



On equal terms

Then and now

Healthwatch Rochdale Annual Report 2020-21

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Message from our Chair

The last year has been absolutely unprecedented. We have faced the worst public health crisis in generations and COVID has had a terrible impact on us all.

But despite how horrific it has been, we have also seen the best of society especially in our borough. As interim chair, I am proud of the part Healthwatch Rochdale has played in responding to challenges posed by COVID.

We have worked closely with all our partners in the battle against this terrible virus while still delivering many projects that have improved health and care in our borough and while still helping residents' voices to be heard.

Over the next few pages, you'll get to see the breadth and depth of work our organisation has undertaken over the last year.

I am so proud, that even with the huge challenges we have faced, we have delivered so much. I want to say a massive thank you to all our excellent volunteers for their help and support over the last year. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisation. Without you, we could not deliver many of the great projects we are renowned for.

I want to thank my fellow directors especially our former chair Jane Jackson, who led the board with distinction over some difficult times. A special shout out to our Advisory Board as well.

I want to also thank our brilliant staff team led by our chief executive Kate Jones. They are a small team, but as you'll see from the report, they do punch above their weight.

Finally, a big thank you to all residents who have engaged with us over the year.



Ben Greenwood, Interim Chair

About us

Here to make health and care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Rochdale. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure your views shape the support you need, by sharing these views with those who have the power to make change happen.

Helping you to find the information you need

We help people find the information they need about services in their area. This has been vital during the pandemic with the ever-changing environment and restrictions limiting people's access to health and social care services.

Our strategic objectives



1 Remove barriers so that choices can be made by all residents about their own and their family's health and social care needs.



2 Work with other to achieve the best outcomes for the provision of health and social care.



3 Deliver innovative ways of working, new opportunities, positive outcomes and value for money

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



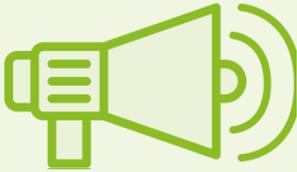
“Healthwatch Rochdale have had to adapt to new ways of working over the last twelve months due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Our work priorities have shifted to providing people with the information and advice they needed as well as listening to people’s experience of living through the pandemic and how things could be improved. Over the next twelve months we are working to ensure more people get their voice heard and have an impact on shaping health and care services ”

Kate Jones, Chief Executive Officer Healthwatch Rochdale

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and how we have engaged and supported people in 2020-21.

Reaching out



We heard from

226 people

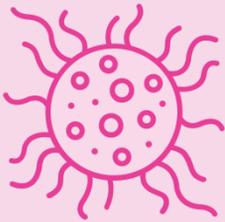
this year about their experiences of health and social care.

We provided signposting information to

203 people

this year.

Responding to the pandemic



We spoke to

674 people

who shared their experience of living through the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Making a difference to care



We published

1 report

About people's experience of living through the Covid 19 pandemic.

3 Surveys

With a total of 1810 responses.

17 Focus Groups

With a total of 37 responses

Health and care that works for you



17 volunteers

helped us to carry out our work. In total, they contributed 35 volunteer hours.

We employ 5 staff

Our FTE is 4.

We received

£136,066 in funding

from our local authority in 2020-21, the same as the previous year.



Then and now Moving on Service



Then: Moving on Service

Following the closure of the Moving On Service in Middleton, Healthwatch Rochdale spoke with 42 ex service users about the effect of the closure and their experience of the consultation process.

The 'Moving On' service previously provided support for individuals with acquired brain injuries e.g., stroke, brain haemorrhages. Healthwatch Rochdale received local intelligence from Rochdale and District Disability Action Group (RADDAG) and several residents, Healthwatch Rochdale's Advisory Group triggered a piece of consultation work regarding the notification that the 'Moving On' service in Middleton had been closed permanently.

Healthwatch Rochdale engaged with forty-two ex-service users, with the majority requesting telephone contact due to not being competent in digital applications such as Zoom. As a result of the communication with the residents a comprehensive report was collated and shared with Rochdale Council which included ten recommendations for improvement.



Now: Moving on Service

Recommendations in the report were:

1. Initial communication regarding the online consultation: most people reported not receiving letters. This may have been down to the postal service during COVID-19 but given the low uptake online it would have been beneficial to reach more service users by telephone or other appropriate means dependent upon the individuals abilities / preferences.
2. To ensure that an individual's communication needs are considered when consulting them.
3. The implementation of a Zoom meeting Although it is acknowledged that this was initially planned as a face-to-face session, there should have been methods put in place to effectively consult and update those unable to participate.
4. To ensure that a clear process is in place to log calls and how / when they have been responded to.
5. To ensure that consultation processes are not changed mid-way through the process and if this is unavoidable to start the process again with clear, transparent information to residents.
6. To ensure that there is an effective transition for service users in the future which safeguards their needs.
7. To ensure that if services are closing that individuals are contacted to determine if they want their personal files back or want them disposing of safely.
8. To ensure that individual impairments and needs are considered when consulting them, especially when access to personal details and knowledge of specific conditions is available.
9. To carry out some form of equality impact assessment on how to reach service users appropriately when carrying out consultations.
10. To add Healthwatch Rochdale to Rochdale Borough Council's consultation procedure so that we can work together to reach residents



To find out more visit www.healthwatchrochdale.org.uk



Then and now Mental Health Services



Then: Mental Health Forum

Local residents and professional's suggestions for improvement to Mental Health services in the Rochdale borough have been fed into Rochdale's Mental Health Partnership Board following Healthwatch Rochdale's Mental Health forum. This will ensure that those responsible for local mental health services are aware of resident's challenges and suggestions for improving Mental Health services locally.

The forum began in July 2020 in response to a survey carried out in partnership with Rochdale Council to gather people's experience of living through the Covid 19 pandemic. The forum grew to include professionals as well as residents and at each meeting there were discussions about how residents were coping during the Covid situation and agreement by partners and residents as to what has worked well, what has not worked so well and suggestions for improvement.

One of the key issues that arose through the forums was regarding the experience of some people from Asian backgrounds and the need for Mental health services to be personalised to the needs of those from this community.



Now: Mental Health

Rochdale Council have acknowledged that there has been an ongoing issue for some residents with Black, Asian or Minority Ethnicity backgrounds from the information they have received from Healthwatch Rochdale and other sources. In response to this they have provided additional funding to the community to enable grassroot organisations to reach specific cohorts of people more effectively.



Within the BAME communities there are more people prescribed medications for mental health problems than in any other community. This could be down to the stigma attached within the community, so they don't always go and get the service help they should – they won't go to the buildings for fear of being seen.

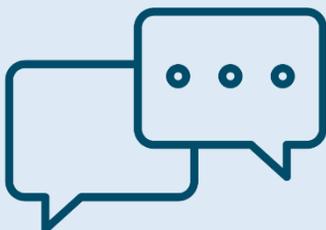
As the Mental Health Forum progressed it was predominantly attended by professionals. On reflection of the low uptake by residents and the need to gather lived experience, Healthwatch Rochdale considered ceasing the facilitating the Mental Health Forum. To ensure that this was done effectively Healthwatch Rochdale worked in partnership with Action Together as part of a piece of co-production with other organisations. This has resulted in a funded Health and Well-being Network being set up including locally for professionals which also has small pots of funding which organisation can apply for to improve mental health and well-being services at a community level.



There are higher cases in the BAME communities due to lack of communication and understanding of the communication sent out. It is not the communities' fault.

Following on from this work during 2021-22 Healthwatch Rochdale are going to carry out additional service user research in this area including surveys with children, young people and adults. This will be fed into the system on a continual basis to support the transformation work currently being carried out by the NHS and Council.

Share your views with us



If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

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Then and now #TogetherRochdale



Then: #TogetherRochdale Communications Group

The #TogetherRochdale Communications Group was developed and facilitated by Healthwatch Rochdale at the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic.

The aim of the group was to help ensure that local residents got the help, advice and information they needed during the Covid 19 pandemic. The group brought together statutory organisations including Rochdale Borough Council and HMR CCG alongside voluntary organisations including Rochdale Mind and Action Together.

The objectives of the group were to:

- Ensure Rochdale borough residents receive current information about the COVID-19 outbreak and how it affects them and local services.
- Ensure a consistent message is communicated from all organisations in the third sector.
- Provide people with the information they need and identify where there are gaps in what is being communicated.



Now: #TogetherRochdale

Following public consultation local residents stated that they wanted Healthwatch Rochdale to continue to facilitate the #TogetherRochdale Communications Group.

The #Together Rochdale Communications Group have developed the following:

- Met monthly and shared updates on work and key messages with partner organisations
- Produced a statement of Intent that outlines the aims and purpose of the partnership communications group
- Created a #TogetherRochdale web page on Healthwatch Rochdale's website
- Produced and shared Covid 19 information videos in various languages
- Produced and shared Information videos on the Covid 19 vaccine
- Produced 19 #TogetherRochdale e bulletins containing news and information from partner organisations
- Shared local Rochdale service user information on social media using the hashtag #TogetherRochdale



The statutory role of Healthwatch Rochdale is to ensure that local people receive the information and advice they need in a way that is accessible to them. The #TogetherRochdale Communications Group was established at the start of the Covid 19 pandemic so that statutory and voluntary organisations could work together to make sure that local residents were receiving the information they need when they needed it

The #TogetherRochdale Communications Group have since decided to meet on a quarterly basis and produced a monthly e bulletin. There will also be a monthly #TogetherRochdale email to ensure relevant information and key messages are still being shared between organisations.

**#Together
Rochdale**



Responding to COVID-19

Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need, especially through the pandemic. The insight we collect is shared with both Healthwatch England and local partners to ensure services are operating as best as possible during the pandemic.

This year we spoke to 710 local people about their experience of living through the Covid 19 Pandemic.

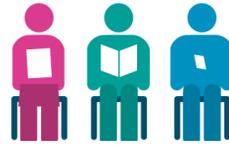
- We carried out a survey in partnership with Rochdale Borough Council to understand how local residents were coping during the Covid - 19 pandemic and to gather information about what would make the situation easier to live with. We had 673 responses to the survey.
- Ran 17 focus groups to allow residents to share their more individualised experience of living through the Covid 19 pandemic. From these focus groups 37 responses were collected and analysed.
- Supported the vaccine roll-out
- Supported the community volunteer response
- Helped people to access the services they need
- Provided information and advice through the Coronavirus information hub on our website

Top four areas that people have contacted us about:



29% on GP services

RECEPTION



21% on Community Services



17% on Dentistry



5% on Adult Social Care

Providing information and advice during Covid 19



Early in the pandemic, we heard from people about the lack of clear information and often inaccurate information. Our role became much more focused on providing people with clear, consistent and concise advice and information articles on our website to help address people's concerns. In the last year our information relating to Coronavirus has been accessed nearly 2000 times.

The key questions people were asking included:

- What does shielding mean?
- How can I find an NHS dentist?



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.



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Volunteers

At Healthwatch Rochdale we are supported by 18 volunteers to help us find out what people think is working, and what improvements people would like to make to services.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say from home, by sharing surveys and consultations to their contacts and online platforms.
- Shared relevant Healthwatch Rochdale and local health and social care related content on social media.
- Carried out a website review for Healthwatch Rochdale and recommend improvements to our website.
- Took part in Focus Groups around specific themes such as mental health and wellbeing and Covid-19.
- Upskilled and took part in refresher training to continually upskill themselves.
- Shared their reasons for having the Covid Vaccination in our social media campaign.
- Looked at innovative ways of connecting via Zoom and participated in two online quiz sessions with staff.
- Took part in, and shared, our annual 360 stakeholder review.
- Continued to support Healthwatch Rochdale remotely (Admin Volunteer)



Admin volunteer – Elizabeth

“I volunteer for Healthwatch Rochdale because it helps me to keep my admin skills in check and the opportunity to learn new ones. I support community engagement sessions as and when they arise so I can develop my social and communication skills.”



Advisory Group members – Jav

“I volunteer for Healthwatch Rochdale because I want to make a positive change in the changing environment of Health & Social arena especially with Integrated Care Systems around the corner.”



Board Member - Melanie

“I volunteer for Healthwatch Rochdale because I want to help local people have a voice in the health and care services that they receive.”



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch at **Healthwatch Rochdale**.



www.healthwatchrochdale.org.uk

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Youthwatch Rochdale



Engaging with young people across the Rochdale Borough

The aim of Youthwatch Rochdale is to engage with young people in the Borough, to enable them to have their views and suggestions regarding Health and Social Care matters actively heard, gather collective views, and for them to use their voice. Examples of this include participation in surveys, focus groups and attending Monthly online meetings.

Why set up Youthwatch Rochdale?

Youthwatch Rochdale will give young people the opportunity to shape health and care services in the Rochdale borough. This will help to improve the health of local young people by giving them an independent voice and making sure that services are right for them. Youthwatch Rochdale will enable young people to be part of their local community through meaningful volunteering opportunities whilst also improving the overall equality and diversity of the work carried out by Healthwatch Rochdale.



How young people will benefit from being part of Youthwatch

- Gain new practical Skills
- Empowerment of young voices
- Improved social skills, including confidence and communication
- Volunteer hours that can add weight to university applications
- Teambuilding, making new friends and socialising
- Improved employability in the future
- Incentives – Poster Competition with Voucher prizes
- Increased aspirations

To ensure that services were not being replicated, and for efficiency, as there are already a number of Youth Groups already established in the Borough, Healthwatch Rochdale asked that these services participate via a youth service user representative and also local secondary schools nominate a pupil voice representative to attend the monthly meetings via Zoom.

To gather a wider reach, spread knowledge and pique interest in Youthwatch Rochdale, a Design a poster competition was run. This had 3 main prizes of a £50 voucher and 5 runners up vouchers of £15.

The Poster competition was very successful and had a wide youth audience reach, it also engaged more young people from diverse backgrounds and saw an increase in interest at the monthly meetings, the competition ignited youth 'Passion'.

The question was also asked "What matters the most to young people?" and the overall unanimous reply was "Getting Young voices heard!" and "We need to establish a safe place to have our voices heard."

Youthwatch Rochdale has held an online Question and Answer session for young people and held four successful online meetings for young people, each of these meetings has had guest speakers these include Action Together Street Ambassadors schemes and some of the local schools have taken this on leading on from the meeting that was attended by their youth representatives, and The Council for Disabled Children also consulted our Youthwatch members on some local outcome statements.

Youthwatch Rochdale meets the second Tuesday of each month via Zoom at 6:30pm until 7:00pm. We welcome new members.



Lived Experience Panel



Lived Experience Panel

Healthwatch Rochdale have run a very successful recruitment drive to recruit 6 volunteers as Lived Experience Panel members working with Aqua and Northern Care Alliance.

The aim of the project was to deliver a model of working with lived experience, that promotes and embeds co-production in any improvement that can be sustained and spread across the Northern Care Alliance footprint.

Healthwatch Rochdale recruited six Lived Experience panel members all whom have an active involvement in health services as service users and Healthwatch Bury have undertaken the evaluation of this work.

The new cohort of lived experience recruits also undertook an induction and training virtually with Rochdale Care Organisation and have been matched with a mentor to further support them.



Lived Experience Panel

The LEP members will be focusing their support on looking at improvements in the following areas:

- Improving communication between patient and staff
- Supporting strengthening the Best Interest Decision process
- Helping patients and service users access our phlebotomy services in a more timely fashion
- Bringing their experience to improve the COVID-19 vaccination process at Rochdale

”



“I really enjoy being part of the Lived Experience Panel, it gives me the opportunity to talk about where I feel improvements to services can be made. The panel, working alongside staff, then work together to put in place any improvements.”

The Lived Experience Panel Members will also be offered the opportunity to enhance their training further by becoming ‘Observe and Act’ assessors, which allows real time feedback to be collected following the review of a clinical area and speaking to service users. The findings are provided in the same session and staff are asked to listen and act on this feedback.

”



“I really enjoy being part of the Lived Experience Panel, it gives me the opportunity to talk about where I feel improvements to services can be made. The panel, working alongside staff, then work together to put in place any improvements.”

Share your views with us

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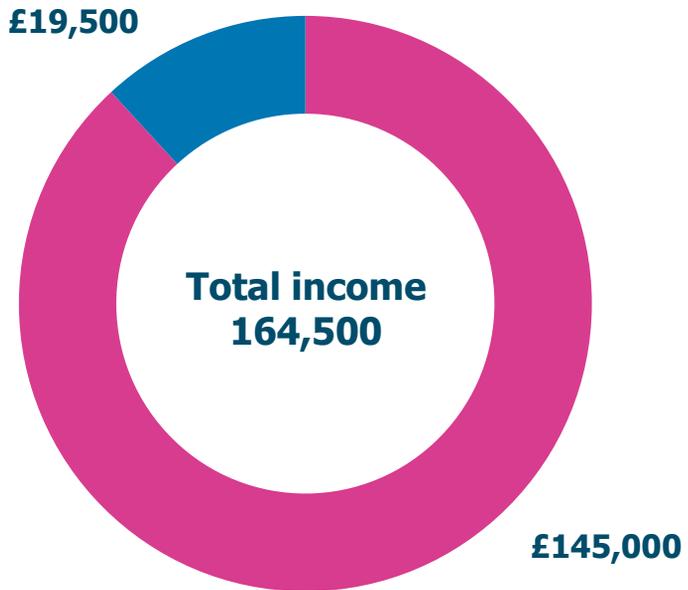
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Finances

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

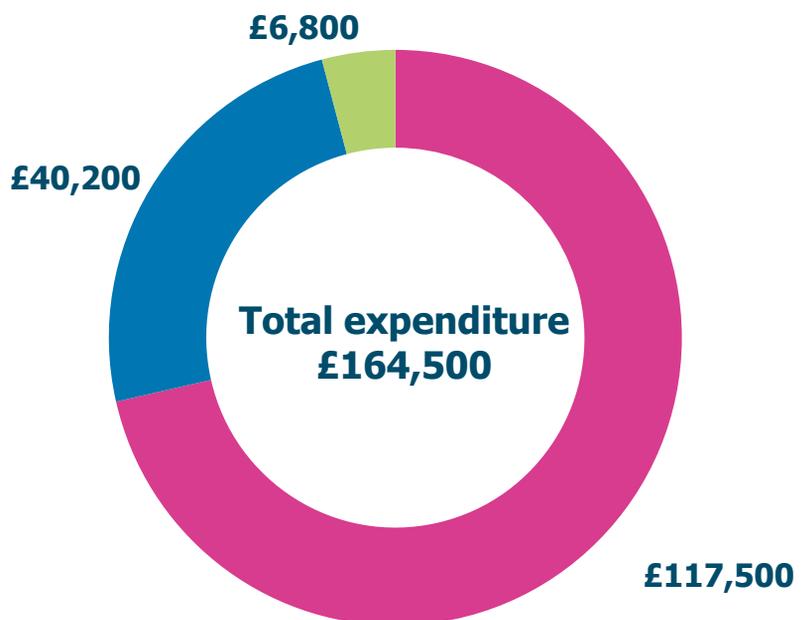
Income

- Funding received from local authority
- Additional funding



Expenditure

- Staff costs
- Operational costs
- Support and administration



Next steps & thank you

Top priorities for 2021-22

Healthwatch Rochdale's workplan for 2021/22 has been developed following public consultation. The workplan consist of nine key work streams based on areas that local residents told us they want us to work. The workplan does not include any additional commissioned pieces of work.

The nine key workstreams for 2021/22 are:

1. GP Access
2. Access to Community Mental Health Services For All Ages
3. Residential and Nursing Home Enter and View
4. Information, Advice and Signposting Service
5. Volunteering with Healthwatch
6. Youthwatch Rochdale
7. #TogetherRochdale Communication Group
8. Healthwatch Rochdale Advisory Group
9. Resident Forum – An Audience With



"Tackling unfair health differences will need those in power to listen. To hear the experiences of those facing inequality and understand the steps that could improve people's lives, and then to act on what has been learned."



To read Healthwatch Rochdale's 2021/22 workplan and business plan please visit:

<https://healthwatchrochdale.org.uk/report/2021-04-13/healthwatch-rochdale-publish-202122-workplan>



Statutory statements

About us

Healthwatch Rochdale, 104 – 106 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL12 1PQ.

Healthwatch Rochdale uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making.

Our Healthwatch board consists of 7 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2020/21 the board met 4 times with the public able to ask questions submitted in advance and attend via Zoom.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Our annual work plan is developed following public consultation with Rochdale residents. We also have an Advisory Group who advise us on local health and care issues and action for Healthwatch Rochdale to take.

Methods and systems used across the year's work to obtain people's views and experience.

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible have the opportunity to provide us with insight about their experience of health and care services. During 2020/21 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, provided a feedback centre/rate and review system, attended virtual meetings of community groups and forums, provided our own virtual activities and engaged with the public through social media.

We are committed to taking additional steps to ensure we obtain the views of people from diverse backgrounds who are often not heard by health and care decision makers.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We publish it on our website and send to our mailing list which includes professionals and local residents. We provide the Annual Report in digital format and paper format. On publication we also send a digital copy of the annual report to Healthwatch England and Rochdale Borough Council

2020-21 priorities

Healthwatch Rochdale developed a new work plan in response to Covid 19 to ensure that patient experience continued to shape local health and care services following changes brought by the pandemic

The programme was developed to run from September 2020 – March 2021 and included the following priorities:

- **Mental Health and Covid 19** - Healthwatch Rochdale held monthly online forums to collect feedback and ensure patient experience is used as part of the design and delivery of local Mental Health services.
- **Inequalities and Covid 19** – Healthwatch Rochdale worked to highlight inequality issues to providers and commissioners and worked with partners to provide inclusive communication.
- **Communication and Engagement** – Healthwatch Rochdale will share health and social care information from partners via the #TogetherRochdale Communications Group and the #TogetherRochdale e bulletin
- **Patient feedback** - Healthwatch Rochdale will share intelligence with commissioners, set up independent forums to enable the patient voice to feed into the health and social care system and develop the Healthwatch Rochdale Advisory Board.





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