

North Tyneside

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health



Championing what matters to you

Healthwatch North Tyneside
Annual Report 2022-23

healthwatch
North Tyneside

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Healthwatch North Tyneside uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our activities as covered by the licence agreement with Healthwatch England

Message from our Chair

It's been a very busy, but productive year for Healthwatch North Tyneside. We have heard the views of more people than ever before and that's testament to the hard work of all our staff and volunteers.

Our job is to listen to as many varied groups of people as possible about the health and social care services they receive, and then use that information to influence decision makers to improve their services accordingly.

Sometimes this has very direct results, such as reporting on challenges people had getting Covid vaccinations at convenient times and places, which resulted in 16 pop-up clinics being set up.

Sometimes our impact is less tangible or immediate, such as our long term work on digital inclusion which began during the pandemic and has seen a new, wide ranging, digital inclusion strategy developed, or our work keeping transport to health and community facilities on local agendas.

Not only do we speak to residents in many different ways - personal interviews, focus groups and research projects, but we also work closely with other community organisations across the borough to hear more varied views and co-design solutions. We thank them for their support and valuable insights.

We have also received extra funding from North Tyneside Council and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board to work on specific engagement projects, and again are very grateful for their confidence in our work as a critical friend and for valuing our independence.

All this would not be possible without the input of all the people we have talked to over the year, who have given us honest feedback and helpful suggestions for improving services. I thank them, and our hardworking staff, volunteers and trustees who have made us the well respected organisation I hope we are.



Julia Charlton
Healthwatch
North Tyneside Chair



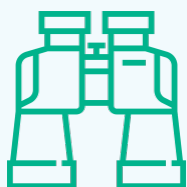
"In the last ten years. The health and care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Healthwatch North Tyneside has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better." **Louise Ansari, Healthwatch England National Director**

About Us

Your health and social care champion.

Healthwatch North Tyneside is your local health and social care champion. We make sure health and social care 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.

We help to shape and improve local health and social care services. We want to show how people's experiences can transform services for the better; and to demonstrate how good engagement can provide solutions to challenges facing the NHS and care services in the years ahead.



Our vision

People's experiences, views and needs are sought, valued, and acted upon as part of the planning and delivery of health and care support in North Tyneside.



Our mission

To champion the experiences, views, values and needs of local people to positively affect the health and social care services in North Tyneside.



Who we are

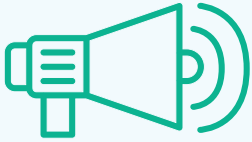
Healthwatch North Tyneside is a small independent charity. We are locally based, and our trustees, staff and volunteers are from the area.

Our work is funded by a service delivery contract with North Tyneside Council or through grants or contracts with commissioners, providers or grant funders.

We are part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch, who operate in every local authority area in England. This network was established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, with the aim of putting patients and the public first.

Our Year in Review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.



Reaching out

3,579 people shared their views and experiences of health and care services with us, helping us to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

We held **98 community outreach events** and **spoke to 2,628 people** about the role of Healthwatch.

Over 1,500 people and 30 organisations shared their views about health inequalities and/or digital inclusion for separately commissioned projects.



Making a difference

Some of the impacts we have had this year

- **Residents' views shaped the North Tyneside Equally Well Strategy.**
- Mental Health service users helped to **identify and develop two new services for North Tyneside.**
- We identified the need for improved access to Covid-19 vaccinations, resulting in **16 pop up clinics** delivering **463 vaccinations to local people.**
- We continued to **work with the new NHS Integrated Care Board (IBC)** to ensure user voice is embedded in their new governance arrangements and built new relationships across the North East and North Cumbria.



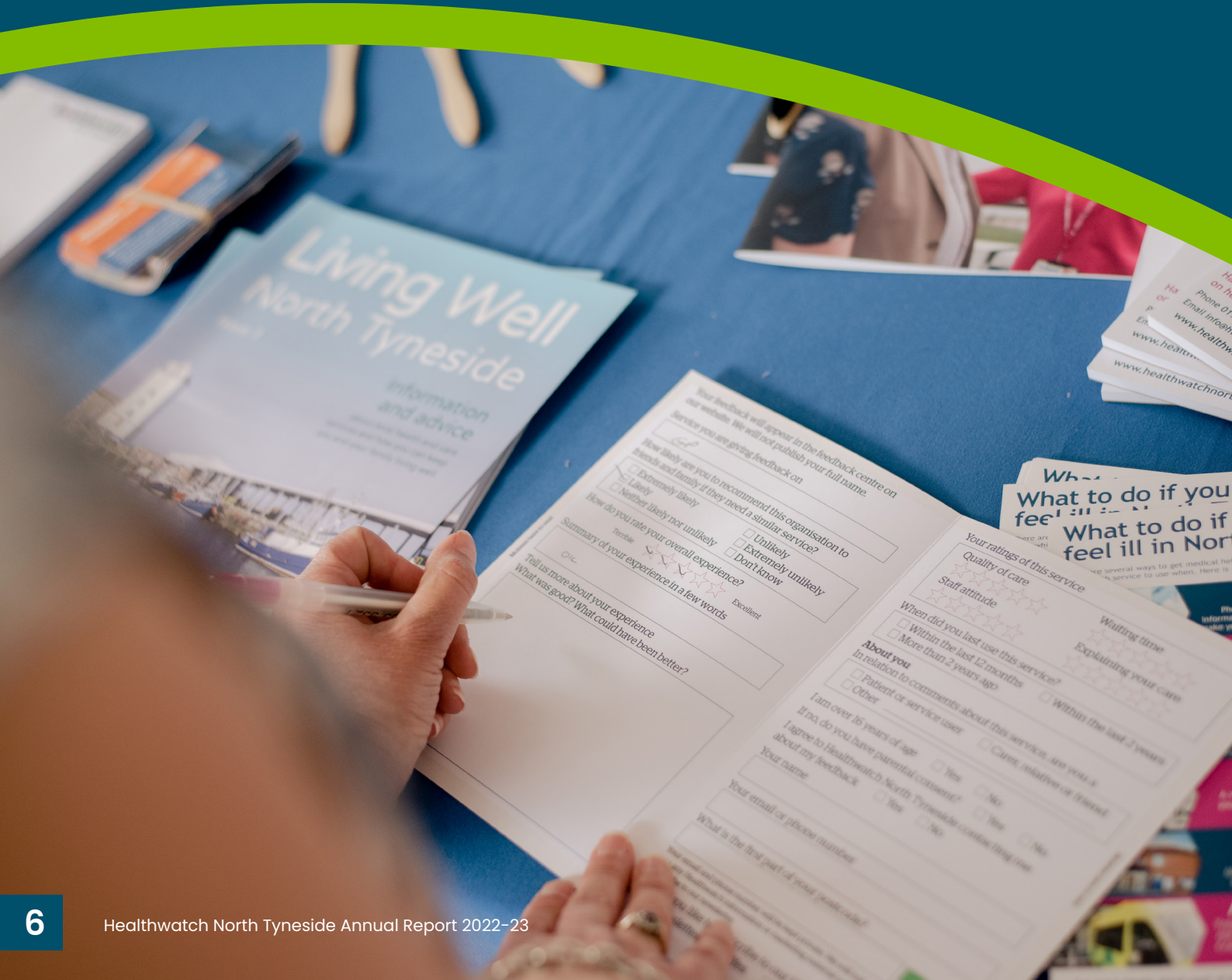
Health and care that works for you

- We had **4.9 full time equivalent members** of our staff team on average during the year.
- **1,635 hours of volunteering** thanks to our amazing team of Trustees and engagement, research and administration volunteers.
- We received **£151,940 of core contract funding** to deliver the Healthwatch service in North Tyneside.

Information and Support

Providing health and care information is part of our remit and residents tell us access to high quality information is critical. We use feedback to identify gaps in information and work with commissioners and service providers to fill those gaps with accessible and useful information.

We have also directly helped over 300 people to get the information or support they have required or wished to access.



Improving Access to Information



Information about issues and services

We worked with partners and service providers to produce a range of resources and information leaflets on issues that matter to people, including refreshing our popular mental health support in North Tyneside leaflet. In addition, we secured funds to work with service users to create new resources to help people know what support is available and where. These will be launched later in 2023 and will be available online, through a new section of the Living well North Tyneside website and printed leaflets.

Our feedback centre service directory

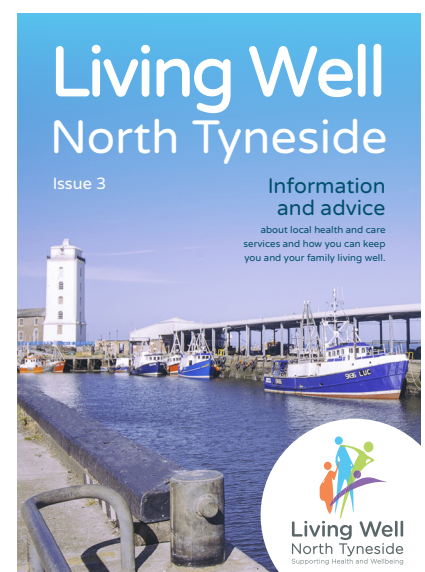
We have relaunched our online feedback centre which acts as a directory of Health and Care services in North Tyneside as well as giving residents the opportunity to leave their feedback and a star rating.

Living well North Tyneside Website

We are a proud member of the Living well North Tyneside partnership and we have worked closely with our partners to improve the content of the site and the way that it works. The updates to the site will be launched later in 2023.

Living well North Tyneside Booklet

95,000 copies of the third edition of the booklet were posted through letterboxes of every house in North Tyneside during March and April 2022. A further 3,000 have since been distributed through services and community settings and at community events. We lead the production of these booklets and are working with partners to agree whether a fourth edition should be prepared in 2023.



How We Have Helped Individuals

People contact us by calling our information line (0191 263 5321), via social media, our website contact form, emailing us (info@hwnt.co.uk) or at one of our face to face engagement events across North Tyneside. Here are some examples of how we have supported local people with their issues:

Raising a problem

We helped a North Shields couple to understand how to make a complaint about a private provider who had completed an autism assessment and a course of follow up support. The couple said they had 'been forced to go private because of the NHS waiting times for adult autism assessments'.

Breast screening appointments

A Whitley Bay resident contacted us to find out when she would be called for her breast screening appointment given it had been more than 3 years since her last check. We contacted North Tyneside's Public Health team to check for the latest information and they subsequently updated their webpage following delays to the roll out.

Finding a dentist

A resident from Wallsend was struggling to find a new NHS dentist following the closure of their practice. We advised about all the ways she could look for available practices and put her in touch with a practice we knew were taking on new patients in Benton. We also provided her with information on the registration process. She was able to register with the new dentist and thanked us for our support.



Improving Health and Care Services in North Tyneside

We believe 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 work with them to improve.

We are committed to being more open and updating people more regularly about the impact we are having. You can see more about what people told us in our general engagement 2022/23 here: www.hwnt.co.uk



Breast Screening

We decided to focus on the breast screening programme in North Tyneside as we heard that there was lower take up than in previous years and local residents told us that the programme wasn't working as well as before. **We heard from 314 people about their experiences of the service.**

We worked closely with the Public Health team at North Tyneside Council and providers to provide regular feedback about what people were telling us and highlight ways services could be improved. Several changes were implemented during the time this survey was open, some of which were as a direct result of the feedback we gathered.

Most people told us that they were grateful to have access to the screening service and felt the overall service was good. However, during the research we identified several opportunities to improve the service and make it more accessible. This included:

- Changing the way that the invitation system worked, moving towards a system where people were given an appointment rather than being asked to contact the service to make an appointment.
- Arranging for free parking at North Tyneside General Hospital whilst someone was visiting the mobile screening unit.
- Highlighted that some people who had moved GP practices might have missed out on being invited for an appointment.

We made 10 suggested actions as a result of this research which are being considered by North Tyneside's Cancer Prevention Network and we have shared these with Healthwatch England as some potentially have national implications.



Outpatients

NHS England is encouraging the rollout of patient initiated follow up approaches to outpatient appointments. This gives patients the opportunity to arrange follow up appointments themselves as and when needed, rather than following a fixed set of appointments.

We worked with our sister organisation, Healthwatch Northumberland, and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to gather views of planned changes to the way some outpatients appointments are delivered. **We heard from 580 people and have shared these findings with the Trust.**

Northumbria Trust said



“The findings of the report will be used to inform patient information on our Trust website and leaflets about the new service to ensure they get the information they need to make informed choices. We are also using the key findings to develop a new patient portal which will be launched later in 2023 to improve communications with patients about their appointments and health information.”

Vaccine Inequalities

Since the launch of the Covid vaccine programme in December 2020, we have been supporting the delivery of the programme by informing and engaging with residents. We are a member of the North Tyneside Vaccine Board and work closely with the Public Health team, ICB North Tyneside, the services delivering vaccinations and community organisations.

In Autumn 2022, people shared their experiences of the Autumn booster programme for Covid and flu with us. We identified that some people were struggling to get a vaccine, particularly in the North Shields area. We worked with the NHS and council to arrange mobile vaccination buses and promote these to local residents. **During November and December, the mobile vaccine units delivered 16 sessions across North Tyneside and 463 people received their jabs this way.**

We are working with the NHS and the Public Health team to understand attitudes to other vaccination programmes, particularly those aimed at older people and children. This activity has been funded by a grant from the ICB and Public Health team.

Carers Experiences

On behalf of North Tyneside's carers' partnership Board, and in partnership with North Tyneside Carer's Centre, we have carried out two research projects to hear about carers' views and experiences.



"I feel I have missed out on my childhood."

Young carer in North Tyneside, June 2022

In April 2022 we heard from 104 young carers (aged between 5 and 21) about their experiences over the previous 2 years. We co-produced key messages and recommended actions with a group of 8 young carers based on the survey results. An action plan is being overseen by the Carers Partnership Board focusing on contingency planning, teachers and other professionals' identification and supporting young carers and increasing the provision of one-to-one, group and peer support.



"Carers take a huge weight off the health care system and also ensure kids are in school, adults are in work and we pay the price. We should be cared for better and given more respect in doing this."

North Tyneside Carer, January 2023

In January 2023 we heard from 681 adult carers about their experiences of caring in 2022. We were able to compare responses from this year to the data we gathered in 2021 about caring during the pandemic. We again took a co-production approach to the key messages and recommendations with adult carers and other members of the Carers Partnership Board. Our report, published during carers week, includes 10 recommendations that will be overseen by the Carers Partnership Board.

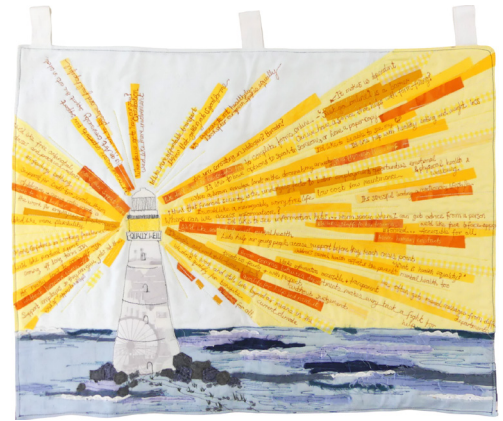
In response to our report in September 2021 the following actions have been completed:

- A new approach to Carer's Assessments has been introduced and a Parent Carer's assessment approach has been developed.
- A new campaign about contingency planning with carers has been launched using the 'message in a bottle scheme'.
- The GP Awards Scheme has improved the identification and support for carers through GP practices and 23 NorthTyneside practices have signed up.

Health Inequalities

Equally well

On behalf of North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board and with grant funding from North Tyneside Council, we undertook a major engagement exercise with residents and voluntary sector organisations. The focus was to understand people's views of the Health and Wellbeing Board's draft strategy and implementation plan. **Over 950 residents and 28 organisations shared their views.**



Jessica Kinnersley co-produced with residents

Key themes to emerge from this consultation included:

- The cost of living crisis dominated people's thinking about health and wellbeing.
- The importance of person centred approaches that help people feel they are not being judged.
- Digital inclusion is important for people and they want a choice.
- Coordinate efforts and join up support for residents so that different organisation work together to tackle these issues.

The detailed report has been used to develop the delivery plan for 2022/3 and the plan for 2023/4 and helped shape the coordinated response to the cost of living crisis last winter, led by North Tyneside Council, including the Warm Welcome centres.

Digital inclusion

We have been championing the issues of digital inclusion, particularly since the start of the pandemic. We are a founding member of North Tyneside Digital Inclusion Working Group, a partnership of North Tyneside Council, NHS and voluntary sector organisations coming together to tackle this issue.

A Digital Inclusion strategy for NorthTyneside has been drafted based on research and engagement activities with Local residents. **With grant funding from the NHS, we led an engagement exercise into residents' views and practical solutions to digital inclusion with over 500 people and 32 organisations. The findings form the basis for the delivery plan and future funding bids.**

This data is also being used to shape the Integrated Care Board's digital inclusion strategy across the North East and North Cumbria.

Adult Social Care

We are separately funded by North Tyneside Council, outside of our core contract, to support them to hear from their adult social care service users. Each month we interview a small number of randomly selected service users to understand how person centred their social care services are. The feedback is used to identify what is working well, what could be done better and review performance of the teams.

We also support the **Inspire User Forum**, which acts as a co-design reference group for adult social care services.

Separately, we are undertaking a research project to capture people's views about **Care Homes and Covid**, so that lessons can be learnt for the future. These findings will be published later this year. This project has also been funded by North Tyneside Council.

Community Mental Health Transformation

The NHS launched this major transformation programme to improve and increase mental health services delivered in the community rather than hospital. A key principle of this programme is involving service users families and carers in the co-design and co-production of these changes. Healthwatch North Tyneside has been funded to work alongside Launchpad North Tyneside to support involvement of service users and carers.

During this year, our work has focused on developing plans for a new crisis support café in North Tyneside, improving access to non-medical and community support and increasing support in the community. The views of residents have also directed the priorities for the next year of community mental health transformation activity.



Service User Voice in Decision Making

NHS governance and decision making

We work hard to ensure service users have a voice in the designing of services and the decisions which will impact on them. During this reporting year we have seen significant changes within NHS governance and decision making with the introduction of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Healthwatch North Tyneside led the discussions with the ICB, on behalf of the Healthwatch Network in the North East and North Cumbria, to ensure user voice and Healthwatch were involved in developments and decision making. We secured funding from the ICB to support this activity across all 14 local Healthwatch in the region.

Local intelligence is collated across four sub-regional areas and shared at Area Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) meetings, with Healthwatch North Tyneside leading this work for the North ICP area.

At regional level, our Healthwatch Network Regional Coordinator represents service-user views from across the region at the NENC Integrated Care Partnership Strategic meeting, Quality & Safety Committee, Primary Care Strategy & Delivery sub-committee, Healthy & Fairness Advisory Group, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion meetings and System Quality Group meetings. The Integrated Care Board Participant for the network is David Thompson, Chair of Healthwatch Northumberland.

The network of local Healthwatch has also been commissioned to undertake additional research to ensure local voices are represented in the ICB's work priorities, including focus groups for the 'Waiting Well' campaign and consultation around the development of the ICB strategy.

Health and Wellbeing Board and decision making

Healthwatch North Tyneside is represented on the North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board by Julia Charlton, Chair, and Paul Jones, Director, of Healthwatch North Tyneside. We play an active role in the Health and Wellbeing Board and its strategic groups that deliver operational work on its behalf including the Future Care Board, Aging Well and Living Well Board, Carers Partnership Board and Mental Health boards.

What we heard in 2022/23

We have published a summary of the views and feedback we have gathered in 2022/23 in a special report. This provides an overview of the key themes and issues people have told us about during our general engagement activities. This report only includes issues people have raised with us rather than our research on specific themes. We have shared this information with North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board during the year.

Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of Healthwatch North Tyneside. Thanks to their efforts, we're able to identify health and social care issues as they arise and understand what is working and what needs improving within the NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Gathered view and experiences from residents by carrying out interviews and surveys when visiting services, over the phone or at community venues.
- Helped with analysing data and writing reports.
- Providing information and raising awareness of Healthwatch at community events.
- Supporting the smoothing running of our office.





Cheryl

“Through hearing lived experiences I have learned a great deal, and feel I understand the issues facing health and social care much better on a local and national level. My community engagement work has reaffirmed my faith in people to be resilient despite great adversity. I find the team positive to work with, volunteers and staff feel equally valued and listened to. I love the atmosphere of collaboration.”



Matthew

“As a neurodivergent person I have found acceptance within the team and plenty of opportunities to explore areas and build networks in improving services which have a personal interest to me. Volunteering gives me a chance to get outside and be active in the community. I have had a chance to connect with people in a very meaningful way. I have heard local people share their personal journeys and seen their courage and hope.”



Maddy

“I enjoy working with the warm and welcoming Healthwatch team. I feel I am doing something useful, and it has helped me find a sense of belonging. Volunteering with Healthwatch is flexible, you can do as much or as little as you are able and there are a range of ways to contribute. No two days are the same, and I have loved the volunteer training and how it has incorporated lived experience.”



Do you feel inspired?

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

 www.hwnt.co.uk  0191 263 5321  info@hwnt.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 to fund the core Healthwatch service in North Tyneside.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Healthwatch core services contract from North Tyneside Council	£151,940	Staffing costs	£122,631
Other funding towards core work	£8,385	Operational costs	£30,407
		Governance costs	£1,190
Total income	£160,325	Total expenditure	£154,228

Other funded activities

In addition to the above funding, we have been successful in securing additional funds to support specific research or engagement activities or information campaigns during this period.

Before we agree to take on additional funded activity, we test that the activity fits with our values and ethos and doesn't compromise our independence.

- Community Mental Health Transformation, North Tyneside CCG – ongoing for two years.
- Adult Social Care User Experience, North Tyneside Council – ongoing.
- Vaccine inequalities, North Tyneside Council Public Health Team – ongoing.
- North East & North Cumbria Healthwatch ICS Network Coordination Funding – ongoing.
- Equally Well Health Inequalities Strategy Engagement, North Tyneside Council.
- Residents solutions to digital inclusions, North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board.

Our Work for the Year Ahead

Each year, we select a small number of key issues to focus some of our work on. These are based on what local people have told us really matters to them through the engagement work we do, the feedback we receive and our annual survey. We also discussed these with service providers and commissioners.

Key themes for 2023–24

Overarching themes



**Understanding
Health Inequalities**



**Improving access
to information**



**User voice in
systems change**

Specific areas

- Experiences of Hospital to Home and service integration
- Experiences and support for autistic adults
- Getting care when you need it – primary and urgent care
- Audiology service
- Travel and Transport
- Waiting for treatment
- Carers
- Mental health and children and young people



The way we work

Our Healthwatch board work on a voluntary basis to provide oversight, direction, and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about our work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. During this reporting year, our trustees were: Julia Charlton – Chair, Bea Groves-McDaniel – Vice Chair, Jackie Doughty – Treasurer, Judy Scott, Theresa Culpin, Dr Joanne Brown, Paula McCormack and Carol Nevison.

healthwatch

North Tyneside

Registered Charity Number 1160753

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