

## Research and Engagement Activity (April – June 2025)

### Background

The Research and Engagement Programme aligns with the strategic direction of the organisation and has been approved by the Board. The Programme has the following aims:

- To gather public views, particularly ensuring that we are hearing from underserved groups
- To understand and address health inequalities
- To ensure our research and engagement activity has influence, impact and positive outcomes
- To support with the financial sustainability of the organisation
- To build and sustain our reputation for high quality applied research

This paper provides an overview of the Research and Engagement activity undertaken, projects that are currently underway, and upcoming projects.

Projects completed in the last 6 months			
Project name	Aims and objectives	Target population	Activity and progress
Drugs and alcohol workstream	<p>Supporting Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council to implement improvements in drug and alcohol services by undertaking a series of projects to engage with affected communities.</p> <p><b>Children and young people:</b> Engaging with children and young people about their experiences of using drug and alcohol services.</p>	Children and young people aged 14-25	Children and young people report is available on our <a href="#">website</a> .

	<p><b>Stigma campaign:</b> Using insights from local residents to inform a new campaign to challenge stigma around drugs and alcohol.</p> <p><b>Prison leavers:</b> Engaging with prison leavers about their experiences of receiving support from drug and alcohol services.</p>	<p>People with lived experience, carers and local residents.</p> <p>Prison leavers accessing drug and alcohol services.</p>	<p>Stigma campaign report is available on our <a href="#">website</a>. A summary of our findings were also shared on Heart Radio Breakfast East. The new stigma website is now <a href="#">live</a>.</p> <p>Prison leavers report is available on our <a href="#">website</a>.</p>
Primary care workstream (2024 – 2025)	<p>Supporting Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) to engage with Hertfordshire residents about key issues within primary care.</p> <p><b>NHS orthodontic care:</b> Engaging with parents, children and young people about their experiences of using NHS orthodontic care.</p> <p><b>Online GP services:</b> Engaging with residents about their experiences of using online GP services and how they could be improved.</p> <p><b>Armed forces community:</b> Engaging with the armed forces community about their experiences of accessing NHS services.</p>	<p>Parents, carers and children and young people aged under 18.</p> <p>All Hertfordshire residents.</p> <p>Armed forces community.</p>	<p>NHS orthodontic care report is available on our <a href="#">website</a>.</p> <p>Online GP services report is available on our <a href="#">website</a>. A summary of our findings were also shared on Heart Radio.</p> <p>Armed forces community report will be published in Summer 2025.</p>

	<b>Children and young people's oral health:</b> Engaging with parents and carers about their experiences of accessing NHS dentistry and what information and support may help them.	Parents and carers with children under the age of 18.	Children and young people's oral health report will be published in Summer 2025.
Blood pressure checks in dental practices and opticians	Engaging residents about their views of measuring blood pressure within dental practices and opticians, to support the ICB with their pilot.	Hertfordshire residents without a diagnosis of cardiovascular disease.	A news article about our involvement and the impact this work has had has been published on our <a href="#">website</a> .
Engagement with adults with learning disabilities about the use of their health data	Supporting Health Innovation East with the introduction of the Secure Data Environment (SDE) by engaging with adults with learning disabilities to capture their views on the use of their health data.	Adults with learning disabilities.	A news article about our involvement and the impact this work has had has been published on our <a href="#">website</a> .
Refugees and asylum seekers	Engaging with refugees and asylum seekers about their experiences of accessing healthcare and how this could be improved.	Refugees and asylum seekers.	The final report has been completed and key findings were shared at the Hertfordshire County Council Refugees and Asylum Seeker Conference.  The report will be published in July 2025.
<b>Live projects</b>			
Drugs and alcohol workstream	Supporting Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council to implement improvements in drug and alcohol services by undertaking a series of projects to engage with affected communities.	Carers and people with a lived experience of co-occurring mental health and substance use.	

	Our remaining project is exploring <b>co-occurring mental health and substance use</b> by engaging with people with a lived experience, as well as carers.		<p>The final report has been completed and the key findings will be presented at the Co-Occurring Mental Health and Substance Use event in July.</p> <p>The report will be published in Summer 2025.</p>
Research & engagement network programme	<p>Supporting the ICB to ensure research participation is more accessible, diverse and inclusive.</p> <p>This will include a dedicated project working with the ICB and Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service (HHAS) to engage with the d/Deaf community about their experiences of accessing primary care.</p>	Underserved communities in Hertfordshire	<p>Our Senior Research Manager is continuing to support with the project management of this programme.</p> <p>Scoping for the project focusing on the experiences of the d/Deaf community is underway. If you are interested in finding out more or sharing your views please contact: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a></p>
Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) monitoring framework	Engaging with Hertfordshire residents to assess progress in delivering the priorities of the integrated care strategy and to inform further development or improvement.	Hertfordshire residents	<p>Initial findings have been shared with the Senior Officers Advisory Group. The full report is underway and due to be shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board in July.</p> <p>The report will be published in Summer 2025.</p>
Smoking cessation services	Hearing from smokers, ex-smokers and friends and family to improve smoking cessation programmes.	Smokers, ex-smokers and friends and family	We are in the process of data analysis and report writing. The report will be published by Autumn 2025.
Support for autistic adults	Engaging with autistic adults about their experiences of post-diagnostic support and the care they would like to receive.	Carers and adults who received an autism diagnosis in adulthood	Our engagement is now live which includes the launch of an online survey and one-to-one interviews.

			<p>If you were diagnosed with autism in adulthood, we'd love to hear from you. You can complete our survey <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>You can also share your story by contacting: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a></p>
Primary care workstream (2025-2026)	<p>Undertaking two in-depth projects exploring key issues within primary care.</p> <p>Our first topic will be exploring <b>frailty</b>, scoping of which is currently underway.</p>	Hertfordshire residents aged over 65	<p>Our engagement is now live which includes holding one-to-one interviews and focus groups.</p> <p>If you are aged 65+ we'd love to hear your views.</p> <p>If you'd like to share your story in more detail or take part in a video, please contact: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a></p>
South and West Hertfordshire Health and Care Partnership Coproduction Board	Supporting with the management, chairing and delivery of the Coproduction Board, the role of which is to advise the leadership in the partnership on how best to embed quality coproduction and engagement with their local communities	Residents in South and West Hertfordshire	Coproduction Board meets on a bi-monthly basis, reporting into the South and West Hertfordshire Health and Care Partnership Board.
East and North Hertfordshire Health and Care Partnership Community Assembly	Supporting with the management, chairing and delivery of the Community Assembly, the role of which is to support the exchange of views, ideas and enable coproduction across local residents and those leading change and transformation programs	Residents in East and North Hertfordshire.	Community Assembly meets on a quarterly basis. If you are interested in attending the Community Assembly, please contact: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a>

Drug and alcohol coproduction	Advising leads in Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council to create a model of coproduction to help ensure professionals, service users, communities, carers and voluntary organisations are involved in the improvements to services.	Hertfordshire residents.	Initial workshop held with providers to start scoping the coproduction model. Activity is underway to start creating the model. If you're interested in finding out more please contact <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a>
<b>Upcoming projects</b>			
Experiences of children, young people and families	Creating case studies through engagement with children, young people and families, exploring a range of key health and social care issues.	Children, young people and families	<p>Scoping is underway and collecting case studies will begin in July 2025.</p> <p>If you have a story relating to any of the following topics, we'd love to hear from you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health</li> <li>• Long-term conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy)</li> <li>• Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</li> <li>• Neurodiversity</li> <li>• Drug use and its effects</li> <li>• Sensory needs (sight and/or hearing)</li> </ul> <p>If you are interested in sharing your story or want to find out more, please contact: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a></p>
Advanced Care Planning	Working with partners across the system to engage with residents about their awareness and experiences of completing advanced care planning, and how they can be better supported to think about their older years.	People aged 65+	Scoping with partners is underway. If you are interested in finding out more or getting involved, please contact: <a href="mailto:research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk">research@healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk</a>