

Update: Healthwatch Hertfordshire's involvement in Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board's Primary Care Board

FOR INFORMATION

At the August 2022 meeting I reported that we would be involved in this sub-committee of the Integrated Care Board (ICB), where I would represent Healthwatch Hertfordshire as an attendee rather than a voting member of the committee, alongside a Healthwatch Essex representative. This committee does not make commissioning decisions but sets the strategic framework in which those decisions are taken elsewhere.

We predicted that this committee would provide significant opportunities for our insight to shape major transformation programmes and so far this is proving to be the case. There is a standing agenda item for Healthwatch insight and so far there have been excellent discussions on the findings from our work on primary care access for parents, carers, children and young people; primary care access in Broxbourne; carers' experiences of GP practices; and public perceptions of community pharmacy.

The January meeting also discussed the work that Alan Bellinger has led on the development of Patient Participation Groups.

Committee members have commented favourably on the quality of our team's work and identified a number of ways in which our insight needs to inform current transformation projects alongside longer-term strategy. There is also a welcome commitment on the part of the committee and the relevant ICB directorate to publishing the work we and Healthwatch Essex undertake to inform these discussions, and to reporting back to communities on the action taken as a result of sharing their views and experiences with us.

The committee shares the unease felt in ICBs across the country as they prepare to take on responsibility for commissioning dental and ophthalmic services and we will need to watch these transitions carefully.

Papers from the meetings in public so far are available here and include updates on a number of relevant strategies in development:

<https://hertsandwestessex.icb.nhs.uk/downloads/download/23/primary-care-board-meetings-in-public>