healthwatch Cheshire West

Healthwatch Cheshire West

Annual Report 2018-19

Contents

About us	3
Highlights from our year	5
Message from our Chair	7
Message from our CEO	8
How we've made a difference	10
Sharing your experiences	17
Our volunteers	29
Our finances	33
Thank you	35
Contact us	36

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 Cheshire West, 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.

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

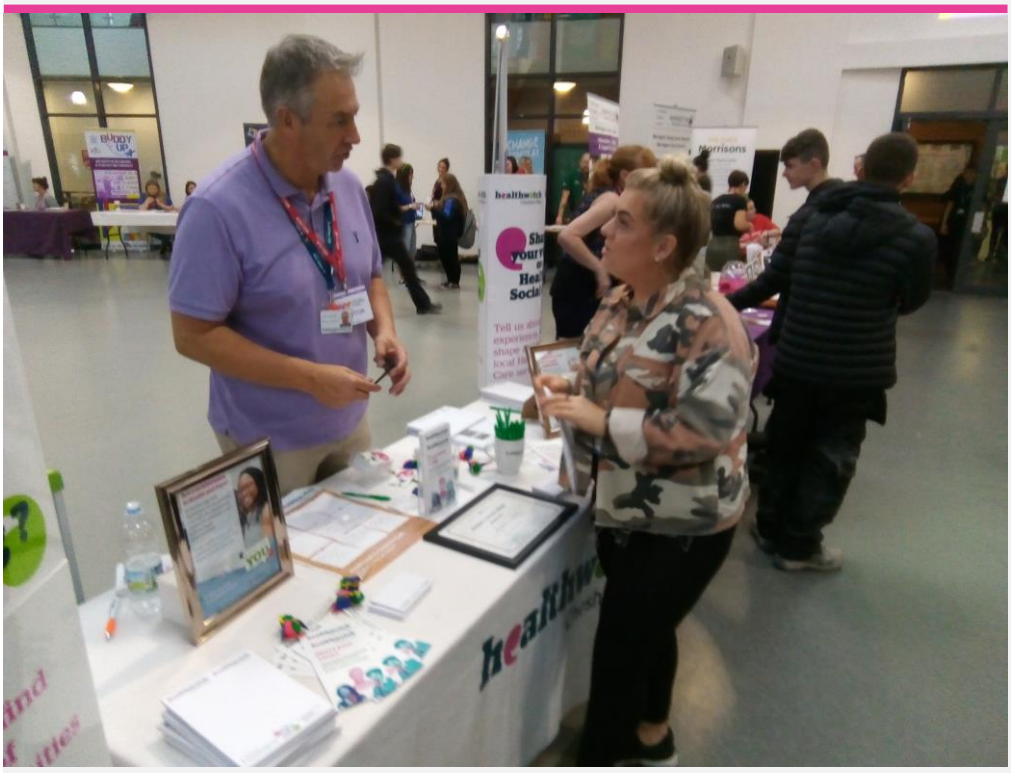
People's views come first – especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

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.

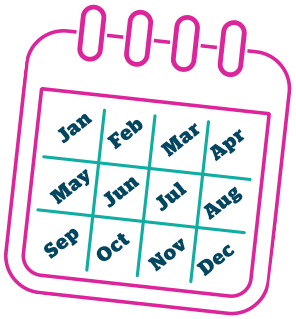


Healthwatch Cheshire West at Warrington and Vale Royal College Freshers Fair, 19th September 2018

Highlights from our year

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

941 comments about health and social care were received from people in Cheshire West and Chester, **34%** more than last year.

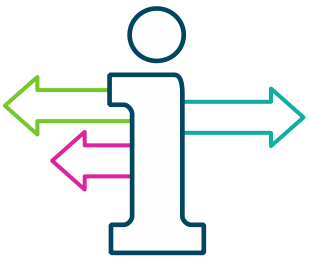


We have **47** volunteers helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up **1189** hours of their time.

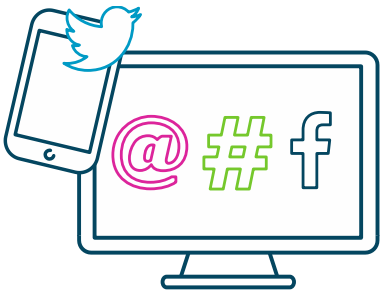
We attended **122** events to speak to people and understand their experiences of care.

We have produced recommendations for **45** services including GP Practices, Hospitals, and Care Homes.

21 services adopted improvements we suggested to make health and care better in our community.



69 people contacted our Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service for support through the NHS complaints process.



This year we have had **7103** visits to our website.

A **317%** increase on last year.

Message from our Chair

I am delighted to present to you our Annual Report for 2018/19; a year which saw us make a greater impact in improving health and care services than ever before.

This year has seen us obtain the 941 views from people in Cheshire West and Chester, a 34% increase on the previous year. This has taken us to towns and villages across the area and allowed us to represent the diverse community we serve by attending Pride events, community festivals, dementia events, and many more.

People have told us that being able to access doctors or nurses quickly and making it easier to access appointments is important to them, along with shorter delays and fewer cancellations for operations.

This year saw us heavily involved in obtaining the views of people in regard to the Adult and Older People's Mental Health consultation in Vale Royal, ensuring that people were aware of proposed changes and that their voices were heard throughout the process. People told us that shorter and fewer delays in diagnosis and treatment of Mental Health conditions was a priority.

People also told us that more understanding regarding autism, and shorter delays in diagnosis and receiving treatment, were important issues.

The year also saw us begin our engagement activity on the NHS Long Term Plan, asking the people of Cheshire West and Chester their thoughts on the plan and what matters most to them about health and care services. The full report of our findings will be published later in 2019.

I would like to thank everyone that has shared their views and experiences with us this year, and to service providers, and local authority and NHS commissioners, for working with us and listening to the opinions of the people of Cheshire West and Chester.

Lynne Turnbull
Healthwatch Cheshire CIC Chair

Message from our CEO

This year has been one of great progress for Healthwatch. We have been able to gain and share the views of more people in Cheshire West and Chester than ever before. These views are also having impact and making changes for the people of Cheshire West and Chester.

This year has seen us launch our new website, which makes it easier than ever for people to leave their feedback. People can now just search for the health or care service they wish to share their experience of and submit their feedback directly to us. The website also contains lots of handy signposting information, including health and wellbeing advice guides and access to all of our latest project and Enter and View reports.

I would like to take the opportunity to say a big thank you to all of our staff and 36 volunteers. They have played a significant role in helping us to gain the views of more people than ever before, and help to make positive changes for people's health and care services in Cheshire East.

We again conducted our A&E Watch, with eight members of staff and 20 of our volunteers getting the views and experiences of 232 people in the three A&E departments in Cheshire across 12 hours from 9am until 9pm. The report that followed was well received by the Hospital Trusts and has resulted in many changes and improvements to people's experiences such as clearer signage within departments, more comfortable waiting areas, and more information on services and waiting times on display screens.

We have conducted focused projects on Sexual Health services, and the rights of Carers in registering with GP Practices. This has not only seen us gain people's views on these topics but also signpost and provide information on the services available to people.

Our work with the boating community last year has now been taken forward, and we have managed to organise a series of meetings between representatives of the boating community and staff from the local NHS and local authority. This is really helping boaters to get their views heard and we can now work together to make health and services more accessible for that community.

We look forward to speaking to even more people in our community next year, and to publishing our findings from the NHS Long Term Plan, which can really shape the future direction of health and care services in Cheshire West and Chester over the coming years. We will continue to discuss potential changes in the way health and care will be delivered with integration and the further development of care communities with the people of Cheshire East, and use their views to help shape services going forward.

Louise Barry
Healthwatch Cheshire CIC CEO

Changes you want to see

Last year we received **941** comments from 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

+ Clearer guidance on the support options available for people with Dementia

+ Shorter waits for hospital treatment after GP referrals and fewer cancelled hospital appointments

+ Shorter delays in assessments for Autism and ADHD

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 Cheshire West and Chester. We show that when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all. Take a look at examples of how we have made a difference in our community.

12 Hours in A&E

On 11th February 2019, Healthwatch Cheshire West and Healthwatch Cheshire East spent 12 hours in the three A&E Departments in Cheshire, namely the Countess of Chester Hospital, Leighton Hospital and Macclesfield Hospital to conduct A&E Watch.

A&E Watch is designed to gain a snapshot view of the experiences of people and understand why they attended and how they thought services could be improved. The purpose of A&E Watch is to explore themes emerging from the comments we have received about A&E during our regular general engagement activity.

Eight members of staff and 20 of our volunteers, assisted in engaging with people in the A&E departments across 12 hours from 9am until 9pm. In total we received 232 responses to our surveys. This report was published online, and presented to the Hospital Trusts and at the Quality and Performance Committees of local Clinical Commissioning Groups.

What people told us

The main findings from the report across the three hospitals were:

+ **The majority of people told us that the reason they attended A&E was because their problem was too urgent to wait.**
+ **52% of people we spoke to had attempted to access another service before going to A&E.**
+ **Just over half of people rated their experience of A&E as 4 or 5 out of 5.**

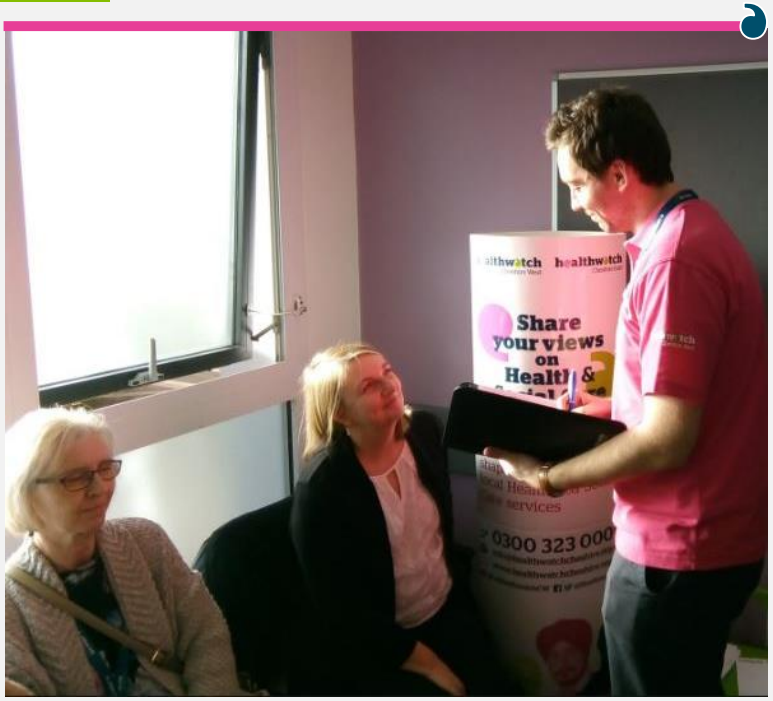
The report can be accessed online at www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports

Healthwatch Cheshire West staff and volunteers at the Countess of Chester Hospital - 11th February 2019

A&E Watch improving our hospitals

Based upon the feedback Cheshire West and Chester residents gave us, **Leighton Hospital** have committed to:

+ Review the signage inside and outside A&E.
+ Monitor the temperature in the children's waiting area daily.
+ Increase the amount of information available to people in waiting areas, including on noticeboards and display screens.
+ Installation of another drinks machine and water fountain in the waiting area.
+ Have volunteers sitting with people and directing them to where they need to be.



Healthwatch Cheshire West at Leighton Hospital - 11th February 2019

"The report informs the picture of the entire health economy rather than just MCHFT. There is much to celebrate in the report, with numerous positive comments. It has also given us the opportunity to address anything negative."

Belinda Dean - Head of Nursing Urgent and Emergency Care, Leighton Hospital

"The A&E Watch report is a great tool to help us improve the service we provide to our patients in A&E. We have used the findings from Healthwatch Cheshire's latest reports to help us as we re-model our emergency department and they have provided valuable insight and focus as we strive to improve the patient experience at The Countess."

Lorraine Burnett - Chief Operating Officer, Countess of Chester Hospital

Healthwatch Cheshire West also reviewed and provided feedback on the Countess of Chester Hospital's Patient Choice Policy and documentation for patients:

"On behalf of the West Cheshire A&E Delivery Board I'd like to extend our thanks to Healthwatch Cheshire's volunteers for their feedback on the draft 'Patient Choice' Policy for West Cheshire which relates to ongoing care upon discharge from hospital. Your feedback (through the lens of the patient) about the policy and its related factsheets and letters, has been invaluable and has helped us to bring more clarity to the wording and more appropriate use of language. The feedback has been used by the Countess of Chester Hospital and Cheshire West and Chester Council to make positive changes for the benefit of patients impacted by the policy."

Jonathan Taylor - Communications and Engagement Lead, NHS West Cheshire CCG

Tackling barriers to health and care in the boating community

In March 2018, we published a report based on the experiences of the boating community in accessing health and care. During this year, we have been able to use this report as a basis for discussions on how to improve access for boaters throughout Cheshire.

Boaters told us that they had experienced difficulty in registering at certain GP Practices and NHS dentists due to postcode issues, and problems in the processing of repeat prescriptions. They told us that they needed better signage and access to information as to where they could access care and which GP Practices they could register with. People we spoke to had also not accessed social care.

Using these views, we were able to bring together the key stakeholders of the boating community, including the Waterways Chaplaincy and the Canal and River Trust, with service providers and commissioners from the NHS and local authorities in Cheshire for the first time. This took place in a meeting at the National Waterways Museum in Ellesmere Port in February 2019.

"Numerous attempts had been made by Waterways Chaplaincies to engage with the NHS trusts across the country without any sustainable engagement with the issues being achieved. The Healthwatch report provided the first clearly defined account of the boater access issues. It clearly identifies the issues and proposes outcomes to address them for boaters in the Cheshire region and subsequently nationwide.

"One of the main outcomes will be the development of materials which can be used to engage with staff of surgeries directly associated with the canal community, so that their understanding of boater rights can be revised. These materials would be trialled in Cheshire along the Shropshire Union and Trent and Mersey canals, and then offered to other regions."

Andy Taylor - Senior Waterways Chaplain in the North West

Next steps in improving access to health and care in the boating community

The key issues raised in our report were discussed and various commitments were made to work together to improve access to services for the boating community:

+ Regular meetings will take place between stakeholders and service providers at various locations throughout Cheshire, to be facilitated by Healthwatch.
+ Local authority commitment to liaise with the Waterways Chaplaincy to provide more and accessible information to boaters.
+ Stakeholders, local NHS and local authorities to look at partnership working around the main issues going forward.

Healthwatch were able to make a difference by raising awareness of the issues of a community that struggle to make their voice heard, and enabling improvements to be made in the future. You can find out more about our work with the boating community by viewing the report on our website at www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports

> *"The meetings are always productive, engaging and have the right people in attendance. It feels like the concerns raised are listened to and there is a proactive approach to address these concerns and make life better for boaters.*
>
> *"I look forward to continuing our partnership work into the future and seeing how these initiatives help improve lives."*
>
> **Sean Williams - Welfare Officer, Canal and River Trust**

Healthwatch meeting with stakeholders from the boating community, local NHS CCGs, and local authorities - 12th February 2019, National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port

Improving services in Cheshire West and Chester through Enter and View

Healthwatch Cheshire West regularly visit GP Practices, Hospitals, Care Homes and other specialist services to conduct Enter and View visits. These visits provide a snapshot in time of the services being provided and allow us to see, hear and feel what it is like within that particular setting for the people who use services, as well as their families and staff.

The Enter and View reports we publish based on our visits contain recommendations to service providers about how we think the service could be improved. Providers are then invited to provide feedback on these recommendations and our visit which show us the impact our Enter and View activity can make and the change it can affect.

These reports are sent to the Care Quality Commission, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Cheshire West and Chester Council and presented at various committees where our findings can be discussed and used to influence change.

Between April 2018 and the end of March 2019, Healthwatch Cheshire West published 45 Enter and View reports of services across the whole of Cheshire West, available to view on our website at www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view.

These include reports of:

+ 37 Care Homes
+ 7 GP Practices
+ 1 Hospital setting.

Services acting upon our Enter and View recommendations

The recommendations offered in these reports led to improvements to things such as care home activities, interior décor, improvements to meals, more information provision for people in waiting areas, and much more. Improvements based on our recommendations were carried out in:

+ 16 Care Homes
+ 5 GP Practices.

University of Chester students completing Enter and View training

"Healthwatch comments are like gold dust."
Diane Noble,
Chair of NHS Vale Royal CCG Quality & Performance Committee

"It is a wonderful opportunity to gain further perspective of our service and organisation, Healthwatch were professional and engaging to the staff team, myself and my deputy on their visit."
Manager - Heathercliffe Residential Care Home, Helsby

"We were very happy with the arrangements/requests prior to the visit. We welcome any feedback or advice given and I feel that these visits are very important as to ensure that all needs are being met for the residents. We were happy with the report content."
Manager - Wealstone Care Home, Upton

"It was a pleasure having you visit our home and some suggestions appeared to be very good and we will be pursuing community involvement."
Manager - Weatherstones House Care Home, Neston

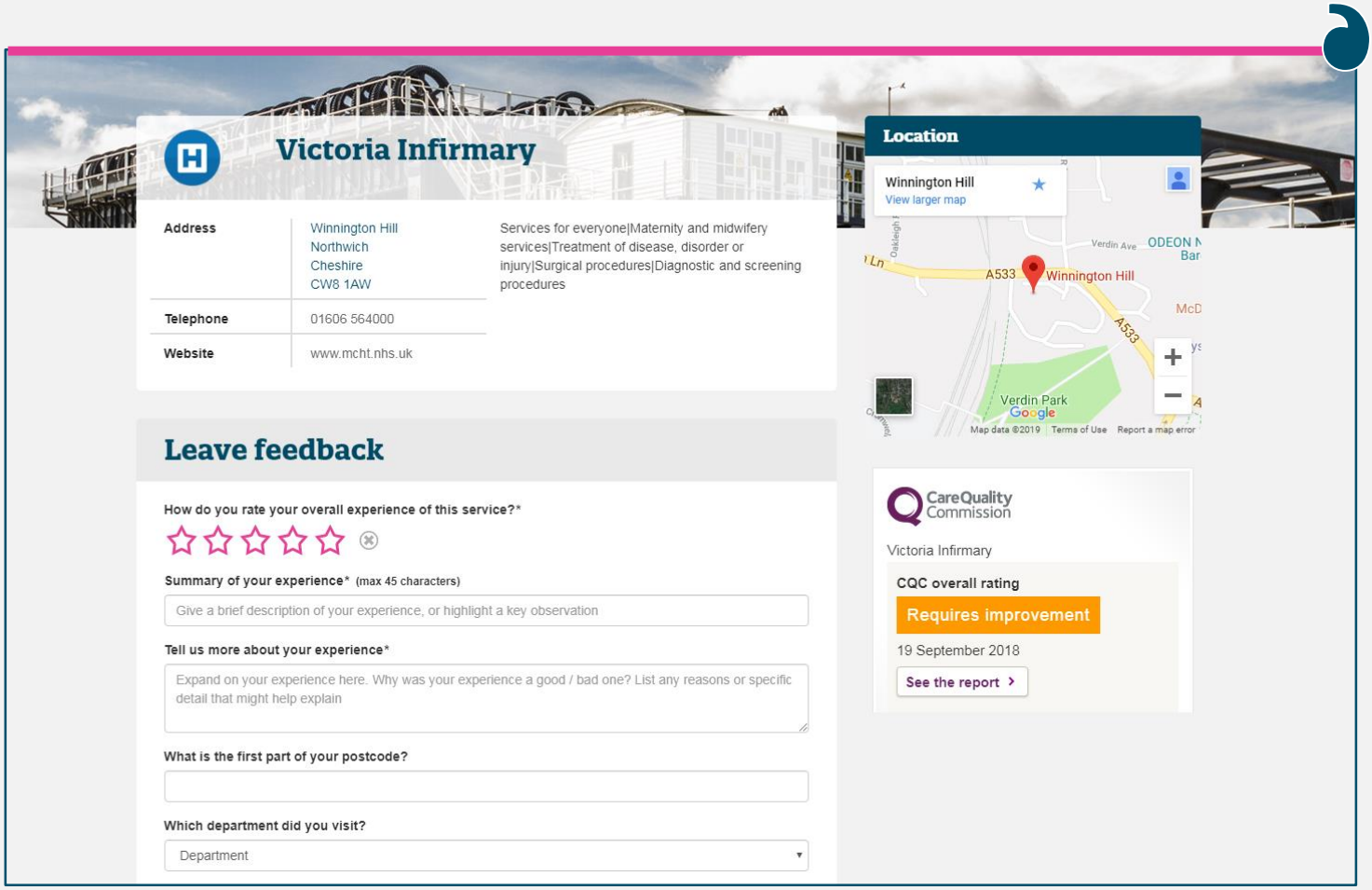
Sharing your experiences

Making it easier to share your views online

The end of this year saw the launch of our new Healthwatch Cheshire West website, which makes it easier than ever to share your views on health and care with us through our Feedback Centre.

To share your feedback on a health or care service, you can just search for the service and submit your feedback directly to us. We can then produce reports based on these comments that go straight to those who provide health and care services.

The website also contains lots of handy signposting information, including health and wellbeing advice guides and access to all of our latest project and Enter and View reports.



You can now search for a specific service and submit your feedback directly to us as shown on the image above - www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk

Listening to your views

Healthwatch Cheshire West use a variety of methods to obtain the views and experiences of the diverse communities of Cheshire West and Chester. This includes in person, by telephone, via email, by Freepost comment cards, via our new website and Feedback Centre or via Facebook and Twitter.

There is no substitute for getting out and speaking to people face-to-face, and our engagement team have been able to gain a breadth of information by visiting all areas across Cheshire West and Chester, and working with a diverse range of groups and organisations. We attend a diverse variety of venues to gain people's feedback such as children's centres, libraries, community centres, local colleges, work zones, leisure centres, hospital outpatients, medical centres, streets and supermarkets.

We spoke to **2862** people about their health and social care in Cheshire West and Chester in 2018-19

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.healthwatchcwac.org.uk
t: 0300 323 0006
e: info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

Speaking to people around Cheshire West and Chester

Between April 2018 and the end of March 2019, we attended 122 events in:

+ Chester
+ Northwich
+ Winsford
+ Ellesmere Port
+ Frodsham
+ Neston.

We attended Chester Pride, at which we gained over 100 comments about health and care services from the LGBTQ+ community.

We have also linked our attendance at events where possible to national and local initiatives such as Carers Week, local health and wellbeing events, Dementia Action Day, National Carers Rights Day, and Eid @ the Park in Ellesmere Port.

Alison Lee, Managing Director of Cheshire West Integrated Care Partnership

Healthwatch Cheshire West at Eid @ the Park, Ellesmere Port - 2nd September 2018

We have worked with local groups and organisations such as:

+ Salvation Army Ellesmere Port
+ Macmillan
+ Brightlife Winsford
+ Welcome Wednesday, Ellesmere Port
+ Men in Sheds, Winsford and Hartford
+ West Cheshire Fibromyalgia Group
+ Alzheimer's Group Neston
+ Warrington and Vale Royal College
+ Hear and Now Isolation Group.

Sharing your experiences

Healthwatch Cheshire West report on the feedback received in various ways:

+ All Hospitals, GP Practices, and the Cheshire West and Chester Social Care department are sent the comments we have received from people relating to their service on a quarterly basis.
+ We attend the Cheshire West and Chester Health and Wellbeing Board, the NHS West Cheshire and Vale Royal CCGs Quality and Performance Committees.
+ Quarterly reports are submitted to the above committees, as well as to Cheshire West and Chester Council commissioners, outlining what people have told us about their health and care.

As well as feeding back to service providers, people's views on health and care enable us to focus on specific areas from which we can produce targeted project reports.

Healthwatch Cheshire West at Neston Market - 18th January 2019

These are available to view online at www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports

This year this has included:

+ A&E Watch
+ Sexual Health Services
+ Carers' Rights.

Throughout March 2019, our engagement work was focused around the NHS Long Term Plan, and obtaining the views of people on what matters most to them about the future of the NHS. This report will be published in July 2019.

This year also saw us take the health and care views of people in Cheshire West and Chester to Parliament, as Healthwatch England held a Parliamentary Reception in Westminster. We were able to meet the MP for Weaver Vale, Mike Amesbury, and Justin Madders, MP for Ellesmere Port and Neston, to discuss the current issues around health and care in our area.

> *"Thank you for forwarding this information to me which I will share within practice. It is always pleasing to receive comments from our patients via yourselves and it can help us to determine our priorities."*
>
> **Practice Manager - Middlewich Road Surgery, Northwich**

Healthwatch Cheshire West with Mike Amesbury, MP for Weaver Vale at the Healthwatch England Parliamentary Reception - 21st January 2019

Healthwatch Cheshire West with Justin Madders, MP for Ellesmere Port and Neston at the Healthwatch England Parliamentary Reception - 21st January 2019

How we provide people with advice and information

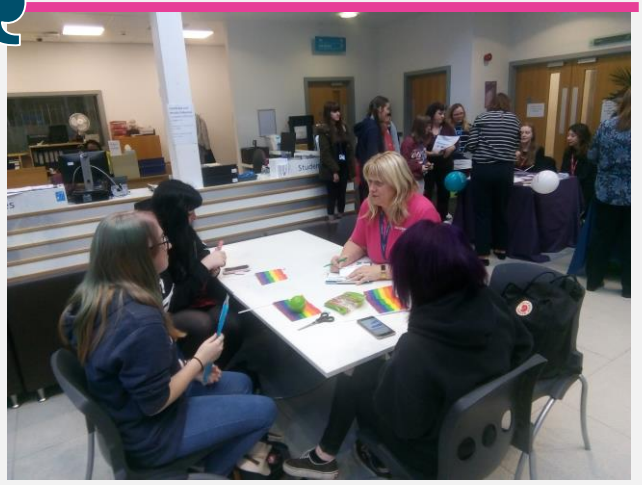
Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't always know where to look.

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

+ Specific advice and information online at www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/useful-links
+ Our contact us form
+ At community events
+ Promoting helpful services across Facebook and Twitter
+ Over the phone – 0300 323 0006.

Below are some examples of where we have helped people in Cheshire West and Chester to find the information they need:

Autism support



A woman described herself as "at her wits end" in attempting to find support for her son who has Autism. Healthwatch provided the woman with information about The Bird Centre and other places that she could find support.

Later, the woman thanked Healthwatch for the information and support. She said that since taking up Healthwatch's advice of contacting The Bird Centre her son has benefited tremendously. He has improved concentration, is walking better and is no longer falling.

Giving people the contacts to combat loneliness and isolation

A person rang Healthwatch looking for a 'buddy' scheme to give them someone to talk to. Healthwatch took the time to research which groups and options were available, and found a contact in the local area called 'Independent Age'. We contacted the organisation and they were then able to liaise with the person to offer their service in reducing loneliness and isolation.

Signposting to bereavement counselling

Healthwatch met a woman who had recently been widowed and was really struggling with her grief. She had tried to find some bereavement counselling but everywhere that her GP and others had put her in touch with involved 'group discussions', which she was adamant she didn't want.

Healthwatch were able to signpost her to St Luke's Hospice who can provide one-to-one counselling. One of our Community Engagement and Project Officers bumped into her a few months later and she thanked Healthwatch. The woman explained that she had been to counselling sessions and whilst she still felt enormous grief, she now understood it more and found it easier to cope with.

Helping to find carers' groups and practical support

Healthwatch met a woman with Fibromyalgia who is a single parent of two children; one of whom is a carer and the other is a child with Down Syndrome. The woman told us she was getting very little support from her GP, who had even suggested having her child taken into care.

Healthwatch were able to put her in touch with Buzz Youth Group, Good Company Support Group, and Young Carers' groups for her 14 year old. We were also able to suggest that she spoke to the school about getting a Team Around the Family (TAF). The woman was very grateful for the help.

Adult and Older People's Mental Health Service Redesign Consultation

Healthwatch Cheshire West have taken great interest in the recent Mental Health consultation and subsequent service redesign in Vale Royal and Cheshire East. In order to help ensure that people's voices were heard during the consultation process which took place during 2018, we:

+ Circulated details of the findings and consultation events online and via social media.
+ Healthwatch attended multiple consultation events to gauge the public mood and collect comments about the proposed options.
+ Following the consultation events, we collated the feedback we had received and our summaries of these events which were then submitted to NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG on behalf of the NHS providers involved.
+ Staff attended the Open Minds Mental Health group in Crewe in November at which NHS Eastern Cheshire CCG presented feedback from original consultation. Feedback from the group raised some concerns and Healthwatch raised general concern on breadth and quality of communications and dissemination of proposals.
+ Healthwatch attended a follow-up consultation event in Middlewich in November and again raised concerns over communication of findings.
+ We also attended the Joint CCG Decision Making Group in November, and the Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) listening event in January regarding community crisis beds as an aspect of the proposal. We provided feedback to organisers about the positive nature of the CWP event.

Healthwatch Cheshire West at Mental Health Listening Event, Crewe - 23rd January 2019

Helping people to understand their rights as a carer

Across the UK, around 7 million people care for a family member or friend. That's 1 in 10 individuals who care for someone, unpaid (Carers Trust). Under the Care Act 2014, carers registering at their GP Practice are entitled to receive certain benefits; such as appointments at convenient times, an understanding from Practice staff, providing free annual health checks and flu vaccinations among others.

During our general engagement activity, we heard reports anecdotally of some unpaid carers not receiving or being aware of the benefits detailed above when registering as a carer with their GP Practice. Therefore, to coincide with activity around Carers Rights Day in November 2018, we developed a survey to assess the experiences of people registering as a carer with their GP Practice in Cheshire West and Chester.

To obtain the views of people, we targeted particular carers groups where we could reach unpaid carers, such as parent carers and young carer groups in Crewe and Macclesfield. On Carers Rights Day, our Community Engagement and Project Officers held stands at events in order to promote the survey

to people; including one organised by Cheshire and Warrington Carers Trust in Northwich.

The survey outlined the benefits that people could expect to receive by registering as a carer with their GP Practice. Where people were unaware of these benefits, we were able to have conversations with people that informed them of these rights, and provide them with the information they need to improve their experience of accessing GP services as a carer. Our full report detailing the findings of our survey will be published in 2019.

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.healthwatchcwac.org.uk

t: 0300 323 0006

e: info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service

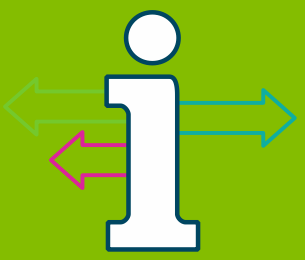
Healthwatch Cheshire CIC provides Independent Complaints and Advocacy Service (ICAS) dealing with NHS complaints. ICAS advocacy works within the NHS complaints regulations and can help you to use the NHS complaints process to have your voice heard.

ICAS offers a service through online, telephone and, where appropriate, face to face support to people living in Cheshire who need assistance to progress complaints in relation to any NHS service provision provided at:

+ Hospitals
+ GP Practices
+ Dentists
+ Pharmacists
+ Opticians
+ NHS funded care homes.

Independent Advocacy is a way of supporting a person to express their views, have these taken seriously and achieve positive outcomes.

Of the 69 people who contacted ICAS for support during the year, 38 were provided with information by ICAS to progress their complaint, 13 were signposted by ICAS to other organisations, whilst 11 required further support from our ICAS advocate to help them through the complaints process. The other seven people no longer required assistance from ICAS.



69 people from Cheshire West and Chester contacted our Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service for support through the NHS complaints process in 2018-19.

Helping people to make sense of the NHS complaints process

> *"Thank you so much for all your time. You've been a lifeline in what appears to be a never ending cycle."*

A man had informally raised his concerns regarding his care with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service, who had been able to provide limited help.

The man came to ICAS asking for support to make a formal complaint. The ICAS advocate supported him to progress his complaint through the system, drafting a letter of complaint for him and helping him to understand the response. He is now receiving the care he requires.

Improving people's care through resolution

A woman who had accessed the A&E Department of a local hospital had a traumatic experience over how she was treated and spoken to. She was supported by ICAS to draft a letter of complaint, understand the response and reply to the response. The ICAS advocate then helped her to prepare for and attended a resolution meeting with her.

After making the complaint to the Hospital Trust, a meeting was held with staff in the department to discuss appropriate behaviour. Training was undertaken around raising staff awareness of patients with mental health issues and their appropriate care.

The Trust added a prompt to the woman's medical records requesting that only female staff treat her. They also identified a member of staff to come and check with her and act as her representative if she was admitted to hospital in future.

Our volunteers

How do our volunteers help us?

Healthwatch Cheshire West could not have undertaken all of this activity without the support of our 47 volunteers who work with us to help make care better for their communities.

What our volunteers do:

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

Healthwatch Cheshire West volunteers taking part in Safeguarding Training

We owe a big thank you to our volunteers, who in total gave up 1189 hours to Healthwatch Cheshire West last year - double the number of last year.

The continued support and development of our volunteers is very important, and this year has seen volunteers take part in Enter and View and Safeguarding Training, as well as workshops relating to the local health and care system.

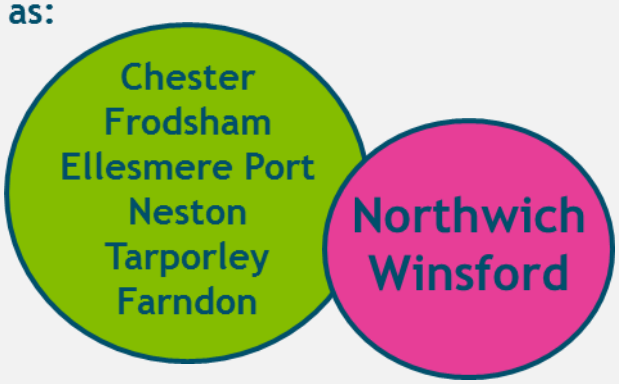
Volunteers are the vital to our Enter and View process, each bringing their specific skills and perspectives to produce impactful reports that can really affect change in GP Practices, Hospitals, Care Homes and Specialist Care Centres across Cheshire West and Chester.

Tweet from the Cheshire West Integrated Care Partnership regarding a workshop held with Healthwatch volunteers - 23rd January 2019

What have our volunteers been involved in?

+ **A&E Watch** – 20 of our volunteers took part in our A&E Watch, enabling us to cover 12 hours in A&E, speaking to people about their experience of using this department.
+ **Chester Pride** – allowing us to hear the views of the LGBTQ+ community around health and care.
+ **Sexual Health project** – volunteers have been involved in project planning, engaging with the community, Enter and View visits, and report writing about people's experiences of using Sexual Health services in Cheshire West and Chester.
+ **Carers Week** – volunteers have engaged and distributed surveys about carers' rights.
+ **Recruitment** – volunteers have been involved in our interview process for a new Community Engagement and Project Officer, assisting with an informal session with candidates prior to interview to assess their abilities.
+ **Award nominations** – Healthwatch Cheshire West were nominated for the University of Chester's Student Choice Award at their Volunteering Celebration.

Our volunteers come from areas such as:



Healthwatch Cheshire West at the Countess of Chester Hospital (left); and at University of Chester Health and Wellbeing Fair, 10th October 2018 (right)

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.

Susan

"As a semi retired Grants Manager in the community sector, I was looking at volunteer positions and was impressed with the work Healthwatch is carrying out in Cheshire East.

I feel I am making an important contribution through my feedback and comments on hospitals and other NHS/Government supported/funded facilities we visit in the Cheshire area. I find the work interesting and extremely varied. We all use these hospitals, health centres at some point in our lives and it's reassuring to see these facilities at first hand, ensuring standards are high. Healthwatch offers the volunteer a chance to make a difference."

Carolynne

"I explained that I had an interest in administration and that I wanted to work in an office. Healthwatch Cheshire created the role of administrative volunteer working at their office in Northwich.

The team there are great and make me feel at home and one of the team. This is a fantastic feeling, improving my confidence and ability. I assist with many roles, but now also have the opportunity to take part in the other roles of Healthwatch. I will be trained to become an authorised representative in Enter and View. This is a massive responsibility ensuring services are maintained to standards and that people are treated with respect and dignity. I will also take part in projects, engagement and attending meetings on Mental Health. Last year I would not have thought I would be doing this, my confidence is increased, as is my involvement."

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.

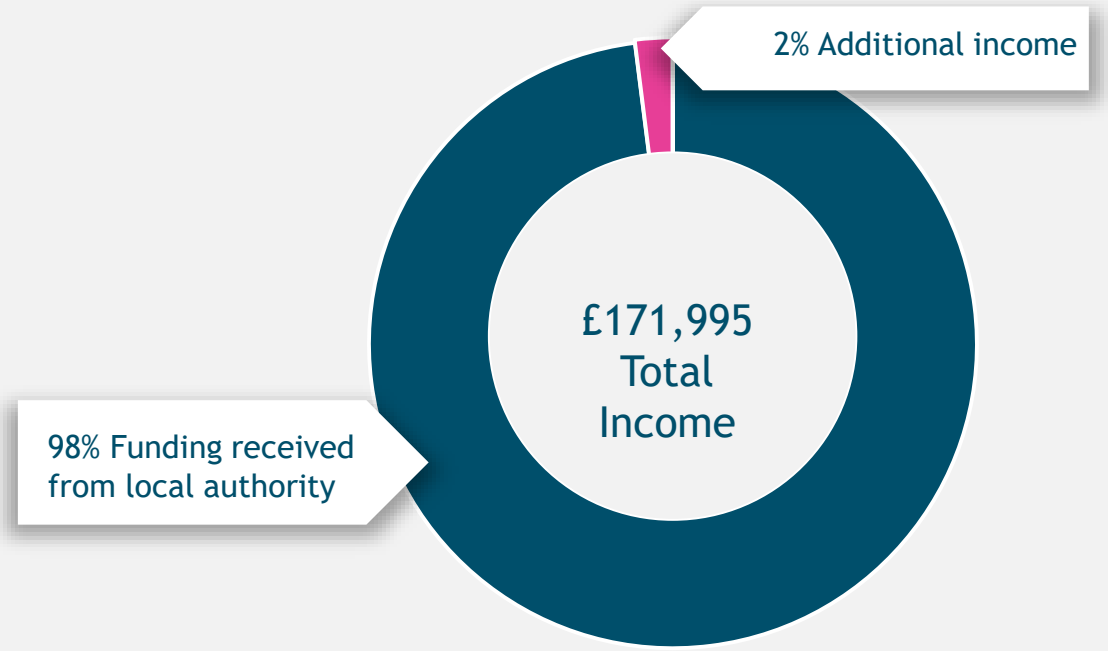
w: www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk
t: 0300 323 0006
e: info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

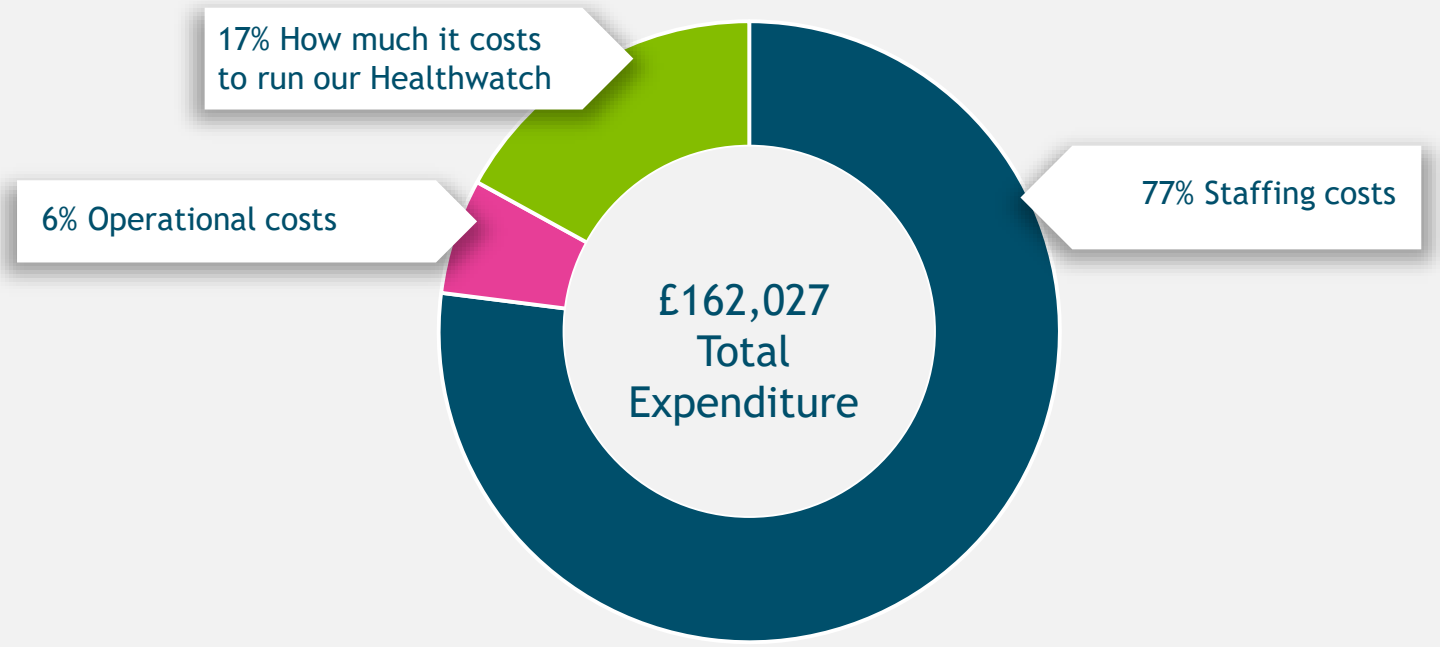
Our finances

How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority. In 2018-19 we spent £162,027.

We also received £4,000 of additional income.





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 local NHS and Local Authority partners and service providers who have engaged in our feedback process and listened to the views of the public.

Healthwatch continues to champion the views of our residents by helping us provide high quality health and care services throughout Cheshire West.

"By representing residents' views and giving strong independent challenge in their constructive and proactive approach, we have welcomed recommendations to improve the services we provide.

In the last year, the Healthwatch team and their excellent volunteers have provided in depth reviews of sexual health services and how we can better support the rights of carers registering with local GPs. Healthwatch are a statutory member of our Health and Wellbeing Board, and are actively involved shaping our future strategy for improving health and care services with the Council and the NHS."

Delyth Curtis, Deputy Chief Executive People and
Ian Ashworth, Director of Public Health Cheshire West and Chester Council

Healthwatch Cheshire West volunteers taking part in Enter and View Training

Contact us

Registered address:
Healthwatch Cheshire CIC
Sension House
Denton Drive
NORTHWICH
Cheshire
CW9 7LU

0300 323 0006

www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk
info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

@HealthwatchCW

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

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

Registered Company Number: 7791174

© Copyright Healthwatch Cheshire CIC 2019

healthwatch Cheshire West

Healthwatch Cheshire CIC
Sension House
Denton Drive
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 7LU

w: www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk
t: 0300 323 0006
e: info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk
tw: @HealthwatchCW
fb: facebook.com/HealthwatchCW