

Impact Report

2023 - 2024



Railway
Cottage
Healthwatch Manchester

Introduction from our Chief Executive Officer, Neil Walbran

I'm very pleased to introduce our impact report for 2023-24. It's been a tremendous year with some high profile wins for our Healthwatch. We've supported hundreds of people into health and care services and assisted them around claiming their rights; and we've interviewed our citizens to find out what they want to see changed or improved around their care.

One of the most enjoyable parts of my job is when I get to go back to the people who have asked us to use our position to push or urge for a change and improvement, and to be able to show how we've helped make it happen. Seeing the outcome of this in the longer term involves some close collaborative partnership with our local partners in health and care.

I hope you find our report useful in gaining an insight into the impact we have had in the past year, on people's access to care, on how we've spoken up for their rights to healthcare and how we've helped to shape local services.

And we couldn't have done it without you. I'd like to give a huge thanks to our board, membership, staff and volunteers, our friends and allies, and of course our Manchester citizens who have taken time to share their views, opinions and experiences with us.

The appendix provides some useful statistics and also links to the reports mentioned in the body of this report. Printed copies of all our reports are available on request.



About Healthwatch Manchester

Healthwatch Manchester is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

We're here in Manchester to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

We focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed.

We work to get services right for the future. People's views come first and especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference, to you.

Our duties and powers

Our work is underpinned by legislation which gives us certain powers and creates certain duties and requirements.

One of our duties is to show, each year in our annual report, how we have involved local people in the way the core budget for Healthwatch Manchester has been allocated and spent. Our local NHS Trusts are required to include a letter from their local Healthwatch within their annual Quality Accounts which provides a review of the accounts. They can't be published without this.

Our local Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be required to review our reports if necessary.

And we have the power to enter any premises which is commissioned to any great degree through the public purse around health and social care. We then make observations and interview the citizens using the service. Our findings can be escalated where necessary.

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1. Information and Signposting

Calls and enquiries to our office



Healthwatch Manchester provides information and signposting to care and health for people who live and work in, or are visiting Manchester. We do this through our contact centre at our base in central Manchester.

Our information and signposting service helps you to identify the services and support you need. We can signpost or refer you to local health, social care or advocacy services, and provide information about what you can do when things go wrong.

If you can't find the right support, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can be there to find you the best place to go for help,

whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or where to go for extra support.

We helped **246** people into health and care services through our calls and enquiries centre.

‘Thank you so much for the information and the well wishes.’

Whether you would like to share your feedback about health and care services, or you are looking for local support - get in touch.

You can reach us through our ‘Contact us’ page:

healthwatchmanchester.co.uk/contact-us

Alternatively, you can reach us via:

Phone - 0161 228 1344

Email - info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk



We come to you, we don't expect you to come to us

We are there to inform and signpost you on a regular basis in your local venues and we also provide a one-to-one service at Manchester Central Library. This makes our information and signposting service more friendly and accessible.

As well as providing a face to face service we have a suite of helpful resources to hand out which are designed to assist you into local health and care services.



Free crisis services in Manchester

Walk-in Centres:
"Talk before you walk"
City Health Centre
Open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
You must phone the centre and book an appointment prior to arrival.
Second Floor (Boots)
Market Street,
M1 1PL
0161 839 6227

Manchester Royal Infirmary:
Open 7 days a week, 8am-10pm
Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9WL
0161 276 1234

Hawthorn Medical Centre:
Open 7 days a week
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm
Sat-Sun 10am-5pm
Unit K, Fallowfield Retail Park,
Birchfields Road, Manchester,
M14 6FS
0161 220 6080

Useful phone numbers

Samaritans:
For people experiencing emotional troubles. 116 123

24/7 Mental Health Helpline:
For people needing urgent support with their mental health. 0800 051 3252

Police non-emergency:
For crime reporting. 101

Emergency only: 999

Sexual assault referral centre: 0161 276 6515

Urgent dental care service: 0333 332 3800
Open 7 days a week, 8am-10pm.

Our 'crisis cards' are now a familiar feature at Manchester's many festivals enabling a swift understanding and access to crisis services for people who live in or are visiting our city. Find them at Manchester's Sparkle, Food and Drink festivals, Parklife, Pride celebrations and many more.

'I am newly settled in Manchester in January thank you for the Crisis card I am very grateful for the information there. I find it very useful to know about the walk-in services and mental health support in Manchester.'

"Thanks for taking the time to come and speak to our members. I'm glad it was a successful visit. You're welcome back again - I think we said perhaps in a couple of months." Wythenshawe Good Neighbours

We answered **351** people's enquiries about health and care through our **27** outreach sessions.



Promotion through all channels

In the past year we have been active in promoting who we are and what we do through the distribution of printed resources and through a strong digital presence:

1,266 crisis cards handed out or delivered to events

750 Healthwatch Manchester calendars handed out to hospital patients

19 e-bulletins to an audience of 2,117 contacts

13 news item publications on our website

38, 661 social media contacts



'First I've heard of Autism Awareness Day yet I have several members of my family on the autistic spectrum, thank you for sharing.'

Our social media channels



[Twitter/X - @HealthWatchMcr](https://twitter.com/HealthWatchMcr)



[Facebook - Healthwatch Manchester](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchManchester)



[Instagram - @healthwatchmcr](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatchmcr)



[NextDoor - Healthwatch Manchester](https://www.nextdoor.com/HealthwatchManchester)

2. Our work around health inequalities and improving access

Reviewing compliance with the NHS Accessible Information Standard



Since August 2016, any organisation which provides NHS and/or publicly-funded adult social care services is required to follow the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). This standard requires that people with a sensory impairment or a learning disability must be able to access information in a format they can use and understand and they should also expect communication support from health and care services.

And since 2018 we have been checking compliance with the standard in community pharmacy across Manchester by postcode area. We have made a total of **49** visits since then.

In 2023-24 we visited pharmacies across three different postcodes (M16, M18 and M20) to assess their understanding and implementation of the AIS. Each pharmacy was sent their own review report and a combined report for each postcode area produced.

18 pharmacies in Manchester were made fully aware of the Accessible Information Standard and have information detailing how they can improve the way to provide this.

From our findings this year we recommended:

- 15 pharmacies across the M16, M18 and M20 postcodes should familiarise themselves with the Accessible Information Standard via the resource pack we provided them with.
- 11 pharmacies across the M16, M18 and M20 postcodes need to purchase a hearing loop as a matter of urgency for hearing impaired service users.
- 10 pharmacies across the M16, M18 and M20 postcodes need to provide a means of producing EasyRead materials.

Providing Jain friendly food in Manchester's Hospitals



The trustee board of Healthwatch Manchester have had representation from the Jain community for a number of years. Dr Mina Desai is a retired, former consultant at the Christie hospital who is a longstanding member of our trustee board. She is also a member of the Jain community.

Dr Desai alerted Healthwatch Manchester to the cultural requirements around diet for the Jain community and the absence of provision of Jain food in Manchester Hospitals. This was of concert to Healthwatch Manchester not only due to poor patient experience, but also patient safety where medication

Patients from the Jain Samaj community in Manchester can now receive Jain food during their hospital stay, improving patient experience and safety.

may be ineffective in the absence of nutrition.

After a lengthy period of consultation by us with the Jain community, Manchester Foundation Trust engaged with Healthwatch Manchester and the Jain Community in order to address this issue.

In 2024, we were delighted to see implementation of Jain food for patients at Manchester Hospitals.

Dr Desai told us:

'Jain patients in Manchester Hospitals have started to get Jain food.'

'Thank you for your support to make it happen'.

Improving the quality of Annual Health Checks for our Learning Disabled citizens

Concerns around Annual Health Checks (AHCs) were raised by the learning disabled community which were communicated to our board via one of our long-serving trustees as their representative.

AHCs are a standard requirement for learning disabled people and provided through primary care. Under lockdown, the offer of AHCs was severely reduced. After a redress of this situation, concerns regarding the quality of AHCs came to the Healthwatch Manchester board and action was taken. Focus groups were held with learning disabled people asking the following:

1. Have you had an Annual Health Check?
2. What did you think of the check?
3. What could have been better?
4. Would you like to have your Annual Health Check online or in person?
5. What would you like to see in an Annual Health Check?

Based on these findings, we recommended that:

- Healthcare professionals should ensure all people within their locality are receiving their Annual Health Checks in a timely manner.
- Annual Health Check letters sent out in the future should include both the date of the next appointment and how often these checks should be booked in.
- Healthcare professionals conducting Annual Health Checks should consider the capacity of their patients and explain, as they conduct these checks, what procedures will happen.

After our report was published, we met with PCN leads and care professionals from across Manchester to discuss the importance of our findings.

We were informed they would be using our report to inform their PCN Learning Disabled Care Coordinator model for Learning Disabled Patient Care.

3. Using our power to Enter and View

Improving safety for our citizens in full-time care



We used our powers of Enter and View to visit Averill house. We made observations regarding the environment and we interviewed the staff and residents there. Our subsequent Enter and View report offered constructive support and advice to the manager of the home. Its key recommendations were as follows:

- The interior of the building needs to be redecorated. We found parts of the building where paint had been heavily chipped and scuffed.

-Photographs need to be added to the staff ‘names and roles’ board at the entrance of the building to help residents and guests know ‘who is who’.

- After seeing many walking frames left in a public area, we recommended that unnecessary clutter be regularly removed to reduce trip hazards and prevent falls and accidents.

After posting to the CQC our report resulted in a further CQC inspection which determined the home required improvement around the areas of safety and leadership.

healthwatch Manchester

Enter & View

What is Enter & View?
The Health and Social Care Act (2012) allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to:
• Visit premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies
• Observe how health and social care services are provided
• Talk to service users, their families and carers about their lived experiences
• Speak to staff to understand their day-to-day experiences

Who are we?
We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services.
We're here to make sure that those using services put people at the heart of care.

What happens next?
It is the responsibility of Healthwatch Manchester to:
• Collate evidence-based feedback
• Report findings to providers, Care Quality Commission (CQC), local authorities and NHS commissioners and publicly monitor
• Provide insights and recommendations on service provided.

Scan to find out more!

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of our Enter & View team.



What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Manchester can go anywhere that health and social care is being provided, so that we can see in person how services are being delivered.



Talk to us...

When we visit, we will listen to the views of the people who use that service, their relatives and care givers so that we can find out what they think.

What does it mean for you?



We would like to ask you a few questions about the care you are getting to see what you think. You do not have to answer if you don't want to.



We then write a report on what we have found and make it available for people to look at online. Or we can send a printed copy out to you if you ask.



Have your say

There are 152 local Healthwatch organisations in England which use this power. Healthwatch England is our national support organisation.

Improving wheelchair access in Manchester Hospitals



Between December 2022 - December 2023, we made Enter and View visits to each of Manchester's three major hospitals:

- Manchester Royal Infirmary
- North Manchester General Hospital
- Wythenshawe Hospital

We assessed wheelchair access and provision and the ease of movement using a wheelchair within the hospital.

We found that:

- The entrances to each hospital we visited were all wheelchair accessible
- Locating a wheelchair was difficult for a person with no physical or sensory disabilities
- Once a wheelchair was obtained in any of the sites, mobility and access was very good

We recommended that:

- University of Manchester NHS Foundation Trust should increase the number of wheelchairs available across all three major hospital sites in Manchester.
- Signage regarding the use of wheelchairs should be improved across all three major hospital sites including how to use them.
- The availability of information regarding the use of wheelchairs should be improved across all three majority hospital sites.

The University of Manchester NHS Foundation Trust have taken on board the findings and recommendations of each report and have and continue to put measures in place to improve wheelchair access and information in each of the three hospital sites.

4. Working with our colleagues in health and care

Bringing the resident's voice to the Extra Care service



Working with our Manchester City Council (MCC) commissioners we began our review of Manchester's Extra Care Service in April 2023.

We visited six Extra Care services to determine the quality of care and the impact on lifestyle the service had: on independence, on wellbeing, on overall quality of life in care.

We spoke with 35 residents whilst completing a survey questionnaire.

The majority of respondents reported that the Extra Care service they received was of good quality and that they had no significant complaints or concerns.

However, some respondents told us that they were not in receipt of in-house dental treatment and/or found difficulty accessing dental care in their locality. Moreover, the location of the service determined how integrated and active respondents were with their local communities.

We recommended that a dialogue should be opened within each venue about improving access to local amenities and increased contact with family and loved ones. This needs to include all stakeholders including citizens using the Extra Care service.

The Manchester Older People's Housing Alliance informed us that they would be using our report to lobby Manchester City Council for more Extra Care services locations to be created across the city.

'The Healthwatch report emphasises that the location of new schemes is key to their success and the impact they can have on people's lives and wellbeing.' - Angela Maffia, MCC.

Improving access to GP digital services



The highest number of complaints received by us are consistently about the difficulty citizens encounter in making a GP appointment, with heavy emphasis on the GP practice websites and their poor levels of accessibility.

In 2021 we completed a review of each GP practice website in Manchester and found that many of the websites were indeed difficult to use, fell short of statutory and contractual compliance, and were far from compliant with the NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS).

At the February 2023 MCC Health Scrutiny Committee meeting we were asked to conduct a second review of each GP Practice website in Manchester. We commenced this work in April 2023. As this work commenced, the NHS England website audit toolkit for GPs came into force.

We reviewed a total of 81 GP Practice websites between April and September 2023. Of these 81 practices, two were not reviewed one no longer having a website, the other's website being unsafe to view.

Our re-review found that statutory & contractual compliance remains low in comparison with the results of our 2021 review. Moreover, compliance with the NHS AIS also remains low overall.

We again recommended that GP practices must invest time and resources in improving their websites in the following areas:

- Access to information for infection control, health and wellbeing and other language availability
- Ease of navigation around the system including making and cancelling appointments
- Compliance with the NHS Accessible Information Standard

GP Practice managers have found the individual assessment review reports we sent to them highly useful in successfully completing the NHSE website audit.

Bringing the patient voice back to GP Practice



Our reviews of GP practice websites revealed little or no evidence of patient involvement through Patient and Public Groups (PPGs)- a contractual and statutory requirement.

Using the 'Mystery Shopper' assessment model we called all GP practices in Manchester to enquire about PPGs

On analysis we found that a significant proportion of GP practices do not provide ready and simple access to their PPGs which may or may not currently be active. There is no standard method of

accessing a PPG across Manchester and access can be a difficult process for many patients.

In our report we recommended that access to PPG's should improve in the following ways:

- Adopt a clear method across the board of how a person can join the PPGs so that every practice has the same process.
- Make this process accessible to the wider population such as citizens who do not have access to the internet or those who are unable to visit the practice in person.

We were invited to present our report at the February 2023 Manchester Health Scrutiny Committee. All recommendations were endorsed by the committee and local primary care commissioners were tasked with improving the level of and access to PPGs in Manchester



The highest number of complaints we received this year were about the GP practice service and are mainly about the difficulties our citizens face in getting an appointment and the using their websites.

Bringing the patient voice to urgent care planning



In late 2023 we were asked by The University of Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) to review patient experience in three of the Manchester Royal Infirmary Accident & Emergency (A&E) waiting areas.

Using a survey questionnaire deployed by our staff on three visits we spoke with patients regarding their experience of the service and their reasons for being here.

After speaking with over 100 people in this department, we found that a significant were being referred to A&E through their GP or the 111 service.

Moreover, we found that people aged between 18 and 29 years appear to be over-represented in the A&E service and that people from the M14 postcode area and from minority ethnic backgrounds also appear to be overrepresented in the A&E service.

We recommended that communication, both inter-service (Between GPs, the 111 service and A&E) and for patients for whom English is a second language, require a review to examine efficiency gains and improve patient experience.

After publishing our findings, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board have adopted the 18-29 age range as a priority area of focus in their urgent care strategy.



This is our third report reviewing access to Urgent Care Services in Manchester over the past 12 years. See 'Three Sites Review' (2017) and 'Report from the Waiting Rooms' (2014) on our website for the full reports.

Acknowledgement

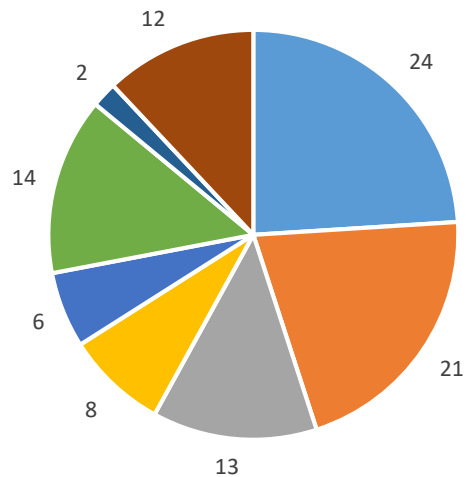
Healthwatch Manchester would like to thank the staff, residents, patients and the planners and commissioners of health and care services for their support, collaboration and their time taken to help us make our Healthwatch do its job.

Author: Thomas Carr - Information and Communications Manager at Healthwatch Manchester

Appendix

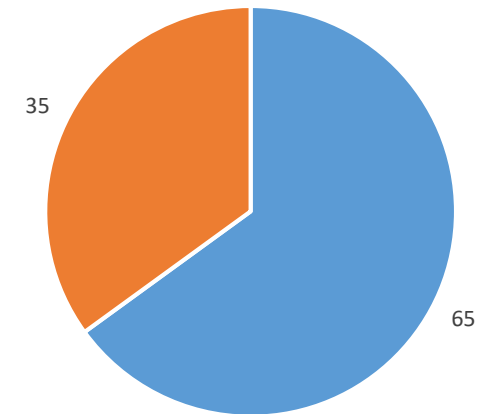
Information & Signposting: a breakdown by percentage

Enquiries to our office



■ Dentist ■ GP ■ Hospital ■ Advocacy ■ Mental health ■ Out of area ■ Social care ■ Other

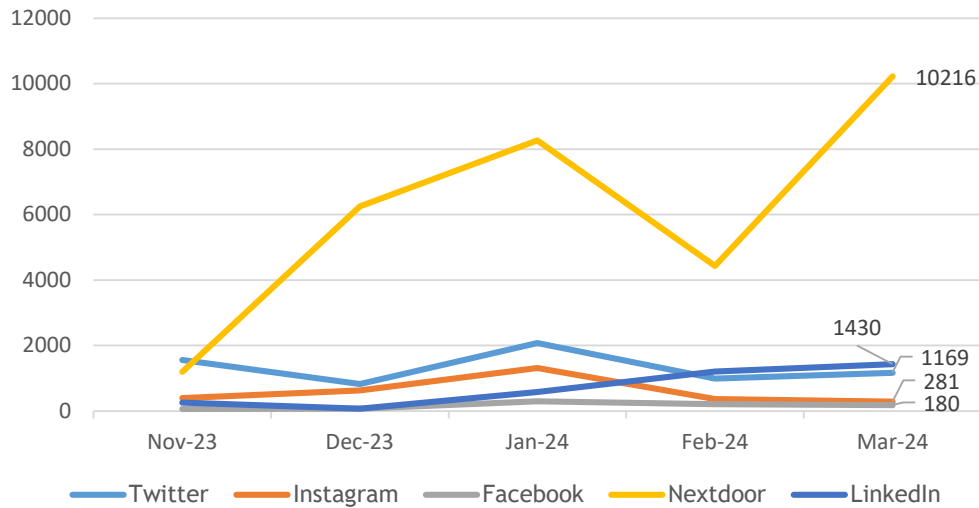
Enquiries I&S vs Complaints



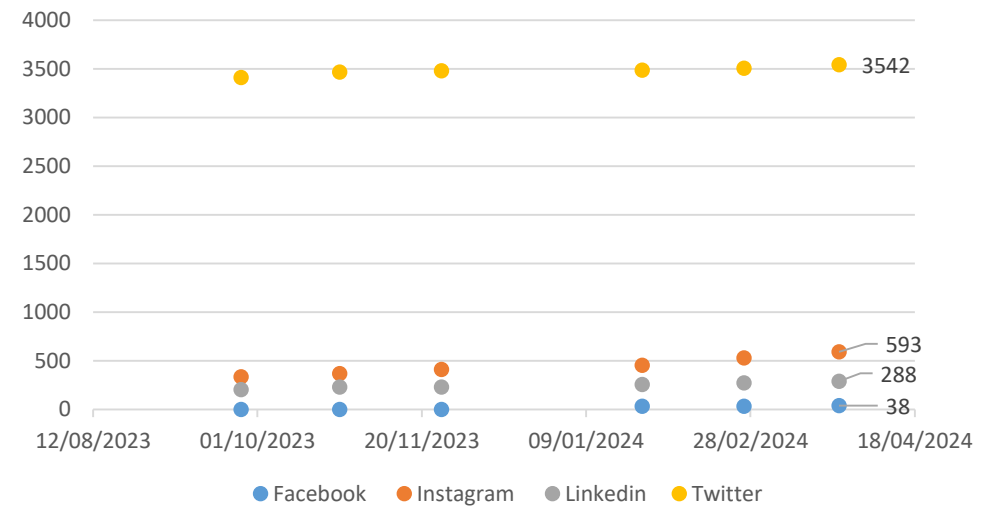
■ Information & Signposting ■ Complaints

Social Media Hits: A breakdown of our views and followers across all platforms

Healthwatch Manchester Social Media hits



Healthwatch Manchester Social Media followers



In the latter half of the year the growth and reach of Healthwatch Manchester through our social media platforms has achieved a *fivefold* increase.

Healthwatch Manchester is fully conscious of the danger of creating a two-tier system of access through using digital technology. As many of our resources as possible are in print version and accessible formats. We conduct all our reviews using both digital and face to face methods.

Our reports this year

[Accessible Information Standard review of pharmacies in M16](#)

[Accessible Information Standard review of pharmacies in M18](#)

[Quality Time: Our Annual Health Check Review Report](#)

[Enter and View: Averill House](#)

[Enter and View: Manchester Royal Infirmary Hospital](#)

[Enter and View: North Manchester General Hospital](#)

[Enter and View: Wythenshawe Hospital](#)

['I would rather be here'. Our review of the Extra Care Service](#)

[GP Practice Websites Review](#)

[Patient Participation Group Review](#)

[Patiently waiting: our review of patient experience in the A&E Department at MRI \(currently awaiting NHS response\)](#)

Reports also mentioned in this one

[Report from the Waiting Rooms](#)

[Three sites Review](#)

Printed versions of all our reports are available on request.

Contact Details for Healthwatch Manchester



Call our enquiry line on 0300 078 0669 between the hours of 09:00 - 16:00 Monday to Friday.

Alternatively, you can email our enquiry inbox at info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk

Our Social Media Channels



Instagram @healthwatchmcr



Nextdoor: Healthwatch Manchester



Twitter / X @HealthWatchMcr



Facebook: Healthwatch Manchester

You can also leave feedback about a health and care service via our online 'Contact Us' form. Just scan the QR code to the right and proceed.



healthwatch

Manchester

Railway Cottage

33a Collier Street

Manchester

M3 4NA

0161 228 1344

info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk

www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk

Company Limited by Guarantee registered in England No. 8465025

