

# The value of listening

Healthwatch Northumberland  
Annual Report 2023 – 2024



**healthwatch**  
Northumberland



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# Contents

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Message from our Chair	4
Message from the Chair of Adapt (NE)	5
About us	6
Year in review	7
How we've made a difference this year	8
Your voice heard at a wider level	9
Listening to your experiences	11
Hearing from all communities	15
Information and signposting	17
Volunteering	21
Finance and future priorities	23
Statutory statements	25



**“Over the last year, Local Healthwatch have shown what happens when people speak up about their care, and services listen. They are helping the NHS unlock the power of people’s views and experiences, especially those facing the most serious health inequalities.”**

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive,  
Healthwatch England



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# Message from our Chair

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In my first year as Healthwatch Northumberland Chair it has been humbling to reflect on the scale of the challenges facing the local health and care systems, the dedication with which our small team of staff and volunteers works to capture the experiences of local people, and the strength of the organisational relationships that have evolved to ensure that these experiences can be amplified to inform relevant decisions about system improvement.

We can be justifiably proud of the framework within which we exercise our independent function as Healthwatch Northumberland, and of the people who work tirelessly to ensure that we do this effectively; they are too numerous to mention by name, but I am immensely grateful to them all.

We are, however, acutely aware of how much more we would like to do. Over the past year, we have made good progress in strengthening our links with residents who have experience of health and social care services, and in reaching out to learn from people whose experiences might otherwise get lost. We have touched on this within this report and will build upon it in the coming year.

This links with our ambition to extend our reach more widely across those diverse communities – not only where people live, but also of their experience – whose voices deserve to be heard more clearly in the rooms in which decisions are made about reducing health inequalities. We are definitely ‘Here to Hear’, but even our talented team cannot be everywhere! So, if you or your organisation have any time, connections or insight that might help us to hear resident’s views and experience even more clearly, we would very much like to hear from you.



**“Over the past year, we have made good progress in strengthening our links with residents who have experience of health and social care services, and in reaching out to learn from people whose experiences might otherwise get lost in the louder public noise generated by higher profile groups or higher-volume services.”**

Peter Standfield, Chair, Healthwatch Northumberland



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# Message from the Chair of Adapt (NE)

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This is the eleventh Healthwatch Northumberland Annual Report and it is astounding to look back over the years to see what has been achieved by the dedicated staff and volunteer teams and board members. This year we welcomed Peter Standfield as Chair of the Board and we know that under his leadership and the dedicated effort of the current team, this record of achievement will continue.

Two constant themes over the years have been change in the health and social care systems, and Healthwatch Northumberland's ability to reach and listen to the people of Northumberland.

Making decisions about health and social care is a complex and difficult task, but one that is made better by always being open to hear, and learn from, the direct experience of service recipients and carers. Healthwatch Northumberland has gained respect through this partnership approach to working and by supporting constructive dialogue.

Adapt (NE) is proud to deliver Healthwatch Northumberland as part of its mission to build a more inclusive society, and so our thanks as ever go to the people who have taken the time to share their experiences to create better care.



**“Making decisions about health and social care is a complex and difficult task, but one that is made better by always being open to hear, and learn from, the direct experience of service recipients and carers.”**

Lorraine Hershon, Chair, Adapt (NE)



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# About us

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## Healthwatch Northumberland is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

### Our vision

The people of Northumberland have their health and social care needs met and their experience of using services heard and understood by those responsible for commissioning and providing services



### Our mission

To ensure that the people of Northumberland can give their views and are involved in and can influence decisions made about their health and social care



### Our values are:

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



# Year in review

## Reaching out:

over **12,000** people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care, or came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost of living crisis.



## Making a difference to care:

We published

**20 reports**

about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services.

Our most popular report was

**Lloyds Pharmacy Enter and View**

which highlighted the negative impact for patients at the start of pharmacy closures in the county.



## Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

**eight** outstanding volunteers who gave up **47 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority.

In 2023 - 24 we received

**£200,000**

which is the same as the previous year., plus **£9,030** from the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board for engagement projects.





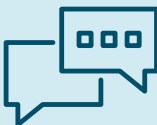



We currently employ

**six staff**

who help us carry out our work.



# How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>We drew attention to the impact of pharmacy changes on vulnerable people in the South East of the county</p>	 <p>We helped the NHS understand why parents in Blyth might attend A&amp;E with a poorly child rather than contact a GP</p>
Summer	 <p>Two young volunteers moved onto higher education with knowledge and experience gained from their time at Healthwatch Northumberland</p>	 <p>Our website gave people the health information they needed. Our most popular pages were mental health, dementia and LGBT support</p>
Autumn	 <p>Our 'Listening AGM' enabled members of the public to speak directly to senior decision-makers about the health and care changes they wanted</p>	 <p>60 people at our online session heard from the charity Battle Scars about the myths and realities of self-harm</p>
Winter	 <p>We published a guide to help with cost of living pressures and distributed it widely across the county</p>	 <p>We listened to parents about Health Visiting Services. The provider is now working on an action plan based on our recommendations</p>



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# Your voice heard at a wider level

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Through funding from the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, 13 Local Healthwatch have formed a network which enables us to work together, both on a regional and an area basis on engagement projects and the gathering of region-wide public feedback. This ensures that the public voice of Northumberland is heard at Integrated Care System level, influencing decision-making across the whole of the North East and North Cumbria. Some of the early work we have done is:

## Understanding the public view of dentistry services

At the end of 2023-24, the Healthwatch Network was commissioned to ask the public about dentist services, to help inform the Integrated Care Board's decisions around improvements to services. Healthwatch carried out extensive public engagement across the region, including surveys and mystery shopper exercises – we gathered over 3500 responses to the general survey alone.

In addition to hearing from the wider population about the general experience of trying to access dentistry care when needed, we also asked patients who received treatment through the additional government funding released in autumn 2023. We found that the temporary increase in funding for NHS dentistry was welcomed by the patients, despite a significant proportion of them not having their dental problems completely resolved.

However, the underlying issues in NHS dentistry provision in the region are still problematic and the ways to get NHS dental treatment are still not sufficiently clear to patients.

### What difference did this make?

North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board has received our report and recommendations and is thinking about how to improve the pathways so patients in need know how to get treatment.

## Making health research more relevant

The Integrated Care Board and partners asked Local Healthwatch to speak to people in their areas about health research. The 'Be Part of Research' project involved finding out from people about their understanding of NHS and health research, their interest in participating, and any barriers or challenges to involvement such as mental health and how these could be overcome.

### What difference did this make?

Our feedback will help the Research Engagement Network encourage wider and more diverse participation in research. Hearing from different communities improves research and ultimately improves services so they better meet people's needs.

## Newcastle hospitals

Healthwatch Northumberland, Healthwatch Newcastle, Healthwatch North Tyneside and Healthwatch Gateshead issued a joint response to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections of Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (NUTH). The inspections had led to a downgrading of the trust from its previous 'outstanding' rating.

While we are reassured that the CQC findings around caring are rated 'good', we are obviously disappointed to see these findings about a provider of key services in the area.

We welcome the robust approach taken by the CQC and the clear expectations of NUTH set out in the reports. We are encouraged NUTH quickly involved service users, families and carers as well as staff teams in its service improvement activities.

We have met with NUTH's leadership and are reassured that appropriate measures are being put in place to tackle the issues identified by these reports and are encouraged by the approaches taken by NUTH's new leadership so far.

As your Local Healthwatch we are here to hear your experiences of NUTH's services and can ensure these are heard by the trust.





# Listening to your experiences

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

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# Health visiting

**During our work in Blyth with parents of 0-5 year olds, some families told us of their experiences of Health Visiting Services. This service is delivered by Harrogate and District Foundation NHS Trust (HDFT).**

So we spoke to parents across the county who have pre-school children and those who were pregnant, to hear their experiences of the Health Visiting Service to understand more about what was working well and what could be better, as well as people's awareness of the service and what it could offer.

In total we heard from 192 families. Those who were happy with the Health Visiting Service praised support given by the service or their individual Health Visitor, and many who did not necessarily have routine or regular contact were still happy as they felt confident in getting support should it be needed.



Those who were less happy generally expressed concerns around staffing, having limited support, being unaware of how to access support, or being unhappy with a particular Health Visitor or the advice given. We also received many comments around accessibility and availability of clinics and concerns these were no longer 'drop-ins'. We heard that many people who had access to the new digital App were not using it as they were unaware of how it could be used.

## Our recommendations for change included

- Changing some sessions to drop-ins and addressing gaps in services in rural areas, particularly around Bellingham
- Ensuring health visitors or other staff demonstrate or explain the functionality of the App when giving parents details of how to download it

The full report is available on our website.

## What difference will this make?

HDFT welcomed the report and we are working with them to co-create an action plan to further develop Health Visiting Services.

*"We appreciate the feedback regarding wellbeing clinics. We endeavour to provide equal access to all service users. We will continue to work closely with partners and service users to source venues that meet the needs of the community."*

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## GP access and concerns

### **Making a GP appointment and communication with practices remain the things we hear about most.**

This is a complex issue and we decided to develop a patient-focused booklet including tips to help access, use of eConsults, different roles within surgeries and getting the right care, for example, the role of pharmacies and NHS 111. We are working with the Local Medical Committee on distributing the booklet across the county.

However, sometimes things do go wrong and patients have the right to make a formal complaint. Patient feedback was that many people seem unaware of how to resolve complaints or concerns with their GP surgery. This was in part due to changes to primary care complaints processes and in the provider of NHS complaints advocacy services.

Our volunteers explored every GP website in Northumberland for their complaints information to see how user friendly this is. We found variations in language, positioning and accuracy. Our report of the findings includes suggested text for GP surgeries to use on their websites which we hope they will find useful and choose to use.

We will revisit the process in 2024-25 to see what has happened.

## Harbottle mobile unit – a community speaks

### **Northumbria Primary Care had the idea to bring a mobile healthcare unit to Harbottle with a view to enhancing primary care services. Northumbria Primary Care asked us to be an independent channel for patient feedback and to provide a report summarising the feedback from its engagement events and patient survey.**

While there was some support for the proposal, concerns were expressed about the practicalities such as parking of the unit, water and toilet facilities, accessibility, confidentiality and staffing. We also heard concerns that current GP services being delivered in the village would be reduced as a result of the proposal.

Northumbria Primary Care took patients' views on board and decided not to pursue the proposal.

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# Three ways we have made a difference in the community

## Working together

**By working together we helped patients maintain a vital service and bring additional health and wellbeing services to a rural area.**

Alnwick Medical Group had to make the difficult decision to stop a prescription delivery service to Longhoughton. This greatly concerned residents who could not easily travel to Alnwick to collect prescriptions, and who were also worried about the reduction of services in the village. The parish council had ideas about how a local community centre could help.

We arranged a meeting with Alnwick Medical Group, Longhoughton Parish Council and NHS commissioners and a solution was agreed that means patients continue to collect prescriptions in the village twice a week. Discussions are now taking place about other health and wellbeing services that could be provided.

## COVID-19 vaccinations

**In April we heard concerns from several patients about the availability of spring booster COVID-19 vaccinations in Alnwick and surrounding areas.**

This was after being told that they would have to travel to sites in South East Northumberland and being unable to find local sites on the national booking system. We raised this concern directly with the Integrated Care Board which is responsible for delivering the vaccination programme, and found out there was to be a roving vaccination unit in the North, including Alnwick. We ensured that speedy communications came out regarding the locations and dates to alleviate patient concerns. We also requested that for future programmes key messages are sent to surgeries and local GPs before vaccination programmes start, to avoid similar miscommunication and understandable patient concerns around unnecessary travel.

A patient said *"A lot of people were very worried about Alnwick having been forgotten in the vaccination offerings so delighted with the swift solving of the problem"*.

## Fine online

**Accessing healthcare online brings great advantages but we recognise that digital may not be the best option for all patients.**

People can experience barriers through sight loss, dexterity, or cost. Some are online already but want to have more confidence in using digital systems.

Following on from public feedback at our Blyth Here to Hear sessions on this issue, we approached Marine Medical Group to ask if they would like to work with us jointly to host an IT session at the Blyth hub for its patients. This was to give support to register for GP online services, using eConsult, and downloading and using the NHS App.

Following that session the practice liaised with Blyth library so patients could be signposted to Digital Champions if they had problems using the App, booking appointments etc. and generally be 'fine online'.



# Hearing from all communities

Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from the least, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and that services meet their needs.

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## Here to Hear

We continue to go out and about across the county at our Here to Hear sessions, getting feedback from people about health and care services and offering our Information and Signposting Service. Alongside our regular monthly sessions, we visited many additional venues and events hosted by other organisations and groups, raising awareness of our work or giving talks, for example, to Carers Northumberland, Women's Institute, the Zig Zag project and Blyth and Ashington Local Area Committees.

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## People with learning disabilities

People with learning disabilities from across the county told us about their experiences of health and social care. We were pleased to raise awareness of our role at Healthwatch Northumberland and to have signposted to services such as cancer support and Health Trainers. Our thanks go to WECAN, Journey Enterprises and HFT for helping us hear from their service users.

*"I just wanted to thank you again for your time yesterday. The adults we support definitely got a lot out of the session, and it sparked some interesting conversations around appointments and care through the afternoon."*

Rebecca Brett, Senior Community Connector, HFT learning disability charity

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## Isolating jobs

We were part of a bi-monthly health initiative from The Fishermen's Mission alongside Well Up North Primary Care Network, to bring healthcare and information to fishermen and their families at Amble Quayside. Bringing services to the quayside was a good way to hear from this community which can have difficulty accessing healthcare services due to the nature of their work. We will be continuing to work with The Fishermen's Mission, Health Trainers and a range of charities to deliver regular health sessions at Amble Quayside.

We are now working with colleagues in other Local Healthwatch based in rural areas, as well as networks in Northumberland to hear from farming families.

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## The experience of Adult Social Care

We know that we need to do more to hear from people using social care services so that their experiences are heard by Northumberland County Council. This year we have worked with senior Adult Social Care staff to create the Adult Social Care People's Advisory Panel.

People on the panel are using care services every day, and early on they said that Carers Assessments were not working quite the way they should. Adult Social Care staff were quick to respond and involved panel members in training for front line staff who do the assessments.

Jane, a founder panel member says *"As a long-term receiver of Adult Social Care, it is refreshing to be able to express the views of someone at the 'sharp end'. It is good to know that we are being listened to by those who make policy and take the decisions which affect our health and quality of life so much"*.

Panel member John adds *"Being part of the Adult Social Care Panel has given me a voice to help shape the future policy and direction of Adult Services within Northumberland"*.

The meetings are lively and challenging and produce real improvements. If you would like to be part of the panel contact [derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk).





## Information and signposting

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Northumberland is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need, in line with a 'making every contact count' approach. Whether it's finding a GP practice, making a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

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## Helping people access the help they need

It's essential that people have clear, accurate communication about their care.

**“I didn't know the procedure of how to complain but I was guided along with different options, allowing me to make the decision suitable for my complaint.”**

One person we spoke to mentioned some struggles they were having in their home, and it was unclear what support was already in place. They were unaware of their GP's Social Prescribing Service, so we referred them on for some help. As a result of this referral and the excellent work of the Social Prescribing Link Worker, the person now has help with weekly cleaning and household tasks as well as receiving a small cash grant for help with heating, some shopping vouchers and other food items to help with the cost of living.

We helped a parent who was not aware of the Family Hubs or the services on offer, to register with the service. They said *“I wasn't aware of Family Hub support groups – I am pleased that Healthwatch Northumberland are now going to put me in touch with them”*.

A patient was being passed between GP and consultant to get a sedative ahead of a planned operation. There was agreement it could be done but not about who would do it. We signposted them to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). The patient told us *“I spoke to PALS and after a few calls and an email, it has all been sorted out. They got in touch with my consultant who rang me to discuss my options. Please accept my sincere thanks for your help”*.

Someone contacted us about help for their mum who has a range of health conditions, had fallen at home and needed more help and support to live independently. We suggested calling Onecall and asking for a needs assessment. We also gave information about the support available from the local Social Prescribing Service.

The caller took the time to get back to us to say *“I have spoken to someone at Onecall who has started the ball rolling in terms of getting her assessed at home with what would be available ... thanks again for all your help which is greatly appreciated”*.

## Online sessions

As part of our Information and Signposting Service we hold monthly online information sessions. These take place on the second Friday of each month when we give a platform to organisations and groups to speak about some common and some less well-known health conditions and support services.

This year 252 members of the public plus people who work in health, social care and voluntary and community organisations, heard from a wide variety of local and national charities and organisations. These included Eating Disorders North East, NECA Gambling North East, Arthritis Action, The Menopause Charity and The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, which spoke about the benefits of strength training.

Where possible, we record the sessions for people to re-watch in their own time or catch up with the talk if they couldn't make the live session. These recordings can be found on our website and YouTube channel and have been watched over 500 times this year.

Health and care professionals tell us it's a useful part of their Continuing Professional Development. One attendee said *"Thank you so much for organising these very useful events and making them available so widely"*.

## Supporting professionals with our reach into communities

A less well known aspect of our Information and Signposting Service is that we are often approached by professionals working in Northumberland to find out about help that may be available for the people they work with.

This is particularly important if they are new to the role or county. For example, we helped new national charity Stamma UK to promote its research around the difficulties people who stammer face when trying to book a doctor's appointment, and recommendations for improvements. We linked Stamma UK with North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board which agreed to include information in the North East GP bulletin and gave links to other Integrated Care Boards.

Similarly a new member of staff at BID, which provides specialist and support services across Northumberland for deaf and hard of hearing adults and those with a visual impairment, said *"I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the connections you've given. I'll start to make my way through contacting them and hopefully spreading the word about our service"*.

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## Cost of living resource

As we were increasingly hearing about the effects on people's health due to the rising cost of living, we decided to collate information on different support services that exist in Northumberland and publish them in one document as a handy resource. Although the information was already in the public domain we thought it would be useful to bring it all together in one printed booklet as part of our Information and Signposting Service.

We distributed the booklets to partners and also to the public at our Here to Hear sessions and other events. We soon had requests for copies from a wide range of organisations including Northumberland Communities Together, foodbanks, parish and town councils, village halls, libraries and Citizens Advice, who wanted to distribute them to service users and residents.

The resource, which is also available as a webpage and digital download, has been really well received. The 2500 copies we had printed initially were so popular we gave them away in a matter of weeks. We now have more copies in stock so please get in touch if you would like one or more in the post.





# Volunteering

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

**This year our volunteers:**

- Visited communities to promote Healthwatch Northumberland and what we have to offer
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Helped create resources for our Information and Signposting Service

**“When I retired, I was keen to do some volunteering and decided to approach Healthwatch Northumberland because I have been interested in health and social care provision for a long time. I wanted to learn more about how these services are provided locally and see if I could help to support and improve them for people. I think it’s vitally important to learn from the experiences of the people who are actually using these services, and to work in partnership with them. I’m looking forward to learning new skills, meeting new people, and feeling a sense of purpose in retirement.”**



Marilyn

**“As a new volunteer, I have not only experienced a warm welcome to the team, but have quickly learned of Healthwatch’s pivotal role in informing health and social care decisions. I have been introduced to the organisational structure of the NHS and, as I continue to develop in my role as a volunteer, I hope to enhance my confidence in communicating with people in a manner that is both appropriate and sensitive to their experiences. I am also keen to understand the challenges faced by individuals in my local community in relation to their health and social care experiences.”**



Matthew

**“Volunteering with Healthwatch Northumberland is rewarding. I enjoy travelling to different parts of the county listening to what people of all ages, and from very different backgrounds, have to say about the health and social care services they use. Knowing that this information is then shared with the managers and commissioners of these services, who value this feedback and use this information to plan and improve vital services, gives me great satisfaction.”**



Anne

## Do you feel inspired?



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

-  [healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](https://healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)
-  03332 408468
-  [info@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)



# Finance and future priorities

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

## Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£200,000	Expenditure on pay	£161,272
Additional income	£30,562	Non-pay expenditure	£26,000
		Office and management fees	£19,000
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£230,562</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£206,272</b>

### Additional income is broken down by:

- £21,532 brought forward from 2022–23
- £9,030 received from the local Integrated Care System for project work – see below

## Integrated Care System funding

We have received £9,030 in additional income for commissioned engagement activity in the year to date as follows, mostly from the Healthwatch Integrated Care Board (ICB) Network.

Purpose	Source	Amount £
Healthier Together	NECS grant	2,954
Waiting Well	ICB	250
Research project	ICB	800
Core ICB grant	ICB	1,875
Dentistry (two projects)	ICB	3,151

## Next steps

**Over the next year we will keep working across the county, reaching out especially to people less often listened to, for example, people whose work or lives mean they face difficulties in using health and care services.**

Thank you to everyone who responded to our Annual Survey and for telling us what you think we should work on next year.

You said these are

- 1. Care in the home**
- 2. Hospital discharge**
- 3. Pharmacy**

We will continue to work on GP access, dentistry, mental health and audiology services. Other issues will emerge so do keep in contact with us through the year!





# Statutory statements

**Healthwatch Northumberland is delivered by Adapt (NE),  
Burn Lane, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3HN.**

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

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## The way we work

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

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board consists of ten members 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.

Throughout 2023-24, the board met six times and made decisions on matters such as our leadership of the Adult Social Care People's Advisory Panel. The board also decided to use the Healthwatch Northumberland Annual General Meeting to bring community groups and senior decision-makers together in a 'listening session'.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities by using the feedback people give us about their experiences and a poll in our Annual Survey.

### **Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences**

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023-24, we have been available by phone, text and email, via a form on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We attended 122 community events and held five regular drop-in sessions per month in community locations, plus an online forum for the relatives of people who live in care homes.

We ensure that this Annual Report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, across our social media platforms and produce hard copies which will be available at events and community locations.

### **Responses to recommendations**

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

### **Taking people's experiences to decision-makers**

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insights and experiences that have been shared with us. In our local authority area, for example, we take information to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Primary Care Working Party, Carers Partnership Board, Equalities Steering Group and the Mental Health Transformation Leadership Forum.

We take insight and experiences to decision-makers in the North East North Cumbria Integrated Care System. Healthwatch Northumberland is represented at the North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board and associated sub committees by Christopher Akers-Belcher, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Hartlepool, and on the Northumberland and North Tyneside Integrated Care Partnerships by Paul Jones, Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside.

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## Enter and View

We did not use our Enter and View powers in 2023-24.

## Healthwatch Northumberland representatives

Healthwatch Northumberland is represented on the Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board by Peter Standfield, Chair of the Healthwatch Northumberland Board. During 2023-24 our representative has effectively carried out this role by raising issues of provision of 0-19 services with reference to the armed forces and the need to hear from less heard communities when developing mental health services.

Derry Nugent, Project Coordinator, represents Healthwatch Northumberland at the North East North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Sub Committee – Northumberland.

We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

The 13 local Healthwatch in the North East and North Cumbria agreed a formal Operating Protocol to coordinate joint work with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System. This work is funded by the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System and ensures that the experiences of people in all areas of the North East and North Cumbria are heard at the highest decision-making levels.

# healthwatch

Northumberland

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Images courtesy of David Shaw