

Together

**we're making health
and social care better**

Annual Report 2022–23



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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

2022/3 was a challenging year for some local residents. Healthwatch Oldham received feedback expressing concerns about the effects of the rising cost of living on health and also regarding difficulties with accessing local health and care services as our colleagues work hard to recover from the impact of the pandemic.



Jacquie Wood
Healthwatch Oldham Chair

Against this backdrop, our staff have been working to hear the voices of local people and to represent and act on this feedback.

Our work is important to ensure local people can share information about their health and care experiences and we must make sure this includes people from communities that may not always be heard. So, in 2022/3, we reached out to all Oldham communities via our bi-monthly survey, "The Healthwatch Oldham 100" and through targeted surveys. The information we obtain from these surveys helps to identify key themes on a range of subjects that matter to you and that we can further explore. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond and share your views. Next year we will build upon this work and seek to improve our engagement with people with disabilities, asylum seekers, the LGBTQ+ community, and young people.

In 2022/23 we used your feedback to further explore the experiences of people living with dementia and to publish our findings. We were also involved in projects with Healthwatch Rochdale to review the experiences of partners and family members in local maternity services and with the former Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group to help evaluate how Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) in GP practices were working. We will ensure feedback is shared with service providers and track how it is used to develop services and address your ideas and concerns. We could also take forward your views on remote appointments with the Northern Care Alliance and work with them and others to develop guidance for future use.

Lifting of Covid 19 restrictions also meant that we were able to resume our work in hosting events with different community groups to help access health services and promote healthy living. A forum for women's health and cancer screening within the British Pakistani community was very well attended and received excellent feedback. Please look out for future events in the coming year.

Last year saw changes to the NHS infrastructure and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) were created to plan and deliver joined-up health and care services. Oldham is part of the Greater Manchester ICP and works with the other nine Greater Manchester (GM) boroughs to improve the health and wellbeing of GM people. Healthwatch Oldham plays an active part in these new arrangements at both a local level and as part of the new Healthwatch in Greater Manchester Network. Being part of this network means we can participate in joint projects and share intelligence.

In 2022/3 we used the feedback you provided on access to dental services in Oldham to contribute to a GM report that outlined key issues and how recommendations made by Healthwatch England for future NHS dental care may be taken forward. We look forward to working with our GM colleagues in the coming year to represent local views, particularly about Mental Health and the care of Children and Young People.

Last year also saw changes to the Board of Healthwatch Oldham. Our former Chair, John Starkey, moved to pastures new as did several long-standing Board members. All our Board members are volunteers who provide their expertise, time, commitment and energy to help us oversee the work of Healthwatch Oldham and I would like to thank them for their years of service. After a successful campaign, we have recruited new Board members to help us take forward our work. We want our Board to be truly representative of local communities and so we are still open to expressions of interest from people interested in this work (please see our website for further details).

Our work would not be possible without the continued hard work of our staff and volunteers. I am proud to work with them and thank them all for their ongoing dedication. I would also like to thank Action Together, which hosts Healthwatch Oldham, and all our funders and partner organisations for your continued support. I very much look forward to continuing to work with you all over the next year.



Jacquie Wood
Healthwatch Oldham Chair

About us

Healthwatch Oldham 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 mission

To champion the voices of and work together with local people to influence positive change and to ensure their health and care experience is the best that it can be.

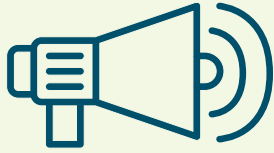


Our values are:

- **Work as a team**
We will work effectively together and support each other to work flexibly as a team in a compassionate and empathic way.
- **Listening and Including**
We are here for everyone. We will listen to, engage with and include local people to hear everyone's voice regarding their ideas for change in health and social care.
- **Strengthen Others**
We want local people to have the confidence and information to access the care they need. We will act upon the information, feedback and ideas shared with us to enable this to happen.
- **Be True**
We will analyse and report upon the experiences and feedback we receive from local people and services to honestly represent their views and to independently make recommendations for change.

Year in review

Reaching out



611 people

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

1,388 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

5 reports

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

Our most popular report was

Living with Dementia Infographic

which highlighted the struggles people face with dementia.



Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

8 Volunteers

outstanding volunteers who gave up over 2 days to make care better for our community.

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

£143,088









which is the same as the previous year.

We currently employ

5 staff

who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year

Spring	 <p>Announced our People's Choice Award winners and created a video where we presented the main award on a local health walk.</p>	 <p>We completed 4 interviews and hosted a focus group as part of a project looking into people's experience of domestic abuse</p>
Summer	 <p>We hosted a Women's Health Event looking into cancer screening.</p>	 <p>We continued our support of local health walks within the Oldham Borough.</p>
Autumn	 <p>We worked with colleagues at the asylum seeker and refugee network to run a series of targeted engagement sessions to better understand the health and social care issues for people seeking asylum or who have refugee status.</p>	 <p>We continued our support of the Rochdale and Oldham Maternity Services Partnership.</p>
Winter	 <p>We carried out a specific project looking into maternity services from the point of view of partners.</p>	 <p>We held our Health and Wellbeing Event at the European Islamic Centre which had 193 people in attendance.</p>

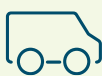
10 years of improving care

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 all our Healthwatch Heroes that have stepped up and inspired change. Here are a few of our highlights:

How have we made care better, together?

Patient Transport

In 2014, we worked alongside our colleagues across the Greater Manchester Network to help raise concerns about Patient Transport services and this helped in setting recommendations that NWS followed up on to ensure patients didn't experience the same issues.



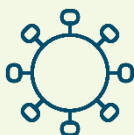
Active Health Outdoors Forum

In 2019, we held a public forum where over 1,000 people attended to find out more about how to stay active outdoors and learn more about services available within the area.



COVID-19

We completed a large project looking into people's experiences throughout the different stages of the COVID-19 pandemic which provided knowledge and information to the Oldham Care Organisation.



Remote Appointments Report

Following on from a successful project we did on looking at Digital health, we worked with Northern Care Alliance on the challenges faced with remote appointments after the COVID-19 pandemic. This helped to produce a user guide for people to attend remote appointments.



CQC Maternity Project

In 2023, we completed a project with the Care Quality Commission, looking into the experiences of maternity services from the point of view of a partner. This has helped services to understand their views and thoughts and is being fed into a larger piece of work carried out by the CQC.





Healthwatch Hero



Celebrating Jo Taylor – a hero in our local community

Jo is our Healthwatch Hero. Jo is living with secondary breast cancer and tirelessly works to raise awareness of the condition and its symptoms along with the promotion of improvements that need to be made to support those living with cancer.

She shared her story with us in our COVID-19 report, supported us with the remote appointments work and hosted a focus group, delivered a presentation at our 2017 Living Well with Cancer Forum, helped us with our questions about the living with cancer survey and she is now helping us to understand and gain insight around Secondary Cancer pathway.

Jo runs retreats for people with Breast Cancer Diagnosis, runs MEUPUK, advocates for primary and secondary breast cancer patients, campaigns tirelessly for better health care and raises the importance of access to treatments and drugs and profiling of secondary breast cancer patients.

Without Jo, Oldham residents and people all over the world would be far less informed about cancer pathways and we would like to thank her for all her hard work.



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.

Advocating for fairer NHS dentistry

NHS dentistry is in desperate need of reform. Through the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network, we are championing key reforms that Healthwatch England has set are much needed.

With living costs on the rise, findings suggest widening health inequalities as people in every part of the country struggle to access and pay for dental care. We continue to see a shortage of NHS appointments, which had a detrimental effect on people with the lowest incomes the most, meaning they were less likely to be able to receive dental treatment than those on higher incomes.

Changes to NHS dental contracts

We supported Healthwatch England on renewed calls to NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care to put a reformed dental contract in place.



- Increasing the payments for dentists when treating patients with complex needs, for example, people needing work done on three or more teeth.
- Requiring dental practices to regularly update the national directory as to whether they are taking new NHS patients.
- Moving resources from dental practices that are underperforming.

What difference will this make for Oldham residents?

We have worked as part of the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network to push the collective case on dentistry experiences locally. This includes:



- A more rapid and radical reform of the way dentistry is commissioned and provided.
- Using the reform of commissioning to tackle the twin crises of access and affordability.
- Greater clarity in the information about NHS dentistry.
- Look at using dental practices to support people's general health.

As well as working with system partners and communicating updates to local people directly, we will be meeting with local MPs for Oldham who want to understand the local pressures to include in parliamentary discussions/ action.

Health and Wellbeing Event February 2023

On 28 February, we, alongside colleagues from BAME Connect held a Health and Wellbeing Event at the European Islamic Centre.

The event had a range of stalls and interactive sessions reflecting the health, care and support services available to Oldham residents. The event had a range of stalls and interactive sessions reflecting Oldham health, care and support services that residents can access. There was also a range of taster sessions which included Nordic Walking, health checks, static kayaking and funky fitness dancing.

Summary of the day:

1. 193 people attended the event from all regions of Oldham and surrounding areas.
2. Over 30 service providers were in attendance on the day to provide information on their support offer for residents.
3. There was a wide range of people representing different ethnic backgrounds in attendance including; Pakistani/British Pakistani, White British, Bengali/British Bengali, Iranian and Afghani.

What difference will this make?

It was great to see people taking the time to go around the stalls and take part in all the interactive sessions. Services fed back that it was also an excellent way to connect with other Oldham providers to find out what they do, how people can access them, where they are based and whom they are for.

Due to the event falling on a day of local school strikes, we encouraged people to bring their children to reduce barriers to attendance. There were around 20 young people under the age of 18 in attendance throughout the day.



“I thought the event was a great illustration of the amazing number of local organisations in Oldham that support our residents and communities to improve their wellbeing.

It was fantastic to see the energy in the room and also the number of organisations that were looking to support our communities to move more so that our residents could benefit from being active. I look forward to seeing more in the future.”

Pritesh Patel

Sport Leisure & Wellbeing Service Manager at Oldham Council

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.

Maternity Services Project



A project delivered in partnership with the Care Quality Commission has provided a unique view of maternity services.

This project was designed to allow us to obtain the views of maternity services from a partner's point of view. Knowing that this is an area where feedback is lacking, we completed an online survey and online focus groups with partners so that they could explain what went well and what needs to be improved moving forward.

The work completed is now being included in a larger project looking at maternity services and ways to improve the patient experience.

Health Forums



Forums to engage with people about their experiences.

Our forums are targeted to capture experiences and share information with people we hear from less through other surveys, e.g. the Pakistani population through the forum held with BAME Connect and hosted by the European Islamic Centre. The impact here has been people from marginalised communities, have been able to speak with a range of services and gather information and support around several health-related areas.

Remote Appointments- Northern Care Alliance

Understanding the experiences of remote appointments



Following a period of engagement, we sent recommendations to the NCA. A task and finish group was set up by the NCA to consider the report and its recommendations. The Healthwatch Oldham report was shared as part of the patient experience update within the NCA, and this has now been the foundation for the best practice guide to support patients with remote appointments.



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 that we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voices are heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Hosting a women's health event aimed at South Asian Bengali/British Bengali people and providing cancer screening information.
- Hosting our health and wellbeing event at the European Islamic Centre in partnership with BAME Connect gave us a chance to explain service provision where the majority of the audience is from Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage.
- Working with BAME Connect to work with their members and focus on their wellbeing including social isolation.
- Working with the Care Quality Commission, we were able to obtain the views of partners and family members of new mothers regarding their experiences of maternity services.
- We published a survey targeting the LGBTQ+ community around cancer screening as a person who identifies as transgender or non-binary person.

Lymphoedema Support Service

A lady contacted us about a misdiagnosis that meant she had to attend urgent care and that her Lymphoedema condition had worsened. She had unsuccessful conversations with the practice manager as they didn't have anyone specialising in this field.

We said we would check with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) if they knew of anyone who had a specialism in this field. The ICB replied and wasn't aware of any GPs with a specialism in Lymphoedema, however, suggested the Tissue Viability Service. Lady was delighted with access to this service.



“Many thanks for all the advice you, and members of your team, have given me over the past few weeks.

Lymphoedema in my area is managed by the Tissue Viability Service and I have had excellent care from this service, and now if I have any problems, I contact them directly which is wonderful.”



Domestic abuse project helps participants recognise issues and access support

Healthwatch Oldham ran focus groups as part of a domestic abuse (in older adults) project. Domestic abuse might not usually be an area Healthwatch would specifically focus on, however we decided to work in this area as part of a partnership with Oldham Adults Safeguarding Board in order to deliver on our safeguarding priorities and the key link that domestic abuse has as a social determinant of health. The focus groups form part of a Domestic Abuse Partnership Project coordinated by Oldham Adult Safeguarding Board which was funded by the Ministry of Justice.

This also includes one-to-one interviews and surveys, which are designed to raise awareness of domestic abuse and gain further insight into the issue.

The focus groups are designed to give participants the chance to share their lived experience and learn about support services available and include representatives of women from South Asian communities, who are able to share the lived experiences through both personal and professional connections.

Continued on the next page...

Domestic abuse project helps participants recognise issues and access support continued...

Recently, one woman of South Asian heritage was prompted to reflect on her own relationship after attending one of the sessions and came to the realisation that she was in a coercive and controlling situation. She explained that she thinks this is sometimes more difficult for South Asian women to recognise such situations due to cultural barriers, self-conditioning and some women accepting such behaviours as normal.

However, we helped her find appropriate local domestic abuse support services and as a result, she is now working towards making changes to improve her situation and seeking a solution. The individual concerned thanked Healthwatch Oldham and the Domestic Abuse Partnership Project coordinated by adult safeguarding for putting on the focus groups and helping her access the relevant support.

Her participation in the groups helped her to understand what domestic abuse is, the signs of domestic abuse and what support was available to everyone in Oldham and how to access this. This was a powerful outcome and shows how a combination of different engagement methods are sometimes needed to help people understand and access the support they need.





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, how to make 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, especially through our health forums. We linked people with services so they can provide up-to-date information about their offer and how people can access it
- 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 Oldham

Throughout the year, Healthwatch Oldham has continued to receive information requests from people trying to obtain an NHS Dentist.

There are still very limited NHS dental options available within the Oldham Borough. However, we have been able to keep people informed of when practices are able to take on new NHS patients.

We have been keeping people up to date when we find out which practices are taking on NHS patients and we have been able to refer people to the Emergency dental service and share information from the GM Dental team on updates via our newsletter and social media pages.



“Thank you for your prompt response regarding my dental query I have been able to find an appointment.”

Stephen, Oldham resident

Healthwatch Oldham continues to raise these concerns about the lack of NHS dental provision and shares any communications from service providers to the local population.

Supporting people to look after their health during the cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis has impacted everyone and so we have run two events in partnership with BAME Connect this year which have focused on Health and wellbeing including physical, mental, nutritional, and financial health for all.

By holding these events we are connecting Oldham residents to local services that offer free health and wellbeing services. This helps people make informed choices about improving their or supports them to access help for themselves or a family member. As the events are held in community venues, they are easy to access and make people feel safe.

The events support people to sit down and talk to a person from the health/care service informally, find out more about them and self-refer to the service.

We also have some activities at the events so people are able to take part in these too.



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:

- Hosted information stalls to promote Healthwatch Oldham and what we have to offer
- Continued to guide the work of Healthwatch Oldham by offering their views and support as part of the Governance Board
- Reviewed GP and dentist websites to review accessibility
- Collected the most up-to-date information on changes to services, such as whether NHS dental appointments were available at a practice

Kath

"I have been a volunteer with Healthwatch Oldham since 2016. I got involved because the work is aimed at improving services for the people of Oldham and it gave me the opportunity to meet lots of interesting people from a wide range of backgrounds. Before volunteering for Healthwatch, I had no idea of the many support groups and services that are available in the area. Being able to participate in a service which signposts people to access the help they need is very rewarding. The team have always made me feel very welcome and I like the way I can fit my voluntary work around other commitments."



Issie

Issie has recently joined our Healthwatch Oldham Governance Board and is a committed housing professional, having worked in the social housing sector for the last 16 years, and volunteered as a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing Northwest regional group since 2015.




Issie is interested in the link between health, housing and social care, and is passionate about these three areas not working in silos, but in harmony together. She has worked in Oldham for the last seven years and is very well connected to a network of different organisations, community groups and people. She believes having local insight is one of her strengths as a Healthwatch Oldham board member.

She holds an undergraduate degree from The University of Manchester and a master's degree in Housing Practice from the University of Salford.



Do you feel inspired?

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

 www.healthwatcholdham.co.uk
 **0161 622 5700**
 info@healthwatcholdham.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	
Contracted sum from Oldham Council	£143,088	Salary Cost	£122,814
Additional Project income	£15,566	Non-salary Cost	£6,851
		Management and Overhead recovery	£32,000
Total income	£158,654	Total expenditure	£161,665

Next steps

This year marked the 10th anniversary since Healthwatch was established, and at Healthwatch Oldham we are proud to have played our part in listening to local people and amplifying the patient voice with the Oldham Health and Care System.

Whilst recognising the huge challenges faced by the system have been exacerbated since the Covid-19 pandemic, we are more determined than ever, to ensure we work with local providers and commissioners for there to remain a strong focus on tackling health inequalities. In doing so we will always endeavour to ensure those who identify as being 'seldom heard' are championed in all possible ways by Healthwatch Oldham.

We are really pleased to report that the Oldham Primary Care Commissioning Committee has agreed to work with us, to better understand the experience of Asylum Seekers and Refugees accessing Primary Care in Oldham, we hope to carry out the engagement work and report back our findings over the coming year.

We will also be working with the Primary Care Commissioning Committee to support a review of the current PPG (Patient Participation Groups) across Oldham, and where appropriate work with GP Practices to help take their work PPG work forward and reach communities that are more reflective of our local demographic's.

Over the coming year, we are looking forward to launching our HWO Youthwatch, which will endeavour to champion the voices of our young people across the health and social care system.

In line with this, we will launch a young people's mental health survey, which will allow the system to understand in greater depth the experiences and challenges faced by local young people when trying to access mental health services.

In addition to this over the next year, our work will include building on the positive work around the Oldham and Rochdale Maternity Voices Partnership and strengthening our engagement with the LGBTQ+ community through widening responses to our ongoing Cancer Screening survey.

Our work plan also includes objectives around facilitating a project to improve understanding of the experiences of Hospital Discharge and to understand the gaps in service provision for secondary care cancer patients.

During this next year, we would like to build on our recent successes with key external projects, with some a commitment to generate income to further develop our work and reach across Oldham.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

1. Improving Primary Care access for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, by collating their views about their current challenges.
2. Establish an Oldham Youth Healthwatch and develop a specific platform for young people to voice their views on the local health and social care system.
3. Tackling health inequalities- Continue to use experiences and data to identify gaps and issues on access, produce reports and work with ICP/ICS and PCNs. We will help reach key demographics such as communities facing racial injustice and the LGBT community whose views are under-represented and ensure services are appropriate for them.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Oldham, Action Together C/O, Medtia Place, 80 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DJ.

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

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Board consists of six members (we are continuing to recruit to our board) who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities.

Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Throughout 2022/23 the Board met four times and made decisions on matters such as our visions and values and our Enter and View Policy.

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 2022/23 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 across all our social media platforms including Twitter and Facebook. We have also committed to creating a video summary of our annual report, which is being actioned with our Communications team following the submission of this report. We will be asking our host organization, (Action Together) to share this with their members across the Oldham locality. We will also share this with members of the Oldham ICP, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Health Scrutiny and key stakeholders including all providers and commissioners.

Responses to recommendations

All providers have responded to requests for information and have accepted recommendations in our reports. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations have taken place.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us. In our local authority area for example we take information to Health Scrutiny Committee, Oldham ICP Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

We also give insight and experiences to decision-makers in the Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. For example, we also share information and provide challenges at GM ICP at the ICS level and explain where this is in collaboration with the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network covering the ICS footprint. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Oldham is represented on the Oldham Health and Wellbeing Board by our Manager. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by ensuring patient voice and patient experience are at the heart of all debates, and decisions.

In particular, the Manager through his input at the Health and Well Being Board has provided contribution to the development of the Oldham Health Inequalities Plan. Healthwatch Oldham is represented on the Oldham Integrated Care Partnerships and Oldham Integrated Care Boards. The Healthwatch Oldham Manager also represents us on the Oldham Mental Health Locality Board, the Northern Care Alliance Partnership Board, and on the Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board. Our Chair represents Healthwatch Oldham at the GM Healthwatch Network meetings.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
Asylum Seeker and Refugees engagement around Primary Care access via the British Red Cross.	Following challenges that have been shared with us by refugees and asylum seekers in relation to accessibility of primary care, we have encouraged Oldham ICP to link with Doctors of the World's Safe surgeries initiative. This initiative aims to improve access to primary care for people in vulnerable situations, including people who are homeless, asylum seekers and refugees. We are pleased to report initial steps have been taken to engage with this initiative, and over the next year we will work to show there are strong tangible outcomes as a result from this.
Oldham and Rochdale Maternity Voices Partnership.	Following feedback and service users feedback the MVP raised concerns that 6 week checks post-natal checks were not happening. This feedback was reported to primary care teams and the checks have now been re-introduced and are also included now as part of the safeguarding process.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
GP Out-of-Hours Support.	<p>Following qualitative evidence received by Healthwatch Oldham in October last year, we discovered that as of 1st of October 2022, the 7-day Access service had ceased and been replaced by a 6-day out-of-hours service, now operated by the individual PCN's. The patient experiences reported when people phoned the 7- day access number they were told to contact their GP. This caused confusion, especially in the evenings or at weekends when patients knew the GP Practices wouldn't be able to respond. We contacted Oldham ICP, who apologised for the lack of communication with Oldham patients. We made enquiries and checked GP websites. We found that many had not been updated with the contact numbers and new details of the service and that some practice staff were not aware of this either. This led to feedback across Primary Care and action was taken to ensure all information and details were up to date.</p>

Message from our Manager

I would like to begin by paying tribute and giving special thanks to our hardworking Healthwatch Oldham team who work so hard to ensure we continue to champion the patient voice of the local community in Oldham.



Tamoor Tariq
Healthwatch Oldham Manager

Our amazing team works so hard to ensure Healthwatch Oldham is at the heart of change and influence but none of our work would be possible without colleagues in Action Together, our Healthwatch Oldham Board, the residents of Oldham who participate in our surveys or the many partners and stakeholders across Oldham who work with us to deliver on the needs for the good people of Oldham.

This year we sadly said goodbye to several board members, who have served us diligently for many years, I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all. I am delighted to report our former Vice Chair, Jacquie Wood has become our new Interim Chair, with her background in nursing and organisational development she will help Healthwatch Oldham go from strength to strength.

We will continue to respond to the challenges that have been presented by the COVID-19 recovery, having regular input into the Health Inequalities agenda in Oldham.

Through our work and engagement, we have endeavoured to ensure that Healthwatch Oldham is a key strategic partner as the Oldham system has developed its role and position within the Greater Manchester ICS system and amongst the national changes more broadly. In the coming year, we will continue to ensure we are at the heart of championing patient voice, and patient experience. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has worked with us and helped us deliver on our work plan over the past year.

It has been another busy year for us. Earlier in the year we launched our Healthwatch 100 'Living with Dementia, understanding 'your experiences of dementia as a patient or as a carer.' Following this, we wanted to progress our work around engagement with seldom-heard communities, through understanding people's experiences of cancer screening with the LGBTQ+ community. We launched the survey last year, and this remains open as we are hoping to reach more people in the coming months.

I am pleased to report that our work and engagement with our Maternity Services has gone from strength to strength. We continue to be part of the Rochdale and Oldham Maternity Voice Partnership and attend their meetings regularly as well as cascading important across Oldham on behalf of the MVP. During the last year, I am delighted to report both Healthwatch Oldham and Healthwatch Rochdale were commissioned by the CQC to carry out engagement work to understand the experiences of partners and family members who have supported their loved ones through the maternity journey. We did this through a survey, and facilitated focus groups, to encourage discussion and engagement around this important area. This will feed into a national piece of work by the CQC and is one of four strands they are looking into.

From a sub-regional point of view, we have been active across the Greater Manchester areas of work.

We are an active member of the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network, we have been part of several key highlights for the network, including, contributing to an all-age strategy, formalising a 3-year partnership agreement with Greater Manchester ICS, contributing to the development of the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Quality Strategy and delivered on our commitment to continuing, to raise concerns regarding access to NHS dentistry. We have also facilitated local survey responses to influence the GMICS strategy and the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership Strategy.

We are pleased to report and successful partnership with Lees Brook GP Surgery. Leesbrook Surgery reached out to Healthwatch Oldham; asking us to carry out engagement with their patients to understand patients' views about their matron service. Over the last few years, the practice made staffing changes to the Matron Service, and from having a part-time matron service offer this changed to full-time. Therefore, our engagement focused on finding out what the patient's experiences were of the service on the ground given the changes and ascertaining for the surgery if the service was impactful, as well as looking for any obvious areas for improvement. Our report found the staff structure/ change had been an overwhelming success.

Healthwatch Oldham is determined that we continue to make a difference in how health and social care is designed and delivered in Oldham and that patients, service users and their families are at the heart of this. Now more than ever we must rebuild and renew parts of our NHS systems and structures.

We hope next year to report on the work of the proposed Patient Participation Group Oldham-wide audit, which hopes to work with the local Primary Care Team given some GP Practices hasn't been able to reignite these important forums, for patient voice. During the next year, we will also report on the launch of our Healthwatch Oldham Youth-watch as well as other key areas in our work plan.

If you would like to know more about what we do, or about our work that is planned for the year ahead, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to the local Oldham community for continuing to work with us, and our partners and stakeholders for giving us the space and ability to play a key role in the local system. None of this would be possible without the support of our Board, and our host organisation Action Together, this important setup for our Healthwatch enables us to try our best and helps us to take our work from strength to strength.



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