



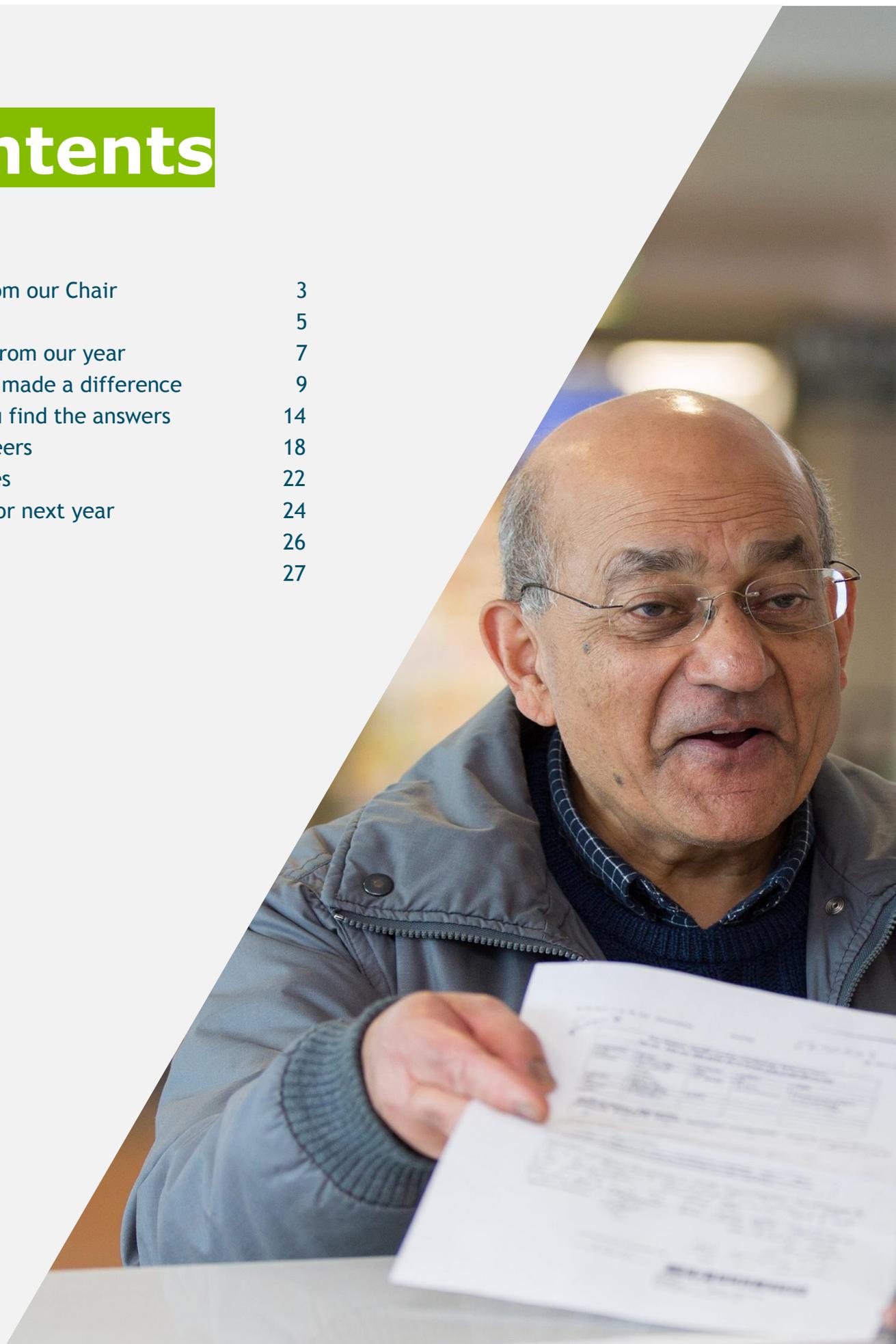
# Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

Annual Report 2018-19



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# Message from our Board

## An Introduction from our Interim Chair, Vivienne King

It has been a great year at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen, building on our relationships with all our stakeholders in the borough - making residents' views and experiences known to the local health and social care sectors and the voluntary sector and seeing the impact of previous years' reports on how services are delivered.

Volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, including young people, continue to play a key role in the delivery of our engagement with residents and we are hugely thankful to their contribution!

Our team of volunteers donated 1,260 hours in the year to supporting our projects - we really could not have delivered these without their passion and commitment.

The highlights of 2018/19 include:-

- + A focus on GP online access which highlighted the need for simpler ways to register and the need for support within the community for some of our residents to get online and access digital services.
- + A young people's project which resulted in the production of a toolkit for schools and youth groups to talk about 'Adverse Childhood Experiences'
- + Recommendations from our report on Children and Young People's Experiences of Asthma have resulted in better promotion of inhaler techniques for families and increased training for Primary Care staff
- + Supporting East Lancashire Hospitals Trust to

establish their Patient Participation Panel to ensure that residents have their say on how their services are designed and delivered

- + Increased reach through our information and signposting activities, ensuring that we gather voices of seldom heard groups.

During the year, we also gathered feedback on the impact of our work in 2017/18 -we are pleased to note that recommendations from our reports on Young People's Body Image, Social Isolation in the borough and Asylum Seekers and Refugees' experiences of health and social care provision have resulted in changes both at a policy level and in delivery of services by both health providers and Blackburn with Darwen Council.



*'Residents' open and honest feedback is critical to the impact of our work'*

*Interim Chair, Vivienne King*

I would like to thank the team of Directors, staff and volunteers for their hard work and successful outcomes.

Most importantly, I would like to thank all the people in Blackburn with Darwen who have shared their experiences with us - your open and honest feedback is critical to the impact of our work.

We will continue to listen to and share your views and experiences to the best of our ability, ensuring that these are heard by local health and social care services.

Vivienne King

## Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from 2,309 people who told us about their experience of a number of different areas of health and social care. Here are some examples of the changes that you want to see.



+ Make it easier to see a doctor or nurse quickly



+ Healthcare professionals should have a positive attitude and be empathetic



+ Staff should take the time to speak to people about what to expect next



+ Services should provide information so that people can make informed decisions about their care

# About us

## Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

*As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.*

*If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.*

*If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.*

*None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.*

*If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.*



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Robert Francis'.

**Sir Robert Francis QC**  
Healthwatch England Chair

## Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



## Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



## Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



## People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- + Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.





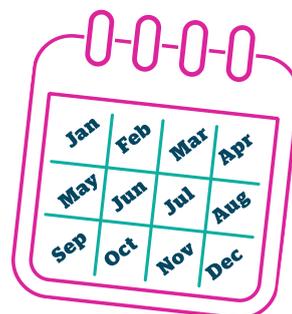
# Highlights from

# our year

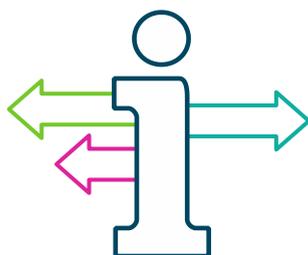
## Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2018-19. Our resources:



2,309 people shared their health and social care story with us.



We have 15 volunteers helping to carry out our work. They gave up a day a month of their time to support our work.



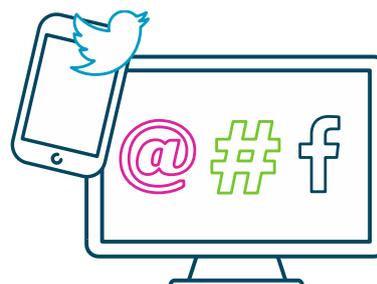
273 people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.



We visited 16 services and 12 community events to understand people's experiences of care. From these visits, we made 72 recommendations for improvement.



41 improvements we suggested were adopted by services to make health and care better in our community.



7% more people engaged with us through our website and social media.



**How we've made**

**a difference**

## Changes made to your community

Find out how sharing your views with your local Healthwatch has led to positive changes to health and social care services in Blackburn with Darwen. We show that when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

### Supporting young people and their families to access dental services

Poor dental health in children is a key issue within Blackburn with Darwen, with statistics in the borough being significantly worse than the average in England.

Between December 2018 and March 2019, Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen undertook engagement work focusing on children and young people and parents. The aim of the project was to explore the views and experiences of children and young people and parents on their oral health and dental habits within the borough.

Using these views, we made a series of recommendations to Blackburn with Darwen Public Health and NHS England:

- + Public Health as part of their responsibility to promote oral health in children and young people, in particular those that are deemed as 'vulnerable' should incorporate their oral health campaign with a specific focus of education on risk factors.
- + Better education for new parents on when to take their child to the dentist.
- + Joint working with Eat Well, Move More, Shape Up strategy with regards to the effect of diet/sugar on oral health. e.g effects of certain juices and bottle/dummies use.
- + A clear oral health programme which is accessible, creative and highly promoted to all children through schools and early years settings, especially targeting children at risk of poor health.
- + NHS England dental services to champion evening and weekend appointment facility for working parents.
- + Develop toolkits for parents to support them to make brushing fun.

#### Feedback from families

"I can't afford treatments or check-ups" (*participant was not aware under 18's is free under the NHS*)

Only 2 of my children are at the same one they didn't have space for my youngest and myself and my husband.

## Making it easier for people to access digital health

Blackburn with Darwen has below England average user rates for online booking of GP appointments and reordering prescriptions according to the 2018 National GP Patient Survey.

With the upcoming implementation of the Healthier Lancashire and South Cumbria digital health strategy, Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen wanted to understand service users' experiences, both positive and negative, and identify common themes or any barriers that people may face in supporting their health digitally in order to inform the commissioning of these services and ensure that patients' preferences are considered.

We carried out focus groups with vulnerable and seldom-heard community members across the borough, engaging with deaf residents, stroke survivors, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, adults with learning disabilities

and a South Asian women's group.

Our volunteers also reviewed the 25 GP practice websites, with only 11 out of 25 finding it easy to find information about online booking and only 6 out of 25 finding it easy to register for Patient Access.

Following our assessments, we recommended that:

- + GPs offer support to residents to use online booking apps
- + GPs reassure their patients that face to face and telephone booking options will remain available for people who prefer these
- + The apps should use simple language supported by visual and audio options and include the ability to book translation and BSL services
- + There should be wider choice of appointment times and availability

“Understanding technology is an issue for me- I would love to use it but I really struggle to understand it.”

*‘Milan’ Ladies Group trying out new health apps*



“The consultant appointments and support from respiratory team have been invaluable to us as a family. We have felt supported and guided to gain some control after a very frightening time.”

“An app or a video so people can keep checking & practising to make sure they are doing it right”

“I struggle with my breathing when I am exercising. PE lessons give me anxiety as I am worried if I start breathing loudly or wheezing. It’s embarrassing for me to tell the teacher in front of the whole class.”  
14 years old male

### Feedback from young people and families

## Supporting young people and their families to manage asthma effectively

In Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire, we have the highest number of children & young people with asthma admitted to hospital each year. We carried out engagement with 85 young people and their families to understand their views and experiences of asthma support across the borough.

A task group including our young volunteer ‘Amplify Champions’ consulted with young people and their families using both questionnaires and focus groups delivered in schools and youth groups.

Using these views, we made a series of recommendations to Blackburn with Darwen CCG:

- + Up to date training on asthma support should be provided for all GPs and they should identify and implement a lead person

responsible for asthma within the practice.

- + All schools in Blackburn with Darwen to be supported by NHS Clinical commissioning group to incorporate the Asthma friendly school in Blackburn with Darwen.
- + Young person friendly material available and promoted in appropriate places where young people access
- + GPs to highlight the importance of personal asthma action plans to families and make them aware of the need for a follow-up appointment after back to the GP for a follow up appointment within 5 days of receiving emergency care

As a result of our work increased training for Primary Care staff on asthma support has been implemented, greater promotion on GP practice TV screens has been arranged and more schools have signed up to the ‘Asthma Friendly Schools Charter.



## Have your say

Share your ideas and experiences and help services hear what works, what doesn’t, and what you want from care in the future.  
w: [www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk)  
t: 01254 292686  
e: [info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk)

## Healthwatch Together

Healthwatch Lancashire is a member of Healthwatch Together, a partnership of four strong, independent and innovative Healthwatch organisations:

- Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen
- Healthwatch Lancashire
- Healthwatch Cumbria
- Healthwatch Blackpool

Our vision is to deliver effective community engagement and co-production opportunities in collaboration with our local health and social care partners to bring about the transformation of health and social care provision in Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Healthwatch Together was developed with a core objective to work together so that we can engage and represent our communities to drive forward meaningful change in health and social care provision.

We are a professional partnership working effectively with our partners to facilitate change, we need to speak with one voice and to provide real solutions to the challenges we face across Lancashire and South Cumbria together.

Healthwatch Lancashire, Working in collaboration with our neighbouring Healthwatch, will empower health and social care professionals to engage local people in co-production opportunities.

This year Healthwatch Together have delivered a number of projects covering a range of themes, including:

- Digital Health Plans
- Screening programmes for women with learning disabilities
- Children and young peoples mental health services

In the future we will continue to explore opportunities for the Healthwatch Together partnership to engage with our communities on issues that matter to them.





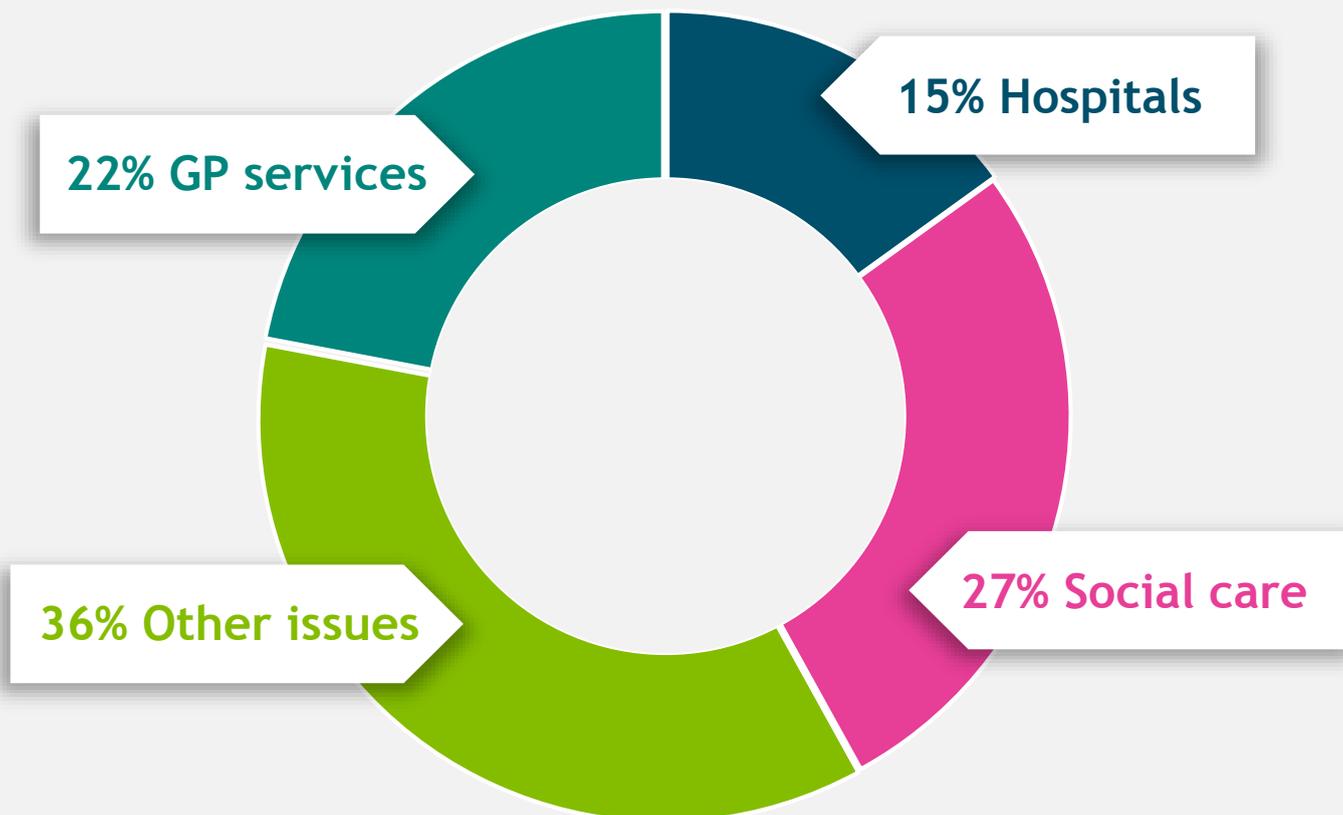
**Helping you find**

**the answers**

## What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

Here are the most common things that people ask us:



## How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look. Last year we helped 273 people access the advice and information they need.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + Specific advice and information blogs online
- + Our contact us form
- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone

## Translation Services



Mr Ahmed enquired about further support to manage his Diabetes (Type 2). He had been attending his regular diabetic clinic appointments but was still unsure as to what he needed to do to manage his diabetes.

Through Healthwatch BwD's information & signposting drop in service at his local health centre, Mr Ahmed explained he is not confident that he understands what is being said to him during his appointments as English is not his first language. Mr Ahmed was given information on the option to request a translation service that is available for patients.

## Knowledge of Complaints Procedures

Many people are often at a loss as to where to go when concerned about the care they are receiving. People are also worried about giving negative feedback to their care provider for fear of it affecting their care.

Healthwatch BwD have responded to these queries by explaining the complaints procedure to service users and if appropriate signposting them to a local advocacy service who can provide further support through their complaints. Regular, anonymised complaint themes are also fed back to providers and commissioners who are encouraged to use feedback as a quality improvement tool.

*'I was not aware of this service and will be requesting this prior to my next appointment.'*





## Domiciliary Care (Care at Home)

Hundreds of people have been supported with their health and care issues thanks to the information and signposting service delivered by Healthwatch BwD. From help finding a new GP practice, to options around social prescribing, the drop-in service is there for people, families and staff, to help with a range of issues.

One recurring theme over the last 12 months has been around domiciliary care. People telephoned in to Healthwatch BwD to discuss their experiences and concerns about the care put in place at home. People shared that the care package is not always adequate and at times does not meet their needs.

As a response to this, Healthwatch BwD will be facilitating a number of domiciliary care forums over the next 12 months to gain a greater understanding of people's experiences. The forum will consist of a panel of care providers, commissioners and partners, giving people who receive domiciliary care, and their families and carers, an opportunity to share their views and experiences and put their queries and concerns to the panel.



## Are you looking for help?

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

w: [www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk)

t: 01254 292686

e: [info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk)



# Our volunteers



## How do our volunteers help us?

At Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen we couldn't make all of these improvements without the support of our 15 volunteers that work with us to help make care better for their communities.

- + Raise awareness of the work we do in the community
- + Visit services to make sure they're meeting people's needs
- + Support our day to day running e.g. governance
- + Collect people's views and experiences which we use in our reports



## Saad's story



My name is Saad Hashmi and I volunteer at Healthwatch BwD . I have a background in medicine and I am a registered doctor at General Medical Council, UK. I have a particular interest in Public Health and have attained MBA degree in hospital and international healthcare management in order to acquire skills in designing healthcare delivery processes.

I wanted a practical opportunity to practise my skills by volunteering in a relevant community focused organisation. I found HealthWatch BwD a perfect opportunity. My objectives are completely aligned with the vision and mission of HealthWatch BwD and I love working along with other team members.

I take part in Enter & View activity projects and have visited various healthcare settings such as the hospital, GP surgeries and care homes. The experience gained in such activities gives me a confidence boost and sense of achievement each time.

*'Volunteering on Enter and Views gives me a real sense of achievement each time'*

## Meet our volunteers

We caught up with a couple of our fantastic volunteers to show you how their work truly makes a difference to the lives of people in our area.



### Saima

I got involved with Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen to keep myself busy whilst I was unemployed. Volunteering helped me to gain experience and get my confidence to get back into the world of work. I've loved contributing to reports and putting my graphic design skills, which my degree was in, to great use!

### Nancy

Hello, my name is Nancy. I care about protecting the health, wellbeing and rights of individuals within my community to help ensure every individual lives free from abuse, harm and neglect. To this end, I have undertaken different volunteer roles at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen since 2014. Volunteering has given me the opportunity to develop and use practical skills.



## Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering get in touch.  
w: [www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk)  
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e: [info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk)



**‘The views and stories  
you share with us are  
helping to make care  
better for our local  
community’**

**Mike Smith**  
Healthwatch Volunteer



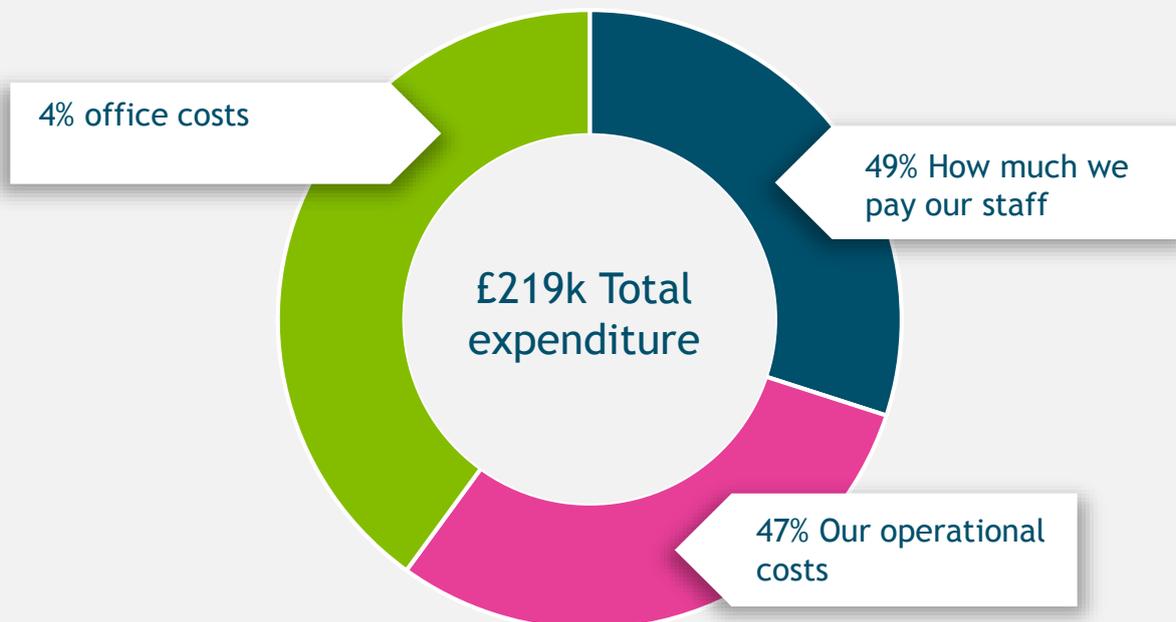
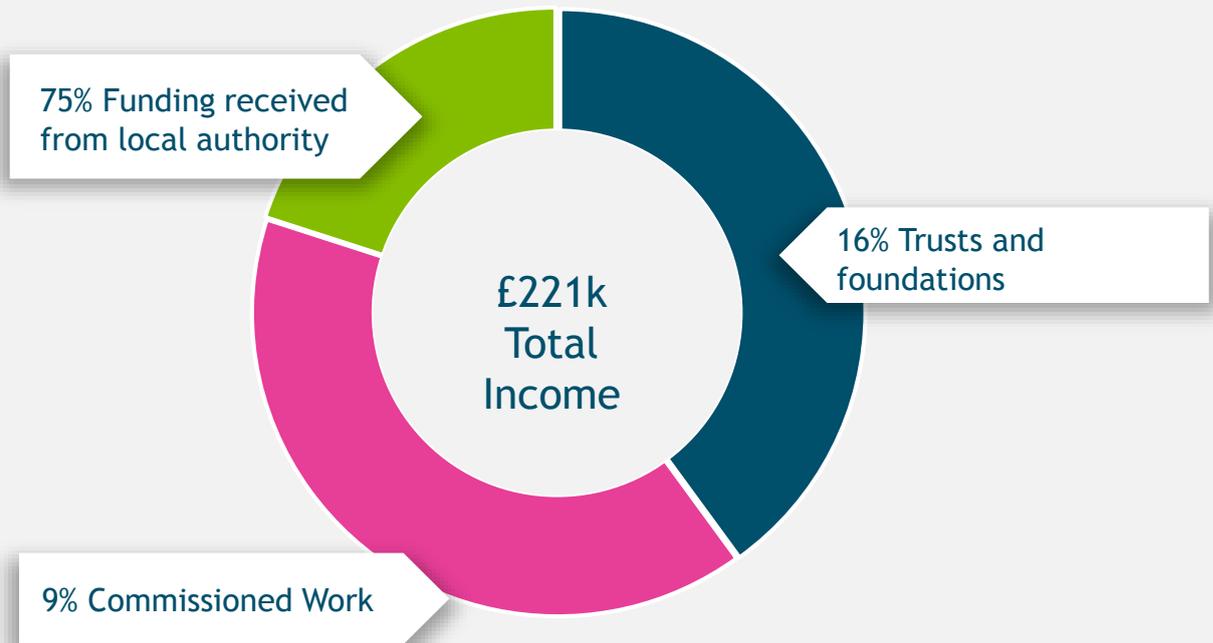
# Our finances



## How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority. In 2018-19 we spent £219k.

We also received £56k of additional income from trusts and foundations and commissioned work.





**Our plans for**

**next year**

# Message from our Chief Officer

## Looking back

- + Last year was one of transition for us as a team and I am proud of the progress we have made in both building our reputation within the local community and with partner organisations.
- + We have made great inroads into understanding our impact better as an organisation and sharing with residents the difference that they have made to services by simply telling us their story.

## Looking ahead

- + Our 2019/20 workplan is based on feedback from residents on what they consider to be the priority issues affecting the borough - these include adult mental health, management of diabetes conditions and the care of our most vulnerable residents.
- + We will also continue to engage with residents on what changes they would want to see in their community as a result of the NHS Long Term Plan.

## Opportunities

- + We look forward to continuing to collaborate with our other local Healthwatch organisations in Lancashire and South Cumbria on what is important to residents in our local area and sharing this with commissioners and providers.

## Thank you

- + I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their continued support and hard work and also our volunteers for their invaluable contribution, we could not do it without them. The team are hugely thankful to all our partner organisations in the voluntary sector, who are key to the effective delivery of our engagement projects.



*'We are proud to share with residents the impact that their stories have made on provision of local services'*

**Abdul Mulla**

Chief Officer, Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

# Thank you

Thank you to everyone that is helping us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- + The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- + Blackburn with Darwen Public Health for their ongoing support
- + All our local commissioners and providers for working with us and taking on board our recommendations

‘The Pennine Lancashire Volunteer project is part of the *‘Together a Healthier Future’* transformation programme which is a partnership between organisations in the voluntary sector, the NHS and Local Authority with the specific aim of reviewing volunteer services across the three sectors to develop a whole system approach.

One of the partner organisations is Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen who have played a dynamic role in contributing to the eight workstreams. This has involved advice on various initiatives, regular and reliable attendance at project meetings and producing data to help monitor trends for example a series of workshops designed specifically for Volunteer Managers. It has been a great pleasure to work with Healthwatch.

*Maggie Asquith, Volunteers Project Lead  
Together A Healthier Future*



# Contact us

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If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.



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