



Together

we're making health and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23

healthwatch
Barnsley

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Message from Healthwatch England



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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from our Chair

Welcome to our Annual Report, which outlines the work that we have carried out during the last year to help influence the improvement in health and care services locally.

The progress and accomplishments we make are the result of a team effort and I would like to thank our staff for their hard work and commitment to champion the voice of the public across Barnsley. I extend my thanks to my colleagues on the Board, which brings together the experiences of people with a passion for improving health and care.

This report outlines some of the key challenges that people face in the provision of the health and care they require. We listen to people's personal experiences and present them (be they positive or negative) to the relevant providers and commissioners.

There have also been significant changes introduced in the last year regarding the commissioning of health and social care services with the introduction of a new Integrated Care System. This represents a major shift on how the NHS and local authorities plan and deliver the services that we all depend on. Healthwatch Barnsley will continue to focus on helping you navigate through the system changes and ensure that we feedback your requirements, concerns and opinions.

Locally, Healthwatch Barnsley, has a position on the Place Partnership Board, and at system (ICB) level Healthwatch has representation at both Board and Partnership levels. This has been made possible by the signing of a collaboration agreement between all the local Healthwatch (Barnsley, Sheffield, Doncaster and Rotherham) and the regular joint meeting of their officers.

“

I look forward to continue working with our staff and Board in the coming year, along with stakeholders and partner organisations, we will continue to help ensure the improvement of health and care services for our local people.



Adrian England
Healthwatch Barnsley Chair

About us

Healthwatch Barnsley is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.

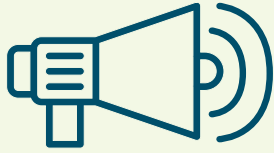


Our values are:

- **Listening** to people and making sure their voices are heard;
- **Including** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard;
- **Analysing** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care;
- **Acting** on feedback and driving change;
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

Year in review

Reaching out



2317 people

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

196 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

3 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Access to GP Services

which highlighted the struggles residents faced when trying to book a GP Appointment



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

10

outstanding volunteers who gave up their time to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£150,000

which is the same as the previous year.

We currently employ

6 staff

who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring



We welcomed **two** new members of staff. Dani our Engagement Officer (Mental Health) and Debbie our Projects Officer.



We published our "Access to GP Services in Barnsley" report.

Summer



We launched our new bigger, brighter more informative website.



We joined forces with other local Healthwatch in South Yorkshire to look at partnership working across the Integrated Care Board footprint.

Autumn



We spoke to residents about 'What matters to you' to help form the Integrated Care Partnership Strategy.



We held our first Hygiene Poverty Awareness event in Barnsley Market which went down a storm!

Winter



We handed out **500+** hygiene packs across Barnsley as part of our Hygiene Poverty Project.

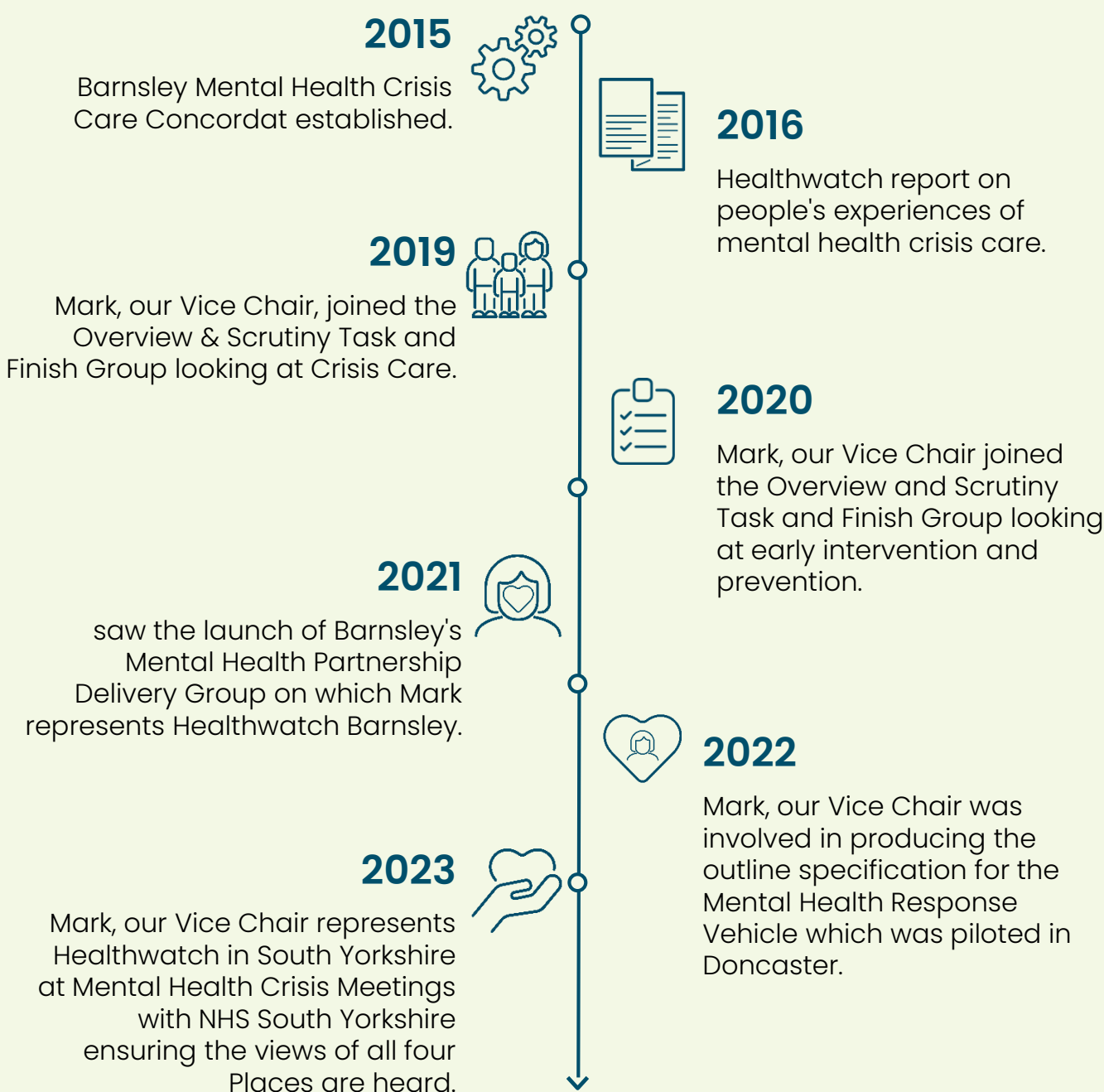


We welcomed Tracy our new Engagement Officer (Adult Safeguarding) a jointly funded post with Barnsley Adult Safeguarding Board and Barnsley Council.

10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. A big thank you to Mark Smith our Vice Chair who has stepped up and inspired change in mental health services. Here are a few of our highlights:

How we have made care better, together



Improving mental health

Healthwatch Barnsley's involvement in relation to mental health Services in Barnsley started in 2015 when we were invited to join the new Barnsley Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat (BMHCCC), which is a national initiative to enhance and improve the services for people facing mental health crisis including their family, friends and carers. Three Healthwatch Barnsley Champions attended the meetings.

We undertook a survey of people, their families and carers to look at their experiences of crisis care. Our reports highlighted issues, some of which have only recently started to be addressed. The BMHCCC was transformed into a Barnsley Mental health Crisis Care Concordat, Suicide Prevention Partnership and provided the catalyst for the formation of the Barnsley Place Mental Health Learning Difficulties Autism Partnership.

KEY Crisis Care Outcomes

1. Mental Health Alternative to Health Placed Place of Safety – Barnsley Support Hub;
2. New ways of working for people detained under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act;
3. Barnsley Section 136 Suite able to be staffed 24 hours a day every day;
4. Improved information and data for people in mental health crisis.



Differences made to people in Barnsley

The improvements in mental health crisis care for people in Barnsley are beginning to be seen, but more work still needs to be done. In particular, work is needed to improve the all age mental health crisis offer, in order to provide alternatives to people having to attend the emergency department at Barnsley Hospital. In addition to this, people in mental health crisis should not have to be transported in police vehicles, nor have inappropriate police attendance when in crisis.



"I just wanted to thank you for your proactive support of and participation in the Mental Health Crisis Prevention Implementation Work. I know you have been consistent and persistent in pressing the case for improvements in Barnsley."

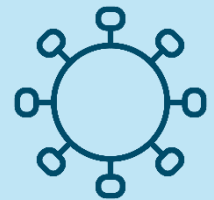
David Ramsey, Deputy Director, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust



Healthwatch Hero



Health & safety concerns raised regarding vaccination centre.



Gill is a Healthwatch Hero for bravely raising her experiences with us and creating change so that no one else had to struggle as she did.

Gill received her invitation to attend her local community centre for her Covid booster. She found the experience difficult, with long queuing times outside, no cover and uneven paving. All these things made it difficult for people with mobility issues. There were also difficulties entering the building, due to lots of furniture crammed into a small space. She also highlighted the flimsy screens used to separate patients.

We helped Gill tell her story to the Head of the Covid Vaccine Programme for South Yorkshire and as a result a series of measures were put in place, including altering the patient flow in and out of the building and employing marshals to accompany less mobile patients to a designated pod. This improved the experience and safety of patients attending the centre.

Without Gill sharing her experiences with us, we would never have known about the issue.



Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.

Accessing GP services in Barnsley

Through our engagement work, we hear lots about residents struggling to access GP appointments. The Covid pandemic served to amplify these concerns, despite the NHS's drive to increase capacity, meet existing targets and reduce waiting times.

At the end of 2021, we asked residents to complete a survey designed by two medical students who were completing their community placements with us. In May 2022 we published our report on the findings.

345 residents responded to our survey and we collected data from each of the 6 neighbourhood networks. The main outcomes from surveys were problems booking initial appointments, delays, patient choice and communication issues.

A draft copy of the report was shared with Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group and Barnsley Health Federation ahead of its publication.

Next steps

It was agreed that a meeting would take place between Healthwatch Barnsley, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group and Barnsley Health Federation to look at the opportunities for improvement:



- Choice of appointment times to suit the needs of the wider population, including patients that are working and those with caring responsibilities;
- To be able to book appointments at different times during the day to avoid the 8am bottleneck;
- Choice of different contact methods to book appointments including online, telephone and in-person.

What difference will this make?

In response to our findings, Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) highlighted some initiatives that were either planned or in progress due to a new service model. These include patients having the ability to book appointments in advance and reviewing the current out of hours service.



“The GP is aware of me and familiar of my home circumstances as a carer. Between us we used the available time very effectively. We co-created an agenda and covered the most important areas.”

Patient, Hoyland Medical Practise

Hygiene Poverty and its effects on mental health and wellbeing

Through our engagement work, we were starting to hear of people who are struggling to afford hygiene products due to the cost of living crisis. We were also made aware of how this was having a detrimental effect on some people's mental health and wellbeing.

For lots of people who are faced with rising energy and food costs, hygiene products are low on their list of priorities. However, within a short space of time this can start to have an effect on their mental wellbeing, and also contributes to poor physical health.

What we did

1. During Hygiene Poverty Awareness Week (October 2022), we attended Barnsley Market and gave away both personal and household hygiene products to people, in return for them completing a short survey. **36%** of the people who completed the survey had recently gone without hygiene or sanitary products due to financial pressures. We did the same activity in the Dearne area, where **55%** of people told us they had gone without hygiene products.
2. **61%** of people who completed the survey in the Dearne area told us that their mental health had been affected by this issue. With this in mind, we applied to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (via Barnsley Council) for funding to conduct the survey across the whole borough and to compare the findings from affluent areas with the most deprived areas.

Our findings and next steps

We attended **24** events and spoke to over **500** people. **36%** of the people we spoke to told us they had just enough money for basic necessities and little else. Just over **21%** of people told us they do not have enough for basic necessities and often find themselves running out of money.

Everyone we spoke to was signposted to other support services for further help with the cost of living crisis, including Barnsley Council's More Money in Your Pocket website.

During Hygiene Poverty Awareness Week (October 2023), we will hold another event in Barnsley Market to see if anything has changed in the last six months.



"I have to use cheap shower gel to wash my hair as shampoo is too expensive, my daughter and I sometimes buy shampoo together and share it, we don't live together"

Anonymous

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life



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

In May 2022, we published our report on carers' experiences of hospital discharge. We held a focus group with service providers and shared stories from a variety of carers, including young carers and carers who have other responsibilities. Stories really come to life when local examples are used and findings from this report helped to form the Carers Strategy. This contributed to work with primary care to identify carers and led to us taking part in the Think Local, Act Personal work with Barnsley Council.

Getting services to involve the public



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

Healthwatch Barnsley raised transport issues for local residents, in particular the Dearne area, where some services had been withdrawn. This put an already disadvantaged area further away from health care, as residents were unable to use public transport to get to appointments in town or at the hospital. After raising this issue and speaking with the transport providers, the buses were reinstated.

Improving care over time



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

Dani, our Engagement Officer, has been building up a fantastic relationship with TransBarnsley to help us to understand the problems this group face when accessing services. An integral part of this has been ensuring that their voice has contributed to the Integrated Care Partnership Strategy and the NHS Joint Forward Plan.

By keeping in touch with the group and showing how we have included their voice, it has made a real difference to how they interact with us and other support services.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Using creative engagement activities as a tool;
- Attending local events and groups on a regular basis to build up trust in our service. We also share community insight with service providers and then report back to the community, so that they know their voice has been heard.

Work with the Salvation Army

We attend the Salvation Army Foodbank in Goldthorpe on a monthly basis and often have residents queuing up to see us. We have helped a number of residents who were finding it difficult to access services due to their situation, including a client that was having trouble getting a district nurse appointment. This was in order to change his leg dressings on a regular basis, as a lack of appointments was causing his wound to leak and smell during the summer months. This was also affecting the client's mental health and was causing problems with his family, who were concerned that the client was not attending appointments. After conversations with the client's GP and the District Nursing Team, we were able to arrange treatment for the client.



We were also happy to contribute to the foodbank during the school summer holidays when their stock was running low.

Clear signage for Diagnostic Centre



We received comments from members of the public regarding the poor levels of signage in the town centre for the Glassworks NHS Clinic. We then provided feedback on this issue to the relevant department of Barnsley Council.

Whilst they took on board our comments, the council stated that it was important that all such signage is very carefully considered. This is because there is a danger that members of the public will mistake the clinic for a walk-in centre, when in fact the service is strictly by appointment only.

By discussing this with them, it ensured that we are giving correct information about the centre to the public, and reiterating to them that appointments are necessary.



Advice and information

Where people are struggling to navigate health and social care services, Healthwatch can help. We can provide confidential support and free information to help people understand their options and to access the services they require. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a care home for a loved one, we will do our best to point you in the right direction.

This year we've helped people by:

- Providing 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.

Help to find dental care in Barnsley

We've had many people contact us for advice and information on dental services. The public reported to us that most practices were not taking on new patients, and that some had waiting lists of up to five years.

The impact of delayed treatment has resulted in people living with considerable pain and their dental conditions worsening.

“It really is distressing and depressing me to the point of such extreme measures.”

Rich, Barnsley resident

Our advice and information has meant people who need urgent treatment understand their options and have clear information.

“I called 111 yesterday waited 8 hours for a call back. They told me there are 300 people waiting in the queue for emergency dental work.”

Elizabeth, Barnsley resident

Healthwatch Barnsley have regularly shared information with the Yorkshire and Humber NHS England Dental Commissioning Team and Healthwatch England. We have also presented findings to our local Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Helping residents feel safe from harm and neglect

During March 2023, we embarked on a new project with Barnsley Adult Safeguarding Board and Barnsley Council to host an Engagement Officer for Adult Safeguarding.

Tracy joined us in early March and has been making contact with local groups and attending events. This is to talk about how to raise a safeguarding concern and the signs for people to look out for if they suspect a friend, neighbour or family member is at risk of harm or neglect. The project has got off to a great start and is already having a positive impact.

Whilst promoting safeguarding awareness at an event in Barnsley Market, Tracy was approached by a client that was a carer. The person that the client cared for had mobility issues and used a stairlift at home. Unfortunately, the stairlift had been out of order for six weeks and was still awaiting repairs. Because of this, the person that the client cared for didn't have full access in his own home and had to stay with his carer, as their home is all on one level.

Tracy encouraged the carer to raise this as a safeguarding issue and once services became aware of the situation, the stairlift was repaired within days.



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 we have chosen to highlight some of our volunteer Strategic Board Members who:

- Promote Healthwatch Barnsley and what we have to offer;
- Attend regular meetings and events to represent the service;
- Communicate the patient voice back to service providers;
- Reviewed our work and reports;
- Collect patient experiences and feedback that help us decide our priorities for the coming year.

Margaret

I joined the Board during 2014 as I am passionate about people getting a high standard of care, especially the elderly mentally ill. I trained in psychiatric and general nursing, mainly working with dementia patients. I also studied for a degree and retrained as a teacher for adults, teaching social care. In the past year, I have attended meetings concerning cancer care, personalised care and urgent and emergency care.



Wendy

I am a retired nursing lecturer with life experiences in nursing and family care. I understand the impact and the difficulties families face on a daily basis, and the necessity for a strong health and social care system and the many advantages this can give to families in our community. I see Healthwatch as a natural continuation of my background in healthcare and I hope to continue to contribute to the improvement of health and social care for all the people of Barnsley.



Christine

I am a former GP surgery manager and enjoyed working within the NHS for almost 23 years, before leaving to become a full-time carer for my elderly parents. I have a special interest in dementia and supporting carers of people living with dementia. I want to ensure that the people of Barnsley receive the best possible care, in terms of both medical treatment and customer services. I am currently involved in SAFE (Safeguarding Adults Forum by Experience).



Do you feel inspired?

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



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Statutory statements

Healthwatch Barnsley, 23 Queens Road, Barnsley S71 1AN is hosted by Barnsley Community and Voluntary Services (BCVS), 23 Queens Road, Barnsley S71 1AN.

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

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	£150,000	Expenditure on pay	£135,455
Additional income	£30,762	Non-pay expenditure	£12,768
		Office and management fee	£24,960
Total income	£180,762	Total expenditure	£173,183

Additional income includes:

- Commissioned work from NHS South Yorkshire on the Joint Forward Plan;
- Funding via BMBC for UK Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver Hygiene Poverty Project;
- Variation to contract to host a Engagement Officer (Adult Safeguarding) this is a joint project with Barnsley Adult Safeguarding Board, Barnsley Council and Healthwatch Barnsley.

Next steps

In the ten years since Healthwatch was launched, we've demonstrated the power of public feedback in helping the health and care system understand what is working. It has also served to highlight issues and how things could be better in the future.

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS, in order to ensure everyone gets the care they need. Over the next year, we will continue our role in collecting feedback from everyone in our local community and giving them a voice to help shape improvements to services.

We will also continue to address inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers people face when accessing care.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. To set up a robust Enter and View program;
2. Family Health including diet and hygiene;
3. Emotional and mental wellbeing for people with protected characteristics.

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Barnsley Strategic Advisory Board consists of **eight members** who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Throughout the year, the Board meets regularly and makes decisions on various aspects of our work. This includes public engagement plans in relation to our work and approving external reports. We also ensure wider public involvement in deciding our priorities, by listening to what people are telling us and using it to shape our future work

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 have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experiences of using services. During 2022/23, we have been available by phone, email, social media and also via a webform on our website. We also attend 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, promote it via our social media channels and community newsletters. We will also have hard copies available on request.

Responses to recommendations

We did not have any providers 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 make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area, we take information to Barnsley Place Partnership meetings, Barnsley Involvement and Equality Group, Oral Hygiene Improvement Group, Mental Health Accountability Meetings and VCSE Strategy Group.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in NHS South Yorkshire. In collaboration with other Healthwatch in South Yorkshire, we are represented at our Integrated Care Board, Integrated Care Partnership and we have regular meetings with Engagement Leads. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.



healthwatch Barnsley

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