

Our Year

Annual Report 2022/23

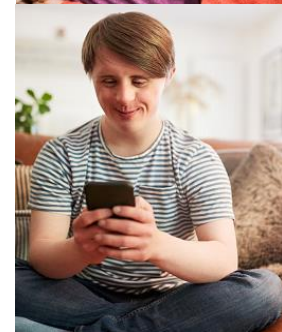
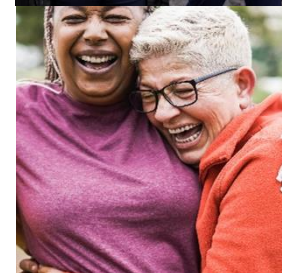
Read about our work during the past year to ensure the patient voice is heard as we continue to have a direct impact on the transformation and delivery of health and care services across Hertfordshire.

This is a short summary – you can find the full report on our website [here](#).

In 2022/23 more than 9,000 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve and develop health and social care services across the County.

Reflecting on the year, our role to evidence patient experience and represent the patient voice in Hertfordshire has been even more crucial and in demand.

We have made care fairer, tackled the big issues facing local patients and involved communities in our work to ensure the best outcomes for everyone.



Making Care Fairer

Tackling Ethnic Health Inequalities in our NHS

Our in-depth engagement with Black and Asian people across Hertfordshire, testing whether or not they are treated fairly in healthcare settings is leading to system wide improvements to service delivery and cultural competency within the NHS locally.

Our work focused on healthcare services in Hertfordshire and the lack of trust felt, and discrimination experienced by these communities.

Six months on, NHS services are responding to our findings with projects targeted at Black and Asian communities to provide fair and equal treatment for all patients. These include Diabetes testing, detection of Atrial Fibrillation and understanding of diverse communities with end of life care.

The Cost of Living Crisis

In partnership with Herts County Council we heard from more than 7,000 Hertfordshire residents who shared how the Cost of Living Crisis has affected their finances, lifestyle, physical and mental health and their access to healthcare.

Specific groups have been disproportionately affected by rising costs, including single parents, families, people with a long-term condition and/or disability, carers and people from a Black or Asian background. In response the Hertfordshire Cost of Living Response Group is using the data to target, inform and develop its services. The full report will be published on our website in July.

44,676 people came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the Cost of Living crisis.

Tackling the big issues

We know that big issues have emerged in terms of primary care services including GP access, community pharmacies and support for carers. As a result our research and engagement expertise was commissioned to support the **ICB's Primary Care Transformation Programme**.

Actions related to our findings include:

- 96 GP practices have upgraded their telephone systems to date
- using new online video consultation tools for GP appointments

With the following in the pipeline:

- better carer identification
- improving access, registration and support for carers
- improving awareness and accessibility of local pharmacies

In the year ahead we will be focusing on topics including cardiovascular health awareness and support, experiences of people with learning disabilities accessing GP services, and substance use.

Involving communities to improve services

Our role to represent the patient voice is at the heart of what we do and is built into all of our activities. Local NHS leaders and health and care organisations have praised and value our commitment and determination to ensure the patient voice is heard.

By championing equity, diversity and inclusion we aim to help services reach all parts of the community and take steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard.

Working in the new Integrated Care System has created more opportunities to ensure that people's views impact on the planning and delivery of services. We are shaping three projects to ensure patient involvement and co-production models exist and are making a difference in all areas across the County.

Helping you find the answers

By providing a much needed, free and confidential advice and information service online and over the phone we help people navigate and access the health and social care services they need.

In 2022/23 our team spent over 300 hours signposting over 300 enquiries.

Holding to account from a patient perspective

Using evidence about health and care services from our research, engagement and signposting activities, we regularly met with health and care leaders to highlight issues raised by patients, hold to account and scrutinise services. Major themes for the year included **GPs, dentistry, waiting lists at hospitals and mental health**. In all cases our feedback was taken on board and plans put in place for improvements.

Take five minutes to share your experiences of health and social care

 Use this [link](#) to give feedback both good and bad. It can help improve services.

 Call us on: 01707 275978



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