

# The value of listening

Healthwatch Gloucestershire  
Annual Report 2023–2024



**healthwatch**  
Gloucestershire

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**"Over the last year, local Healthwatch have shown what happens when people speak up about their care, and services listen. They are helping the NHS unlock the power of people's views and experiences, especially those facing the most serious health inequalities."**

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive at Healthwatch England



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# Message from our Chair

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**As Chair of Healthwatch Gloucestershire, I am delighted to introduce our annual report for 2023/24, which details all of the work carried out by our team during the year.**

We have progressed many projects and pieces of work, and I want to highlight a few of these here.

We have made a difference for individuals through sharing their stories with the Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board. For example, Sandra, who was invited to participate in an Expert by Experience Dementia group after she spoke to us about the difficulty she had arranging home care for her husband.

Our work this year has also continued to amplify the voice of people who are often seldom heard and under-represented. For example, we were able to speak to people using mental health inpatient services to understand what it felt like to be a patient.

Our project work focusing on access to GP surgeries and urgent and emergency care also highlighted differences in experience among diverse groups such as Bangladeshi, Arabic and Chinese women; people with disabilities; carers; and young people, from which we were able to make recommendations for improvements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been a part of our network. Please continue with your hard work and commitment and to raise your voices to improve care for everybody in Gloucestershire.



**“This was my final year as Chair, and I leave tremendously proud of the differences we’ve been able to make, sometimes for individuals and sometimes within the wider system. None of this would be possible without the hard work of our team, Board and dedicated volunteers, but most importantly, the individual members of the public who share their stories with us allowing us to challenge and influence the health and care system.”**

Nikki Richardson, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Board Chair



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# About us

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## Healthwatch Gloucestershire 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

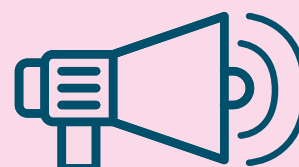
## Reaching out:

**3,277 people**

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

**784 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

**13 reports**

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

Our most popular report was

**Supporting people to stay healthy and well as the cost of living rises**

which highlighted how financial pressures are affecting many people's ability to pay for treatment and services required to access healthcare.



## Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

**33**

outstanding volunteers who gave up **120 days** to make care better for our community.

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

**£214,451**



We currently employ

**3 full-time and 1 part-time staff**

who help us carry out our work.

# How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We shared public feedback to help transform Gloucestershire's community mental health services and make support for adults with severe mental illness more personalised.



Our volunteer readers panel made health and care literature more accessible for the public and were described as 'an invaluable partner' for their work on NHS documents, One Gloucestershire's Dementia Strategy and Joint Forward Plan.

Summer

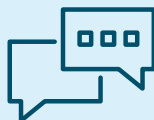


Our Chair and Board members, who are Governors for NHS Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust (GHC) and Hospitals Trust (GHT), helped appoint key NHS leadership roles including GHC's Chair, GHT's Chair and the ICS Chief Medical Officer.



Through One Gloucestershire's Working with People and Communities Strategy, we shared views about the range of services that could be delivered at the new Quayside Community Diagnostic Centre.

Autumn



We highlighted difficulties around getting a diagnosis and support for Fibromyalgia by sharing Nicole's story. We presented it to the Gloucestershire ICB and the Pain Management Clinical Programme Group to inform service development.



Following our work with asylum seekers and refugees about access to services, we held a workshop with healthcare, housing, voluntary and community sector representatives to reflect on achievements and highlight challenges.

Winter



We gathered public feedback about urgent and emergency care services and used this to inform One Gloucestershire's procurement of a new integrated urgent care (IUC) service.



Our Enter and View volunteers visited GP surgeries, Minor Injury and Illness Units and care homes, to understand people's experiences of these services. Findings were shared publicly, with the CQC and those responsible for services.

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# Your voice heard at a wider level

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**We ensure the experiences of local people influence decisions made about services at Gloucestershire's Integrated Care System (ICS) level.**

This year we've worked to achieve:

## Achievement one



We made sure the public voice was heard and used to support the design and commissioning of more accessible dental services. We shared people's stories with the Gloucestershire Dental Strategy Group and two of our volunteers are Patient Reps in the Group. We worked with Gloucestershire's ICB to develop up to date signposting information so that local organisations can refer people to the right service, which will also help reduce waiting times.

## Achievement two

Our ICS Engagement Officer worked with communities across Gloucestershire and extended our reach and connection with seldom heard communities. This work provided 'cathartic' opportunities for people to share their stories and gave One Gloucestershire's ICS greater context about 'how it felt for a patient and their family', making sure they 'include the human aspect in what is so often a data driven conversation'. This helped us secure continued ICB funding for this role.



## Achievement three

In collaboration with Citizen's Advice, we highlighted the poor employment and living conditions of some care workers recruited from overseas. We shared people's stories with the Gloucestershire Care Providers Association, Adult Social Care and CQC, and highlighted the implications this could have on quality of services. We were invited to attend support sessions for care providers and overseas workers, to raise awareness of feedback and signposting services to help people know their rights and what support is available.



## Achievement four

We supported the Gloucestershire Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership with a series of listening events in the community following a BBC Panorama documentary focusing on maternity services in Gloucestershire. The stories that women told resulted in a report that has been shared with the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust with recommendations to help improve services.





# 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.**



# Accessing GP services in Gloucestershire

**Addressing the persistent concerns raised by residents about difficulties accessing GP services, we sought to understand the current situation amid the increasing pressure on GPs and the accelerated use of digital technology by GPs.**

Based on feedback from 824 people representing Gloucestershire's diverse communities, we identified key issues affecting access to GP services.

## What did you tell us?

- 56% of respondents had changed the way they access their GP in the past year.
- Poor communication causes confusion and frustration about appointment booking processes, triage systems, and the roles of different healthcare professionals.
- Patients with accessibility challenges, including language barriers and technology use, face difficulties engaging with GP practices.
- While some patients are keen to use digital services, there is frustration at the disparities in availability, complexity, and effectiveness of digital services across GP practices.



**“When change comes you want to know why. The patients should be informed of changes, kept updated and even invited in. This is where person centred care falls down.”**

Patient interviewed by Healthwatch Gloucestershire

## What difference did this make?

We reported our findings and recommendations to NHS Gloucestershire, and they made a commitment to:

- Develop information about GP services in a range of accessible formats and languages, by working with Healthwatch Gloucestershire, the Local Medical Committee, Patient Participation Groups (PPG), Gloucestershire Deaf Association, Inclusion Gloucestershire, and language interpretation and translation services.
- Share examples of good practice in communicating with patients to all practices across the county, through regular meetings with Practice Managers and at the countywide PPG Network.
- Work closely with GP practices to ensure they deliver all requirements in the national General Medical Services contract, in particular the range of options available for appointments.
- Explore opportunities to promote the services of Digi Hubs to patients via PPGs to help tackle technology disparities.

# Supporting people to stay healthy and well as the cost of living rises

**As concerns about the cost of living continue, the impact on people's health and wellbeing is becoming apparent, particularly for those with limited financial resources who are finding it hard to pay for and access health care.**

We analysed feedback from almost 400 local residents and organisations involved in providing services, to identify common challenges faced by communities in Gloucestershire.



**“We aren't asking for crazy luxuries. I just want to know my mum and all my family are safe at home. Don't we all deserve to have that and not be forced to choose between warmth or food?”**

Interviewed by Healthwatch Gloucestershire

## What did you tell us?

- Many people face difficult choices between basic necessities like food and heating, and essential health care like medication and dentistry; this is affecting mental and physical health.
- There are pockets of poverty in every district of Gloucestershire, including areas considered more affluent.
- Those in work who were 'just about managing' are now struggling due to low incomes, not qualifying for benefits, and costs associated with children and childcare.
- The lack of accessible and affordable patient and community transport, especially in rural areas and outside regular working hours, is a major hindrance to accessing health and care services, leading to increased stress and missed appointments, as well as wasted time for health services.

## What difference did this make?

NHS Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire County Council welcomed our report and the contributions from local people, including stories highlighting the difference in NHS and private treatment costs across the county.

- Work is underway to dramatically improve the Patient Transport Advice Centre.
- A commitment was made to work with the voluntary and community sector to build on the existing support provided by local groups to create more holistic 'wrap-around' support for residents in times of need.
- The lack of patient and community transport was acknowledged to be a serious and major barrier to people accessing health and care services.

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# Three ways we have made a difference in the community

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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

**It's important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.**

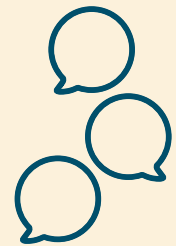
We shared Bob and Sandra's story with Gloucestershire ICB, which tells of Sandra's struggle to arrange appropriate homecare for her husband who was living with dementia. It highlighted the impact of positive and negative interactions and attitudes on outcomes for Bob and Sandra. Sandra has been invited to join an Expert by Experience dementia group to influence services and she was visited by the Dementia Service's Community Manager who wants to ensure better support in Gloucestershire.



## Getting services to involve the public

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

Our volunteers visited Wotton Lawn hospital, which provides mental health inpatient services, to understand what it feels like to be a patient there. With support from Gloucestershire NHS Health and Care Trust, we spoke to 28 patients, 22 staff and eight carers/relatives. Overall, feedback was positive about feeling safe, listened to by staff and the activities available, though most people wanted access to more calm and sensory spaces. The Trust accepted our recommendations which included developing patient and carer/relative involvement in care planning, and better communication to help reduce anxiety around negative media coverage of the hospital.



## Improving care over time

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

In 2022, we reported on people's experiences of accessing support for Post COVID Syndrome. This year, we worked with Gloucestershire NHS Health and Care Trust to reach patients with Post COVID Syndrome to find out what support and interventions they are using and how effective these are. Over 80% of people found the Post COVID Syndrome Service helpful, but people wanted a more personalised approach and there was little awareness of support groups. We recommended that GPs should be more aware of the services available and offer flexible communication options for appointments to support a wide range of needs.





# 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, make sure their voice is heard and that services meet their needs.**

**This year we have reached different communities by:**

- Working with community partners to raise awareness of Healthwatch Gloucestershire.
- Attending community events and groups to build trust, develop meaningful relationships, and reduce stigma.
- Using translation services and interpreters to ensure that people feel heard and able to express themselves.
- Demonstrating that people's voices have been heard by local NHS and care leaders through our reports and presentations.

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## Improving access to social care

With support from a local care provider, we spoke to people about their experiences of the Care Act assessment process. We identified a significant risk of people in need of social care support, and their unpaid carers, having unmet needs.

### What did you tell us?

- It is challenging to understand and access the array of social care services available.
- Many people are unaware of the process and timescale for getting a care assessment, deterring them from seeking one.
- Communication with professionals is inconsistent and people are often not offered adequate advocacy support which affects the outcome of assessments.

### As a result of what people shared, Gloucestershire's Adult Social Care team invited us to:

- Provide feedback at a Local Government Association peer review meeting in preparation for a CQC inspection.
- Work with their newly appointed Customer Experience Manager to help improve people's assessment journey.

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## Improving patient experience of urgent and emergency care

We worked with local organisations to hear from our diverse communities about urgent and emergency care in Gloucestershire, including Bangladeshi, Arabic and Chinese women, people with disabilities, carers and young people.

We shared our findings with the ICS Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Programme Group. They are reviewing our recommendations to help improve patient experience for people with different needs.

### What would improve your experience?

- More wheelchairs and hoists available in hospitals.
- Recognise the importance of Community Liaison Nurses.
- Increase patient awareness of 'calm' spaces.
- Make sure staff are trained to ask if a person has a Health Passport, What Matters to Me folder or ReSPECT form.
- Review NHS websites to ensure they are up-to-date, easily accessible and have a language translation function.





## Advice and information

**If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch 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.
- Advising people when they are unable to access NHS dentistry.
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost of living crisis.

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## Understanding and supporting autism

**It's important that health and care professionals understand autism so that they can provide people with the right care and support.**

A Gloucestershire resident raised concerns that her GP didn't understand autism and was not putting adjustments in place for her or her daughter, so she felt they were being denied healthcare. The GP told her: "Don't be silly, you're 46; you should be able to deal with it", and he wouldn't visit her daughter at home because they live too far away, even though she is unable to cope in a clinical environment. In contrast, the immunisation team had administered her daughter's flu jab at home.



**"They were so patient and kind. If we could find a GP with that level of understanding that would be great."**

Resident interviewed by Healthwatch Gloucestershire

We signposted them to PALS to try to find a resolution and shared their feedback with NHS Gloucestershire through our report about improving access to GPs.

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## Helping to improve pharmacy services

**We have seen an increase in feedback about pharmacies this year, including people struggling to get prescriptions due to stock issues or because they are unable to get to a pharmacy or have their prescriptions delivered on time.**



**"My elderly father has been unable to get some of his meds for three months. The pharmacy says it's not available. Meanwhile my father suffers."**

**"My repeat prescriptions have been late and incomplete during the last six months."**

As a result of this increased public feedback, with pharmacy closures in Gloucestershire and pharmacists taking on increased responsibilities to relieve pressures on GPs and urgent and emergency care services, we are sharing people's concerns directly with NHS Gloucestershire to help improve the quality of service. We continue to monitor the situation and will explore this more fully as a priority project for 2024/25.



# 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 raise awareness of Healthwatch Gloucestershire.
- Researched issues affecting people due to the cost of living crisis, the availability of information on care assessments, and urgent and emergency care.
- Carried out Enter and View visits to local services to help them improve.
- Reviewed NHS literature to make sure it is easy to understand.
- Represented Healthwatch Gloucestershire at meetings with health and social care professionals and decision makers, supporting local people to share their views and experiences.





## Jo

"I volunteered for Healthwatch because my late husband was a 'frequent flier' with the NHS and I thought I could perhaps give something back. My background is in project management, risk analysis and finance and I've been able to use some of those skills in various ways – meeting the public to get their views of our health service, visiting hospitals and GP surgeries under the Enter and View process, and even reviewing new documents prior to publication to see if they would make sense to the public. It's a very rewarding job which I would thoroughly recommend."

## Martin

"I was born very soon after the inception of the NHS – soon enough to have benefitted from its benevolent care ethic, but close enough to the 'bad old days' to grow up with tales of life without its umbrella of health provision. My appreciation has grown over my lifetime as my family have variously received lifesaving treatment for cancer and heart disease, broken bones and infections, as well as support with dementia and Alzheimer's, mental illness, and cerebral palsy. So now it's payback time, and with a scientific background in quality assurance I can help by constructive review which will lead to improvement in service and delivery. Nothing (even the NHS) is perfect, and each Enter and View visit, each document review, each PLACE visit, is a step towards improvement."

## Amanda

"I don't have any experience in the health sector and as such I wasn't sure if this would be the right organisation for me to work with, however, it's been a thoroughly worthwhile experience. I've completed several visits to very different types of care provision; meeting residents, relatives and staff has been interesting, challenging but ultimately very rewarding. All the volunteers and the team at Healthwatch Gloucestershire are very supportive and caring; I've been made to feel very welcome and that my contribution has been valued. I've also enjoyed some very pleasant social occasions with the team."



## Do you feel inspired?

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



[Healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk](https://healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk)



0800 652 5193



[info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgloucestershire.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 Gloucestershire County Council	£214,451	Expenditure on pay	£122,251
Additional income	£35,657	Non-pay expenditure	£35,853
		Office and management fees	£78,164
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£250,108</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£236,268</b>

### Additional funding

Additional income is broken down by:

Purpose of ICS funding	Amount
Funding received from NHS Gloucestershire ICB to support the Engagement Officer (ICS) post.	£35,657

## Next steps

**Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of society, especially people in the most deprived areas, so that those in power hear their views and experiences.**

We will also focus on how we can improve the issues that matter most to local people, including GP access, waiting times, dentistry, and social care. And we will work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

**Our top three priorities for the next year are:**

1. Pharmacy services – the impact of closures and increased responsibilities.
2. Joined up care for older adults.
3. Access to services for our ‘hidden’ homeless.



## Statutory statements

**During 2023–2024, Healthwatch Gloucestershire was hosted by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 2, Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.**

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

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## The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Board consists of eight members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of 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 seven times and made decisions on matters such as priority work areas for the year ahead, and the issues to take forward at the ICB meetings, such as the challenges involved in understanding and navigating services, sharing our pharmacy data with the ICB, feedback on the CQC self-assessment for Adult Social Care and public procurement processes.

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 and announce it in the press, on social media and in our monthly news bulletin. We will provide hard copies on request and share these with people at any events we attend.

### **Responses to recommendations**

All providers responded to our requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

### **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 the Partnership Boards, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board.

The ICS and local authority have a coterminous footprint and we are an integral part of the Working with People and Communities Strategy, so most of our insight and experiences are taken to decision-makers in One Gloucestershire ICS. For example, we share information with the ICB and Gloucestershire County Council. 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 seven Enter and View visits. We made 32 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Hyperion House Care Home, Fairford	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county.	We wrote a report which recognised the 'family feel' of the home and made recommendations around addressing some visual cues for residents in the home and personalisation of resident's rooms. The provider took this on board and acted immediately on many of the recommendations.
Bramble House Care Home, Gloucester	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county.	We wrote a report with recommendations about the physical environment and reviewing the activities and entertainment on offer for residents. Since the visit a new activities coordinator has started work so they hope to address these issues.
Sevenside Medical Practice, Gloucester	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county, and it also supported our wider project about access to GPs.	We wrote a report with recommendations about communication with patients and car park access issues. The insights provided were appreciated and we were informed that they were working on ways to resolve or improve many of the issues identified.
Cirencester Health Group	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county, and it also supported our wider project about access to GPs.	We wrote a report with recommendations about information provision, communication, and disabled parking bays. The provider reflected on the findings and responded to each recommendation made.
Dockham Surgery, Cinderford	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county, and it also supported our wider project about access to GPs.	We wrote a report with recommendations about communication with patients, the appointment booking process and access for people with mobility issues. Some recommendations have been actioned and we were informed that some issues had been raised with NHS Gloucestershire and NHSE.
Forest of Dean Minor Injury & Illness Unit	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county, and it also supported our wider project about urgent and emergency care services.	We wrote a report highlighting the positive feedback received and made recommendations about undertaking a review of patient feedback following an impending move to a new location.
Cirencester Minor Injury Unit	Part of our ongoing partnership work to improve patient experiences across the county, and it also supported our wider project about urgent and emergency care services.	We wrote a report highlighting the positive feedback received but made recommendations about the physical environment and wheelchair/mobility aid user access. These were immediately looked in to by the provider.

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## Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is represented on the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board by Nikki Richardson, Board Chair. During 2023/24 our representative has effectively carried out this role by playing a full and active part in meetings, taking a systemwide view and making sure that the public, patient and service user voice is included in the thinking and decisions of the Board.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is represented on Gloucestershire Integrated Care Partnerships by Nikki Richardson and we are regularly invited to present feedback to Gloucestershire ICB, represented by Lucy White, Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager, and Nikki Richardson.

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## 2023–2024 Outcomes

**Project/activity:** Dentistry data for local Healthwatch in the South West.

**Outcomes achieved:** We reported our feedback data to the NHS Local Dental Network throughout the year. They are using this data to make sure patient voice informs their decisions about development of NHS dental care.

**Project/activity:** Supporting people to stay healthy and well as the cost of living rises. What are the challenges and what support will make a difference?

**Outcomes achieved:** Our report was shared with stakeholders in NHS Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire County Council. The need for supporting the development of the infrastructure that enables a thriving ecosystem of VCSE organisations across the county was recognised to be able to build on the holistic 'wrap-around' support to residents in times of need, such as the food pantries and Long Tables mentioned in our report. NHS Gloucestershire also committed to feedback our findings to NHS England where some processes were governed nationally rather than locally. The County Council committed to take our findings into consideration when developing their services and said they took our findings about a lack of community transport very seriously.

**Project/activity:** Gloucestershire Post-COVID Syndrome Service (Long COVID). A follow up to our March 2022 report, Post-COVID Syndrome: People's experiences of health care.

**Outcomes achieved:** We shared our report with the Clinical Lead of the Post-COVID Syndrome Service at Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust who will use the findings to review service design and implementation. The report was showcased at their regional conference for the South West in September and it is due to go to their national conference.

**Project/activity:** Joined up health and care – A year in review report.

**Outcomes achieved:** This was shared with our Commissioners at Gloucestershire County Council as well as NHS Gloucestershire who have funded our ICS Engagement Officer for the past two years. It has enabled us to secure additional ICB funding for this role for the future.

**Project/activity:** How can people's social care needs be better assessed and supported?

**Outcomes achieved:** Our report was well received by the Director of Quality, Performance and Strategy, Adult Social Care, and we were encouraged to share our findings and recommendations during a LGA Peer review of Gloucestershire Adult Social Care (ASC) in September, prior to the report being published. We will continue to share insight with their new Customer Experience Manager within the ASC Transformation team who will help address some of the recommendations in relation to information accessibility and communicating with people, their families and carers in a simple way about the Social Care Process and what to expect.

**Project/activity:** Accessing GP services in Gloucestershire.

**Outcomes achieved:** NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) welcomed the report based on a large and diverse number of Gloucestershire residents and acknowledged that we had identified some new areas for them to focus on. They are keen to work with Healthwatch Gloucestershire, the Local Medical Committee and Patient Participation Group (PPG) representatives to develop information in a variety of formats about accessing GP practice services and they told us that they will work closely with GP Practice Managers to ensure they deliver all requirements set out in the national General Medical Services (GMS) contract.

**Project/activity:** Wotton Lawn Hospital, Gloucester.

**Outcomes achieved:** We shared our findings with the Gloucestershire Health and Care Trust who said that they welcomed the opportunity to partner with Healthwatch and valued our independent assessment of the views of services users and staff. The feedback from services users about the impact of the Exercise and Activity Practitioners and the recent changes to the access and egress from the Hospital were noted and they acknowledged and accepted the recommendations noted in the report. They have committed to support the Matron to reflect on these and consider how this can improve service user and staff experiences in the future.

**Project/activity:** Understanding people's experiences of urgent and emergency care in Gloucestershire

**Outcomes achieved:** In response to our report, we received a joint statement from the following NHS partners: NHS Gloucestershire ICB, Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust and Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The recommendations and themes in the report will be reviewed in detail by the One Gloucestershire Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Programme Group. The findings were also shared as part of the One Gloucestershire procurement of a new Integrated Urgent Care Service in January 2024, and we will share our findings with the successful provider to help inform service delivery to meet the needs of Gloucestershire residents.



**“This year NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) has worked very effectively with Healthwatch Gloucestershire. The patient stories presented by Healthwatch Gloucestershire to the ICB meetings have brought insights which have prompted constructive debates. The findings presented in Healthwatch Gloucestershire reports produced this year, notably those about access to services, have underscored a number of areas NHS Gloucestershire has prioritised. We are grateful to Healthwatch Gloucestershire and pleased that so many local people take the opportunity to share their views with Healthwatch Gloucestershire, ensuring the voices of people and communities have been heard. We look forward to working with Healthwatch Gloucestershire in 2024/25.”**

Becky Parish, Associate Director Engagement and Experience, NHS Gloucestershire



# healthwatch

Gloucestershire



## Healthwatch Gloucestershire

-  [healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk](https://healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk)
-  0800 652 5193
-  [info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk)
-  [Facebook.com/HealthwatchGloucestershire](https://Facebook.com/HealthwatchGloucestershire)
-  [Twitter.com/HealthwatchGlos](https://Twitter.com/HealthwatchGlos)
-  [Instagram.com/healthwatch\\_gloucestershire](https://Instagram.com/healthwatch_gloucestershire)
-  [Linkedin.com/healthwatch-gloucestershire](https://Linkedin.com/healthwatch-gloucestershire)

