by people with longer term health conditions. It also highlighted the positive contributions made by community food provision in giving support, reducing isolation, and building sense of community and suggested actions for community and system partners to better support. We continue to contribute learning from our work to support development of Oxfordshire Community Research Network. The final report will be on our website, along with **a film** will be available here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-work/our-videos/>

Enter and View reports and visits continue. Once complete, all reports and provider responses are available here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-work/enter-and-view-reports/> including:

- Inpatient Ward at Bicester Community Hospital (February 2024)
- The Close Care Home, Burcot (March 2024)

- Day Lewis Pharmacy, Didcot (March 2024)
- Alma Barn Lodge, Didcot (May 2024)

All recent reports are on our website: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reports>

Other activity:

- We are currently hearing from people about their **experiences of leaving hospital and getting care and support afterwards**, through in-depth interviews with patients and unpaid carers, and an online survey open until end August: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/leavinghospital/>
- We convened a **webinar (May)** to enable Oxfordshire residents to hear about the new Pharmacy First scheme and ask questions to decision-makers. Video recordings of this and past events are available on our website. <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/news-and-events/patient-webinars/>
- We presented on the importance of Patient Engagement to an audience of over 150 at the Primary Care Network event in March (along with Healthwatch Bucks).
- Our regular Healthwatch Oxfordshire **hospital stands** continue with a recent visit to the Churchill Hospital to hear from members of the public.
- We support **My Life My Choice** in establishing and running a user led Health Voices Group to ensure the voices and experiences of people with a learning disability are heard by commissioners and providers. The Group's first two meetings, in February and June 2024, focused on learning disability nurses and mental health respectively.
- Our staff focus on general and targeted outreach to listen to and build relationships with community and grassroots groups. What we hear from people, feed into the overall intelligence gathered, picks up on emerging themes, and supports specific project theme focus. Recent face to face outreach has included: Witney Pride, Hanwell Fields Community Centre, Banbury House Hotel, Sunshine Centre Family Day, Grimsbury Community Centre Warm Spaces event, Banbury Spring Fest, libraries and food larders.
- We convened an online discussion about support to asylum seekers and refugees around oral health and other health support – connecting up system partners

Key issues we are hearing:

- Access to NHS dentists. We carried out a 'mystery shopper' exercise and found that, of the 57 dental practices we managed to speak to, 6 were taking on NHS adult patients and 15 were taking on children (compared to 4 taking on adult NHS patients and 17 taking on children in a similar exercise in April 2023). Website information on NHS 'Find a Dentist' was not always up to date – 13 had not been updated in 90 days and 7 gave inaccurate information. https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Dental-summary-30424_Final.pdf

- Getting GP appointments and communication with GP practices.
- Cancelled appointments (GP, hospital, community services)
- Challenges booking and accessing covid boosters – and limited access and coverage especially in Didcot area
- Problems accessing pharmacy services – for example long queues or pharmacies being closed during opening times
- Concern about access to ADHD medications
- Waiting times for SEND support and other CAMHS services
- Delays in accessing hospital services – including delays in receiving follow-up appointments, waiting for surgery or delays in getting diagnostic test results
- Praise for the good care most people receive from health professionals once they receive treatment.
- Meeting with D/deaf community and hearing about ongoing barriers to access due to poor interpretation support

Our priorities for 2024-5 have been published on our website
<https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/about-us/our-priorities/>