

# The value of listening

Healthwatch Lewisham  
Annual Report 2023–2024



**healthwatch**  
Lewisham

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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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Healthwatch Lewisham is the independent champion for local people – patients, service users and carers – using health and social care services.

Healthwatch is a small organisation, and must prioritise rigorously the areas it can address in any detail. This annual report, prepared by our host provider – Your Voice in Health and Social Care – summarises the feedback received and the research undertaken in the last year.

Much of the feedback is positive. As in previous years many local people continue to have significant concerns, especially about difficulties in contacting and accessing primary care.

Like many other services, the team has had to cope with uncertainties. The three-yearly retendering of the service was deferred from 2023 to 2024, leaving the local advocacy service, which was due to be retendered separately, in a particularly uncertain position. A move from our Forest Hill base has been on the cards but remains to be finalised. There have been staff changes. Our small team of staff, and our supportive colleagues in Healthwatch Bromley who share our office, are to be congratulated for continuing to focus on supporting local people.

We need to work with other organisations to fulfil our statutory roles effectively. We take an active part in various local partnerships with the Council, the local NHS, the local voluntary sector, Healthwatch in neighbouring boroughs, other agencies, and the local community. Much of this representative work is undertaken by our volunteers, especially our local committee members. A special thank you to them, for their commitment and interest.

Michael Kerin, Chair, Healthwatch Lewisham Local Advisory Committee



**“Healthwatch Lewisham have continued year on year to have an impact across the whole community. This year, working with our partners in health and social care, Healthwatch Lewisham launched 13 separate reports. This year we gathered over 4000 pieces of patient experience feedback from local people using health and social care facilities. The service was supported by 24 valued volunteers who contributed an amazing equivalent of 1348 hours to Healthwatch Lewisham. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Healthwatch Lewisham staff and volunteers, who have continued to work with dedication to ensure a responsive and vital service continues to support the local community.”**

Tim Spilsbury, CEO, Your Voice in Health and Social Care

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# About Us

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## Healthwatch Lewisham 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, Local Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



# Year in Review

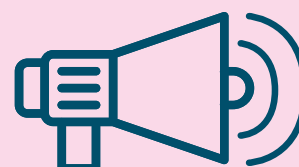
## Reaching out:

**4,229 people**

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

**104 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**

reports about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services. Our most popular report was

**Trans and Non-Binary health in Lewisham** which highlighted the struggles people from this community can face.



## Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

**24**

outstanding volunteers who gave up 1348 hours to make care better for our community.

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

**£140,000**



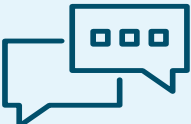





We currently employ

**3.5 FTE staff**

who help us carry out our work.



# How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>Gathered over 1000 comments from local people on their experiences of health and social care.</p>	 <p>Published 3 Enter &amp; View visit reports to Care Homes and a Learning Disability Home.</p>
Summer	 <p>We inducted 5 people with lived experience of homecare to participate in interview panels for homecare workers.</p>	 <p>We coproduced an action plan with Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust to address our Outpatient Report findings.</p>
Autumn	 <p>Published a newsletter and highlighted involvement opportunities from partners as well as important messages like local strikes information and foodbank info.</p>	 <p>We represented your views at over 20 meetings and boards.</p>
Winter	 <p>We were supported by 12 active volunteers who delivered an extra 218 hours of support (equivalent of 31 extra working days!).</p>	 <p>Provided Information &amp; Signposting to over 50 residents, with the majority of enquiries relating to mental health services.</p>

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# Your voice heard at a wider level

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**We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in Lewisham influence decisions made about services at South East London Integrated Care System (ICS) level.**

This year we've worked with local partners across the London Borough of Lewisham to:



Feed in people's experiences to identify, shape, and develop the six South East London Integrated Care System (SEL ICS) priorities, the principles that underpin them and the ICS Integrated Care Strategy. We also provided support for this programme's community engagement.

Provide representation on 16 ICS and ICB Boards, Committees, and Groups. Through this participation, we ensured an independent voice for the public, and highlighted the insight and intelligence gathered by SEL Healthwatch to decision makers and health providers.



Develop south east London Healthwatch webpages, bringing together key Healthwatch reports in one place to facilitate health commissioners' access to people's views, experiences, stories, and recommended solutions.

Champion digital inclusion across south east London programmes and services so that as technology use becomes more widespread, the reality of digital exclusion, which many people face, is mitigated.





## 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. We particularly consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard, and services meet their needs.



# Patient Experience Programme

**At Healthwatch Lewisham we operate a comprehensive Patient Experience Programme as part of our duty around gathering and representing the views of patients and service users in the borough.**

Last year, we published reports highlighting the experiences the public shared with us around GP services, Hospital services and Dental services.

Gathering this insight each quarter enables us to understand, in real time, what is working well and what could improve. We raise awareness of the issues you tell us about, inform local decision makers and consistently work with partners to champion your voice and improve care.



We collected over **4,200** experiences from local people this year.

We carried out **159** face-to-face patient engagement visits to listen to patients, service users and carers

## What did you tell us about GP services?

- Lewisham residents spoke **positively** about treatment and care, staff attitude, and communication with patients.
- People spoke **negatively** about getting through on the telephone, booking appointments and waiting times (punctuality and queueing on arrival).
- Some issues, such as appointment availability, **varied** across the borough with some patients having very positive experiences and others highlighting more negative experiences.

## Always improving and expanding

- This year we introduced a new equalities page to our Patient Experience Report, highlighting differences in experience between key equality groups.
- We presented our Patient Experience Report locally at the Health & Wellbeing Board and Healthier Communities Select Committee, and regionally at South East London meetings to ensure your voice was heard across the system.
- We are having to find new ways to reach people and are always adapting our service to reach more people. This year we diversified our range of engagement visits to take into account reducing attendance at some health venues due to increasing digital appointments. Where once we focused on health and care venues, we now also regularly visit community venues such as Catford, Sydenham and Deptford libraries and ensure we are regular participants at a range of community events such as activities held during Dementia Awareness Week.

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# Listening to our trans and non-binary residents.

One of our key projects this year was our Trans-Health study. We ran focus groups and interviews to speak to our transgender and non-binary residents to hear what they had to share with us about their experiences of health and care services. We also spoke to charities, health care providers, and advocacy groups to bring together a report on these experiences.

Transgender and non-binary residents told us that despite the success of a previous training scheme, which was rolled out to some GPs in Lewisham, they were concerned that without a full coverage the same problems could keep happening. Most of the concerns from people we spoke to were regarding:

- Health professions who seemed unsure about how to care for them or, in some cases, uninterested in their care.
- Digital health systems that were challenging to use or that made it difficult to access records.
- Long wait times compared to the general population, particularly for specialist services.
- An unintegrated system where specialist services and GPs had poor communication or did not understand each other's roles.



**“Doctors and nurses need to be more understanding about disparities between people’s access to gender affirming care... it was hard for me to change my gender marker because I had to show ID, which not everyone has.”**

A non-binary person interviewed by Healthwatch Lewisham

As a result of this project Healthwatch Lewisham now has better signposting resources for this community and some of our staff were able to visit specialist clinics in our borough to see how they really work.

We also met with Pride in Practice, who have already trained GP practices in Lewisham, to see what was on their training regime. One of our participants said that when they switched to a Pride in Practice trained GP the effects were noticeable.

## What are we planning to do with our findings?

- We have written recommendations on how we think health outcomes can be improve for this group. These include better training, more inclusive environments, and better signposting.
- Our recommendations are being shared with people in our borough that can help make a change.
- Our report is being used by Healthwatch England to influence one of their upcoming projects.
- We were commissioned by the CQC to write a related People’s Profile on our local trans population. This will be used by the CQC, along with other People’s Profile reports, to direct their internal work.

## Reaching out to people in Lewisham receiving care services at home

**Lewisham Council works in partnership with homecare providers to maximise wellbeing at home. We think it's important to hear from these people in a way that makes them feel involved.**



**Residents who receive home care services are often some of the most isolated and vulnerable in our neighbourhoods. Throughout 2023/24 Healthwatch Lewisham has supported Local Authority Commissioning around social care (Proud to Care and Maximising Wellbeing Programmes), seeking ways to make sure that those with lived experience of homecare can have their voices heard.**

We have set up a new user forum and we are contacting people who receive care at home services. We have been hearing positive things about homecare workers so far and a lot of people are happy with the Proud to Care system. As this project continues, we hope to open in person spaces for those receiving care, and their carers, to meet and get to know one another.

Some of our additional activities have supported people to get involved in different ways. These include:

- Developing suitable interview questions and participating in interview panels for new Proud to Care (Homecare) workers.
- Inducting people with lived experience of homecare to participate directly in interview panels for Proud to Care workers.
- Creating materials and resources, including in easy read, to support the training and induction of people with lived experience of Homecare, enabling their active, direct involvement in the interview process now, and in the future.

These activities, together with our new forum, continue to ensure that the user perspective and experience is weaved into staff interview processes, and that those with lived experience of services form an integral part of current and future service provision, scrutiny and monitoring.



**We are looking for more people with lived experience of homecare, and their carers, to participate in our project. Your involvement could take the form of regular feedback phone calls, online meetings or in-person meetings. Please get in touch today if you wish to help shape the future of homecare services in Lewisham.**

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## Improving hospital administration

**After leading a regional project with Healthwatch Bexley and Greenwich during the previous year, Healthwatch Lewisham published its report on The Experiences of Outpatients in Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust (LGT) and continued to work with the Trust to pursue outcomes and impact during 23/24.**



In order to gather the views of over 900 patients, Healthwatch Lewisham made multiple visits to outpatient departments at University Hospital Lewisham to talk with patients. They told us about conflicting or missing appointment letters and difficulties navigating their way around the hospital to find the right outpatients area/department. Our report, published in March 2023, identified 12 recommendations to the Trust and during the year we continued to work with the Trust to coproduce an action plan to address these areas. As a result of what people shared, LGT have:

- Made improvements to appointment letters
- Put in place updated signage
- Put in place plans to commission a new service to support people with disabilities and those who need help with translation

All these changes mean real differences on the ground for patients and visitors trying to access healthcare on a day to day basis, now and in the future. We look forward to continuing to work with the Trust around their new disability support and translation service, which will see some fantastic changes for those who typically experience a range of access and health inequalities.

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## Making better connections to local organisations

**We made a push this year to connect to more local organisations and local and national charities.**

Lewisham is a borough where there are lots of communities and in which lots of charities operate. This year, we have started to make much better use of our social media channels. We have been sharing events and opportunities for our residents and have been making connections with other charities. We have also been in contact with some national charities, like Alheimers UK and the British Liver Trust to figure out ways we can work together to raise awareness and offer training and support to health organisations in Lewisham.



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# Hearing from people in Mental Health inpatient wards

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**Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services, before, during and after a project, to consistently raise issues, bring about changes and improve care over time.**

## 2022-23

**During the previous financial year we visited Powell ward (male) and Wharton ward (female) at The Ladywell Unit, an inpatient Mental Health unit run by South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM), on the site of Lewisham Hospital.**

Through two Enter & View visits we were able to hear from mental health patients at the point of service delivery. We heard about issues around environment and cleanliness, information and communication, patient involvement, Carers and staffing. We wrote two reports identifying over 20 separate recommendations for the Trust to review and address.



## 2023-24

**We published our Powell ward and Wharton ward visit reports and produced a combined Executive Summary, looking at the overarching strategic issues the combined visits brought to light.**

A new ward was opened at The Ladywell Unit this year. Work around the new ward took into account the recommendations from Healthwatch Lewisham's Enter & View report findings. Patients now have access to better information and signposting, stronger links and updates on the Advocacy service provision available to them, and carers have been involved throughout, demonstrating further embedding of the Triangle of Care initiative.



## 2024-25

**This year we will continue to profile the voices and experiences of patients with mental health and wellbeing issues, and those that care for them.**

We will champion their voices and their experiences through continued promotion of our reports, findings and recommendations. We will seek to integrate further Enter & View visits to both the older and newer wards to ensure that best practice is transferred across the Trust, and that all patients benefit from improvements. We will continue to monitor and scrutinise the Trust around application of the Triangle of Care initiative and champion all plans that strengthen the voice of carers within Mental Health services.





## 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
- Helping people access NHS dentistry
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost-of-living crisis

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# Supporting people to find services and to have their say

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**We provide information and signposting support to help people navigate complex health and care systems. We also promote opportunities where people can get involved and have their voices heard.**

## Getting services to involve the public

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

We enabled people to share their feedback and encouraged their participation in several opportunities this year, including:

- Serious Violence Duty survey, gathering views and perceptions
- Joining the SLaM Council of Governors
- Shaping Lewisham 2030
- University Hospital Lewisham have your say campaign
- University Hospital Lewisham LGBT+ share your thoughts survey
- British Heart Foundation views on app tracking heart health
- South East London NHS Joint Forward Plan

## Staying informed and up to date

**The health and care system is complex and services change from time to time. We work to keep the information flowing and help communities stay informed and up to date.**

During the year we shared many important messages, including:

- Free online Art for Anxiety workshops
- New online mental health and wellbeing resources for young people
- The new Dementia Hub service changes
- A new mental health course for Black people and those that support them
- Updates on NHS industrial action and impact locally
- Changes to opening hours of key health services during bank holidays and holiday periods
- Guide for people experiencing homelessness
- Local Foodbank locations and opening times

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## Being there for local residents

**It's essential that all people are able to access help and support and be directed to services that can support their needs.**



Being at the end of a phone line means we can help all kinds of people, including those that are digitally excluded, or those that do not have much spare time and need something that works for them.

We received a call from a 94-year old carer, who was looking after her husband. Her husband was also 94 years old and has Alzheimer's and she needed help finding out where she could get support over the phone. Although services like the Alzheimer's society have a helpline, it can be difficult to know this exists before the first time you use it. Someone at Healthwatch Lewisham wrote back to this resident, telling them about Lewisham Carers; Carers UK; Age UK national; and the Alzheimer's Society helplines.

We received an email back, saying that the person was able to start getting care services from Lewisham Carers – helping to alleviate the callers care burden.

At Healthwatch Lewisham, we have previously looked into our digitally excluded population. Helping this person was another good example of why having multiple ways to contact an organisation is useful to many people who need that choice.

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## Help at a time of need



**Health and care journeys can be worrying and scary, but getting on the right track with support can make all the difference. Sometimes the simplest information and signposting can turn things around.**

Our Advocate at Healthwatch Lewisham, received a telephone call from a very distressed member of the public. She had received a cancer diagnosis over the telephone and told that her scan was 'very bad'. She had no treatment plan and was floundering and really frightened.

Our Advocate suggested a call to the PALS team at her local hospital, but she had already done this and unfortunately this had not produced results. The Advocate then suggested contacting the linked PALS team at the larger sister hospital. A quick email to the head of PALS outlining that a member of the public had received a serious diagnosis and no treatment plan, produced an agreement to email her directly. This information was passed to the client for her to act on herself.

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**Healthwatch Lewisham's information and signposting service assisted 104 people during 2023/24. A large number of these enquiries were received by phone, often hearing from those digitally isolated, vulnerable or just lost in a complex system of services.**





# Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service

**The Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service offers help and support to Lewisham residents who want to make a complaint about an experience they have had within the NHS.**

**The service is free and confidential. Our advocates explain the NHS complaints procedure and discuss with clients the best way forward.**

## The way our advocacy service works

**Advocates don't always recommend a complaint as the most appropriate way forward. We listen carefully to our clients' stories and ask them what they want to achieve by making a complaint. We can then discuss with them how best to do that.**



**The NHS complaints procedure is not a "quick fix" for problems that need an immediate solution and sometimes a response to a complaint will not be ready for 6 months or more. This year, there have been substantially longer waits for responses from some service providers.**

If a matter needs urgent attention, we may help our clients resolve issues in a different, more timely way. For example, we may:

- Help our clients to resolve issues themselves by advising how best to navigate NHS "systems" and making sure they know their rights under the NHS Constitution
- Speak to a GP or hospital on a client's behalf (with their permission)
- Ask the Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) based at hospitals to intervene
- Raise a safeguarding alert

If a client decides that a complaint is right for them, we support them in a number of different ways:

- We explain to them how the complaint process works
- We advise on what they should include in their complaint
- We draft a complaint for them and (after their approval has been given)
- We can submit a complaint on their behalf

We normally stay in touch with our clients throughout the complaint process and if they are not happy with a response, suggest what their next steps might then be. These can include:

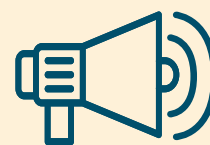
- Asking for clarification on the response
- Asking for a meeting with the NHS service
- Referring the complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, the final stage in the NHS complaints procedure.



**All clients who gave us feedback in 2023-24 said they would recommend the advocacy service to other residents, and they were "extremely satisfied" or "satisfied" with the support they were given.**

## Advocacy service statistics

**During 2023–24, our advocates worked on 154 new cases. Not all cases involved making a complaint – sometimes other routes helped to resolve a problem.**



This year:

- Our advocates continued to support people who had made a complaint, or submitted their complaint to the Ombudsman (the final level in the complaints process) in previous years, and who were still waiting for a response.
- On average, advocates had between 65–70 open cases at any one time during the year.
- We signposted 98 people who contacted the service but who needed other sorts of help.
- 681 people visited the pages on Healthwatch Lewisham’s website that explain the NHS complaints process. These pages include downloadable template letters.
- Our advocates worked with clients both on the phone and in person. They also offered support to clients at meetings with NHS services – these meetings often helped to resolve a complaint.

During the year, we heard an increasing number of complaints about GP surgeries. Between January and March 2024, 50 per cent of all new clients contacted the advocacy service because they wanted to complain about their GP. Common causes for complaint included: unhelpful GP receptionists; removal of patients from GP lists; unable to make an appointment with a GP; mistakes in referrals to secondary services by GPs.

Related to other services, we also heard about: Extremely long waits for ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and ASD (autism spectrum disorder) assessments; long waits for surgery; and multiple cancelled hospital appointments.

Months	Number of clients
Q1 (April–June 2023)	88
Q2 (July–September 2023)	104
Q3 (October–December 2023)	92
Q4 (January 2024)	115

Type of service complaint related to	Number of new clients (2023/24)
GP	61
Hospital	38
Mental health services	43
Dental	3
Other (including London Ambulance Service)	9



# 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 promote Healthwatch Lewisham and what we have to offer
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Carried out enter and view visits to local services to help them improve



**"As an undergraduate student hoping to enter a healthcare profession, Healthwatch Lewisham provided valuable personal and professional skills that I hope to take with me in my future endeavours. My experiences have shaped who I am as a student, coworker, and future healthcare provider. I was given the opportunity to talk to patients about their experiences within the NHS. I thoroughly enjoyed working with everyone in the office, specifically on the Trans+ health services report. Throughout my time, I interacted with many people who work with and around the NHS and saw how devoted everyone was to create an equitable and accessible healthcare system. I hope to follow the examples of my mentors and coworkers as I enter the healthcare profession."**

Caoimhe Lyons, Intern



**"Working with Healthwatch Lewisham was an eye-opener as I was exposed to a lot of things that I usually would not have been exposed to otherwise. Despite being just an intern, everyone in the office was very friendly and accommodating which made the environment very comfortable. I felt very fulfilled and happy given how the organisation strives to make the community a better place for everyone, and for a while I played some part in it.**

**I learned how the "behind-the-scenes" of a research project works and being part of the team gave me the experience and skills to apply in my future career. I acquired skills such as effective communication, report writing, data entry, team work, data analysis, active listening etc.**

**I enjoyed my time working here wholeheartedly. I learned so much that I would not have been able to learn back at home (Singapore) and I would always be grateful for that. I always looked forward to work as there was always something new to learn. I definitely miss all the friendly faces that I saw at the office and how they were always ready to lend a helping hand whenever I needed it."**

Subiksha Ranguram, Intern



**"I particularly enjoyed the collaborative and dynamic work environment at Healthwatch Lewisham. The team's dedication to improving healthcare services and advocating for patients was inspiring.**

**Working on such an impactful project provided a sense of purpose and fulfilment. Interacting with a diverse group of professionals and community members enriched my experience, fostering a more empathetic approach to healthcare."**

Edward Olounfemi Fewry, Volunteer



**"My time working with Healthwatch was a transformative experience, it gave me the opportunity to make meaningful impacts in the community by engaging with the public and allowing them to discuss their experiences with their local healthcare services.**

**It also offered me the chance to advocate for better health service and thereby contribute to the continuous improvement of health and social care systems."**

Hanna Macaulay, Volunteer



### **Do you feel inspired?**

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



[www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk)



020 3886 0196



[info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlewisham.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 Government	£140,000	Expenditure on pay	£120,000
Additional income	£8,400	Non-pay expenditure	£12,000
		Office and management fees	£16,400
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£148,400</b>	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£148,400</b>

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**Additional income is broken down by:**

- £8,400 from CQC for work on a project.

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## 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 concern local people the most, including GP access, waiting times, and social care.

We will also 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. Embedding the voice of those with lived experience of homecare in service provision/monitoring
2. Supporting Local Authority co-production and engagement around Healthwatch procurement
3. Mental Health and Carers





# Statutory Statements

**Healthwatch Lewisham**

**Waldram Place, Forest Hill, London, SE23 2LB**

**Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC) hold the contract for Healthwatch Lewisham | 45 St Mary's Road, London, W5 5RG**

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

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# The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Local Advisory Committee consists of seven members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Our Committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the Board met three times and made decisions on matters such as which issues to escalate with service providers and how to develop our Patient Experience Programme further.

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 social media platforms and distribute it to local partners.

## Responses to recommendations

We had one provider who did not respond to 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 Health and Wellbeing Board and the Healthier Communities Select Committee.

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in South East London Integrated Care System and are represented at 16 boards, committees and groups with our regional Healthwatch partners.

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 published 5 Enter and View visit reports and a further strategic overview report for SLAM. We made over 40 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Brownhill Lodge Care Home	To review Dementia care as part of focus on the boroughs Dementia Strategy	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up on these and refreshed décor to be more Dementia friendly.
Powell Ward, The Ladywell Unit	To focus on acute mental health provision and voices that often go unheard	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up and integrated the recommendations into developments for a new ward.
Wharton Ward, The Ladywell Unit	To focus on acute mental health provision and voices that often go unheard	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service followed up and integrated the recommendations into developments for a new ward.
Manley Court Care Home	To review Care Home provision following CQC 'requires improvement' rating	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service introduced training to ensure staff were interacting in a more friendly and less clinical way
Mpower Learning Disability Home	To talk to people whose voices often go unheard	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service improved fire safety notices, introducing easy read information for residents

## Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Lewisham is represented on the Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board by Michael Kerin, Chair of Healthwatch Lewisham.

Healthwatch Lewisham is represented on South East London Integrated Care Partnerships by Folake Segun, Director of SEL Healthwatch.

# healthwatch

Lewisham

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