



Together

we're making health
and social care better

Autumn 2023

healthwatch
Wigan and Leigh



“Over the last quarter HWWL has ensured representation on an increasing number of committees and groups. The Chair and Chief Officer have a place on the ICS and ICB forums where we can ensure engagement and inclusion of public opinion is embedded into service design.

We have also had additional recruits to our Advisory Committee and volunteering work, which has also enabled us to be present at a wide range of forums. Our engagement officers have increased our presence across a range of venues and events. We have undertaken projects on a wide range of topics including mental health and sexual health, assisting service design and feeding back patient experience issues. The whole team have given renewed energy into getting out and about and taking part in person as meetings and events have once again opened up following the covid pandemic.

We have welcomed several speakers to our Advisory Committee meetings from local services and strategic leaders. These have been warmly welcomed by all with strategic and service leads welcoming the opportunity to engage with our community.

Dr Kathryn Drury
Chair Of Healthwatch Wigan & Leigh



A message from our Chief Officer

Welcome to our Autumn 2023 report which will hopefully give you a great insight into the work we have carried out over the past few months. Thank you to everyone who continues to be involved by volunteering, sharing our information, giving us feedback or offering an open invitation into your groups and communities. We really work hard to make your voice heard.

Throughout October, November and December I continue to attend high-level decision-making boards in the borough and drive hard the message of the importance of listening to patients, residents and communities. I am also asking for a commitment from health and social care leaders to act on what people are telling them and making sure that peoples views are considered when decisions are being made about the future of services.

Some of the areas of work that I am involved in is, transformation of diabetic services, mental health, transformation of community services, improving the lives of children and young people, improvements in planned care, transformation of primary care services, and there are many more.

I hope you enjoy what you read and if you would like to become more involved please do contact us. We would be thrilled to talk to you.



Karen Parker
Chief Officer

About Us

Healthwatch Wigan & Leigh is your local health and social care champion.

From Appley Bridge to Astley, and all areas in between, our mission is to ensure that your voice is heard by the NHS and Council leaders, as well as other decision makers, who use your feedback to make improvements in the care you receive.

We are proud to offer the following services:

Information and Advice: We provide easy-to-understand information and guidance about local services, helping you access the resources you need.

Complaint Advocacy: If you ever have concerns about NHS care, we offer a free and independent advocacy service. Our team will support you in making a complaint and ensure your voice is heard.

Our Mission:

We are the independent voice of local people to influence, challenge and question health and social care provision in the Wigan Borough.

Our Vision:

A health and social care experience that meets the needs of the people of Wigan Borough.

Our values are:

Empowered Leadership – provide citizens with the skills and knowledge to facilitate change and have their voices heard.

Integrity – Honest and selfless and act solely in terms of the public interest .

Accountable – open and transparent in everything we do.

Independent – in purpose, voice, and action.

Inclusivity – we will support communities that are not normally heard to have a voice and challenge inequality.

Objective – take decisions impartially and fairly without discrimination or bias.

Value for Money – make the best use of our resources, working collaboratively with other stakeholders to avoid duplication.

Critical Friend – We will be constructive as well as challenging to service providers and the system.

Autumn In Review



Reaching out

34 Venues, 49 Visits

with people sharing their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

81 cases

of people asking for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and access to GP and dental practices.

Health and care that works for you

We're lucky to have in total over Autumn

28 Volunteers

who gave up 60+ days to make care better for our community. Donating the equivalent of over £4,220 worth of time

We currently employ

8 staff

who help us carry out our work.



Our Online Reach



Reach ⓘ

17.6K ↑ 187.3%

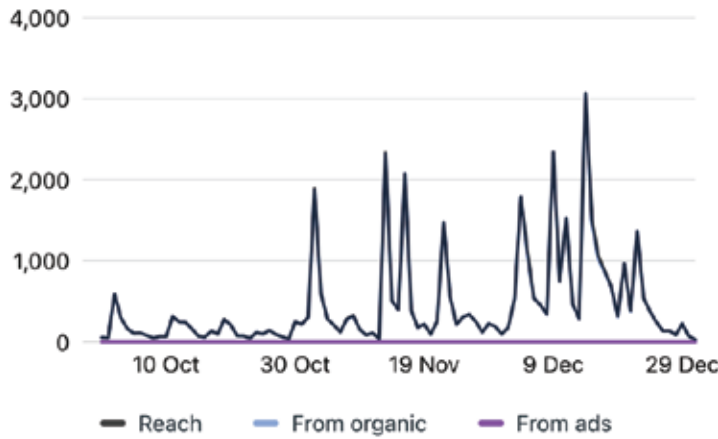
Content interactions ⓘ

1.3K ↑ 117.4%

Followers ⓘ

Lifetime

587 ↑ 33.3%



Reach breakdown

Total

17,566 ↑ 187.3%

From organic

17,005 ↑ 193.4%

From ads

0 0%



Reach ⓘ

290 ↑ 76.8%

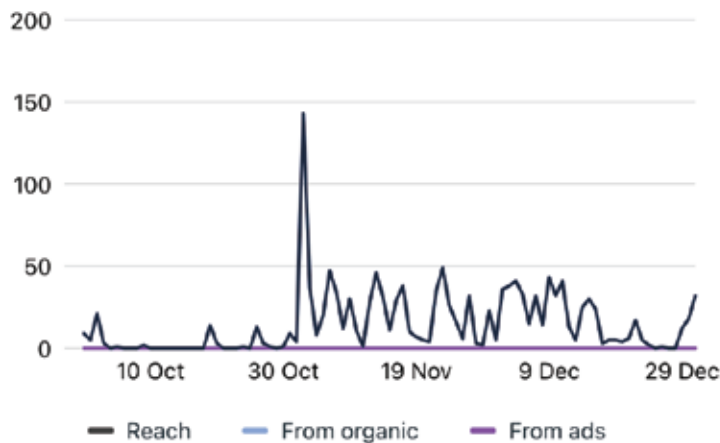
Content interactions ⓘ

195 ↑ 153.2%

Followers ⓘ

Lifetime

447 ↑ 109.4%



Reach breakdown

Total

290 ↑ 76.8%

From organic

290 ↑ 76.8%

From ads

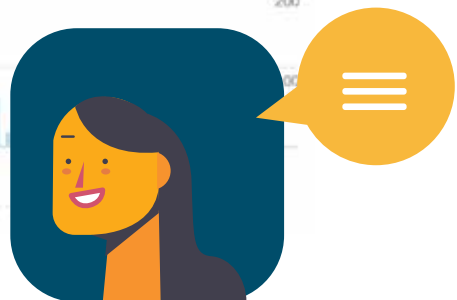
0 0%



We are continuing to grow our online presence and have been focussing on connecting with other organisations and key people and groups within the borough.



Your posts earned **2.9K impressions** over this **91 day period**



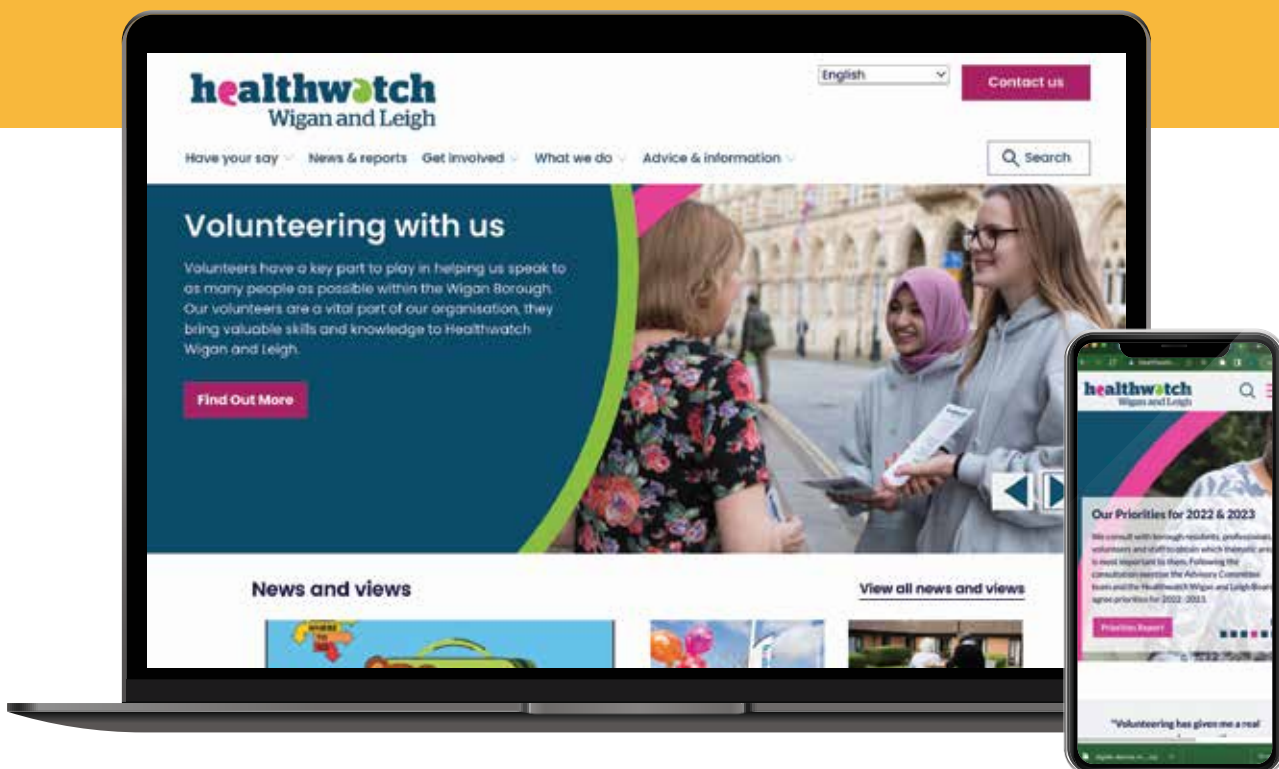
Our Website



10,000 Views

7,000 Organic views , 2,400 Social media referrals

Best performing page (2,944 views) "Drink and needle spikings"



Healthwatch Heroes



Ann Lloyd

I have been volunteering with Healthwatch for approximately 4 years since retiring as a nurse having worked in both the NHS and Independent Care Home sector. Health and social care have always been important to me, having had many family members experiencing both hospital and care home services. Volunteering with Healthwatch allowed me to continue to use my knowledge and skills of these sectors in ensuring the users voice is heard.

I am an Authorised Representative for Enter and View as well as a member of the Advisory Committee. Over the last 18 months I have led a group of volunteers to undertake a project to explore the post covid access to health and social care services for those living in care homes. As a result of this project, I now represent Healthwatch on a number of groups led by Wigan Council. I am currently involved with other volunteers in a project exploring Patient Participation Groups within the borough's GP practices.

Listening to people's experiences is central to the function of Healthwatch and there is always an opportunity to become involved in engagement activities as much or as little as the volunteers want and/are able. There is never any pressure to attend any events.

The staff at Healthwatch have made me very welcome. They are a very friendly bunch who truly value their volunteers for whatever time they are able to give.



A word from Lisa...



Ann has committed hours of volunteering her time to lead a piece of work –“Exploring the experiences of Care Home staff in accessing Health and Adult Social Care services for their residents’ post Covid Pandemic”.

This involved engaging with 15 care homes across Wigan Borough to listen to the voice of the care home staff. Ann managed a small team of HWWL Volunteers to execute this piece of work which concluded in her writing a detailed report of her findings and suggested recommendations. Ann and the volunteer team worked tirelessly to deliver this and their passion, empathy, and determination to influence change was evident. Ann has since presented the findings and recommendations at various forums including Scrutiny Committee, Care Home Manager Forum, Care Home Support & Development Board and in February, Wigan Adult Safeguarding Board. Ann has been invited to have a regular seat at the Care Home Support & Development Board which enables HWWL to monitor action being taken.

We would like to say a HUGE thank you to Ann and the volunteers that supported her on behalf of HWWL.

If you would like to volunteer for HWWL, please get in touch.

Lisa Armstrong
Volunteer co-ordinator.



POSITIVE FEEDBACK



During the Care Home Project, Richmond House in Leigh was one of the facilities we visited, and we've received exceptionally positive feedback from the relative of a former resident. It's gratifying to showcase and emphasize the recommendations we receive regarding services within the borough.



"We couldn't have been more impressed. The staff and management were exceptional. They could not do enough. He had his own room and bathroom. The food was great. They interacted with him and supported him with his recovery. Listened to our concerns re his return to home. They frankly couldn't do enough"

Relative of past Care Home Resident – Wigan and Leigh



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Primary Care Event

Monday October 16th 2023
1.30pm - 3.30pm

Sunshine House Community Hub
Annex 1, Wellington Street, Wigan, WNI 3SA

Guest Speakers from Wigan Integrated Care System sharing their expertise

- Pharmacists
- GP's
- Dentists
- Opticians

With opportunities to ask questions

Call to book 01942 834666

FREE Parking available at the venue
www.healthwatchwiganandleigh.co.uk

Scan to book

healthwatch
Wigan and Leigh

An independent voice for the people of Wigan and Leigh

Healthwatch is the independent "consumer champion" for health and social care.

Whether it's improving services today or helping to shape them for tomorrow, Healthwatch is all about influencing the delivery, and design and commissioning of local services.

We help people to make informed choices about the health and social care options available to them.

It has been set up to help the people of the Wigan Borough have influence and a powerful voice on how services are run.

#SpeakUp

01942 834666
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@healthwatchwl





...a massive THANK YOU.

Not only was your talk brill, engaging, informative and pitched perfectly you were both full of positivity – AND did it twice to cover my epic mistake – thanks so much – I hope you enjoyed the jaunt out of the office and I hope to bring a group to Sunshine House soon to say hello again.

Fiona Robinson
 Health & Social Care Lecturer
 Wigan & Leigh College





Access to insoles



A lady contacted Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh in October to say that she had had an appointment with Podiatry Services back in May and was promised to be sent some insoles via the post but still hadn't received them. The lady had tried to contact the podiatry service by phone but kept on getting an appointment line at the hospital. Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh made the necessary enquiries, attempting to contact the podiatry services on behalf of the lady. However initial efforts led us to the appointment line. The administrator listened to our concerns and said that they had sent a message to the service manager and asked them to call Healthwatch back and that it would be within a few hours. However, the requests seemed to echo in silence.

Undeterred, Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh persisted, reaching out to the appointment line once again. This time the message was acted on straight away by the administrator. The details of the issue were promptly forwarded to Ashton Podiatry Clinic. Healthwatch thanked the administrator for all their help and support. The lady was now hopeful but still a bit doubtful, awaited the outcome.

The day after a call came into Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh office. It was the lady who had sought Healthwatch's help, she had some great news to share. She had received her insoles! The lady expressed her heartfelt thanks to Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh for all the support they had given to her being able to get her insoles from the podiatry team.





Help to register at a local GP practice

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh had a member of the public contact to ask for help with registering at a local GP practice which was the most suitable due to specific needs and requirements.

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh made contact with the GP practice to discuss options available and with the help of the practice the person successfully registered at the GP practice and obtained an urgent prescription the following day.

" Thank you so much for your help"
Wigan and Leigh Resident

Lost in Silence:

Navigating Healthcare Challenges in the Deaf Community

Lost in Silence: Navigating Healthcare Challenges in the Deaf Community

In the bustling emergency room and ward of a local hospital, amidst the whirlwind of medical activities, a deaf person, found themselves in a disconcerting situation. Struggling with their health, they were rushed to the hospital via ambulance, hoping for prompt medical attention. Little did they know that their journey through the healthcare system would be marred by a lack of understanding and communication.

The story begins with,

The hospital was so full, after going through tests the person was in the emergency day ward where they all sat on chairs not laying on beds as everywhere was full.

As the patient sat there, they noticed another patient, who spoke no English, effortlessly communicating with healthcare professionals through an interpreter. Filled with hope, they asked the staff where their British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter was. To their dismay, they were met with perplexed stares and dismissive responses. "**You can speak English,**" they said, ignoring the fundamental differences between spoken language and sign language. The staff member responded "**Just write down what you want to ask.**"

With a heavy heart, the person was handed a small card with the alphabet on it. However, their visual impairment, exacerbated by their illness, made it **nearly impossible for them to use the card effectively.** Feeling isolated and frustrated, they lamented the lack of empathy and understanding within the healthcare professionals. Many others in the deaf community shared their experience, facing similar barriers to accessing essential services.



The serious issues that the person wishes to share was that the consultant brought their friend in the room without checking with the person first if they wanted them present and disclosed too many personal things and thought their friend will help to communicate despite them being deaf themselves, this made the person so furious (but the person was too ill to challenge as they never want their personal medical to be revealed without their permission as their friend was only there to keep them company). **The person says “it’s hard for me to explain what I’m trying to say as it left me very traumatised. It’s often why I try avoiding having friends with me because they think its ok to use them to communicate and disclose my medical things without my permission”.**

Attempts to bridge the gap through technology often prove to be ineffective. Video BSL signing, pushed as a solution, frequently offered poor quality, with freezing screens and pixelated images rendering communication nearly impossible. The deaf person, like many others, long for genuine, face-to-face human interaction, where emotions can be expressed and understood beyond the confines of a screen.

The person’s experience has highlighted a pressing issue: the urgent need for comprehensive training in deaf awareness among healthcare professionals. The staff’s confusion on how to accommodate the needs of the deaf community underscored the complete lack of education in understanding the unique challenges faced by deaf individuals.

The deaf persons story serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of effective communication in healthcare settings by healthcare professionals. The deaf community, like everyone else, deserves to be heard, understood, and treated with dignity. It is a call to action for increased deaf awareness training, compassion, and real, tangible support. Only through these efforts can we ensure that no one, regardless of their abilities, is not left lost in silence within the healthcare system.





Safeguarding What'sUp Champion Launch Event

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh were invited to attend the Safeguarding What'sUp Champion Launch Event which took place at St.Peters Pavilion, Wigan on Thursday 19th October 2023. The What'sUp project is being launched to raise the profile of the work being carried out in the Wigan Borough to raise awareness of Safeguarding amongst the Wigan communities.

Three volunteers from HealthWatch Wigan and Leigh attended the launch event, noting the launch as inspirational and highlighted its impressive turnout and organisation. The function drew participants from diverse organisations and specialities, successful delivering the well received and impactful What'sup message.

" I have not so far witnessed anything more inspirational"

Pauline Gregory (Healthwatch Director and Volunteer)

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh “Changes in Health Care” Event

In December we held a “Changes in Health Care Event” for members of the public to attend. The speakers spoke about what the current challenges we are facing in the Borough. The event was well attended with over 50 members of the public attending.

The speakers represented the following organisations

Deputy Place Based Lead (Wigan), NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Population Health and Inequalities, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Associate Director of Finance, (Wigan) NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Associate director of Finance (Wigan) NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Assistant Director of Engagement, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care

and gave an overview of the following:

- Greater Manchester wide planning and oversight which included:
- All diagnostic services
- All secondary acute physical healthcare
- All acute inpatient mental healthcare
- Emergency services and patient transport
- Public Health Services



The Planning and Oversight of some NHS Services will be led at Place and Integrated with Local Authority Service planning. NHS services under the scope of place level planning and oversight of delivery:

- All NHS Community Services
- All mental health; learning difficulties and autism services
- Some Public Health Services

Local authorities will determine which of their services to integrate; this will include:

- Social services including residential and non residential services for adults
- 0-19 services including health visitors, school nursing, mental health, learning disabilities and autism
- Public health and sexual health services

The speakers spoke about “Our Healthier Wigan Partnership Strategic Objectives”.

- To radically improve outcomes in population health and wellbeing for residents of the borough of Wigan
- To tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access
- To enhance productivity and value for money, working towards a sustainable financial model for health and care services in the borough
- To deliver high quality, person-centred health and care services across the borough and empower residents to be active partners in their own health & wellbeing
- To work with partners and all relevant stakeholders to support broader social and economic development which will address the wider determinants of health and wellbeing (e.g. housing, education, jobs & economy).

They also spoke about “Wigans Neighbourhood Approach- our healthy, happy, resilient communities

healthwatch
Wigan and Leigh

Changes in Health and Social Care Event
11 December 2023 1:00pm

Speakers

Mel McGuinness, Deputy Place Based Lead (Wigan), NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Jess Williams, Population Health and Inequalities, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Ella Bailey, Associate Director of Finance, (Wigan) NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Ben Smith, Associate director of Finance (Wigan) NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

Alexia Mitton, Assistant Director of Engagement, NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care.

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NHS GM (a statutory organisation)

Services under the scope of GM-wide planning and oversight of delivery:

- All diagnostic services including radiology, physiological tests, prosthetics, blood tests, pathology and screening
- All secondary acute physical health care including specialist centres, intensive care, urgent and emergency care for adults, mental and physical health care, and in-hospital, day procedure care
- All acute hospital mental health care and all specialist services, for adults, children and young people including intensive care services
- Integrated services and patient transport including emergency ambulance services and patient hospital transport
- Some primary health services including vaccines and immunisation, health check programmes, health visiting, routine surgery, at least provision for surgery at induction

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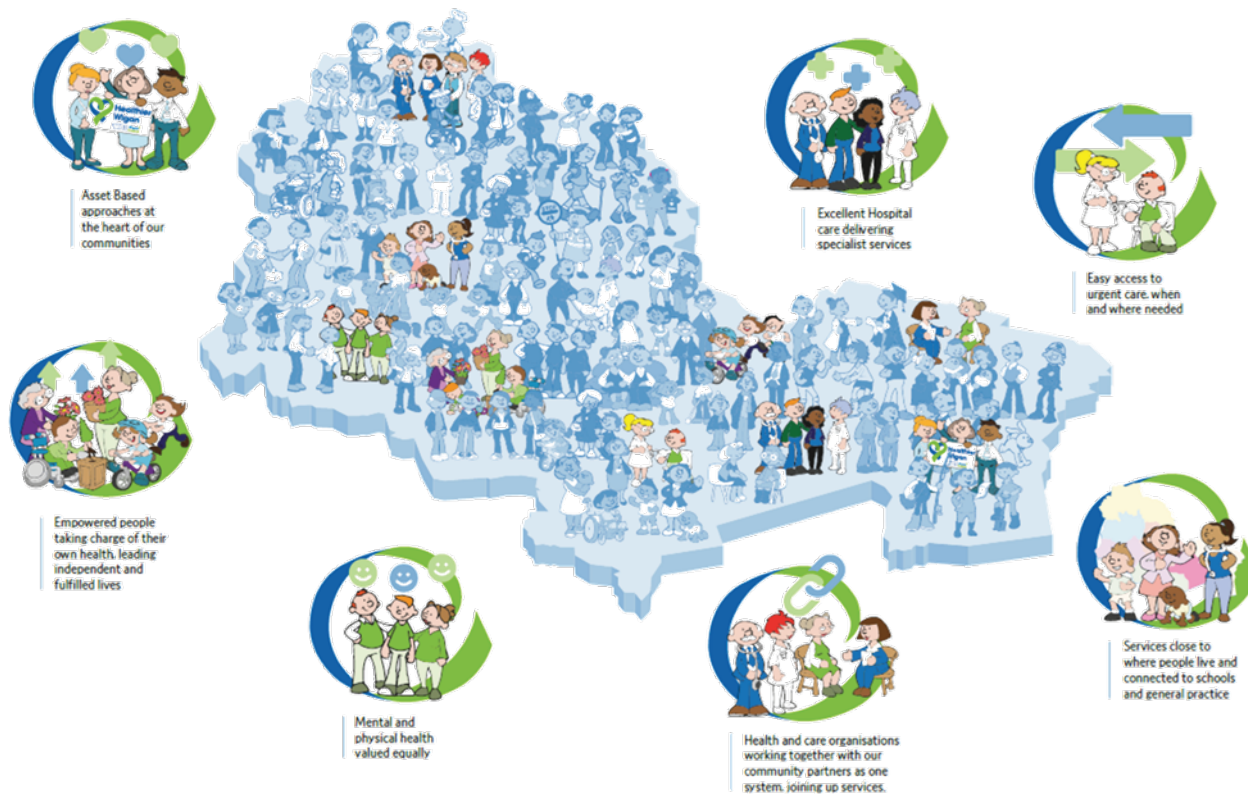
Key Statistics

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| Programme Domain | Governance Oversight |
|--|--|
| Best Start in Life: Children, Young People and Maternity | Children and Young People's Strategic Alliance Improving Health subgroup |
| Early Intervention and Prevention: Population Health Improvement | Transformation and Prevention Board |
| Long term conditions and Cancer | Planned Care Board |
| All age Community Mental Health Services | Mental Health Transformation Board |
| Integrated Neighbourhood Working | New Board to be established with PCN Leads and System Partners |
| Urgent and Emergency Care | Urgent and Emergency Care Improvement and Transformation Board |
| Home First and Integrated Community Services | Home First and Integrated Community Services Board |

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Our approach for healthy, happy, resilient communities



- **7 neighbourhoods aligned to our Primary Care Networks (PCNs)**
 - **GPs, schools and community assets as anchors for place**
 - **30-50,000 population size for integrated working**
 - **Understanding and working with our varied communities**
 - **Knowing and nurturing the assets in our communities**
- **Importance of sub-neighbourhood focus in tackling inequalities.**

Finance

The speakers gave an update on their financial strategy, cost savings and cost efficiencies and the financial challenges they face such as a fast-ageing population, demand growth, obesity and diabetes.

The members of the public asked many questions at the event. Feedback from the public was that the event was very informative and that this is the information that the public needs to have.

Patient Participation Groups Project

Where are they now?

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) play a crucial role in primary care by facilitating communication and collaboration between General Practice, their patients, and the wider patient community. Generally, a PPG is a group of patients registered at the practice, who work together to support the practice to develop. However, beyond this, there is no specific description of what constitutes a PPG, what it can do, or how it should be organised.

The Wigan borough has 52 General Practices which serve more than 329,000 residents. Historically, Wigan has had good representation from PPGs across the borough with various networks facilitating access to support and development opportunities. The pandemic had a significant impact on PPGs and how they operate. While this presented challenges, it also highlighted the resilience and adaptability of some PPGs in ensuring that patient perspectives remained integral to General Practice decision-making and service delivery.

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh wanted to carry out a piece of work, carried out by volunteers and led by one of our Authorised Representatives, Mary Hill to identify:

- If all residents of the Wigan Borough can attend a PPG.
- How patients access and get involved with the group.
- What the PPG 'looks like' at different practices.
- The roles and functions carried out by the PPG members.
- How the PPG is a stimulus for improvement within a practice.
- What is the evidence of the impact the PPG has on patient experience.

The final report for this work is due to be published in March 2024.

Community Diagnostics Project – Leigh

Community Diagnostics Project – Leigh

We have been working in partnership with Healthwatch England on a national project comparing Community Diagnostic Centre's (CDCs) across England. This work is led by Ann Lloyd one of our Authorised Representatives.

CDCs aim to transform diagnostics in England by reducing the pressure on acute services, ringfencing resources for elective diagnostics, and increasing diagnostic capacity. Little is known about the patient experience of CDCs. CDCs are new, having only been established in February 2022.

We will explore different aspects of the patient experience, particularly: accessibility, expectations, choice and quality.

We want to understand the experiences of people attending CDCs for diagnostic tests and the experiences of staff working there. We will carry out short interviews with patients and staff. We will conduct a minimum of three very short follow-up interviews with people interviewed during the visit. This will help us to capture reflections on their experience, and understand what happened after their test. We remain committed to ensuring that we hear from the widest range of patients, particularly those we hear from the least. In this project, we want to ensure that we hear about the experiences of patients with different accessibility needs. This includes:

- People with different physical accessibility needs.
- People who require translators or interpreters.
- People who require information in a different format or language.

We would also welcome insight into how people in the local community have benefitted or been impacted by the CDC, and whether then we feel there are any groups whose voices it would be important to include.





Impacts

- Mental Health supported living contracts. We provided some statements from the mental health project to form part of the mental health supported living contract/tender with Wigan Council.
- I want to see what the supported accommodation looks like before I go to live there. Don't just send me.
- I want you to get to know who I am, not just my diagnosis.
- I want to feel safe.
- Brookfield Supported Living Manager commented around the impact the feedback session had on the residents. "Some of the residents said it felt like a therapy session and it was helpful to be able to "get things off their chests" and be heard". Some said that it felt "therapeutic" and feel now that they can move on from some of the challenges they have experienced.



Volunteering

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.

Our volunteers:

Two volunteers of Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh attended a Breathlessness Workshop organised by Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh (WWL) alongside a member of the Patient Representatives Group to assist in the mapping of the New Onset Breathlessness Pathway. The development of the pathway will allow GP's to refer patients who are experiencing breathlessness for a range of tests which will be undertaken at the Community Diagnostic Centre based at Leigh Infirmary rather than the individuals being referred for a set of individual tests.

Thank you for your input at the Breathlessness workshop back in May 23. Your support helped to develop the New Onset Breathlessness Pathway which will be launched on 1 November out of the Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC).

On Wednesday November 8th HWWL attended the WWL Annual General Meeting.

One of our volunteers also joined us to engage with the WWL members and talk about the pieces of work currently being undertaken by Healthwatch. It was a great opportunity to network with the public and with partnership organisations as well as hearing about the future direction of WWL.



The Fat Olive

Healthwatch Wigan and Leigh volunteers enjoyed a lunchtime meal at the 'fat olive' in Wigan. This was a 'thank you' to them for the commitment and passion they bring every day.

The staff at Healthwatch recognize everything they contribute and really do value this. We could not achieve what we do without them. They really are an integral part of the team.



Goodbye and Hello!



Saying Goodbye ...

Sadly, we have to say 'goodbye' to 3 of our HWWL Volunteers.

We want to say a huge 'thank you' to Ann Heaton, Adrian D'arcy and Carole Jones.

Their commitment and enthusiasm to make a difference for Wigan

Borough residents will be missed hugely. However, we wish them

all the best for the future and with any new ventures

that come their way.

Saying Hello ...

And we are thrilled to be able to welcome new volunteers

to the Healthwatch Team.

We would like to say 'hello' to Gill Gibson, Maureen McCoy, Alan Taberner and

David Melling. They are bringing both their energy and passion along with a

variety of experience and personal skills to continue to assist Healthwatch

Wigan and Leigh with their vision for a better health and social care

experience for everyone.

Healthwatch is your health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care.

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