

# Impact & Performance Report



January - March 2021 (Q4)

# AT A GLANCE

## Making a difference to care

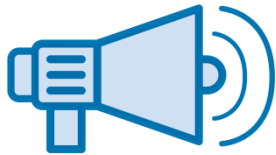


### 106 reports

We've published 26 reports on a wide range of topics, some for information and advice and others that reflect what people have shared - you can read about this in pages 9 to 16.

Each of the 80 GP Practices in West Sussex will receive an individual report detailing our observations of the information on their websites.

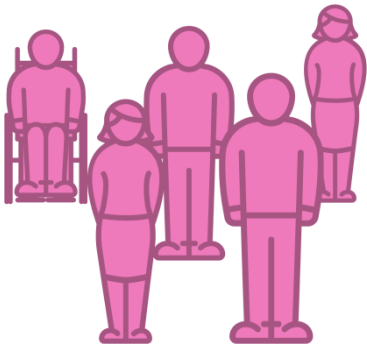
## Reaching out



### 6,500+ stories and survey responses

Recording breaking levels of insight this quarter created through our networking and collaborations, covering a wide range of services and themes.

## Providing support



We engaged with

### 2,000+ community partners

focusing on autism, sensory needs, vaccines, digital access to healthcare, and communication improvement.

# IMPACT: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

At the start of this report, we highlight some of areas/topics where we've had the most impact in the last quarter:

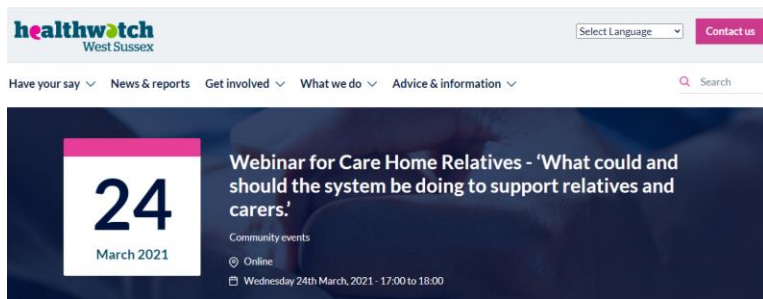
## Highlighting the autism gap

It seems appropriate with this month including World Autism Awareness Week to detail the progress that Martin, one of our Non-Executive Directors, has made advocating for people with autism. West Sussex residents have shared valuable insight with us so that we can help influence positive change:

- Options for training Personal Assistants in autism awareness and providing greater clarity on the use of Direct Payments in adulthood are being looked at by system-leaders.
- Support for family carers of autistic people is being looked into, and it's been agreed that it would be helpful to promote the Carer's Assessment and to support mental health social workers and staff (including securing some learning sessions with social workers.)
- From 01 April there is to be an improved interface between the County Council's Lifelong Services Team and the Mental Health Trust Social Work Team to make sure peoples' needs are not missed.
- The supporting team is to be strengthened with more staff to support the growing needs of people living with autism.



Martin has a meeting in May to look at the progress against agreed actions. This will also give us an opportunity to present the findings from our engagement with autistic adults (see page 6.)



## Giving a voice to family carers of care home residents

With the support of Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's Care Home Wellbeing lead and Carers Support West Sussex, we've advertised and held three powerful webinars this quarter. These offered family carers the chance to speak directly to Public Health and Social Care agency representatives, the NHS and Care Providers. The webinars provided a safe space to benefit from clinical and support afterwards from others who shared their experience. From these webinars, we've been able to:

- Get a commitment from West Sussex County Council for a clear way of supporting family carers when a care home is reluctant to follow the national guidance from 8 March to enable family connections to restart.
- Produce a [Guide](#) to support people to understand the visiting guidance and prepare themselves for reconnecting with their relative.
- Attract interest in this work and link family carers to national research.



## Supporting the vaccination programme

We've received a high-volume of vaccine related enquiries throughout the quarter, and this has meant we can take current insight into our weekly vaccine meetings. Your voice has helped us to strengthen communication around the vaccination and to make sure services are responsive when people tell us of issues.

**healthwatch**  
West Sussex

### How can I avoid being scammed?

The vaccine is free of charge and at no point will you be asked to pay or provide your bank account or card details. Do not accept offers for 'private, chargeable' vaccines from private providers. UK MHRA authorised vaccines are only obtainable via the NHS.

#### Advice from action fraud

- The NHS will never ask you for your bank account or card details
- The NHS will never ask you for your PIN or banking password
- The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving license, bills or pay slips.

If you think you have been a victim of fraud or identify theft, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

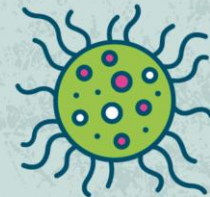


**healthwatch**  
West Sussex

### How does the vaccine work?

Vaccines work by tricking your body into thinking it has to fight the virus. It trains your immune system for this fight by stimulating you to make antibodies and T-cells. This means that when Covid-19 is encountered naturally, the body has already been prepared to protect against it.

You cannot catch Covid-19 from the vaccine



Gemma contacted us concerned that someone had turned up at their elderly relative's house in full PPE offering the vaccine. We gave advice and asked the system if this was genuine or a scam and called her back with an update. “ ‘I was so worried. Healthwatch is the bee's knees for not panicking me and for guiding me through how to check it out without alarming my relatives.’ ”



We've been asking people to provide feedback, via surveys, on their experience of the vaccine. We also asked those who've not yet had an invitation about their thoughts and views towards having the vaccine.

A massive thank you to the **2,250 West Sussex residents who completed the survey** and to our colleagues across our health and social care system who supported the survey. We had a very quick response when the survey went live, and we wanted to ensure those working on the vaccine programme benefitted from the insight people had offered, so we quickly pulled together an [Interim Report](#).

“ Thank you for [the report]. It is very helpful. I am sure that the CCG [Clinical Commissioning Group] will work through the comments on peoples experience of vaccination booking and delivery. Collectively, we will take on board the comments about general messaging and why people are reluctant to accept invitations.

*Dr Tony Hill, Interim Director of Public Health, West Sussex County Council*

”



## Influence can take time....



For example, in 2019 we spent time looking at and commenting on the public consultation around improving the In-patient Mental Health changes proposed by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. We took part in public engagement events and were part of the group that reviewed the findings.

Whilst the pandemic has delayed the work, we have been critical of the NHS for not publishing the consultation findings earlier. However, these are now available and have been shared and discussed at the West Sussex Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. The Trust's papers for the Decision-Making Business Case acknowledge all the contributions Healthwatch made. **More importantly, it demonstrates that people have been listened to, and the proposals for In-patient beds have been amended as a result.**

After our discussion at the [Scrutiny Committee](#) held in public in February 2021, Jessica Britton, the Senior Lead for this work, has acknowledged the need to include transport and how relatives can stay in contact with a patient when they enter an acute mental health hospital.

## When things are clinically wrong

In 2019 we were invited to be part of a Clinical Harm Review. This was not only a first for involving a local Healthwatch, but also for a Clinical Commissioning Group. This work has proved important and has provided much learning and informed national practice.

Participating in the Review Panel has been a considerable commitment of resources, but was important as it supports patient safety and experience. We were able to add valuable expertise through in-depth knowledge of supporting people through our complaints advocacy and with information and advice.



The Clinical Harm Review Governance arrangements were based on the NHS England External Clinical Harm Review Handbook <sup>1</sup>.

The finalised report is due to be published, and Healthwatch has made recommendations for wider systems/clinical issues and patient safety.



Thank you for all the hours and expertise you have given to the Clinical Harm Review project. As the Independent Chair it has been a huge support to me to have you as part of the panel.

*Julia Dutchman-Bailey, Independent Chair for the West Sussex Clinical Harm Review*

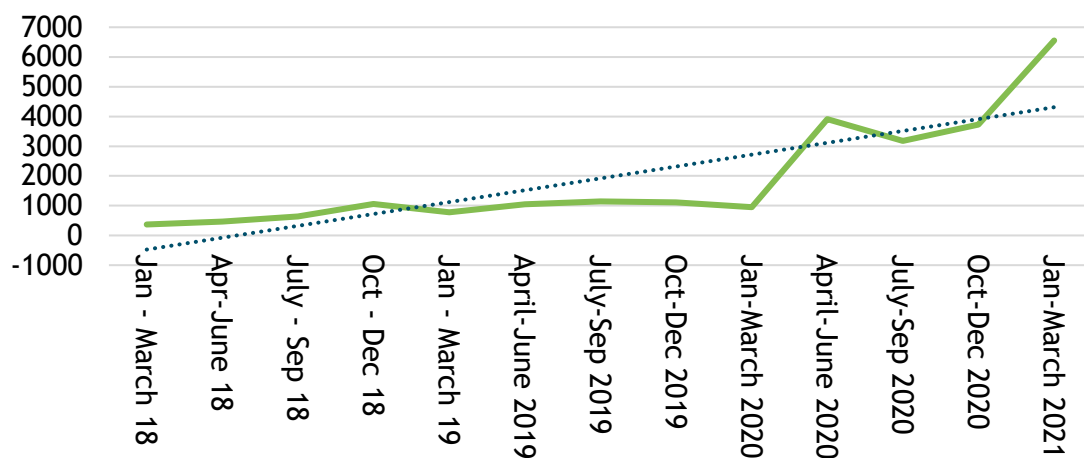


<sup>1</sup> NHS England Publication - External Clinical Harm Review Handbook, version 5, March 2016

We are committed to public and stakeholder engagement and transparency. You can find this and our other reports, on our website [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk)

## SERVICE AND ACTIVITIES

Total No. of stories on CRM database and survey responses (from Helpdesk & Local Team)



This has been a record-breaking quarter for insight and stories shared by West Sussex residents. This was largely due to the vaccine enquiries and large-scale engagement projects, including engaging people with sensory impairments to support the West Sussex Sensory Strategic Needs Assessment, and vaccine surveys.

We recorded a total of **6,555 pieces of insight** compared to 950 this time last year.

Whilst the capture of large volumes of insight is important, we are focused on adding value to the health and social care system through the provision of powerful case studies that speak to the heart of the matter. We are working hard on our community relationships to ensure we're trusted to be the *custodians* of peoples' health and care stories.

Engagement activities underway include:

- We're now developing the reports from the Sensory Impairment engagement and have already included some of the valuable insight into our first [#ConfusingComms report](#). [We plan to run this campaign throughout 2021.](#)
- As well as the Sussex-wide engagement with autistic people and their families, in West Sussex we've captured some powerful stories from people seeking an Autism Assessment as an adult. We surveyed people and then followed up with some 1-to-1 conversations. We wanted to try and fully understand their experiences and motivations and better understand their situation and challenges. Thank you to those who agreed to talk to us. The insight you provided is invaluable.



*I really loved the notes from our conversation. I felt like you had completely understood what I was getting at and it encapsulated all I feel. It was quite strange to read it back to myself in a more detached way, but I actually think it was really helpful to me to get a bit of distance and objectivity. [F - assessed as an adult]*



# Information, Advice, Communication & Engagement

Supplied to patients, their family and friend carers, community partners and Integrated Care System stakeholders, through all of our communications channels:	Key performance metrics for current and previous quarter	
	Q3 October - December 2020	Q4 January - March 2021
Enquiries to Helpdesk and frontline team through email, website and social media	736	932
People signposted to IHCAS	49	57
Number of people engaged with (all channels)	52,328	62,456
Number of engagement/influencing occasions	568	854
No. of stories/accounts recorded on CRM and surveys by Local Team & through Community Partnerships	3732	6,555
Number of community partners engaged with	1,315	2000+
Active community collaborations	25	28
Reports, Spotlights, and case studies	65	106 (80 are individual and not published)
Website visits	8,568 - 88.9% were new users	29,883 - 89.4% were new users
Facebook: Followers Posts Reach	458 88 22,968	598 65 30,320
Twitter: Followers Posts Reach	1,717 75 29,300	1746 65 23,300
Heads Up briefing subscribers	441	1,582
External publications (hard copy and digital)	22	114

# Involving Local People

Involving local people in designing and delivering our core responsibilities and work is critical to the success of this local Healthwatch:

	Key performance metrics for current and previous quarter	
	Q3 October - December 2020	Q4 January - March 2021
<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Roles covered by volunteers</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Volunteering interactions (meetings, events)</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>431</b>
<b>Volunteer support hours</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>420</b>
<b>Healthwatch Board Independent Directors</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Estimated value of volunteers **</b>	<b>£29,600</b>	<b>£30,275</b>

\*\* Estimate based on £25 per hour for volunteers who usually work at a high level and £75 per hour for Independent Director volunteers. More virtual meetings reduced the need for travel hours so although a slightly lower number of hours, it reflects increased direct activity.

## During this quarter:

We continue to sustain a good level of engagement with volunteers taking part in:

- Collecting and sharing insight from local networks and social media
- Website Reviews
- Discussions, forums, AGMs, and other meetings
- The Board met virtually for a formal meeting in February.



Frances Russell stepped down as Chair of Healthwatch West Sussex on 31 March 2021. We joined our new Chair, Steve Cooper in thanking her for her drive, enthusiasm, and professionalism which she has tirelessly demonstrated on our behalf throughout the last 8 years.

Steve will be joined in role as Chair by Board member Jeremy Gardner as Vice Chair. You can read more about our Board [here](#).

The Board's aim is to help the organisation continue to be the "listened to" voice of the consumers of health, care, and wellbeing services in West Sussex and to strengthen our advice and guidance on pathways through the provision of such services. We couldn't achieve this without you - those who share experiences and who work with us as volunteers, colleagues and as commissioners/providers. We offer thanks and gratitude for your continued support.



# REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

As well as usual publication channels, we are pleased to be working with the West Sussex Records Office so that these and other reports relating to the pandemic are recorded. They provide important information for the here and now, but also give a historical reference.

The following were published this quarter:

## Information & Advice



### [#ConfusingComms - Communication tips for restoring planned care](#)

March 2021

Early public feedback to our #ConfusingComms Campaign allowed us to highlight some good practice and make suggestions based on experiences people have recently shared.

As Trusts and other NHS services resume paused services, this early insight should support those writing appointment letters/emails. Getting the content right is vital for reducing Do Not Attend rates.

Our report gives suggestions on how local health and care services can communicate efficiently to manage expectations and offer reassurance. We have also shared challenges encountered by people who are visually impaired and what services can do to help communicate better.



### [#ConfusingComms Amelia and Cathys Experience](#)

February 2021

Cathy shares with us her example of a poorly written NHS appointment letter as part of our #ConfusingComms campaign.



## [Understanding why maternity services have changed in West Sussex](#)

January 2021

Update explaining why maternity services have had to change in West Sussex due to the pandemic.



## [Supporting Access to Online Support for Autistic People](#)

January 2021

This report reflects our learning from attending a presentation by Ambitious About Autism at the Engage Conference 2020, which took place at the end of November. We believe many other organisations would benefit from this insight.

[Ambitious about Autism](#) are a national youth-based organisation that employs and works with autistic people. They provide an Autism Education Trust Panel, Health Panel (commissioned by a London NHS Trust) and work on the principle that all their work goes to the young people first for consideration.



## [Updates-covid-19-vaccination-programme-west-sussex](#)

January 2021

Coronavirus vaccinations have been given to patients and will gradually be rolled out across the region. You can find out what to expect here.



## [Transportation-coronavirus-vaccinations-community-transport-sussex](#)

January 2021

Crawley Community Transport to provide up to 1500 free of charge journeys to Mid Sussex, Horsham, Crawley and Adur & Worthing residents needing assistance to travel to their Coronavirus vaccination appointments.

## Care Homes



### Supporting the Safe Return of Family and friends in Care Homes

March 2021

We are delighted the Government has published new [Guidance](#) on care home visiting.

As a partnership ([Carers Support West Sussex](#), [Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#) and Healthwatch West Sussex), we recognise that family and friends are not just “anyone” and many of you have shown such patience in the face of significant emotional and physical turmoil for yourselves and those you care for.



### Library Service -support-care-homes-and-family-carers

March 2021

Find out how West Sussex Library Service can help you stay in contact with your loved one in a care home. You can also find online singing and reminiscence sessions to watch at home, as well as wellbeing and bereavement support.



### <https://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/care-homes-wellbeing-project>

February 2021

Healthwatch, together with [Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#) (SPFT) and [Carers Support West Sussex](#), have hosted three monthly webinars for relatives and carers with loved ones in Care Homes. These have enabled conversations and connections established at our Sussex wide event in November ([Staying Connected with loved ones in Care Homes during the pandemic](#)) to continue.



## Staying Connected Webinar Report

January 2021

On the 10 November (2020) Healthwatch in Sussex hosted an online webinar for families and friends of care home residents. It explored the impact and potential solutions to the separation of care home residents and their loved ones in a pandemic. This event was attended by 90 people, made up of members of the public, representative bodies, commissioners and front-line staff from health and care services.

## GP Care



## GP Websites - How easy it is to find information?

March 2021

Since the end of Lockdown One, residents have been increasingly sharing information to suggest some are struggling to access GP services in West Sussex. The length of time people reported waiting to get through to a GP Practice is mixed and, in some cases, extreme. We are aware that a number of Practices are in the process of installing more telephone lines to compensate for the increase in outbound calls.

Accessible information that helps the public to understand the necessary changes to services is key to managing the COVID-19 response and how services will be offered going forward.

## Vaccines



## COVID-19 Vaccine Survey - Interim Report

March 2021

An interim report from over 1800 survey responses from our Vaccination Survey from 3-8 March.

We launched a survey to understand how to improve the vaccine service and vaccine confidence and thereby uptake. We asked for feedback about what is working well and what could be changed.

We also asked people who haven't had the vaccine their views to see what further information is needed to support people to make an informed decision.

## Spotlight on other services:



### Autism Connected

March 2021

A new voluntary support group for autistic, neurodivergent girls, women diagnosed or not, those who identify as women and nonbinary.

They are based in the north of West Sussex and Mid Sussex but accept members from surrounding areas.



### Please Give Me Space

March 2021

The 'Please Give Me Space' visual awareness campaign has been developed by [Hidden Disabilities Sunflower](#) and the [Royal National Institute of Blind People](#) (RNIB), in response to COVID-19 and the need to social distance.



### Time to Talk Befriending

January 2021

An accredited befriending charity overcoming loneliness experienced by older people through a range of intergenerational befriending activities.





### Library Service

January 2021

During Covid-19 West Sussex County Council Library Services have been limited in accordance with Government regulations and are subject to change.



### Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust - Living Well Programme

January 2021

A free 6-week self-management course for adults living with any long-term physical or mental health condition.

The Living Well Programme is now running a new online version of the course via Microsoft Teams.



### Southern Water

January 2021

Southern Water is the private utility company responsible for the public wastewater collection and treatment in West Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, East Sussex and Kent, and for the public water supply and distribution in approximately half of this area.

## Dental Care



### What's happening with dental care?

March 2021

Residents continue to contact us about the difficulties they have in finding an NHS Dentist and getting the treatment they need to maintain a healthy mouth and teeth. Yesterday, the Department of Health and Social Care release a [letter](#) to all NHS dental contract holders which updates on the NHS Dental Contract Reform and Arrangements.

### Healthwatch England Announce Dental Crisis

February 2021

Healthwatch England have announced a dental crisis. Healthwatch in Sussex found similar concerns when talking to people across Sussex throughout the pandemic.



### Healthwatch in Sussex Reports- Patient Transport Services-2020

January 2021

Healthwatch in Sussex has published a series of reports which indicate high levels of satisfaction amongst people who have used Non-Emergency Transport Services but also sets out how they could and should be improved.



## Healthwatch West Sussex



**Heads Up** - Keeping people up to date on health and social care.

March 2021

February 2021

January 2021



### Healthwatch West Sussex and Help & Care achieve Investors in Volunteers Award

February 2021

We are delighted to share the exciting news that Healthwatch West Sussex alongside Help & Care have achieved the Investors in Volunteers (IIV) award.



### Q3 Impact and Performance Report (October to December 2020)

February 2020

Here is a summary of the breadth and depth of our work in the last quarter, October to December 2020, issues/concerns, and our forward plan for the next 3 months.

We **published 65 reports or case studies** about the improvements people would like to see with their health and social care. Through these we've been able to show areas for improvement and system learning.

Reaching out - **335% increase in insight** compared to the same period last year, recording over 3,700 pieces of insight, covering a wide range of services and themes.

Providing support - We **engaged with 1300+ community partners** focusing on autism and learning disabilities, sensory needs, digital access to healthcare, and communication improvement.

# INDEPENDENT HEALTH COMPLAINTS ADVOCACY (IHCAS)

Supplied to patients, their family and friend carers, community partners and Integrated Care System stakeholders through offering support in learning from complaints and patient concerns:	Key performance metrics for current and previous quarter	
	Q3 October - December 2020	Q4 January - March 2021
One off information, advice and support	33	35
New referrals for support	49	57
Advocacy support concluded	50	55
Ongoing advocacy support cases	75	77

## During this quarter:

- We are seeing the referrals starting to increase and many of the referrals to the service are complex.
- The capacity of our advocates is now impacted by the toll of the pandemic. Therefore, we have asked our Board to add IHCAS service delivery to the risk register, and for this to be kept under review.
- Example of adapting communication to meet needs: Advocate supported a client with communication needs, the complaint letter was written via the advocate sending text messages and then the draft letter was sent via the post and the client made corrections via text message and the complaint letter was sent to the GP Practice. As a result of the local resolution meeting the GP became aware of the need to communicate with the patient via text message and the communication method was established and the complaint was closed.

“Thank you so much. It’s nice to be able to let go now and I think I’ve only been able to do that because of the help and support from you .... I think my main comments about this service would be that right from the start you made it so much easier to navigate, and despite barely having had the chance to read up on my case before the hospital meeting, your professionalism and support was amazing, and I’d have been totally lost without you there. The guidance you’ve been able to give throughout the hospital complaint and then the ombudsman process, and finally to have my records amended has been invaluable.

**Advocacy Client March 2021**



# FINANCE

## Finance and Performance Board Sub Committee and Actions

We continue to pursue additional commissioned work and social enterprise opportunities and believe this is enabling us to work creatively to support the core objectives of a local Healthwatch. Several small-commissioned projects are underway or concluding. We're also delighted to be working with Healthwatch England in relation to young people transitioning to adulthood with mental health needs and cancer experiences for Black men (this is part of the NHS Integration Index Toolkit development).

The finance subcommittee met on 4 May 2021 to scrutinise:

- Impact and Performance report (published document)
- Finance report (internal document)
- Risk Register (internal document).

We wrote to WSCC at the start of march about the ongoing financial pressures we face as a result of additional meeting and insight support commitments required resulting from the pandemic. As a minimum we asked that our contract be uplifted in-line with inflation as provided for in the contract. To date we have had no response to this letter.



# LOOKING FORWARD

Following government advice and guidance Healthwatch West Sussex team members continue to work from home. Healthwatch England has not changed its position (as at, 29 March) and for now recommend that where possible, local Healthwatch should continue to work from home. We will continue to monitor the situation alongside the Government's roadmap and will keep you updated should circumstance change.

## Future opportunities



We continue to work collaboratively with our colleagues in Healthwatch Brighton & Hove and East Sussex, where issues are Sussex-wide, including additionally commissioned work.

Healthwatch West Sussex currently lead on behalf of local Healthwatch on: Cancer, Autism and Learning Disabilities, Dentistry, Children and Young Peoples future engagement with the implementation of the Foundations for Our Future recommendation implementation.

## What we have done to date and will continue to do:

- Built on our existing good home working practices and using the time to maximise technology to deliver effective communications. Our staff have access to MS Teams, Skype and Zoom so we can have virtual meetings both internal and with external stakeholders.
- Maintain effective and productive relationships with all key partners. We will:
  - continue to use *a constructive partner* tone of voice in our conversations, whilst recognising our independence and responsibility to the public.
  - give stakeholders insight early, to enable them to respond swiftly and will then publish any reports.
  - produce case studies and updates using our routine communication channels: monthly Heads Up, website and social media.
  - capture our escalations, recommendations, outcomes, and testimonials, in a central document and will share this with system partners - this will enable us to demonstrate the difference our work makes.
- We've reviewed our work plan and agreed activities timeframe to avoid putting any added pressure on the West Sussex/Sussex health and care system, where frontline issue exist (such as issuing of the GP Access Report at the height of vaccination Programme - these are now being published in April 2021, after being refreshed.)
- We continue to share important information relating to local COVID-19 issues and signposting to up to date information regarding local and national services to residents.
- Ensure we provide ongoing support for voluntary and community sector organisations.
- We have aligned a vaccine survey with other local Healthwatch in Sussex, created an interim report and are now working on the final report.

- IHCAS will continue to support residents with their NHS complaint options throughout these difficult times, recognising the pressure the NHS is currently under and the need to delay some investigations - recognising the need for good communication during this time. Our advocates are now using What's App to work with some clients.

## April - June 2021

### Clear and accurate information, advice, and signposting

- Work with key stakeholders to create information relating to COVID vaccine, changes as West Sussex emerges out of Lockdown and any other support based on what residents say are their emerging themes - using a narrative that enables local people to understand what is changing and how this could impact them.
- We will focus on supporting our place-based system to improve the content of written material to residents, for example, hospital leaflets and general letters, focusing on delayed care and diagnosis.
- Use our social media presence to deliver trusted information and advice to local people and engaging people, which when appropriate may include surveys.
- Develop our information and advice through digital innovation to maximise the investment in our Healthwatch Hub and Community Partnership engagement and knowledge of West Sussex.
- We will be refreshing our Heads Up communication.

### Gather feedback and the views of peoples' needs and experiences in relation to COVID 19 and other services where it relates to patient safety.

- Our team will use existing networks within the community, and a range of designed communication tools to establish and encourage individual and groups to provide *eyes and ears* feedback around health and care:
  - Confusion and contradictions information.
  - Gaps and blockers in accessing support and services.
  - Positive experiences of accessing services and the innovative things that people are finding beneficial which could be maintained after the pandemic.
- This includes joining more geographical Facebook Groups and seeking out opportunities to talk to voluntary and community group members virtually.

### Reporting

- Recognising the need to respect the pre-election period due to local elections, we will defer the publishing of our reports until after 6 May.
- Spotlights on community and voluntary services.
- Learning for Recovery case studies (published) and insight briefing (non-published).
- Construct or contribute to and share Sussex-wide Healthwatch Reports.
- Enable our place-based system to respond to insight and then publish reports.

### Involving Local People

- By working with our existing and where possible new volunteers, we'll create opportunities for online review of information sources, and phone-based interactions with residents to support the system to improve services through the lens of local people.

# Issues and Concerns - “Hot Topics”

## Access to GPs/Primary Care

We continue to hear of issues **accessing GP** services in particular geographies. In many only digital appointments are available which aren't always working for all patients. This is causing knock on effects with delays in some diagnostics and referrals. Our own recent **Cancer** related work and insight from the health system itself reinforces this.

The engagement we've done with **Adults with suspected or diagnosed autism** shows some significant concerns around the impact of a lack of diagnosis, with the estimated waiting time now at 3 years.

## Care Homes and Carers -

We have been working closely with care homes and Carers and a number of ongoing issues around access to relatives, communications and quality of care are growing.

**Dentistry** - Rates of vaccine-related enquiries have reduced now, but we are still continuing to receive **high-levels rates of dental-related enquiries**. Locally, our escalations are having a limited affect but there appears to be more movement nationally (which we contribute to). We are updating the public through our various communication platforms. Dental will need to be prioritised (in quarter 3 or 4 of 2021/22) in preparation of the Sussex Integrated Care System take-over of dental commissioning from April 2022 (assuming the White Paper proceeds to legislation).

**Communications** - We've asked the Sussex-system to be clear on its **definition of terms such as: personalised care, co-production and co-design** and suggest these definitions need to start any conversations with people when the terms are being used. There is a risk of under-delivering in specific areas, and that the public see any engagement as just 'ticking a box' if there is not clarity and accountability for work that is being labelled as being co-produced/designed.

## Independent Health Complaint Advocacy - concerned about levels and complexity of cases

Our work looking at **Young People living with mental health issues turning 18** (part of the Healthwatch Integrated Index Project) and recent complaints advocacy cases suggest the transfer of care to adult services does not exist, and we need to work closely with the system to understand the actions needed to achieve the recommendations in our report.

We are following the concerns being expressed in relation to the increases in care-charge contributions for working aged residents (that were effective from April 2021), as this links with our previous work around **financial assessments**. We are concerned that families are expressing surprise over the amount being charged and the impact this will have on them, as we had been assured that there would be clear communication with people.

# Board meetings

Future meeting dates are:

- Wed 12th May 2021 10 am - 12 noon (Q4 board report 20/21)
- Wed 18th Aug 2021 10am - 12 noon (Q1)
- Wed 10 November 2021 10 am - 12 noon (Q2)
- Wed 9 Feb 2022 10am - 12 noon (Q3)