

Annual Report

2020-2021



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Message from our Chair

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The pandemic has presented us with both challenges as well as opportunities which we intend to build upon in the future. We have taken time to assess what benefits the change to digitalisation has brought about and adjusted policies and processes accordingly, thereby maximising our efficiency and the value for money we offer our commissioners.

Of course, the opportunities to meet with our public is one of the downsides although we have made good use of Zoom and MS Teams to hold focus groups to supplement our research activities and surveys. We represent Healthwatch on more than 20 health and care boards and groups at both a Greater Manchester as well as a Trafford level, so we believe that we have been able to bring influence to bear throughout the year by routinely presenting our work to senior colleagues and partners.



OUR WORK

Access to services has been a key focus. We have looked at access during Covid-19 (where we had more than 170,000 visits to our website), the difficulty in patients being able to access an NHS dentist, and patient experience of intermediate care. Our volunteers looked at the accuracy and ease of use of GP websites. Underlying these activities was the ambition to reduce health inequalities through improved accessibility which is another major piece of work we have undertaken in the North of the borough.



COMMUNITY INCLUSION

We worked with ethnic minority groups when we undertook our Covid-19 report. In some cases, we offered small donations to encourage groups where English is not the first language to express their views and we were able to feed these in through the Clinical Commissioning Group so that they could tailor their communications and engagement to maximise uptake of the vaccine.

Message from our Chair cont.

FUNDING

We were fortunate this year in having our already reduced funding levels maintained at the same level. The vast majority of our funding is spent on staff. Our staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly throughout the year to enable us to make good progress in very trying circumstances and our grateful thanks go to them. Our Research and Projects Officer has worked with Healthwatch England to deliver webinars on designing surveys and qualitative research. This work, together with other Greater Manchester Healthwatch projects during the year, has enabled us to generate much needed additional income.



INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS

Towards the end of 2020/21 we were invited by the Clinical Commissioning Group and the local authority to become a member of the local ICS One System Board, the first in Greater Manchester to have been invited. We believe that this bodes well for future partnership arrangements, enabling us to have a seat at the table to work together to influence improvements in health and care going forward.

Heather Fairfield
Chair, Healthwatch Trafford



About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Trafford. Healthwatch helps people get the best out of their local health and care services, whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow by sharing your views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our goals



1 Supporting you to have your say

We want more people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, make informed decisions and shape the services that support them.



2 Providing a high quality service

We want everyone who shares an experience or seeks advice from us to get a high quality service and to understand the difference their views make.



3 Ensuring your views help improve health & care

We want more services to use your views to shape the health and care support you need today and in the future.



"Local Healthwatch have done fantastic work throughout the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is more work ahead to ensure that everyone's views are heard. COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities and to tackle these unfair health differences we will need those in power to listen, to hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people's lives."

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



We heard from

307 people

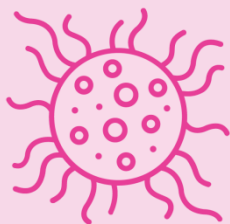
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided advice and information to

Over 166,470 people

including via our website over the past year.

Responding to the pandemic



We engaged with and supported

115,203 online and **30 people** via other methods during the COVID-19 pandemic this year, and had over

65,000 unique page views

for our COVID-19 advice and information during the pandemic, as well as 73,341 impressions via Twitter.

Making a difference to care



We published

12 reports

including performance reports, 5 of which looked at local health and social care services including care homes and dentistry. From this, we made

17 recommendations

for improvement, as well as offering signposting for residents struggling to access services.

Health and care that works for you



36 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed 450 hours.

We employ 5 staff

3 full time, 2 part time (4.3FTE).

We received

£124,500 in funding

from our Local Authority contract in 2020-21, the same as the previous year.

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



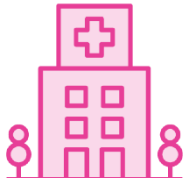
49.4% on Dentistry



20.8% on GP Services



2.6% on NHS 111



2.6% on Oncology

Information Provision



During the pandemic, we realised that local residents needed to be able to find clear information about coronavirus in one place. We created a landing page on our website, and created pages concerning dentistry, community services, news, vaccine information and personal resources. We promoted these pages on Twitter, and found that our COVID-19 information pages ranked highly among our top visited webpages in 2020-21. We have also been able to refer to these pages when answering enquiries from the public.



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.



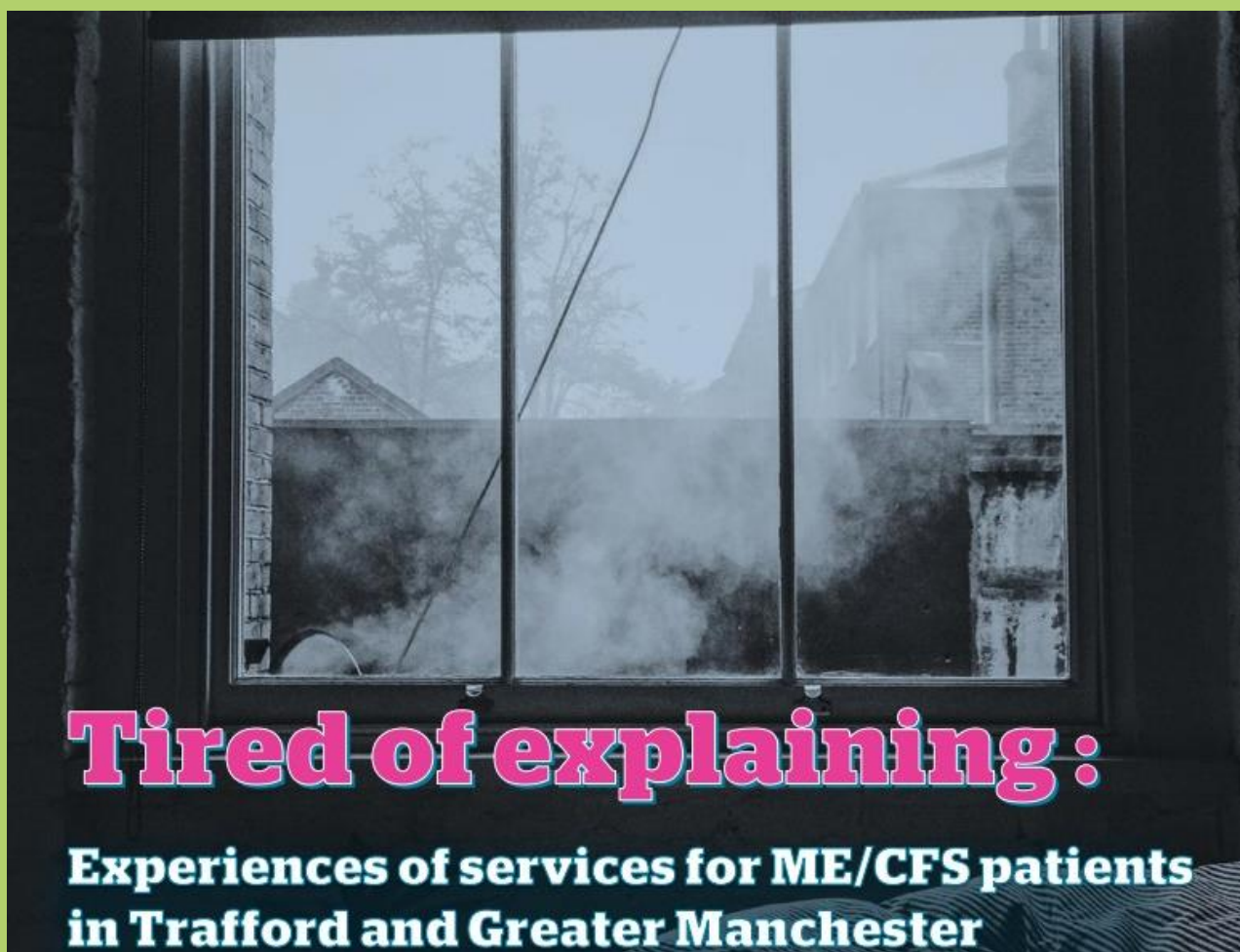
healthwatchtrafford.co.uk



0300 999 0303



info@healthwatchtrafford.co.uk



Case study: then

In 2017, Healthwatch Trafford looked at the experiences of people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Encephalopathy when using local NHS services. We received over 1000 responses to our survey between April 2015 and March 2016, which informed our report.

Issues ranged from respondents feeling that their GP had little to no knowledge of the condition to people not knowing how to access their medical records and subsequently their treatment history. Many felt 'abandoned' and left with no way of finding safe, accurate information about the condition. It is important to mention that some respondents did feel that their GPs were delivering high-quality care and praised the service received.

Healthwatch Trafford made several recommendations such as improving training for clinicians and providing standardised, consistent patient information. We also emphasized the important of improving the way services and records were accessed, including extending appoint types and times, shortening waiting times and clear mapping of services.

We made these recommendations in the belief that making these changes would not only improve the experiences of people with ME/CFS but increase trust in the NHS and reduce the financial impact on health and welfare services.



Case study: now

Our report into Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome has since featured twice in larger reviews and academic work.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence conducted a review into ME/CFS services and our report was fed into the evidence review as part of the consultation process, alongside the work of other Healthwatch.

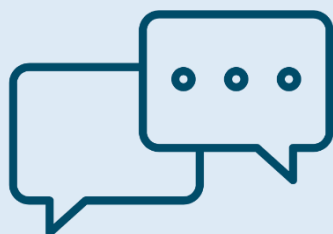
A peer-reviewed academic paper was also written following the report; 'Predicting GP visits: A multinomial logistic regression investigating GP visits amongst a cohort of UK patients living with Myalgic encephalomyelitis'. This was published by BioMed Central in the open-access journal BMC Family Practice. BioMed Central is an imprint of Springer Nature, one of the most prominent academic and STEM publishers in the country whose catalogue includes Scientific American and Nature journal. This work was done in collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University. It is hoped that the increased awareness and scholarly format may encourage medical practitioners to consider the recommendations given, as well as lead to further research and investigation.



“Overall, study findings should usefully inform a range of salient and potentially crucial social relationships and interactions that affect the lives of those living with ME.”

Walsh, R.S., et al (2020)

Share your views with us



If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.



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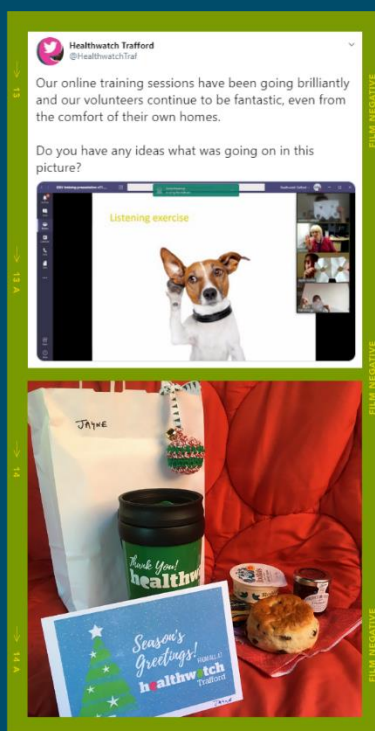


Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we helped over 115,203 people by:

- Providing up to date advice on the COVID-19 response locally including listing available community services
- Creating a landing page for COVID-19 on our website and collating reliable and up-to-date information
- Supporting the vaccine roll-out via social media
- Signposting people when they were in need of services
- Working with a number of local hubs and partner organisations to deliver a community response and build relationships.



Volunteers

At Healthwatch Trafford we are supported by 36 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home by co-designing our online surveys.
- Undertook a review of all GP practice websites in our borough.
- Joined us in regular video chats to get-together, learn and share experiences.
- Formed a Readers' Panel to vet all our publications from a lay perspective prior to release.
- Attended monthly Covid-19 Q&A sessions run by public health.
- Developed their knowledge and skills by attending virtual training sessions.
- Contributed content for our young persons' website and social media.



Young volunteer - Diana, 17

"Since lockdown began, I wondered how I would be able to spend lockdown productively. It wasn't until surfing the web, finding the opportunity to join Youthwatch Trafford and volunteer virtually, where many young people joined together to help improve care through people's views and previous experiences. Introducing Healthwatch to my classmates, I gained their interest when asking for opinions on the care they received through health environments. It was definitely rewarding to assist others in benefitting future care for more people."



Research volunteer – Ralph, 73

"I am retired and not too mobile these days, so I don't feel that I am suited to helping with face to face surveys that our Healthwatch Trafford staff and volunteers carry out.

However, I do have some experience from my former life of on-line working, so I enjoy being able to help analyse the collected data and write preliminary draft summaries of the surveys from home, helping me to keep in touch and remain of some use to society."



Board member – Elaine, 55

"It has been really interesting volunteering on the Board at Healthwatch Trafford this year. I joined the Board in April 2020 and since then have attended Board meetings regularly, however, due to covid, all the meetings have been online, so I haven't actually met any of the Board members in person but thank God for technology as it means we have been able to continue our work online to represent local people and the health needs of Trafford residents.

As a Board member this year I have supported initiatives to ensure that the voices of local people are heard. For example, in the last 12 months the Board has surveyed local people and asked them about their experiences of using health services during the pandemic which we have been able to feed in to service providers. It is important that local voices are heard and that the health services are responsive to our needs.

I hope to continue to support the community in this way and look forward to delivering more local initiatives in the coming year."



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch with our Volunteer Officer, Katherine Bays at:



healthwatchtrafford.co.uk/volunteer



0300 999 0303



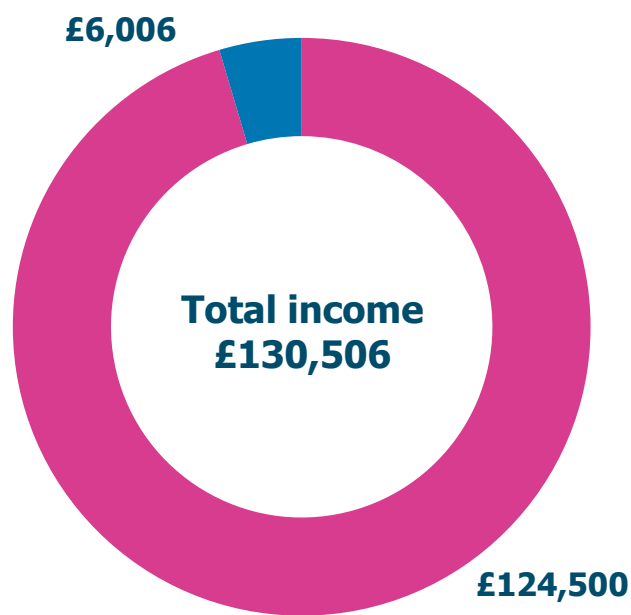
info@healthwatchtrafford.co.uk

Finances

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

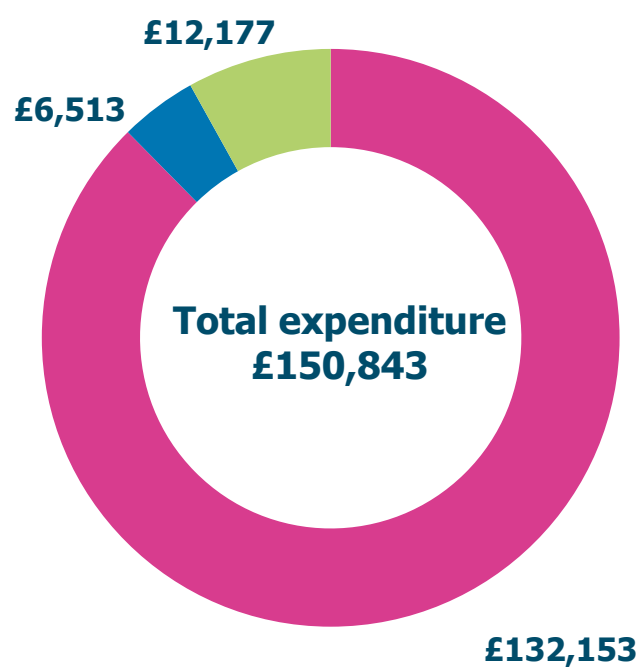
Income

- Funding received from local authority
- Contracted work



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs
- Support and administration



Next steps & thank you

Top three priorities for 2021-22

- Learning Disability provision (Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council aligned project)
- Inequalities
- Mental Health

Next steps

- We intend to revisit our previous work over the coming year, to assess the impact of our recommendations and ensure Trafford residents feel empowered to get involved and shape their local services.
- We hope to be able to resume in-person events, in accordance with government guidelines.
- We are developing both a Communication & Engagement Strategy and a Volunteer Strategy in which inequalities underpin all strategic areas. We will be dedicating resources to ensuring we engage with a truly representative cross-section of the community.



"This has been a year of unprecedented changes due to Covid 19 and enforced restrictions and we are grateful for the continued dedication of our staff, volunteers, and those organisations that we have worked with during this period. We are also grateful for the continued engagement of the public, whether it's telling us your experience of accessing health and care services or contacting us for information and signposting. Please do continue to share your stories with us and together we can try and influence positive changes to the way in which services are commissioned and delivered for the benefit of all."

Andrew Latham, Chief Officer Healthwatch Trafford



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Trafford, First floor mezzanine, Upper unit 65 & 66, Stretford Mall, Stretford, M32 9DB

Healthwatch Trafford 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 Healthwatch board consists of 8 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 6 times and made decisions on matters such as hiring an external consultant to review staffing roles and structure.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. We conduct a number of surveys, engage via feedback and public enquiries, and pre-COVID conducted face-to-face events where we were able to work with the public. However, we also request input from commissioners and service providers in foundation trusts and local authorities.

Our participation in several groups is a task undertaken by our Chair, Directors, and Chief Officer and which takes up a significant amount of time. We will be reviewing our involvement in these groups to establish whether we add value and have an impact. We have listed the groups on the next page.

We represented Healthwatch Trafford in the following groups:

- Trafford One System Board
- Trafford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Governing Body
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Start Well Board
- Live Well Board
- Age Well Board
- Patient Reference Advisory Board
- Local Care Alliance
- HWT/Moorside Liaison Group
- Trafford General Hospital Liaison Meeting
- Primary Care Committee
- Quality, Finance and Performance Group (CCG)
- COVID Communication and Engagement Group
- Trafford Public COVID Engagement Group
- Mental Health Transformation Board
- Learning Disability Transformation Board
- Health Scrutiny Committee
- Trafford Safeguarding Board Policy and Procedures Sub Committee
- Trafford Carers Partnership Board
- Voluntary and Community Sector Collective
- Local Medical Committee Sub Committee
- Trafford Deaf Partnership

Groups in Greater Manchester representing all ten local GM Healthwatch

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Mental Health Programme Delivery Board
- Adult Mental Health Acute Board
- GM Oral Health Group
- GM Quality Board
- Quality Improvement and Best Practice in Care Homes and Living Well at Home Group
- Single Hospital Service meetings with Manchester University Foundation Trust

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, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

Over the past year we have also heard from specialist community groups, and aim to seek out seldom heard voices and involve them in our work.

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 and send it to several key stakeholders including members of the council.

2020-21 priority projects and work

Project / activity area	Changes made to services
Booking appointments report	N/A
Ascot House report	N/A
Dentistry report	N/A
COVID-19 report	N/A
Enter and view summary report	N/A

Responses to recommendations and requests

26 providers did not respond to requests for information or recommendations, though we acknowledge the enormous pressures placed on care providers over the past year.

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 Trafford is represented on the Trafford Health and Wellbeing Board by Heather Fairfield, Chair. During 2020/21 our representative has effectively carried out this role by working collaboratively with a wide range of partners to agree a set of priorities which will contribute to improving the health and well-being of our residents whilst at the same time reducing inequalities.

Health and wellbeing boards are a formal committee of the local authority charged with promoting greater integration and partnership between bodies from the NHS, public health and local government. They have a statutory duty, with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), to produce a joint strategic needs assessment and a joint health and wellbeing strategy for their local population. Our Chair's attendance helps to try and ensure that the public and patient voice is represented in this work and serves as an opportunity to raise issues with elected members, partner organisations and the CCG.



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please contact us with your requirements.
