

Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch Northumberland
Annual Report 2021–22



Contents

Message from our Chair	3
Message from the Chair of Adapt (NE)	4
About us	5
Highlights from our year	6
Listening to your experiences	8
Advice and information	15
Volunteers	18
Finances and future priorities	21
Statutory statements	22

Message from our Chair

Well, that was another challenging year! The ongoing effects of the pandemic obliged the health and care services to continue adapting to a world where COVID-19 remained a hugely significant factor. That they have done so bears testimony to the dedication, professionalism and flexibility of the staff who are charged with looking after us. We are indeed grateful for their efforts although there is still much to be done as we progress towards normality.

Similarly, everyone associated with Healthwatch Northumberland has needed to respond to the evolving circumstances. The natural preference for staff, volunteers and board members to meet people face-to-face was largely superseded by online forums, written submissions and telephone conversations. Yet this did not deflect the organisation from its fundamental responsibility to seek out the views of the wider community and then to react appropriately to the forthcoming messages, information and evidence. I am glad to say that we were able to make a quick return to in-person work and hopefully you will have seen the team out and about.

Such ongoing communication and engagement has enabled us to fulfil our role in advising members of the public, in forwarding information to providers and commissioners, and in presenting formal reports to service leaders. Details of the work undertaken can be read on the following pages which include reference to dentistry, pharmacy services, end of life care, and care homes. There has also been increasing involvement in issues surrounding the emerging Integrated Care System for the North East and North Cumbria although our priorities remain focussed on issues within Northumberland itself.

Finally, a word of appreciation to colleagues within Healthwatch Northumberland and the parent company Adapt (NE). Their individual contributions and collective endeavours have been reflected in the County Council renewing the contract to provide Healthwatch services to the community for another three years. And let there be no misunderstandings about what this means: whether it be within the higher levels of the Integrated Care System or in conversation with an individual member of the public - and everything in between - you can be assured that we shall remain the independent voice for health and social care in the communities of Northumberland.



David Thompson
Healthwatch Northumberland Chair

Message from the Chair of Adapt (NE)

I am delighted that Northumberland County Council has awarded Adapt (NE) the contract to deliver Healthwatch Northumberland until 2025. It is testament to the way in which the Healthwatch Northumberland staff, volunteers and board rose to the challenges of the pandemic.

As our communities opened up through 2021, Healthwatch Northumberland was ready, with its eye catching gazebo and regular 'Here to Hear' drop in sessions, to meet up with people across the county. Together with the digital means to engage with groups, to communicate stylishly and working closely with like-minded organisations across the county, it has never been easier for people to share their experiences of health and social care or to find help and support.

Once again I say thank you to those who gave Healthwatch Northumberland their feedback and to those service providers and commissioners who listened to, and acted upon it.

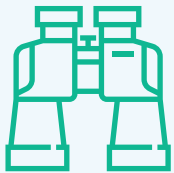


Lorraine Hershon
Adapt (NE) Chair

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Northumberland is your local health and social care champion. From Haltwhistle to Wooler, Ashington to Allendale and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

The health and social care needs of the people of Northumberland are heard, understood and met by those responsible for commissioning and delivering services.



Our mission

To help make sure the people of Northumberland's views and experiences shape the health and social care support they need.



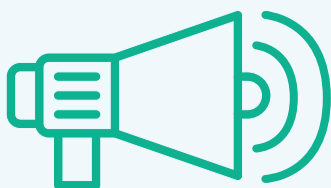
Our values

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

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out



1167 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

3179 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

Making a difference to care



We published

11 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Click and Connect

which highlighted the struggles people have trying to register for GP services online.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

22

outstanding volunteers, who gave 500 hours of their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received

£200,000

which is the same as the previous year.

We also employ

six staff

who help us carry out this work.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

These are the biggest projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



As the COVID-19 vaccination programme continued to be rolled out, we shared key messages about who could get the vaccine and where.



Our care home forums gave people a chance to share experiences of visiting loved ones in care homes and we could keep them updated on the latest guidelines as COVID-19 restrictions eased.

Summer



When we heard some people were having difficulties trying to register for GP services online, we looked at how people could register for online services at GP practices across the county.



We ran a survey to gauge the access and support received by young people (aged between 13-25 years) from mental health services in Northumberland.

Autumn



On World Menopause Day we highlighted the differences in treatment from health care services in Northumberland that two women have experienced as they go through the menopause.

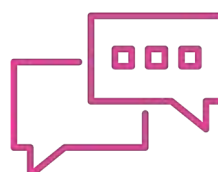


We held our AGM online and invited guests from the new Northumberland Recovery College to speak about what is on offer to support local people with mental health and wellbeing.

Winter



As patients became increasingly concerned about getting to see their local dentist, we worked with other local Healthwatch to mythbust some common misunderstandings about NHS dental care.



We supported the #YourCareYourWay campaign which encouraged people to come forward and tell Healthwatch about getting healthcare information in a way that is right for them.

Listening to your experiences

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



NHS dentistry services in Northumberland

Throughout the second half of 2021 people told us that accessing NHS dental services was very difficult, whether registering with an NHS dentist or getting treatment.

We knew this issue was wider than Northumberland, so we worked with other local Healthwatch from the North East and North Cumbria to understand the concerns of our respective local communities. The project had three parts: a survey for members of the public, a survey for dental practices and a public information campaign.

The response from the surveys found there was the greatest difficulty with finding an NHS dentist as it seems to be almost impossible to be 'registered' as a new patient. Therefore, dissatisfaction levels were high. It appeared that the dental practices were struggling to cope with their existing patients and have no further capacity to accept new patients.

The situation was better for those patients who were existing patients and the ease of booking an appointment for routine check-ups, minor dental issues and emergency dental appointments seemed to lean towards patients being slightly more satisfied than dissatisfied.

We are part of the national Healthwatch England network and this project was used by Healthwatch England to influence national decision makers.

"We heard from Healthwatch Northumberland about how few practices were accepting NHS patients and the impact that this was having on patients, particularly parents with young children." Healthwatch England.

The information we received was shared with the Chief Dental Officer and used as the basis of our reports about the problems people faced with the accessibility and affordability of NHS dentistry. Our research was mentioned in a Westminster Hall debate, and we can only achieve that level of prominence with local help.

Our dentistry mythbuster, also produced with other Healthwatch in the region, provided practical support to patients trying to access NHS dental treatment and was well received. The NHS England commissioning team said:

"We can confirm that from an NHS England, local Dental Commissioning Team perspective the North East Healthwatch 'mythbusting' leaflet has been extremely useful in helping to improve patient, public and local politicians' understanding around the most common myths and misunderstandings relating to NHS dentistry. It is clear and easy to read and as such we have used it to supplement responses we have made as an organisation to enquiries we have received."

The joint report on Experiences of Dental Care Services produced earlier this year set out clearly how dentistry was facing both longer-term structural issues as well as shorter-term problems caused by the pandemic, leading to many people being unable to access the services they desperately need.

We have seen some progress in the reform of the dental contract and, more recently, saw an additional £50 million made available to improve access to NHS dentistry. The insight from this work has been a vital part of making that happen. You can be very certain that we will make sure that dentistry is kept high on the agenda, and will ensure that local people's voices are heard.

Reaching out

In the past year, we have provided a meaningful outreach and engagement programme despite the continued constraints posed by the COVID-19 control measures.

The year started with 13 engagement events across the county to promote our annual survey. What you said in the survey was used by the Healthwatch Northumberland Board to determine our priorities for the year. In September 2021 we introduced monthly drop-in sessions at five regular venues across the county. There are now 'Here to Hear' sessions at Cramlington Hub, Berwick Leisure Centre, Morpeth Library and Blyth Community Hub. At Haltwhistle Leisure Centre we have partnered with the Bridge Project to hear particularly from people who are looking to get into the workplace.

Here to Hear works. A woman specifically came to see us at one of our drop-in Here to Hear sessions in Berwick as she had not got the proper menopausal support from her GP practice. When at the same time we heard from another woman of the same age and with the same name who'd had excellent support from her GP whilst going through the menopause. We used these contrasting experiences as 'A tale of two Tina's' to generate some discussion around the subject for World Menopause Day.

Also in September, in line with our other core purpose of raising people's awareness of health issues and the support services available to them, we hosted online talks from different agencies and charities, beginning with Arthritis Action. Since then, we have had online presentations from Alzheimer's UK, Parkinson's UK, National Autistic Society, Diabetes UK, the Integrated Wellbeing Service and the Social Prescribing team. With an average attendance of around 20, we have seen a steady flow of new supporters sign up from these events.

NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) wanted to understand people's experience of accessing GP services and commissioned us to get more responses for its survey. It wanted to hear from less heard groups such as young people, those with long-term health conditions, unpaid carers, people with learning difficulties and language barriers and those facing homelessness or drug/alcohol misuse. We ensured that hard copies were distributed to people who may be digitally excluded using our newsletter, and to libraries and voluntary organisations for those using their services. 549 people clicked to access the online survey and we had 99 hard copies returned.



Pharmacy Needs Assessment

Pharmacies are a key link in the healthcare chain. This year we partnered with Northumberland County Council to hear from people about how they use their local pharmacies and what they think about current services.

We made sure the council heard from groups of people who might not usually respond to surveys and from those who are not online. We designed an Easy Read version of the survey and partnered with community organisations who work with people with learning disabilities.

Hexham, Blyth, Alnwick and Morpeth have been affected by pharmacy closures so we held outdoor engagement events in these areas in addition to our Here to Hear drop-ins.

Across all events we helped 300 people complete the survey about their pharmacy needs and almost 1000 people clicked to access the survey online. Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey or helped to promote it within their groups or networks.



“Healthwatch Northumberland has helped enormously in obtaining a public perspective of the services offered by our community pharmacies. The team has worked with community organisations to target groups which would not normally respond to 'official' surveys. They have also reached out to communities which have had pharmacy closures in recent years to check that services still meet their needs. All of this has been done against a backdrop of COVID-19, not being sure when, or if, they would be able to meet safely with members of the public. A big thank you to Derry and her team for all the support they have given us in the production of the Pharmacy Needs Assessment.”

Liz Morgan, Interim Executive Director for Public Health and Community Services at Northumberland County Council.



What next?

The results of the survey will inform Northumberland County Council's Pharmacy Needs Assessment to ensure local pharmacies continue to provide services that meet the needs of people living in Northumberland.

End of life care

Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissioned us to find out what is important to people in Northumberland when thinking about services for people who are dying and their families.

This was part of the CCG developing an End of Life Care Strategy including the idea of a social agreement, which is a set of principles or responsibilities that providers and individuals may have when someone is facing end of life care.

Following an initial survey, our role was to get more detailed feedback and ensure the CCG heard from groups and communities with different experiences and perspectives about death and dying.

We hosted two focus groups directly and seven were facilitated by specialist partner organisations including Being Woman, Carers Northumberland, Headway Arts, Mind Active, Northumberland County Blind Association (now Vision Northumberland), Northumberland Community Voluntary Action and Tynedale Hospice at Home. In total 68 people took part in the groups and three people gave detailed feedback separately.

Our report made several recommendations including:

- The need to help facilitate public communication around death and dying, for example, commissioning a series of 'death cafes' and considering how best to sensitively communicate and educate younger people.
- Using our case studies (people with a learning disability and people from diverse ethnic backgrounds) to undertake further research on whether the issues highlighted are recognised by providers, how they are currently handled and how challenges might be met.

What next?

Using the results of the public engagement, the CCG presented its End Of life Strategy with a draft social agreement to the Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2022 which added some additional comments.

The strategy is due to be published in autumn 2022 with a communications plan.

We will be part of the monitoring group which will look at how the strategy is working and what feedback the public give as it is rolled out.

How we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Listening to patients and families about care at home

'Understanding the experiences of people using home care services, then, now and in the future', was designed to find out the experiences of people using services and their family carers in Northumberland. We wanted to find out what is working well for people and also make recommendations for changes or improvements to services, based on what people told us.

These are difficult times for all social care services as nationally it is difficult to attract and keep staff. This is especially so for home care services.

Feedback covered a wide range of care experiences from excellent to not so good. Key themes included experiences during the pandemic, navigating the home care system and securing access to services, pressures caused by reductions in staffing, communication with care providers and adult social care and how to identify quality services.

Key recommendations have been made based on the issues raised to assist commissioners and providers to implement the responsive, effective and caring provision which everybody desires for the residents of Northumberland.

"The council commissions almost 30,000 hours of home care per week and its second largest area of spend in contracted services. We're aware how important visit-based home care is for individuals and their families to ensure people are as independent as possible and this is reinforced in the report. This service area is under pressure particularly because of workforce issues and the report has picked up on that, offering recommendations, some of which are already underway".

Alan Curry, Senior Manager – Commissioning,
Northumberland County Council



Championing what matters to you

We know from feedback that GP services really matter to people in Northumberland; this is never more so than when changes are proposed to those services. When a change is announced we work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the practice to agree how patients will be informed and involved.

This year we have helped patients in Felton, Cramlington (Brockwell), Seaton Delaval (Elsdon Avenue) and Longhoughton to have their say and to ask important questions of the practices and the CCG. We convened nine online meetings attended by 55 patients, practice representatives and the CCG. We also supported Longhoughton Parish Council in a specially convened parish council meeting attended by 26 residents.

Although each practice and its circumstances were different, patients raised the same issues – access to services, with the lack of public transport, and the potential impact on appointment systems being big concerns. By hearing directly from patients, practices were enabled to make informed decisions to improve services.

“I appreciate that there were mixed views when we did our patient engagement, but would like to reassure people that we will do all we can to address any concerns, including providing patient transport for those who need it and ensuring there is enough free parking on site. There won’t be any change to, or reduction of, the current services. There will in fact be a better provision as a result of more space. We will be able to co-locate with other services, develop our digital offer to patients and increase access to face-to-face appointments.

Dr Amir Munir, Valens Medical Group.

We have continued our support for Patient Participation Groups with the focus now on the West Northumberland and Northumbria Primary Care Networks. We are working with the CCG to develop new ways of working across the county for this pivotal part of representing the patient interest in new health structures.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Northumberland is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on COVID-19
- Linking people to reliable information they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need



Our Signposting and Information Service helps people get the service they need. It also helps NHS and social care services to improve as it shows them how their services are working in practice.

Audiology services

We were contacted by someone with concerns about the removal of ear wax, the build-up of which was affecting their hearing and maintenance of hearing aids. The local GP surgery had stopped providing these services and private providers had said they could not help due to the wax being too deeply impacted. After requesting a GP referral to the Ear, Nose and Throat department at the Freeman Hospital and being told that the waiting list may be around 12 months, the patient contacted us for further advice.



We contacted the Ear, Nose and Throat department to query waiting times and were advised that 12 months was excessive, and the appointment was more likely to be within a month. However, if the GP were to mark the referral as urgent it could even be sooner. This reassurance was gratefully received and helped to alleviate the patient's worries. They got an appointment the following month and are now registered for six-monthly checks.



“Thank you so much for your fantastic help and support. It meant a great deal that someone was listening to me and not just brushing me off.”

audiology patient.



We continue to get feedback about audiology services following our report in 2020 and are working with commissioners to see how changes can be made, especially for those using hearing aids.

Pre-operation assessments

A patient got in touch with concerns about pre-operation assessments at Wansbeck General Hospital, after being told that over 60s must complete their assessment online rather than face to face. The patient felt that this was unfair as those under 60 had the option of face to face assessments but also that older people may potentially struggle more with digital access and have more complex health conditions that would be better discussed in person.

We raised these concerns with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust and clarified that there had been some misunderstanding as all patients would be encouraged to complete an online assessment (with support from staff at outpatients, if required). A face to face follow up would be offered depending on circumstances.

Northumbria Healthcare thanked us for raising this issue and said they would highlight the procedural pre-operation assessment advice to consultant and outpatient colleagues to avoid future misunderstandings. They also contacted the patient directly about progressing their individual assessment.

Podiatry services

An 80 year-old man with long term health conditions was having podiatry appointments every three months at a local clinic which was easily accessible to him. He is a wheelchair user and is cared for by his 82 year-old wife.

He was told by the service that the appointments would become four-monthly and then later that there were 'no appointments for the foreseeable future'. He was advised to go private. He contacted local private services but none of these were based in accessible buildings. It would not have been possible for his wife to get him upstairs and she was struggling with putting his wheelchair in the car.

We contacted the Patient Advice and Liaison Service and asked them to contact the patient to see what could be done. As a result the patient got a suitable appointment and was very happy. We also asked the service provider and NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group to explain the current situation with the community podiatry service. We were told that the commissioning lead had contacted the service to understand more about the issues, mitigations and patient communications.

Delays in GP referral and communication

An elderly man contacted us as he was concerned that his GP had not made an urgent cardiology referral. He had been to A&E and at discharge he was told to see his GP for an urgent referral. He spoke to his GP but heard nothing for several days. He contacted the cardiology unit which had no record of a referral.

He contacted the GP practice but they could not confirm whether the referral had been made or not. The patient was extremely anxious and felt this was having an impact on his health. He was told the GP would ring the next day but he felt this was too long to wait for what he felt was a simple factual enquiry.

We phoned the practice to see if anything could be done and the Practice Manager agreed to see what was happening. The patient rang back the next day to say that the Practice Manager had rung the same evening and had apologised. The GP had also rung him in the morning and a referral was made that day.

The patient was pleased with the outcome and said he did not think it would have happened without Healthwatch Northumberland's intervention.



Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch Northumberland. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Enabled people to have their say by talking to them on the telephone, helping run online forums and listening to people at events.
- Continued to make wellbeing calls on behalf of Vision Northumberland as part of our local COVID-19 response.
- Developed our database of local organisations and services.
- Helped design and implement projects exploring emerging issues such as dentistry during the pandemic and GP online registration.
- Distributed our information and resources to local communities.
- Helped create and promote surveys to find out what people in Northumberland think about their local health services.





Anne Community Engagement Volunteer

Anne has appeared in previous annual reports when she was one of our Engagement Officers. After retirement, we were delighted when Anne said she would like to volunteer with us and last year saw her involved in a wide range of activities to support our work including making wellbeing calls for Vision Northumberland, updating databases, helping with fact-finding and attending many of our 'Here to Hear' engagement events.

Anne says "I find my role as a volunteer with Healthwatch Northumberland to be very rewarding. The pandemic has highlighted the vital importance of our health and social care services and it has been a privilege engaging with local people at this time. I have been struck by how constructive and positive people have been when sharing their experiences of a range of different services and I believe their voices have the ability to make a valuable contribution to the quality of provision across the county. I find the work satisfying and the team supportive. If you are looking to start volunteering, I recommend that you consider one of the many roles at Healthwatch Northumberland."



James Digital Support Volunteer

The COVID-19 pandemic led to many services and engagement activities moving online but not everyone in Northumberland finds accessing the digital world easy. James joined us at the start of 2022 as a Digital Support Volunteer to support our online engagement events and help us become more digitally inclusive.

Like many other people, James found the pandemic an isolating experience and found his physical and mental health suffered as a result. Volunteering with Healthwatch Northumberland is one of the ways James has become more involved in his local community again, which has helped him to manage his Type 2 diabetes and has improved his wellbeing. James also volunteers for Cramlington Foodbank and is a member of the Cramlington walking group.

James says "Mainly it was my mental health that suffered during the pandemic. I needed to be involved with something rather than looking at the same four walls, which I found hard. Talking to people really seemed to help and I eventually moved forward and lost weight - getting out was what was needed. Onwards and upwards!"



Jess and Molly Community Engagement and Communication Support Volunteers

Jess and Molly are both sixth form students and are involved in our 'linking with young people' project.

We currently hear very little from people aged 13-24, despite knowing that they have been hugely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This new project aims to build links with Northumberland schools and colleges, and to design and distribute materials that are relevant and appealing to this age group.

Jess says "It feels great to work on a project which will help young people like myself access the support they need in school and outside of school. I hope that this project will also give young people a better and brighter future."

Molly says: "It's been nice to be involved in a project right from the start, see it develop and create materials with young people in mind."



Do you feel inspired?

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



healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk



03332 408468



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Finance and future priorities

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

Income		Expenditure	
Funding received from local authority	£200,000	Staff costs	£175,179
Additional funding	£68,569	Operational costs	£69,132
		Support and administration	£15,200
Total income	£268,569	Total expenditure	£259,511

Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Accessing care and support

Continuing our focus on access to GP and primary care services and the experiences of those with sight loss or hearing loss.

Understanding people's experiences of accessing outpatient treatment, particularly their experiences of virtual contact (by phone or online).

2. Community Engagement and Insight

Engaging with communities of place and experience in Northumberland and particularly to understand the experiences of young autistic people and their families, people with dementia and re-starting our Enter and View ('Look and Listen') visits.

We will provide information and communications about sources of help and support about health conditions and services.

3. Service users' voices in system changes

Championing service users and Northumberland residents' voices in NHS and care system changes, particularly the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System.

Next steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race. As a start we are planning our annual survey for autumn 2022 and changing to a more focused approach with groups we hear from less.

If your group would like to partner with us in holding a focus group or can help to gather views then please get in touch.

Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Northumberland, Adapt (NE), Burn Lane, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 3HN.

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



The way we work

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

The Healthwatch Northumberland board consists of 11 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met five times and made decisions on matters such as agreeing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy with Key Performance Indicators to ensure that people from diverse communities feel welcome and are able to engage with us.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities, by using the feedback people give us about their experiences to highlight areas where we can make a difference.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, attended virtual and face-to-face meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own in-person and virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers. This year we have done this by developing tools to produce Easy Read documents.

We ensure that this Annual Report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website, across our social media platforms and produce hard copies for our stakeholders.

Responses to recommendations and requests

We made 39 recommendations to service providers and commissioners this year. There were no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity.

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Northumberland is represented on the Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board by our Chair, David Thompson. During 2020/21 David has effectively carried out this role with positive contributions based on feedback and evidence gathered from service users in Northumberland. He has continued to work to ensure that those who are less heard are encouraged to engage with services and that the voices of Northumberland residents are heard in the Integrated Care System.

healthwatch

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