

healthwatch

Telford and Wrekin

Annual Report 2020-2021

**With your help
we're changing
local care for
the better**

Our mission is to make Health and Social Care Services better for the people of Telford and Wrekin.

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin is an independent champion for local people who use Health and Social Care Services. We provide a platform enabling patients and the public to have their views heard. We share those views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information

We help people find 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.

4 reports published based on your feedback related to health and Social Care Services

Palliative Care

Coronavirus pandemic

Dental Services

Hospital Discharges during Covid-19 Pandemic

Our Goals

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

Providing a high quality service

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

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.

Message from the Chair

Undoubtedly this year has been an extremely difficult one for our hospitals, front line Social Care, Public Health staff, and other key workers and Volunteers who have worked together heroically during the period of the pandemic.

Our NHS staff showed the country the amazing dedication that goes on in our local hospitals and community. Local people know first-hand the different that the NHS key services make to our lives and that of our families.

Our team at Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin like most others have introduced new creative ways of working to engage and communicate with service users, Stakeholders, Volunteer, and members of the public by Team meetings, Facebook, and Twitter. Whilst staff have been working from home locations, we have continued to respond to all issues raised by the public and have worked closely with all Statutory and Voluntary organisations.

As we come out of the pandemic and an emphasis is being placed on integrating care systems, we must learn from what has worked well and address the areas of inequalities that need to be addressed. The past year has brought stark relief that health and wellbeing are not equal. Factors such as culture, location, wealth, education, environment, and discrimination can lead to worse outcomes, and there is a strong consensus that this must change.



Barry Parnaby

Currently we are reviewing our priorities to ensure that we are tackling unequal health outcomes and access to support will require those in power to listen, hear experiences of those facing inequality, understand and act on the steps that can improve peoples lives. Our team at Healthwatch are ready to help by doing more to amplify the voices of communities that go unheard and reduce the barriers they face. We will continually ask ourselves what more we can do to listen to those the system currently overlooks, address the barriers to participate, and make sure our evidence gets those with the power to act swiftly.

Barry Parnaby,
Chair of Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin

We have a new Board member and are actively recruiting additional staff

We are excited to introduce our new Board member Fiona Doran, Fiona started with us in November, she is Co-Chair of the Mental Health Forum and a public Governor of the Midlands Foundation Trust for Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. She also works with the Carers Partnership Board in Telford and with other bodies. Fiona's background is in IT & Project Management. She will be focusing on Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and digital exclusion which will have a great impact on the Board.



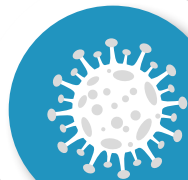
Fiona Doran

Additionally, new staff members are currently being sought to sharpen our skills base and widen our community connections.



Highlights from our reports 2020 — 2021

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic 2020: What did the people of Telford & Wrekin say?



We sought views from 122 local residents of Telford & Wrekin through a survey seeking their views about accessing Health and Social Care Services during the pandemic.

People's main challenges during the lockdown period were issues such as:

- Accessing Dental services
- Self-isolation and experiencing the difficulties of being unable to see loved ones and friends.
- Suspending services left many people without access to appointments or treatment.

Local residents' experiences of Dental services



We wanted to understand what major factors influence people's experiences of dentistry and identify any differences between NHS patients and private patients. We found that overall, most patients were happy with the service they were receiving. However, some patients felt improvements could be made.

Top concerns raised were:

- Booking emergency appointments
- Access (specifically wheelchair users)
- Medication (out of those who received medication more than 30% of these patients felt not everything was explained to them)

Experiences of Out-of- Hours Palliative Care in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin



We worked with Healthwatch Shropshire to gather the views and experiences of those who have received out of hours palliative care since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. In most aspects both patients/carers and professionals had more positive experiences of the additional support provided by the dedicated ShropDoc Palliative Care Helpline when compared with the NHS 111 service.

We also found:

- 48% of all ShropDoc contacts and 63% of all NHS 111 contacts needed a call back. ShropDoc called back 100% of patients/carers and 86% of professionals within 30 minutes. NHS 111 responded within 30 minutes to 44% of patient/carers and 36% of professional calls.
- 95% of callers to ShropDoc reported being either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' and 40% of callers to NHS 111.

Hospital Discharges During the Covid-19 Pandemic



Since March 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic new guidance was introduced nationally around hospital discharge, the aim of this guidance was to ensure that no one would remain in hospital longer than needed. Due to Healthwatch England's national survey receiving few comments from people in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin we decided to create a survey that would be relevant locally and help evaluate the service.

We found:

- 24% of people said that they/the patient had not been prepared to leave hospital when they were discharged.
- 24% of people waited more than 24 hours to be discharged.
- Carers and relatives told us that communication around discharge and after care could have been improved.

Enter and View

Enter and View is a statutory power that has given us the right to visit any publicly funded Health and Social Care provider, to see how care is being delivered.

Due to the pandemic, arranged visits to view these essential services - which represent a major part of our vital role - have had to cease.

Prior to the first lockdown in March 2020, our staff and volunteers undertook regular authorised visits to observe local hospital and Care Home services.

In the meantime, we will be taking the opportunity to recruit new volunteers and update our current training programs.

We have listened to the opinion and experiences of local people, to influence positive outcomes.

Check out our new website



When people visit our website, we want them to be able to navigate easily and find the information they need efficiently and with our brand-new website it could not be simpler. People can find all sorts of information and advice, local news about Health and Social Care Services, national/local campaigns and more. Our new website also gives you the opportunity to have your say on Health and Social Care Services in Telford & Wrekin. You can find the latest news, updates and take part in our monthly hot topic surveys 'Share your views'.

We recently began hosting the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Maternity Voices Partnership. You can access their information and find out more about them via our website. There is also the opportunity to have your voice heard and leave feedback on maternity and neonatal care from the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital (SaTH) Trust.

Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is responsible for inspecting Health and Social Care Services.

We meet with them quarterly to share service users' feedback and experiences. Our feedback contributes to their inspection programme to ensure the continued safety and quality of care for all.



Contacting General Practices by telephone during Covid-19

The purpose of this short study was to review all General Medical Practices (GPs) in Telford & Wrekin and find out how accessible GP appointments were over the telephone. We explored how many attempts/calls it took to get an appointment and the length of time that elapsed before the call was answered by a Receptionist/Call Handler.

We found:

GPs varied in the time it took to answer.

The quickest responses time for a call to be answered was 10 seconds and this fell within the period 12pm – 2pm and subsequently a call between 4pm – 6pm at the same GP.

The longest response time for a call to be answered was 45 minutes, which fell within the period 8am – 9:30am.

The average call-length waiting time to get through to a Receptionist/Call Handler between 8am – 9:30am was just over 10 minutes.

Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP)



Early in 2020/21 the MVP were pleased to launch the volunteer programme hosted by Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin; this included the recruitment of:

- Chair
- Two Vice Chairs
- Volunteers

This large team has enabled us to gather more service users' opinions; help promote and share the message and projects of the MVP, and further a range of important projects, from proofreading and co-producing a range of documents, to help build diverse contacts within our communities.

Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin launched their new look website in February 2021 which includes a dedicated page that helps people find out more

about what the MVP stands for, the work that we do, and how they too can get involved. This page is also the platform for a new, comprehensive MVP feedback survey, which we launched at the start of April 2021. The survey which has been planned and quality assured during 2020/21 elicits detailed feedback from service users and takes around 15-30 minutes to complete. It is broken down into sections to help identify themes and trends. The MVP will then review the feedback to the Local Maternity and Neonatal System to support a more focused development of the local services.

The team at Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin have worked extremely hard during the past year to get the website and the feedback survey successfully launched and continue to support the volunteer team. We are incredibly thankful and look forward to continuing to work closely together going forward.

Our finances



Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin is funded via the local authority, under a contract to deliver local Healthwatch services.

In 2020-21 we spent £100,340.96.

This is a brief breakdown of our total expenditure and total income:

Income

Telford & Wrekin Council	£100,000
MVP	£1,800
Total income:	£101,800.00

Expenditure

Staff costs (in total)	£52,087.92
Running cost of Healthwatch	£48,253.04
Total expenditure:	£100,340.96

Helping you find the answers

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.

We helped people find the answers to a few services such as:



23% - Hospitals

21% - GPs

13% - Social Care Services

42% - Other Services

We have received 167 comments/ complaints on experiences of local residents, who have used Health and Social Care Services

Maternity Services in Telford & Wrekin



We have continued to receive feedback from local residents, telling us about their experiences of using the Maternity Services. Last year in July 2020 both Healthwatch Shropshire and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin approached SaTH asking about the

support for patients, families and staff affected by the independent review of Maternity Services from SaTH and the wider system.

Next steps

With our priorities in-mind we will continue to listen to people, explore their views and encourage them to leave feedback.

Our priorities for 2021-22 are:

Mental Health

Adults and Children

Inclusivity

Listening to all sectors of the community and making sure their voices are heard.

Acting on feedback and driving change.

How we made a difference?

As members of the Vaccine Roll-out Group and the Local Authority's Outbreak Board, we have provided the public with regular updates received from Public Health. We have dealt with numerous enquires relating to the Pandemic, signposting service users to relevant agency support.

We followed up a query raised in relation to support for those who had previously suffered from Anaphylactic shock during the immunisation process. This was investigated and resulted in the issuing of new national guidelines.

Support given to Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), requesting greater involvement in engagement on new Pathways being introduced as part of the Integrated Care System (ICS). This resulted in an extension of the consultation process with Service users.

Representations made to SaTH Trust following discussions with families on concerns raised in relation to Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)/Complaint's system. It's reassuring to see that a full review is being undertaken to address shortfalls in the system.

Healthwatch are involved in all major ICS and Local Authorities and SaTH Boards in ensuring wherever possible that Patients/Service users' voices are heard in decision-making processes.

HWT&W host the MVP, together with NHS, and we provide ongoing support/training to the Chair and volunteers.

We have been working closely with others to address the Inequalities in the Health and Social Care system, highlighting the areas of priority and greatest need.

More recently we have been actively involved with the Local Authorities Working Groups Steering Committee and their related workshops, with the aim of developing a Charter for older people in Telford and Wrekin.

Our volunteers

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin have a small team of amazing and dedicated volunteers! They are a huge part of what we do. Despite not meeting face-to-face, they have spread the word for Healthwatch, through projects, gathering feedback and attending virtual support groups/forums. During the pandemic, we have refreshed our volunteers' training package to renew and strengthen their professional competencies.

Volunteer support meetings have been conducted via informal 'virtual' get-togethers, where we share insight into the challenges facing Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin residents. We have regularly sent out newsletters to our volunteers which - as well as being interactive, fun and upbeat - have importantly included, self-isolation activity suggestions and advice on allowing time and space for mental health and wellbeing.



Katie Cook

Our volunteers really are at the heart of what we do. We want to thank them for their time and the difference they help make within the community.

We are looking to attract new volunteers, young and old, to join our small staff team. Volunteering will provide you with new skills and experiences that can make a real difference in our communities. In growing our volunteer team we are seeking to attract people from different races and cultures, so that those whose 'voices are seldom heard' have the opportunity to represent the views of our diverse Telford and Wrekin population.

If you're interested in volunteering or need help or advice, please contact Katie Cook:

**Tel: 01952 739540
or Email: katie.cook@healthwatchtelfordandwrekin.co.uk**

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