



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

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Message from our Chair



An Introduction from our Interim Chair, Vivienne King

This has been a year of strengthening our relationships with stakeholders and developing Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen's profile within our community, ensuring that we give voice to the experiences and views of those least heard.

Our priorities for this year were developed based on what residents told us they saw as the most significant issues facing members of our community.

The highlights of 2019/20 include:-

- A focus on the experiences of individuals with dementia, and their families and carers, of discharge from acute to home care or residential care which highlighted the need for carers to be involved in discharge planning and to feel they have been listened to, valued and had their needs considered.
- A project gathering residents' experiences of mental health crisis which highlighted the need for improved early intervention support, improved discharge from inpatient settings and the need for mental health training for all staff working in Accident & Emergency.
- A series of Home Care Forums which engaged a wide range of residents in sharing their views that services need to engage better with service users and their families and the need for more effective discharge processes between the NHS and Adult Social Services and better communication of financial options and arrangements by Adult Social Care.

We were also proud, as a member of the Healthwatch Together collaborative, to have received a Highly Commended in the Healthwatch Network 2019 Awards for Giving People the Advice and Information they Need for our co-production of screening information leaflets for women with learning disabilities.

I would like to thank our Directors, staff and volunteers for all their hard work and most importantly residents of Blackburn with Darwen for sharing their honest views and experiences with us.

Vivienne King
Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen Chair

“Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen's impact as an organisation is driven by the ability of our residents to voice their experiences and concerns openly and safely with our staff and volunteers”

Our priorities

Last year 2,160 people told us about the improvements they would like to see health and social care services make in 2019-20. These are our six priorities for the year ahead based on what you told us.



Management of diabetes amongst residents – Type 1 in young people and Type 2 in adults.



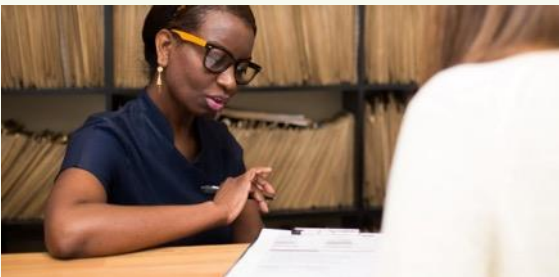
Young people’s mental health and emotional wellbeing



Adult mental health – with a focus on people’s experiences of crisis



Residents’ views on home care provision in the borough being heard and acted on



Effective discharge of adults with dementia from acute to social care



Person centred care and better information available for residents to make decisions about their care



“Healthwatch have continued to make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of local residents over the past year. They continue to be constructive critics of local services, a voice of the people, gatherers of research and public communications champions on key health and wellbeing issues.” Dr Dominic Harrison, Director of BwD Public Health

About us

Here to make care better

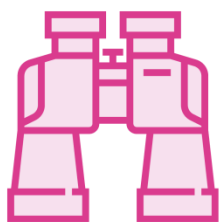
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review – sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

 I've now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I'm extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people's views to decision makers at a national and local level.

Sir Robert Francis, 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 who 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.



How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. 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



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk

Twitter: @HealthwatchBwD

Facebook: @Healthwatchbwd

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2019-20.



Health and care that works for you



15 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 1,260 hours.

We employed

5 staff

80% of whom are full time equivalent.

We received

£148,500 in funding

from our local authority in 2019-20, 10% less than the previous year.

Providing support



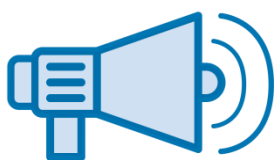
2,378 people

shared their health and social care story with us, 3% more than last year.

286 people

accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support, 5% more than last year.

Reaching out



10% more people

engaged with us through our website, 2,924 people engaged with us through social media, and 385 people engaged with us at community events.

Making a difference to care



We published

9 reports

about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care, and from this, we made 65 recommendations for improvement.

How we've made a difference



Speaking up about your experiences of health and social care services is the first step to change.

Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people with dementia receive in discharge from acute care to adult social care, either at home or in a residential setting.

Helping families and carers have a voice in the discharge of their loved ones with dementia

It was identified in the National Audit of Dementia (2017) that Royal Blackburn Hospital received a below average rating for the 'extent of planning for discharge from hospital for people with dementia, hospital transfer and how adequately carers were informed'.

East Lancashire Hospitals Trust has now signed up to the Dementia Friendly Hospital Charter and is proactive in ensuring that best practice guidelines are achieved.

We carried out 3 Enter and Views at the hospital and in residential care home settings and carried out 20 in-depth interviews with families and carers of individuals with dementia.

Based on what people told us, we made the following recommendations:-

- All professionals in the discharge



pathway should 'ensure that carers are involved in discharge planning and are listened to'

- There should be clear communication with the about discharge and support arrangements.
- Clear communication about any prescribed medication and management of the person's condition should be discussed with the main carer
- Professionals should not influence the decision of the patient, family or carer.
- There should be clear communication and effective coordination, irrespective of where a person is discharged to, of post discharge treatment, support and information ensuring that adequate care packages are in place.

I would like to thank Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen for undertaking this valuable piece of work. The Trust constantly strives to ensure all our patients have the best possible experience when using our services. We take all feedback very seriously and will be taking on board the feedback and recommendations '

Christine Pearson, Executive Director of Nursing for East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust



Understanding residents' experiences of mental health crisis

Mental health services improve their early intervention approach to reduce the number of adults reaching crisis

When consulting with residents on our 2019/20 workplan, one of the most highly voted areas was Adult mental health services in particular at crisis point and admission to a mental health inpatient facility.

We carried out a survey online and face to face interviews with service users of community mental health services and with inpatients at Pendleview Mental Health Inpatient facility in Blackburn with Darwen.

Key recommendations from our discussions with patients include:-

- Improved early intervention support to avoid people reaching crisis

- Better communication of support available in the community
- Mental Health awareness training for all staff in Accident & Emergency
- A more person centred approach to home care treatment
- Early discharge planning from inpatient services
- Improved post discharge support provided, with varied options to avoid relapse.



I feel people will know why I am here. Trying to hide is embarrassing, I was worried as someone I know could walk through that door and see the state I am in.

Patient experience of A & E



Home Care Forum discussing direct payments and personal health budgets

Home Care Forums Create A Safe Space for Open Conversation for Families and Carers

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen established a series of home care open forums to start a discussion about issues facing people who use these services, their family, carers and service providers. Guest panel members were invited to speak on their topic of expertise and host question and answer sessions with the public.

The main topics covered in the forums were:-

- Time; Management & Communication;
- Commissioning of Home Care Providers and Quality Assurance

- Triage, Assessment and Complaints
- Direct Payment & Personal Health Budgets

The forums were well attended by a wide range of members of the public who had the first opportunity to raise concerns about support and ask questions, which they have struggled to get answers to over the phone, to providers of services.

Next steps involve better involvement of service users, families and carers in the design and evaluation of services in the future.

"Care staff need better training and more time allocated when supporting someone with dementia. Rushed visits increase agitation which then leads to poor cooperation and impacts on effective care provided". Family member



Share your views with us

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.

Website: www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk

Telephone: 01254 292686

Email: info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



More than 40,000 people shared their views nationally with Healthwatch.



Our national Healthwatch network held over 500 focus groups reaching different communities across England.



In Lancashire and South Cumbria, Healthwatch Together hosted 20 focus groups with priority groups across the geography on what matters most to them as service users and what barriers in the system they face.

NHS Long Term Plan

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the 'Long Term Plan' in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next 10 years. Healthwatch launched a countrywide campaign to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in their communities.

Here's a summary of our work and what we found in Lancashire and South Cumbria.

- Mental health service users felt there was a lack of support for their issues and lengthy waits for referrals.
- There was a lack of understanding around the role of the PCNs but community services seem to be heading in the right direction.
- GPs tend to focus on physical symptoms with not enough emphasis on people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Having greater access to health professionals in the community other than their GP would be welcomed.
- Illiterate and visually impaired individuals still receive letters and rely on family rather than being catered for.
- Continuity of care is important and patients dislike explaining the same symptoms at each visit due to never seeing the same GP twice.
- A & E services should be kept for emergencies only, with better triage especially for mental health access.

Helping you find the answers

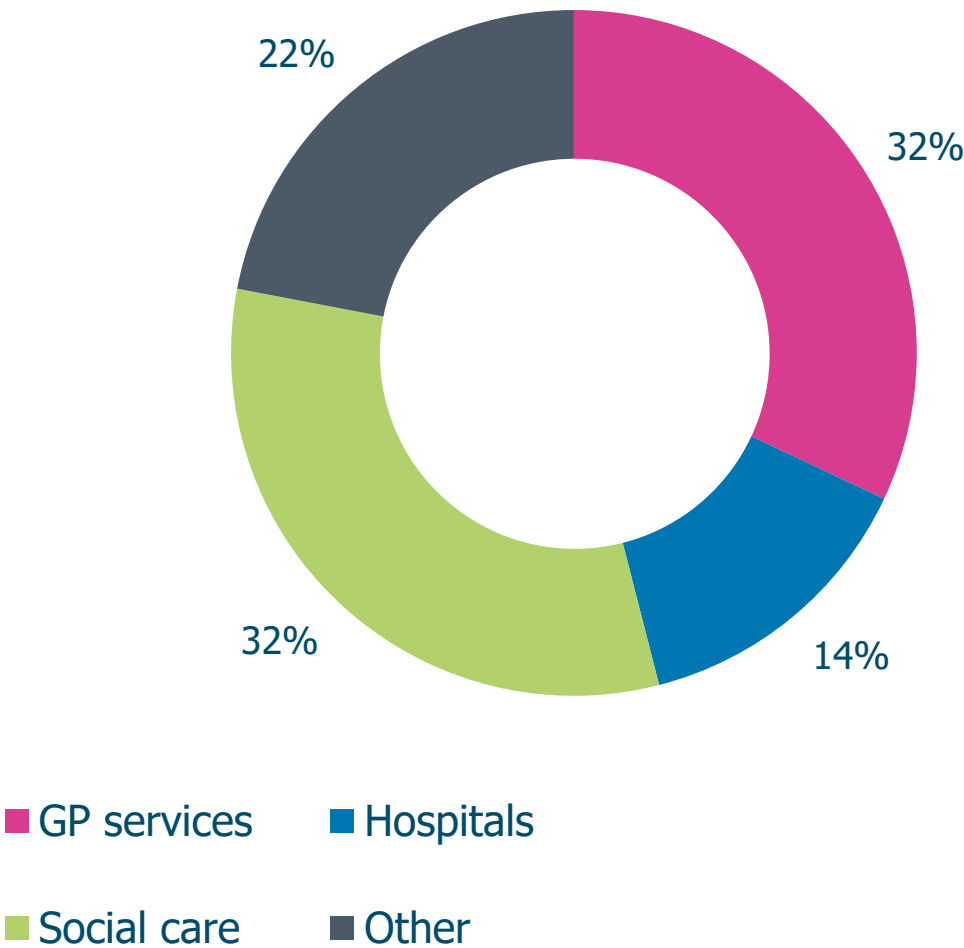


Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care and find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped 286 people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people’s queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about.



Case study: Improving hospital access for patients with mobility issues

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen supported a local resident with her concerns both for herself and others about physical access at the local hospital.

Themes of her complaint included:-

- Lack of assistance to get to an outpatient appointment – although assured that a porter would be available to escort her from reception to the relevant department, on arrival the patient was told that this service was not available for outpatient appointments.

- Parking issues – whilst the parking office was closed, the patient found it difficult to pay for her ticket as the machine did not have clear instructions of where to insert parking tickets/debit cards.

Following Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen's discussions with the patient experience team involving the patient herself, it was confirmed that East Lancashire Hospitals Trust would:-

- Have patient transfer services available Monday to Friday directly from the main reception
- Have disabled friendly parking machines and ensure that the parking office is not closed during key visiting times.



Volunteers



At Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen we are supported by 15 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, to services in their communities.

This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of the work we do at events, in the community and with health and care services.
- Visited services to make sure they are providing people with the right support.
- Helped support our day-to-day running.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

Working in Partnership with Blackburn College

It has been a fantastic opportunity this year for Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen to take on two work placement students from Blackburn College to support our day to day work as well as work on specific projects.

James and Miro brought fantastic skills in business administration and graphic design to the team, supporting our work on presentations, workshops and report writing.

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen worked on a project this year raising awareness of food poverty amongst young people in the borough and supporting them to tackle this topic both in and out of school.

As part of the project, we worked closely with Church Poverty Action Group and Lancaster University to develop a film and set of flashcards as a resource to discuss food poverty and related issues with older teenagers in a range of settings.



Young people's views are central to our work at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

James and Miro were an amazing support on this project, working on the social media campaign but also testing out the materials we created to ensure that these were suitable and appealing for an audience of 14-19 year olds.

Their feedback on the resources was well received by the team at Church Poverty Action group and is now quoted on their social media!



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen.

Website: www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk

Telephone: 01254 292686

Email: info@healthwatchbwd.co.uk

Our volunteers

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and hear what they get up to.



Saad

I have a background in medicine and have a particular interest in Public Health. I wanted to give a practical shape to my skills by volunteering in a relevant organization. I found Healthwatch BwD a perfect platform this working on Enter & View activities – this gives me a boost of confidence and sense of achievement each time.



Saima

Now that the kids were back at school I wanted to do something valuable with my free time whilst unemployed. Volunteering in the office has given me the chance to put my graphic design skills to good use, helping out on project flyers, presentations and reports. It's given me the confidence to get back into the world of work again!



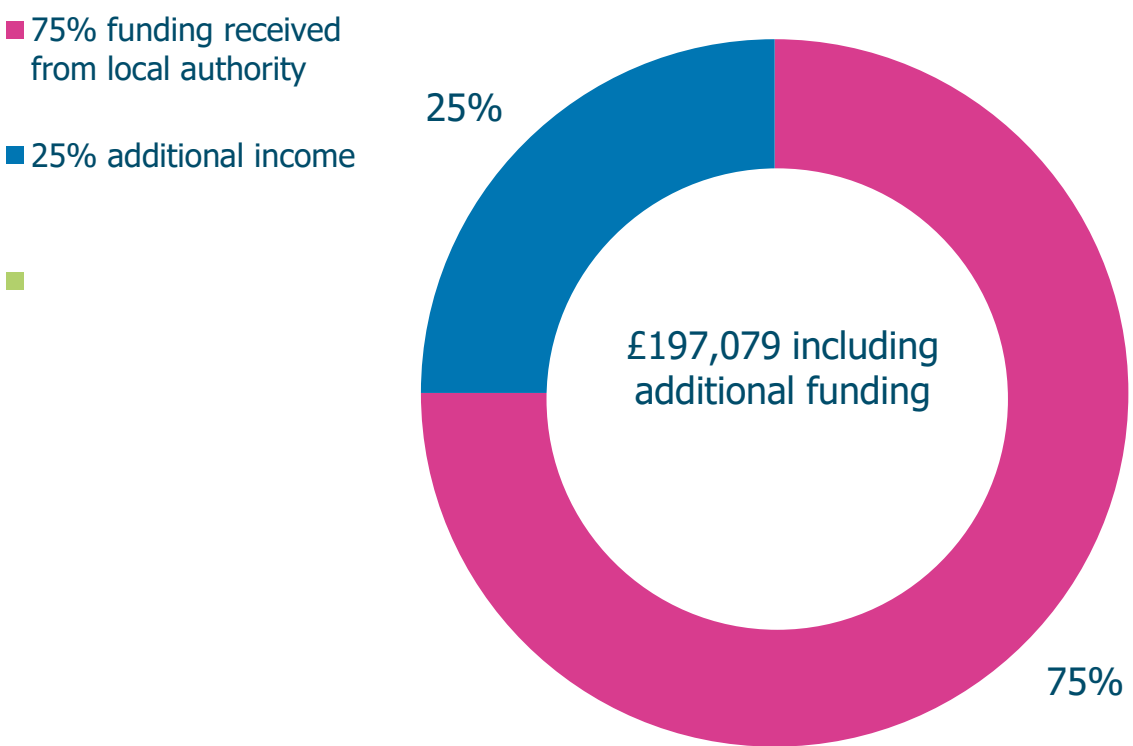
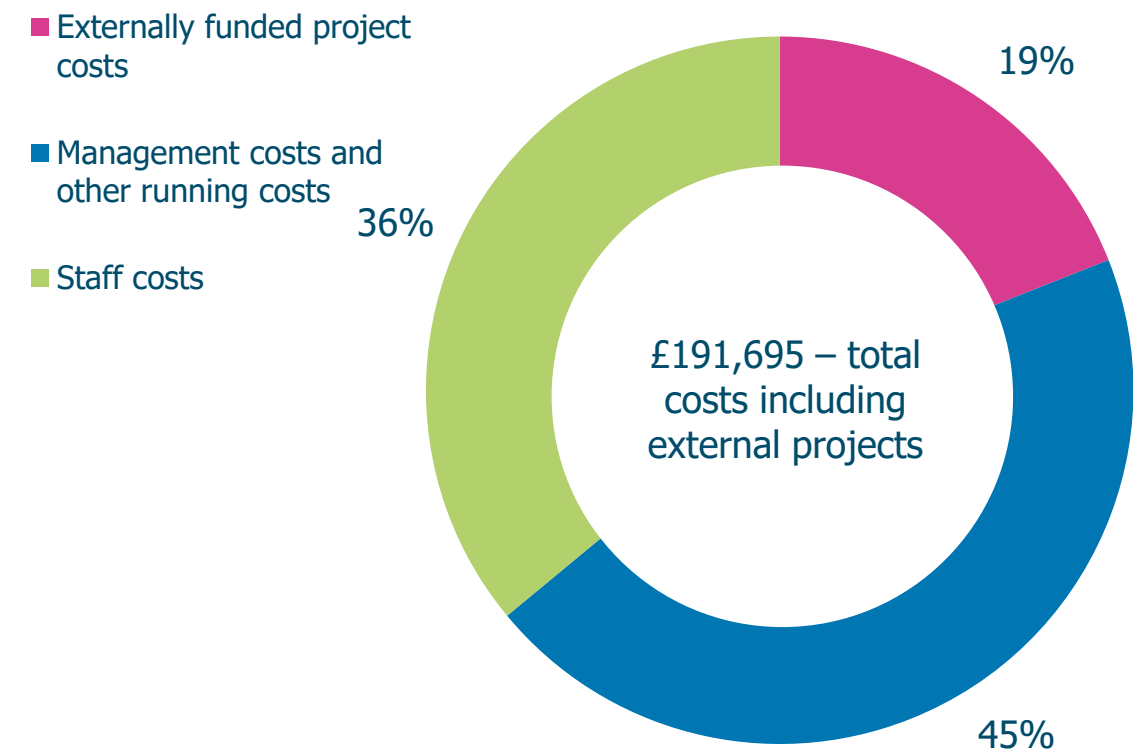
Aicha

I started volunteering with Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen this year because I had experienced personal frustrations with local health services and wanted to help others find the information they need or the support to make a complaint. I've got involved in several projects with Healthwatch including the Blackburn with Darwen Time to Change campaign.

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £191,695 including externally funded projects.



Our plans for next year



Our Plans for Next Year

Looking ahead

- Our 2020-21 workplan has been developed based on feedback from residents on what they consider to be the priority issues affecting the borough. Our workplan will include:-
 - a co-production approach to improving complaints procedure in acute healthcare and adult social care
 - Youth Voice in health care
 - Engagement forums (with a focus on support for the elderly and residents with learning disabilities)
- We are working closely with our colleagues at Healthwatch organisations in Lancashire and South Cumbria to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on people's lives and specifically on their access to health and social care services. We are particularly focused on understanding the impact of the pandemic on residents who already experience health inequalities.

"We are proud to share with residents at our regular public meetings the impact that they have made on shaping and evaluating local health and social care services"



Thank you

- I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their continued support and hard work with a clear focus on the future of the organisation.
- I would also like to thank our volunteers, including our new work placement students from Blackburn College for donating their time across the year to supporting our day to day running as an organisation as well as working on projects and carrying out signposting events throughout the borough. We really could not do it without you.
- The whole team at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen are incredibly grateful to our voluntary sector partners for their continued support for our engagement projects, working together in the interests of the least heard and most vulnerable members of our community.



Abdul Mulla

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen
Chief Officer

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.
- All our local commissioners and providers for working with us and taking on board our feedback and recommendations
- Blackburn with Darwen Public Health for their ongoing support



Contact us

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