



Together

we're making health
and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23

healthwatch
Tameside

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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch England National Director

Message from our Chair

Welcome to the 2022/23 Annual Report from Healthwatch Tameside. I present this report confident that Healthwatch Tameside's work remains strong and respected amongst our local partners.

Over the course of the year we have:

- Welcomed Alex Leach as the new Healthwatch Manager.
- Assessed our compliance with the Healthwatch England Quality Framework standards and implemented action for improvement.
- Published 4 reports, and shared feedback on 'what matters' to our local community with commissioners and providers of services.
- Maintained our focus on digital inclusion and ensuring the widest possible access through the use of the telephone and hard copy materials.
- Prepared the ground work for 2023/24 with a new business plan and an agreement to hold our board meetings in public.



Tracey McErlain-Burns
Healthwatch Tameside Chair

About us

Healthwatch Tameside is your local health and social care champion.

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



Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.

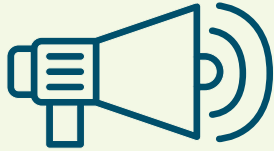


Our values are:

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

Year in review

Reaching out



765 people

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

221 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.

Making a difference to care

We published

4 reports

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



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

8

outstanding volunteers who gave up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£135,806 in funding

which has remained the same to the previous year.

We currently employ

3.2 Full time equivalent staff

who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We launched our mental health survey, to be able to compare what we were told in 2017 with current feedback.



We published a report about 'Changes to the ways people access health and care services',

Summer



We published a report about 'Delays in non-urgent care, showing the impact on people's lives.



We supported the #BecauseWeAllCare campaign which saw people come forward to tell us about issues they faced with services.

Autumn



We worked with the other Healthwatch in Greater Manchester on a joint project about the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership 5-year plan.



We re-started our regular outreach sessions at Tameside Hospital, talking to people about their experiences of care.

Winter



We launched our cost of living survey, in partnership with Action Together.



Our governance board approved our assessment on the quality assurance framework

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Mental Health

Our research exploring mental health provision in Tameside has helped shape new projects and design new services.



Accessible information

We have worked with many different groups in the community to ensure that NHS services and information are accessible to everybody. Examples include helping ensure a group of Bangladeshi women had access to the LIPS interpreting service and help them get more involved with their local GP services; working with residents to produce a list of suggestions for providers on best practice for appointments with patients who may have a hearing impairment



NHS Complaints

Our NHS complaints service has grown year on year – we offer support through the NHS complaints process, and share feedback from these experiences to services so that they can make any appropriate changes.



NHS dentistry

We continue to voice public concerns that improvements to NHS dentistry are too slow, leaving thousands of people in pain.





Healthwatch Hero



Celebrating a hero in our local community.

Penny has been volunteering for Healthwatch Tameside for ten years, so our celebration of Healthwatch Tameside's anniversary would not be complete without her.

Penny, volunteer at Healthwatch Tameside said;

"When I heard about Healthwatch, it seemed a good fit as a volunteer opportunity for a retired nurse, so I approached them. I think it is genuinely important for people to have somewhere to tell their stories and get a response if possible. Sometimes it helps people just to feel listened to."

"I've been attending bi-monthly outreach sessions at Tameside Hospital to gather feedback on local health and care services, and I've renewed the monthly outreach sessions at Stalybridge Library. It's good to be back in contact with the public after all the upheaval of Covid restrictions and I really enjoy the interaction with the public."



Listening to your experiences

We use the feedback we collect to engage with providers and commissioners via our regular anonymous reports, and in meetings we attend. To be able to influence services, it is important that we hear your views, both positive and negative.

Access to NHS dentistry

We have been hearing a lot about people's attempts to access NHS dentistry since the pandemic started.

We are in regular contact with NHS dental commissioners and the Local Dental Committee (LDC) in Manchester about access to NHS dentistry. We also ask questions, and request updates on service provision. We have developed a good relationship with both organisations, who regularly respond with updates and information we can use as part of our information signposting service.



Here are some examples of queries we have assisted with:

- A care worker wanted to know how they could get NHS dental treatment for a young person in a children's home. The response told us about a scheme set up with local authorities to help find dental care for these children, and how to request a referral.
- We have asked questions about payments, NHS dental payment bandings and how these apply if someone is in receipt of benefits. We have responded to the individuals who asked us a question, with the responses received.
- We have asked for information, when people have been told by a hospital consultant, they must have a dental check-up before surgery or treatment can take place, and they have been unable to access the care required.

What difference will this make?

By building relationships with organisations, we are 'in the loop' when information is being made available. We have been told about plans being put into place to increase the number of NHS dental appointments across Greater Manchester during the 2023/24.

Three ways 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.

Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.



We were contacted by a member of the public who had not been registered with a GP for over a year. They were trying to register, but were being asked for photo ID which they didn't have. The NHS website states ID is not essential. We explained this to the person, and they were able to register with a practice. This was not the first time we had heard about this issue. We contacted the local primary care commissioners again, who agreed to send a reminder out to all Tameside GP practices that ID is not required to register with a GP Practice.

Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.



We meet regularly with Patient Experience staff from our local hospital and discuss anonymously the feedback themes we are hearing. Communication is often at the heart of issues, and we discuss ways improvements could be made. Changes have been made within the patient, advice and liaison team, with an emphasis on keeping people informed if they are waiting for information, or the outcome of a complaint.

Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.



Digital access to care is increasing across all services. We regularly remind commissioners and providers that other methods of access are required for people who do not have, or do not want, access to online services. We are starting to see different options being included at the planning stage of new projects



Hearing from all communities

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

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Having a stand at community events which include colleges, places of worship and libraries. An example of events we have attended include; Armed Forces Day, Tameside Men's Mental Health Conference and outreach events at Tameside College.
- We have worked with partner organisations to provide talk, listen and share events with a range of groups and services. For example, we have held sessions with Samuel Laycock School and Tameside Carers Centre.
- We have continued to develop our links with organisations which include the job centre and housing providers.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Tameside 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've helped 221 people by:

- Providing up to date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access NHS dentistry and emergency treatment
- Supporting people through the NHS complaints process

Support with complaints

Healthwatch Tameside provides support to people living in Tameside to make NHS Complaints. We help people understand how the NHS complaints process works and support them where needed. Support is offered by telephone, online, and face-to-face in relation to any NHS service provision provided at hospitals, GP Practices, dentists, pharmacies, opticians, and nursing homes.

This year in Healthwatch Tameside:

Our complaints service received 92 new cases, a 15% increase from the previous year.

We have helped people write complaint letters, attended local resolution meetings and provided our Self Help Information Packs; empowering people to follow the complaints process themselves, but with clear guidance and expectations.

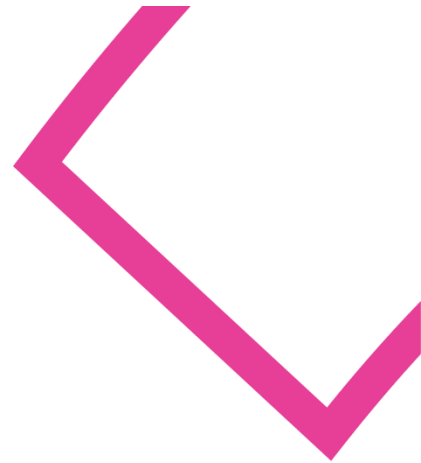
Comments from complaint clients

“Thank you so much for all your help yesterday, it really helped talking to you especially with you being so understanding”

“Thank you for your assistance and input over the last 6 weeks as I believe this had greatly assisted in me receiving a much higher quality response to the complaint”

“many thanks for your support at the local resolution meeting, it was greatly appreciated”

“The letter you drafted up is absolutely perfect. I could never have got my head around it. Thank you ever so much for taking the time to help me”




Concerns around hospital discharge

we often hear from people that are inpatients at hospital who are uncertain where to go for advice and information.

One enquirer contacted us as she was concerned around the discharge plan for her vulnerable family member. She felt that the plan was inadequate, and it didn't accommodate his needs when he got home.

Healthwatch Tameside talked through the concerns with her and helped her to make a list of the issues. We recommended that she speak to the ward manager with these concerns which she agreed to do and went to the hospital the same day. The concerns were addressed by the ward manager and a home assessment was done when her family member got home.


 "Special thank you to Healthwatch Tameside for listening to me and giving me the timely support I needed"

Helped mum get support for baby's feeding

A mother was referred to us by a social prescriber for support with making a complaint following a poor experience at a Children's Clinic.

After speaking to the mum, we explained that making a complaint can be a lengthy process and she needed urgent support around her baby's feeding.

With her permission we contacted the dietetic service and they agreed to contact the mum directly. She was happy with this outcome and was provided with a direct contact number for the dietetic service for future.

 "thank you for all your support with this case. Client is very happy to have had a call from dietician and she is now able to support her child better with the diet and weaning"
– Social Prescriber



Volunteering

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

This year our volunteers:

- Visited communities to promote their local Healthwatch and what we have to offer, this included our local hospital.
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Shared information with their communities about health and care
- Provided information to Healthwatch Tameside about local changes to services which impact the community

Finance and future priorities

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

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£135,806	Salaries Expense	£102,922
Additional income	£816	Direct Delivery	£4819
		Overheads and Mgt	£30,000
Total income	£136,622	Total expenditure	£137,741

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working, spot issues and think about how things can be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue our work to tackling inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless of who you are or where in Tameside you live.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. We will conduct research projects on children and young people's mental health services
2. We will become enter and view ready
3. We will relaunch our volunteer programme including more ways for young people to be heard



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Tameside, 131 Katherine Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7AW. Healthwatch Tameside is delivered by Action Together CIO (Registered Charity no: 1165512).

Healthwatch Tameside 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

Healthwatch Tameside operates as part of Action Together, the voluntary sector infrastructure organisation in Tameside. Healthwatch Tameside has its own Board which sets our priorities and overall strategy. Our Healthwatch Board consists of **7** 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. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met **6** times and made decisions on matters such as our quality assurance framework and our business plan for the year ahead.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

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

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of using services. During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website.

Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example, we share our insight to several committees and groups to support commissioners and providers with their decision making.

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

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Tameside is represented on the Tameside's Health and Wellbeing Board by Anna Hynes, Tameside Director, Action Together.

Healthwatch Tameside is represented on Tameside Strategic Partnership Board by Anna Hynes, Tameside Director, Action Together. and Tameside System Quality Group by Alex Leach, Manager, Healthwatch Tameside.

Healthwatch Tameside are also represented on Tameside Provider Partnership, Tameside General Practice Alliance, Tameside Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board, Primary Care Commissioning Committee, Integrated Medicines Optimisation Group, Tameside and Glossop Mental Health VCSE Network, Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network, Pennine Care Foundation Trust Healthwatch Partnership Group, Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care Foundation Trust Patient Safety and Service User Experience Group.

These regular meetings enabled us to do a number of things on behalf of local people:

- Making sure that people leading our health and care systems understand the feedback we are given by local people.
- Asking questions based on things we know that local people have said to us before.
- Checking that the public engagement that informs decisions is balanced and not just based on the views of the people who are easiest to talk to.

Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network

There are 10 local Healthwatch in Greater Manchester who have come together to work as a network. In 2022/23 the HW in GM network have achieved the following;

- Published an all-age strategy.
- Formalised a 3-year partnership agreement with Greater Manchester Integrated Care.
- Gather opinion from across our local communities to influence the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Strategy and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Strategy.
- Contributed to the development of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Quality Strategy.
- Delivered our commitment to continue raising concerns regarding access to NHS dentistry.



healthwatch
Tameside

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