

The value of listening

Healthwatch England
Annual Report 2023–2024



healthwatch

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It's our goal to support your voice, intervene and support and work with the local health systems to make a better and healthier borough for us to live in. We would appreciate your continued support as we head into this next year.

Albie Stadtmiller, Chief Executive at Healthwatch Enfield

Message from our Chair

Healthwatch Enfield continues to be a key player in improving access to health and social care services.

Working alongside Enfield Council, we have improved communication with adult social care service users, and helped departments in identifying areas that could be strengthened and how best to meet the needs of service users.

Our work with the North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) has successfully informed the public about the proposed service delivery changes of eye surgery procedures and how accessibility can be enhanced for individuals with sight loss.

As part of the CORE20 PLUS5 initiative, our Healthy Hearts and Hypertension awareness campaign, we have developed a team of community connectors to provide a channel of communication with the wide variety of communities in Enfield. Through this effort, we've trained these connectors, to carry out free blood pressure checks, promote health literacy, and encouraged residents to visit their GP for early diagnosis and treatment. We have cooperated with the Care Quality Commission on digital exclusion, reaching out to seldom heard communities and addressing the barriers they face in providing feedback.

At the annual conference, 'GP Access Made Simple', Enfield residents spoke powerfully and directly to Doctors and health service professionals about the difficulties faced by people with disabilities and their carers.

In all this work, our dedicated team of volunteers are the lynch pin of the service. Our 'Enter and View' volunteers continue to visit care homes to monitor standards and drive improvements. To ensure transparency, accountability, and adherence to statutory obligations across our work and services, Healthwatch Enfield has implemented a Quality Framework. The framework guides our organisation in continually striving to better engage with Enfield's diverse communities and partners.



I would like to thank Healthwatch Enfield for their dedication, expertise, and all their hard work in the past year. We look forward to another year of working with Enfield residents on their priorities including the mental health of young people and cancer screening.

Christine Vigars , Chair of Healthwatch Enfield



About us

Healthwatch Enfield 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 voice 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

Reached out to **24,109** people!

1918 people

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

152 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

8 reports

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

Our most popular report was

CQC Digital Inclusion

which highlighted the struggles people face **on the digital barriers in providing feedback.**



Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

21

outstanding volunteers who gave up **268 hours** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2023 - 24 we received

£144,973

which is the **same** as the previous year.



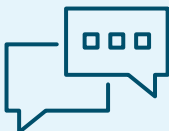





We currently employ

3.5 staff

who help us carry out our work.



How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>Over 353 residents received free blood pressure checks, leading to referrals for previously undiagnosed hypertension.</p>	 <p>We reach out to seldom heard communities to discuss the digital barriers of providing feedback to health and social care services.</p>
Summer	 <p>We rekindled our connections with voluntary sector community groups, strengthening our engagement locally.</p>	 <p>We created a new GP access guide and now offer translation in various languages to increase accessibility.</p>
Autumn	 <p>We raised the importance of patient education, communication, and transport support in the North Central London's Eye Surgery Proposal.</p>	 <p>Built a community connector network of 6 local community groups and residents to empower underserved communities with hypertension awareness.</p>
Winter	 <p>Spoke to adult social care service users to find out what they think of the services, identifying the gaps in services and good practice in anticipation of CQC visits.</p>	 <p>We hosted our Annual Healthwatch Enfield Conference, the central theme being 'GP Access Made Simple'.</p>

Your voice heard at a wider level

We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in **North Central London** influence decisions made about services at North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) level.



We actively engaged the community of Enfield in measuring blood pressure and educating them about hypertension. We measured and educated 353 residents on blood pressure, attended 28 events, partnered with community groups and trained 6 connectors. This initiative aligns with the national NHS England and NHS Improvement approach to reduce community health disparities.

We worked with RNIB and Healthwatch Haringey to petition North Middlesex University Hospital to hire an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) as it was one of only two hospitals in London without one. An ECLO has been recruited to help support local residents who need support when having issues with losing their sight.





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 feed this back to services and help them improve.

Improving Community Hypertension Awareness

Building on our commitment to address health inequalities within Enfield, Healthwatch Enfield was contracted for the Core20Plus5 in 2023/24. The initiative addressed health inequalities by expanding outreach and information sharing to diverse communities.

We actively engaged the community of Enfield in measuring blood pressure and educating them about hypertension. We measured and educated 353 residents on blood pressure, attended 28 events, partnered with community groups and trained 6 connectors. This initiative aligns with the national NHS England and NHS Improvement approach to reduce community health disparities.

What did you tell us about Healthy Hearts?

- By raising awareness about the causes, risks, and preventative measures for hypertension, we empowered residents to take charge of their health, about the importance of measuring their blood pressure regularly and where to get help and support having been informed.
- We attended community events and partnered with local organisations to offer free blood pressure checks, allowing us to reach residents who may not otherwise seek hypertension screening.
- A cornerstone of our project is the development of a community connector network. 6 community connectors were trained to measure blood pressure and raise awareness within their communities, building a legacy.

What difference did this make?

- Through 28 events and partnerships with community groups, we have measured the blood pressure of over 353 Enfield residents.
- Residents with high blood pressure readings were advised to visit their GP for further evaluation and treatment. Early detection and management of hypertension can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other health complications.
- We observed a growing interest in learning about hypertension among residents and an increase in health literacy.

Looking Forward...

- Expanding our reach, we will prioritise partnerships with BAME communities, homeless people, sex workers and other underserved communities to counteract the gap within health care services.
- Strengthening the community connector network and recruiting more connectors.
- Collect and track data to measure its effectiveness of the programme and identify areas for improvement.

What are the digital barriers in providing feedback?

Last year, we published findings on the experiences shared with us by both the general public and seldom-heard groups in Enfield. Our report highlighted an array of digital barriers in providing feedback to health and social care services, ranging from language, sensory challenges to mistrust, and costs.

In April 2023, Healthwatch Enfield collaborated with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to understand the reasons behind digital exclusion with specific community groups by exploring how individuals share their feedback about health and social care services.

57%

survey respondents are aware of the CQC, suggesting that while there is some level of awareness, a significant portion of the population is not informed about the regulatory body or its role.

Who took part?

We conducted surveys and focus groups to explore the reasons behind digital exclusion. Between April and August 2023, we connected with:

- 116 people who participated in our survey on digital exclusion, service feedback, and the CQC.
- 86 participants in community engagement sessions.
- 30 respondents in a general survey.

What difference did this make?

- Identified specific challenges faced by people with disabilities, those with English as a second language, mental health support group participants, and refugees.
- The engagement has empowered seldom-heard groups by validating their experiences and ensuring their voices are considered in decision-making processes.
- Recognising that only 57% of survey respondents were aware of the CQC, steps have been taken to improve awareness campaigns. These campaigns aim to inform the public about the CQC's role and how their feedback can influence health and social care services.
- Listed recommendations to the CQC and emphasised participants preference for personal interaction methods (phone calls, face-to-face meetings) for feedback collection.

How will service changes to eye surgeries affect you?

In August 2023, Healthwatch Enfield worked with the NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board to collect feedback on their proposal in making changes to how eye surgery services are delivered in North Central London.

The proposal has the potential to facilitate an additional 3,000 eye surgery procedures annually and significantly reduce waiting times for certain sight-saving surgeries by up to four weeks. In an effort to understand and address the needs and concerns of those affected by the proposed service changes at the new specialist site in Edgware.



If you don't drive, then you rely on people. How do people get home after surgery? Some rely on kids, but they don't always have the time. There used to be a service for disabled people, done by GP's. If yes, they can't bring anyone with them. Hospital usually says no to this, and taxis are expensive!

Focus Group participant discussing the issues of travelling post-surgery

Who took part?

From 4 September – 16 October 2023, we sent out surveys and held focus groups to collect insights on the planned service changes.

- Engaged with 107 people, of which 85 people took part in the survey.
- 7,421 people were reached through social media and Healthwatch Enfield Website.
- Reached out to 14,770 people, through community newsletters.



What difference did this make?

- Our outreach had raised awareness of the new services changes to eye surgeries in North Central London as well as identifying the concerns that service-users have on the changes.
- We published our research, emphasised the importance of patient choice, that service-users can choose the hospital or clinic that provides the service, where they want to be treated.
- We also recommended enhancing patient accessibility and communication to help service-users who are visually impaired and vulnerable to navigate the current systems in place.

Three ways we have made a difference in the community

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

Expanding community's health literacy

Healthwatch Enfield is taking a vital step forward with the introduction of community connectors. Community Connectors are Enfield residents, making a significant difference by bridging the gap between their community and health resources.

Community connectors are at the heart of our project's outreach efforts. They have been trained to raise awareness about hypertension within their communities, support residents, and ensure equitable access to blood pressure screenings and health education. Through their cultural understanding and local connections, community connectors have empowered residents to take charge of their health and wellbeing.



Getting services to involve the public

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

Healthwatch Enfield and Enfield Council have worked together to collect feedback from service users who uses adult social care to identify the gaps in services. As a result, the Integrated Hospital Discharge Team and Integrated Community Equipment Services (ICES) has agreed to improve communications with service users by creating a leaflet with contact details as well as specifying the role of departments.



Giving the local community the voice to drive change

Empowering residents to speak up their experiences in front of decision makers can help them feedback their experiences.

In Enfield, many residents experience difficulties in securing timely appointments with their local General Practice (GPs), a concern that not only affects individual health but also places a strain on our healthcare system as a whole. Our annual conference, 'GP Access Made Simple' was an opportunity for residents and community organisations to learn about alternative pathways to traditional GP services and their rights to accessing GP care. North Central London Integrated Care Board and General Practitioners found the Q&A useful, and will use the feedback to update their policy and strategy to improve GP Access.



There's a summary of other outcomes we've achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.



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:

- Building rapport with community support groups, including those representing disabilities, autism, sensory impairments, non-English speakers, unpaid carers, long-term conditions, and mental health
- Providing free blood pressure checks to individuals using food banks, promoting health literacy and encouraging regular monitoring
- Facilitating local residents in sharing their challenges accessing General Practice services with doctors and healthcare professionals at our Annual Conference, 'GP Access Made Simple'

One-to-One: Identify Solutions to Digital Exclusion

As part of our Care Quality Commission (CQC) Digital Inclusion project, we worked with the charity One-to-One to explore the challenges faced by individuals living with learning disabilities and/or autism in giving feedback about their experiences of health and social care services through digital technology.

This focus group consisted of five participants living with learning disabilities and/or autism, and a support worker. Comprised of 3 males, 3 females, ages ranged from 30 to 70+ years old.

As a result of what people shared, we recommended CQC to:

- Work to improve accessibility on the feedback and complaints digital channels, such as enhancing accessibility on website, provide large images and easy to read text for those with sensory impediments and/or dyslexia.
- Introduce in-person feedback consultations, to allow those who cannot access or use digital technology, feedback their experiences.
- Promote the organisation more thoroughly in community hubs and places. Display flyers and posters listing the CQC contact details.

Oasis Foodbank: Expanding Community Hypertension Awareness and Health literacy

We conducted outreach at Oasis Foodbank, offering free blood pressure checks and information on hypertension awareness. The event went beyond taking blood pressure readings; it provided valuable insights into the healthcare challenges faced by some community members.

The 23 attendees were primarily single parents from low-income backgrounds, representing diverse global majority communities. Partnering with organisations like OASIS Foodbank is key to ensuring that everyone in Enfield has the opportunity to monitor their blood pressure and live a healthier life.

How did it make a difference?

- Attendees were more encouraged to visit their General Practice (GP) once discovering their blood pressure was out of normal range, and their health literature has been expanded understanding the values or blood pressure and how their lifestyle can impact it.
- We identified barriers to hypertension monitoring, as attendees shared their struggle with affording blood pressure monitors and language barriers. We fed this back to the North Central London Integrated Care Board who are looking at ways to resolve these challenges.
- Attendees also shared challenges of not being able to secure timely GP appointments. Healthwatch Enfield updated the GP access guide, available in various languages, explaining how to navigate the system.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch Enfield 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, making a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access NHS dentistry and GP services
- Signpost people to the right organisations for their needs

Overcoming Language Barriers When Accessing NHS 111

Accessing a translator when using the NHS 111 can be very challenging due to lengthy telephone menu options.

With the efforts of the Healthwatch Enfield team, a non-English Speaking resident was able to better able to navigate the NHS 111 Service.

A Healthwatch Enfield staff member was contacted by Jane*, who was experiencing pain and mental distress due to a broken tooth. Jane attempted to get help from a local dentist but was turned away due to not speaking English, despite having a card explaining her right to NHS care and access to an interpreter. We advised Jane to call 111 but found that the long triaging menu would be almost impossible to navigate for a non-English speaker, and there was no way to request an interpreter without going through these steps. Jane's ability to understand written English was stronger than her ability to understand spoken English, so we signposted her to Relay UK, a service that helps to convert speech to text.

Healthwatch Enfield staff created a 'cheat sheet' to help Jane navigate the NHS 111 menu and request an interpreter. They also raised awareness of the communication barrier in North Central London Integrated Care Board meetings.

*Name changed

GP Guide to Increase Healthcare Accessibility

Residents may be unsure how to access essential services or secure timely General Practice (GP) appointments. Healthwatch Enfield has created a new 'Access your GP' guide to bridge this gap and empower residents.

The 'Access your GP' guide is a simple and informative resource, that provides residents with clear instructions on how they can register for a GP and learn their rights to primary care. The guide is available in print and digital, and Large Easy Read versions are also available.

- The GP Guide provides information on how to register for a GP, the different roles within a GP, and how to register with a practice.
- Recognising the diverse needs of our community, the digital version of the GP Guide is available in several languages, empowering residents who may struggle with English.
- In addition to our GP Guide, we also promoted our factsheet, which provides detailed information about the various staff roles within a practice.

Making GP Access Simple

Healthwatch Enfield hosted their annual conference in March 2024 with the theme 'GP Access Made Simple', it kicked off with an overview of our priorities for the year.

Our expert speakers from a local General Practice (Evergreen Primary Care Centre), North Middlesex University Hospital, Royal Free Hospital Trust, and North Central London Integrated Care Board (ICB) provided detailed information on how the public can access their GP, the rights they hold as patients, and signposted organisations they can contact for further support.

Enfield residents were able to ask questions and shared their experiences to doctors and healthcare professionals in Q&As. Lead clinical directors and doctors from the NCL ICB took onboard the feedback.



Inform patients of policy procedures and triage system. Train staff in speaking to patients with learning disabilities and autism.

Feedback from resident to guest speakers at conference



- Raising awareness of patients' rights to GP care, avenues of access and ensuring community voices are listened to.
- Healthwatch Enfield promoted their 'Access your GP' Guide (see page 16 for more information).
- Speakers emphasised the benefits of 'Pharmacy First' service; utilising local pharmacies for non-critical health issues, which can help alleviate the pressure on GPs and provide quicker access to necessary medications and advice.
- Speakers outlined the expected benefits of the North Middlesex Hospital and Royal Free Hospital merger, including improved patient care, better resource allocation, and enhancing service delivery.



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 Healthwatch Enfield and the services we provide
- Collected experiences and supported local residents to share their views
- Carried out enter and view visits to local facilities and care homes to help identify areas of improvement
- Conducted Place assessments at a number of local hospitals in Enfield
- Represented Healthwatch at stakeholder and partnerships meetings
- Assisted Healthwatch Enfield staff in community engagement and social media
- Ran blood pressure training programmes for volunteers and community connectors



I have been a volunteer with Healthwatch for three years, and find helping to champion good care and support in the borough extremely rewarding. My background is in social care; I spent the majority of my working life with the London Borough of Enfield involved, in various guises, in the arrangement and provision of care and support for adults living in the community.

I have learnt a lot whilst with Healthwatch Enfield, particularly from the Enter and View visits to care homes and PLACE assessments in a hospital setting, but also from being on the Committee. Volunteers are well supported, and I have met some very nice and knowledgeable people along the way.



Margaret –
Healthwatch Enfield



Raising a family with children in Enfield schools and working within the NHS, I was keen to volunteer at Healthwatch to learn about the considerable challenges we have in population health and play a part in supporting local projects. I've supported awareness on digital exclusion and how a growing digital society is deepening inequalities particularly among our most vulnerable communities.

I am a great believer in the development of health equity and how it impacts communities and modern lifestyles. Everyone can play a part to make Enfield a better place to live, work and play. I am enjoying my time with Healthwatch Enfield, who are a warm and inviting team and hope I can make a difference by being involved.



Saleem –
Healthwatch Enfield

Do you feel inspired?



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

 www.healthwatchenfield.co.uk

 **0208 373 6283**

 admin@healthwatchenfield.co.uk



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 Local Authority	£144,973	Expenditure on pay	£106,768
Additional income	£25,850	Project Activities	£2874
		Office and management fees	£52,588
Total income	£170,823	Total expenditure	£162,230

Additional income is broken down by:

- £16,250 received from the local Integrated Care Board (ICB) for joint work on a project.
- £9600 funding received from Care Quality Commission (CQC) to support their project.

ICB funding

Healthwatch across North Central London also receives funding from our local ICB to support new areas of collaborative work at this level, including:

Purpose of ICB funding	Amount
Hypertension & Community Connectors project	£11,250
Ophthalmology Review	£5000

Next steps

Over the next year we will continue our role in collecting feedback from 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 faced when accessing care.

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

1. Improving GP access for patients and providing alternative pathways for health
2. Helping young people with Mental health support
3. Raising awareness of the importance of Cancer screening



Statutory statements

Listen to Act delivers Healthwatch Enfield.

Listen to Act, 37 Chapel Street, London, NW1 5DP

Healthwatch Enfield 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

Our Listen to Act Board, the hosting organisation for Healthwatch Enfield consists of 9 board 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 2023/24 the Board met 6 times and made decisions on matters such as approving a new 2-year Strategic Plan and also put in place a restructure of the organisation.

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 can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023/24, we have been available by phone, and email, provided a web form 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, www.healthwatchenfield.co.uk.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

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

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to London borough of Enfield Health & Wellbeing board, their partnership board and voluntary sector community meetings. We also update our local hospitals on a regular basis.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers at the [North Central London Integrated Care Board](#). For example, we meet regularly with director of primary care and attend a number of their meetings such as the immunisation and screening group.

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

Enter and View

This year, we made 4 of Enter and View visits. We made 28 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Nairn House	Follow up from a 2022 visit where a number of recommendation were made.	Wrote a report stating if recommendations had been complied with and giving further recommendations
Elsyng House	Routine visit to monitor standards	Wrote a report with recommendations to be followed up on a return visit
Eliza House	Second revisit as first revisit found that recommendations were not implemented	Wrote a report with some recommendations but also stating the vast improvement in the service.
Autumn Gardens	Routine visit to monitor standards	Wrote a report with recommendations to be followed up on a return visit

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Enfield is represented on the Enfield Health and Wellbeing Board by Albie Stadmiller, CEO. During 2023/24 our representative has effectively carried out this role by attending meetings of the Health and Wellbeing Board and presenting information gathered during our engagement programmes.

Healthwatch Enfield is represented on the North Central London Integrated Care Partnerships and Enfield Integrated Care Board by Albie Stadmiller, CEO.


2023 – 2024 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
GP Access	Local residents were provided with other pathways for primary care via our GP guide and factsheet of the different roles now available at GP surgeries.
Heathy Hearts	Seldom heard groups were informed on the risk of hypertension, actions they can take to lower their blood pressure (signposting where appropriate) and advised on how to get their blood pressure checked. Trained community connectors from local community groups on how to take a blood pressure reading for their community.
Ophthalmology project	Local residents had the chance to provide feedback and were informed about the proposed changes to ophthalmology (cataract) operations in the borough.
CQC Digital Inclusion	Seldom heard groups were given the opportunity the voice their experience of digital exclusion.

healthwatch

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