



Looking Ahead

Our Strategy 2020 - 2024



Healthwatch Hertfordshire is the independent, consumer voice for health and social care. Our purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of local people and to provide evidence to help improve services and health and wellbeing across the county

Our Strategy 2020 - 2024

This is the second strategy for Healthwatch Hertfordshire enabling us to look back to our beginnings in 2013 and plan for our future from 2020 onwards.

It's important to reflect on our learning about the last seven years: In many ways Healthwatch Herts has been very successful, we have a strong reputation with those in Health and Care who make key decisions; our research work has produced important insight and changes, our signposting service deals very effectively with complex cases to support patients and enable their voices to be heard. Our governance is very strong and our Board and Team are committed and talented. We have evolved effectively to meet the changing world of health and social care.

But there is a need for change. Our financial model now requires us to generate revenue to supplement the reductions in our commissioned budget; at times our focus could be seen as over-reactive, the organisation is stretched with staff working beyond their hours every week in a way that is not sustainable.

So this strategy is important to help us focus our limited resources on priorities, and also set the direction for change within our approaches

Looking forward we will focus even more on:

- Being more strategic
- Gathering more evidence
- Carrying out more research
- Focussing on outcomes
- Generating more revenue
- Reaching more seldom heard groups

To achieve, this our approaches will focus more on strategically planning our activities and recognising our capacity, the breadth of our agenda and the need to



ensure what we do has impact and holds the system to account. With a scope covering all health and social care, we can't do everything and so we need to have a sharp strategic direction, to inform our activity over the life of the strategy. Similarly our focus on increasing involvement from our diverse and seldom heard communities, will necessitate less attention on untargeted promotional work.

Our approach also needs to acknowledge that change is a feature of the health and social care environment and our ability to be a sustainable and flexible organisation remains critical in that context. To put this in context at the time of our last strategy, STPs, ICSs, ICPs and PCNs¹ were not invented, social prescribing was a local rather than a national initiative, and the commissioner/provider split was very distinct².

However the need for the patient and service user voice to be heard remains as important as ever and we look forward to making a difference to the health and wellbeing of local people.

We see our role as independent 'critical friends', balancing the desire for positive relationships with statutory bodies, and other organisations, challenging on behalf of local people, based on their needs, and experiences. Our credibility and reputation over recent years has grown stronger with partners in the health and social care system and we want this to continue going forward. To uphold our reputation and recognised as a serious, professional organisation we need to be clearly focussed and manage expectations.

To deliver our role, organisational values are very important to us, are therefore part of this strategy, and signal our style of working to implement it.

¹ Sustainability Transformation Partnerships, Integrated Care Systems, Integrated Care partnerships, Primary Care Networks

² Since the Strategy was written Covid-19 has transformed health, social care and our work. We will hold the system to account around tackling Covid-19 and system recovery



Our Vision

‘Healthwatch Hertfordshire: Challenging, Changing and Championing Health & Social care in our community’

To Achieve our Vision we will:

- Engage with communities, families and individuals to gather views, evidence and intelligence
- Be independent, effective and valued ‘critical friends’ with a wide range of organisations working in health and social care and holding the system to account from a patient perspective
- Work with groups, communities, commissioners and providers to help develop solutions to health and care challenges
- Have a well-defined programme of research and engagement, based on evidence and focused on outcomes, with some flexibility to respond quickly and effectively to unplanned challenges that require our attention.



Our strategic objectives form the basis of our work over the life of the strategy, and form the framework of our operational planning.

1. Having strategic influence

We will do this by:

- Effective participation in key health and social care developments in the county
- Maintenance of strong and effective relationships with key strategic players

2. Using evidence to improve outcomes

We will do this by:

- Ensuring a highly qualified and effective research and engagement team
- Maintaining a high quality signposting service
- Providing analysis and reports of key trends from research and engagement
- Working with partners and making recommendations for service improvements and monitoring the implementation of these as appropriate

3. To strengthen the voice of the public

We will do this by:

- Using a wide range of effective ways for the public to engage in providing us with their views and experiences
- Giving voice to seldom heard and disadvantaged people and communities; striving for equality



4. Being a sustainable, high quality service

We will do this by:

- Being agile to reflect the changing environment needs
- Looking at opportunities for revenue generation and adopting business like approaches

Operational Planning

Each year the Board will agree an operational plan that fits within the strategic objectives.

The organisation will use a suite of documents to report on specific activities, aims, setting out outcomes and measures of success. They will also be used to identify responsibilities, indicate key milestones and duration, resources and organisational development needs.

We will use the following values to underpin all that we do and expect all those working for or representing us to demonstrate them.

Compassion and Equality

- We are empathetic to the experience and voice of individuals
- We work in an inclusive way, showing respect for all
- We are part of the community and are committed to the wellbeing of all people in it
- We are approachable, and trusted
- We promote equality & diversity

Influential

- We evidence the lived experience of people within the county to influence, and challenge decision makers
- We offer appropriate recommendations for change in our findings
- We look to have positive working relationships with leaders of health and social care provision

Credible

- We will adopt rigorous standards for activities we undertake
- We have good and transparent governance
- We want the public to be confident about the long term future of Healthwatch Hertfordshire
- We do not promise what we cannot deliver, or promise for others
- We strive to ensure that the views expressed by our representatives are those of Healthwatch Hertfordshire, and not an individual opinion.

Independent

- We are politically and organisationally impartial; challenging those in power locally to design and deliver health and social care services from

- We are pleased to highlight what works well, and confident in reporting identified problems
- We use our independence to enable original approaches to our work

Supportive

- We always work with positive intent
- We promote and practice the idea of ‘critical partnership’ with local bodies, without compromising our role to challenge, or their role as decision makers
- We will challenge each other in a supportive and constructive way
- We share our learning and learn from others
- We take collective responsibility as a ‘Healthwatch Team’ and help each other to be successful

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