

# **Impact Report**

## **2020-21**

**Bringing communities and service providers  
together to shape health and care services**

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# How we have made health and care better by listening to residents, patients, & carers.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have been listening to the experiences of local residents, patients, and carers about their experiences of using and accessing local health and care services.

It is more apparent than ever that the deep-rooted health inequalities that exist in our communities have left many young people, parents,

disabled people, ethnic minority communities, and care home residents more affected than others.

This booklet highlights what people have been telling us, who we've told about it, and what impact it's had so far in working towards shaping a fairer and healthier system.



## Our Values

Co-developed through conversations with our members and local community groups.

**Collaborative:** We work in partnership with local community groups and champions to bring about positive changes in community services, and to increase our reach and influence.

**Inclusive:** We reach out to all parts of our communities to ensure they know about their rights, and so that we reflect their priorities and concerns.

**Influential:** We are independent, open, and honest; using our insight and intelligence to hold decision-makers to account and to improve local services.

**Amplifying:** We actively seek out the experiences of local people and champion their voices, concerns, and ideas in order to shape local decisions and services.

# Our COVID-19 Insights

## How they are influencing change in health and care

### The challenge

Throughout 2020 the NHS were having to make quick decisions about service delivery in response to COVID-19. We wanted to ensure that local residents, patients, and carers' needs were kept at the centre of decisions.

### Our response

After publishing our first survey 'Your Experience Matters' in early Summer 2020, we started to hear about the devastating impact of the COVID-19 virus and how it was affecting different communities.

What we were hearing highlighted serious inequalities that already exist in our communities and has since become the focus of our engagement work.

We went from a reactive response to proactively designing surveys that reflect the challenges facing minority communities.

Published reports on page 24.



“The surgery seems to think that everyone is able to access a computer/ smart phone, which is not the case with the older generation who do not have close family or friends, etc. who could help them.”

Your Experience Matters Survey, RBKC, 2020

# Our Impact

Our initial survey insights led us to carry out more in-depth studies that have strengthened grassroots partnerships. By sharing these insights with local commissioners, councillors, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), and NHS Trusts we have facilitated a deeper understanding of these health inequalities, which has led to minority communities being more central to local discussions.

By getting surveys to people who weren't online, more people were able to share their views and experiences of health and care throughout the pandemic.

# Highlights

- Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) invited us to share our survey findings and recommendations. As a result the needs of parents with children (SEND) were included in the Kensington & Chelsea Community Redesign Engagement.
- 500 people offline were able access our printed surveys and contribute to conversations about health and care.
- Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust asked us to explore how our data and evidence could be included in their work. We are now part of the North West London Anchor Institution and co-chair the co-production work stream.
- Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (CLCCG) asked us to find out what local people thought of the Westminster Borough Recovery Plan. Based on the findings and our recommendations, they produced 'easy read' versions.
- Local decision-makers were provided with timely information to help them identify future needs.
- Freepost postcards were distributed to local GPs and health centres, providing an opportunity for patients to easily share their views.



## Our COVID-19 Information

### A trusted resource during a difficult time for those online and offline

A key part of our role is to help people find the information they need about local health and care services. From accessing mental health support, through to choosing the right care home or self-help group.

#### The challenge

As more services and public engagement events were offered online, we wanted to ensure that those who were offline weren't left feeling excluded or unable to access the help they needed.

#### Our response

During this time we frequently publish local and national information from trusted resources, in different formats and languages, and our goal was to get it to the most vulnerable people in our community. We developed a COVID-19 web page that featured a digital resource pack, including health guidance, finance support, safety advice, and guidance.

Information was often published in real-time and shared on our social media channels and e-bulletins.

At the start of the pandemic our volunteers helped to deliver over 1000 printed copies of our COVID-19 resource pack to residents with limited digital access.



## Our Impact

By routinely creating and sharing local and national content on the COVID-19 pandemic to guide, inform, and educate, we have contributed to the efforts to help reduce COVID-19 transmissions. We have enabled more people to feel safe, access the support they need to undertake essential life tasks in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea .

## Highlights

- 500 residents not using a digital device received printed resource packs straight to their door.
- 528 residents received our resource packs by email.
- 420 residents received our summer e-newsletter.
- Between March 2020 and September 2021, COVID-19 content on our Support Hub was visited **23,434** times.

“ Some people can't access digital information. Services must take care of them too. ”

Church St Library report



## Assessing care during COVID-19

### Continuing to assess the standard of care being received in sheltered housing and care homes

As a local Healthwatch, we have the powers to undertake 'Enter and View' assessments to publicly funded places delivering health and social care.

#### The challenge

As a result of safety restrictions due COVID-19 we were unable to carry assessments in person and needed to find other ways of enabling people to access information and share their views about health and care.

#### Our response

We reached out to **29** Housing Association Managers with a total of **1069** sheltered housing flats to offer their residents printed resource packs and surveys.

“ I helped to deliver printed surveys to local residents, collecting survey forms from the Healthwatch office by Uber and taking them home. Paper is very heavy! I reached out to other volunteers in the network to help deliver the survey by hand.

Together, we delivered over 200 forms! Whilst delivering forms, a number of residents were going into and leaving their homes so I took the opportunity to speak with them our work at Healthwatch.

On the whole people were pleased to have the opportunity to take part.”

Peter Bell  
Healthwatch CWL Volunteer

## Our Impact

By connecting with more Housing Association Managers in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea we have significantly strengthened our relationships and continue to build on this to support local residents. As a result of our findings, we have also set up further studies to hear from residents about their access to dental care and oral hygiene support.



## Highlights

- Individuals were able to comment on the level of care and support they received and were able to use the resource pack to access further support.
- 20 Housing Association Managers responded and shared our surveys with their residents so that we could understand their challenges.
- 78 residents completed our COVID-19 survey, helping us give a voice and the opportunity to influence change to people who may not have been heard in conversations about health and social care.
- 800 resource packs were sent to residents in sheltered housing flats.

## Facilitating local events during COVID-19

## Improving local knowledge about the vaccine

### The challenge

During our engagement work we heard a lot of confusion and concern about COVID-19 vaccinations. We needed to improve people's understanding and confidence, and increase trust.

### Our response

We partnered with the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) to organise and host information sessions that would provide accurate information about COVID-19 vaccination. It also provided an opportunity for patients to direct questions to a panel of health professional and get their concerns addressed.



## Our Impact

Public health bodies gained a clearer picture of people's concerns, especially around why different minority communities were concerned about receiving the vaccine.

By helping to bridge the gap between local people and health bodies we helped to increase protection from the worst outcomes of COVID-19 by improving local knowledge.

## Highlight

Participants reported feeling that they had better knowledge about COVID-19 vaccinations and that they would be able to share this information within their networks and Patient Participation Groups (PPGs).

## Insights for equality

### How we're reducing inequalities in health & care

For insights to be meaningful, they need to represent everyone living in our communities.



As we started to hear about people's struggles during COVID-19, we realised the value of our new engagement model, the **'Small Grants Programme.'** This was an initiative we launched in early 2020.

Our goal was to collaborate with local grassroots groups and listen to people from as many minority communities as possible.

The programme was inspired by a partnership with the BME Health Forum. We saw how keen small community groups were to carry out engagement to represent their communities' views, but they often lacked the money and resources.

### The challenge

Making our engagement and insights representative of the diverse populations living in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea during the pandemic was a challenge, so we decided to tackle it head-on.

From our surveys we knew that certain groups were more adversely affected, such as carers, parents of children with disabilities, young people, and people from minority ethnic groups. From language barriers to issues accessing care offline, we wanted to find new ways to hear about their views and challenges.

### Our response

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, we had already launched the programme and a panel of Local Committee members and Young Healthwatch volunteers identified five organisations to take part in the first year of our programme.

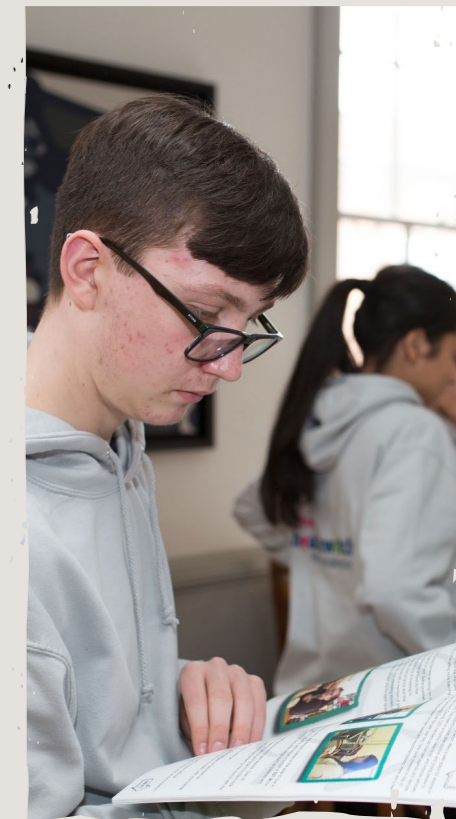
Each organisation was awarded a small amount of money to invest in listening activities and to provide support for their communities of interest.

Together, we co-developed focus groups, interviews, and surveys and people spoke to us about digital exclusion, the

impact on their mental health, COVID-19 stigma, and isolation. They also told us about their worries about accessing food, medicine, and treatment, keeping up with their finances, and following public health advice.

In 2021 we partnered with nine more organisations to hear people with learning disabilities, through to Immigrant women from the Middle East and North East Africa. A list can be seen on page 28.

Findings were shared with Councils' Scrutiny Committees, the Health and Wellbeing Board, councillors, community partners such as Thrive LDN, the London COVID-19 Public Dialogue, and Imperial College Health Partners.





## Our Impact

**More patients, residents, and carers from more minority communities are now being heard as a result of this work and it has carved out a strong direction for our 2022 goals.**

Organisations felt more supported during a difficult time as we collaborated on engagement work. Training for their teams and sharing our advice and knowledge will also enable them to carry out future engagement work and consistently put the needs of their communities on the agenda for change.

The Small Grants Programme has become a model for how local Healthwatch can run successful, diverse, community-centered engagement. Findings and data from this work have been far-reaching and have been used to develop a number of local plans, including the Westminster borough recovery plan and to support mental health and wellbeing service development by Thrive LDN.

Published reports can be seen on page 24.

## Highlights

- Staff at the organisations we supported received training, developed new skills, and strengthened NHS connections.
- Parents of children with special needs and disabilities (SEND), received clearer communications.
- We helped to sustain small local community organisations through a particularly challenging year.
- The success of the programme has also led us to work alongside Healthwatch teams around the country to facilitate workshops and to identify and prioritise communities of interest across the country.





# Insights for equality

## Understanding the needs of young people aged 11-25

One of our key projects, Young Healthwatch (YHW), is guided by a dedicated team of young volunteers (aged 14-25) and HWCWL staff, committed to supporting the wellbeing of young people in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

We want young people living, working, or studying here to feel supported by local health and care services, so that they can grow without feeling held back.

### The challenge

In January 2020 YHW launched a survey to understand young people's thoughts on mental health - what they thought about the services available and what action they would take in a mental health crisis based on their existing stressors and support network.

Findings highlighted an increase in anxiety, eating disorders, depression, and low mood. Our survey evolved to reflect these concerns in the context of COVID-19 to inform service team leads of changing needs.

### Our response

We shared insights from our mental health survey with the Mosaic Community Trust and

the Church Street Community Champions that highlighted young people's experiences of COVID-19 and its impact on their mental health. There was a focus on people from minority ethnic backgrounds and how language and cultural barriers had prevented them from using the Test & Trace service.

Our findings were echoed by colleagues from Connecting Care for Children at Imperial College Healthcare Trust, demonstrating a need to provide a forum for young people to find answers to their questions.

We set up Q&A sessions with health experts and planned and co-hosted a webinar for young people on MS Teams.

## Our Impact

**Our mental health survey provided vital data about young people's needs in a time of crisis to help local organisations and services adapt and plan. It sparked the development of online forums for young people to have questions answered by local experts.**



## Highlights

- Young people were able to put their COVID-related questions to a panel of health professionals, with some being signposted to further mental health support.
- With the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and Imperial College, we supported the development of a Schools Research Network for North West London.
- Young volunteers developed new skills through team training.
- Mosaic used data from our survey to secure funding from the Council to offer training to young people on the benefits of the Test & Trace programme. This training provides young 'champions' with the knowledge to communicate the benefits to minority communities.
- With the support of mental health service managers from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), 200 young people aged 11-25 shared their experiences of accessing information, support, and services from across the 8 North West London boroughs.
- Young volunteers featured on CNWL One Community Radio discussing our findings
- 200+ young people had access to clear mental health support and guidance via our volunteer network.
- Summaries of Q&A's from sessions with young people were shared with commissioners, service providers, local authorities, community groups, and schools.

## Insights for equality

### Shared learning & National Influence

As a result of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we have been awarded a Communities of Interest grant from Healthwatch England to facilitate discussions with other local Healthwatch.

The discussions focus on how to design engagement in partnership with community groups to ensure that we are listening to experiences that aren't often included in decision-making discussions.

We can't tackle all minority communities at once so we are setting an agenda based on research and learning about which communities to prioritise for 2022.

This will help learning to be shared and for us to improve our approach. The focus of this grant is on Black African communities, and we will be working with other local Healthwatch to share knowledge and ideas.



### We're in the British Medical Journal...

An editorial written with Imperial College partners was published in the British Medical Journal and cited one of our reports:

#### *'Raising the profile of Healthwatch as a channel for under-represented voices'*

The editorial considers the value of Healthwatch as a channel for voices that aren't often included in discussions about health and care, using our work as the example.

See here:  
<https://www.bmj.com/content/372/bmj.n605>





# Primary Care

## Improving access to GPs

### The challenge

During our engagement work we heard a lot of confusion and concern about GP access and wanted to carry out more in-depth research to understand the barriers to access and who it was affecting the most.

Published reports can be seen on **page 24**.

### Our response

We worked with our Dignity Champions and volunteers to deliver a comprehensive report of local people's experiences of primary care, in particular how well they were able to access their GP Surgeries. The report was shared with both Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea Scrutiny Committees and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

“ The surgery seems to think that everyone is able to access a computer/smart phone, which is not the case with the older generation who do not have close family or friends, etc. who could help them ”

Your Experience Matters Survey, Kensington & Chelsea, 2020



# Our Impact

The Kensington & Chelsea Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), formerly West London, quoted our report and the need for local people to be able to access their surgeries in a bid for additional funding from North West London CCG to support work in West London.

The report challenged the position locally and in North West London on the value and importance of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs).

Our report has encouraged greater commitment to supporting this grassroots channel for engagement and has resulted in PPGs becoming a core element of the CCG's Engagement Strategy for North West London.

# Highlights

The presentation of our Primary Care Report at Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster Scrutiny Committees highlighted the difficulties patients were experiencing when accessing GP surgeries due to changes made during COVID-19 restrictions. Action is being taken to improve access to GP services for local people:

- 🔄 We were contacted by four GP practices asking for advice on how to restart and move their Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) online.
- 🔄 We were made aware that a further eight GP practices now have PPG meetings.
- 🔄 Brompton Health Primary Care Network (PCN) had a joint meeting for GP member practice PPGs.
- 🔄 One practice updated their website to include information and support specific to young people.



## Our priorities for 2021/2

After the success of our small grants programme in 2019 /20 we are extending the programme to increase our reach into local communities together. We have secured national funding from Healthwatch England to share our expertise in working with Black African Communities.

We are continuing our focus on mental health, primary care and young people.

We also feel that the change to Integrated Care Systems and Integrated Care Partnerships at local level needs to be connected to local people so they can understand who is responsible for services in their area.

We will also be working hard to support the communication and engagement on what health and care services look like as the COVID-19 virus evolves and changes.



### What they are...

Co-developed through conversations with our members and local community groups.

**COVID-19:** Supporting public health communication around the vaccine rollout, and working with local people to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities across Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

**Primary Care:** Hearing from local people about their experiences of using primary care services.

**Mental Health:** Hearing from local people about their experiences of using mental health services.

**Young People:** Hearing from young people about their experiences of using health and care services.

**Minority Communities:** Hearing from more people that represent our communities.

# Our COVID-19 Insights 2020/21

## Published Reports & Briefings

### **Bridging the Gap**

Young people's experiences of mental health before and during COVID-19.

### **COVID-19 in Central West London** (Kensington & Chelsea)

How the pandemic impacted minority communities

### **COVID-19 in Central West London** (Westminster)

How the pandemic has impacted Minority Communities

### **Your Experience Matters** (Kensington & Chelsea)

Responses from minority communities

### **Your Experience Matters** (Westminster)

Responses from minority communities

**GP Access:** Westminster & Kensington & Chelsea reports

### **Care Home Insights**

### **Small Grants Programme:**

Exploring the impact of COVID-19 with people who have had a stroke or who live with neurological conditions.

**With LEGS**

Exploring the local impact of the pandemic

**With Wand UK**

Exploring the impact of COVID-19 on those who have English as an additional language

**With Church Street Library**

Living through COVID-19 with a respiratory condition

**With Breathe Easy Westminster**

### **Domino Effect**

Discussing the knock-on effects of COVID-19 for parents of children living with disability (SEND) in Westminster.

### **Download here**

<https://healthwatchcwl.co.uk/our-work/reports>

## Shared with...

### **Locally**

Jules Martin MD and Ayesha Janjua, Assistant Director, CLCCG

Louise Proctor, MD WLCCG

Bernie Flaherty, Bi-borough Director of Adult Social Care

Bi-Borough Councillors

Imperial NHS Health Trust

Westminster Borough Director, Ela Pathak-Sen (interim), CNWL and BAME network

### **Nationally**

Healthwatch England

Parliamentary Health and Care Select Committee Inquiry into the impact of COVID-19

### **Regionally**

Thrive LDN

Community Voices – community engagement project

Proactive Population Health Management and Inequalities Board led by the CEO of North West London NHS Trust and the CEO of Hounslow Local Authority



## Our Partners & Collaborators

- Local Exercise Groups for Stoke & Neuro Conditions (LEGS)
- WAND
- French African Welfare Association
- Breathe Easy Westminster (BEW)
- Make it Happen
- Equal People Mencap
- Health 4 Sports
- Henry Dickens Court Estate Residents Association
- Midaye Somali Development Network
- Hear Women
- African Women's Care
- Abdul Majeed Educational trust
- Biti Foundation
- Kulan Somali Development Network
- Local Age UK
- National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)
- London Schools Research Network (LSRN)
- Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
- Central London Community Healthcare

## Our growing network

### Our Ambassadors

Dignity Champions	12
Volunteers	86
Young Volunteers	25
Members	1,019
Local Committee Members	20

### Social Media

November 2021:	
Twitter	1,832
Facebook	1,118
Instagram	522
LinkedIn	83



We are commissioned by local councils and the NHS to carry out engagement work and proactively partner with local organisations, charities, and groups to uncover genuine insights that can make a real difference to how services are delivered in our Boroughs.





# A spotlight on health and care services in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

## Visit us or get in touch

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