

Annual Work Programme

April 2024 – March 2025



Introduction

About Us

Local Healthwatch organisations were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure that the voices of those using health and social care services are heard.

Healthwatch Dudley, formed in 2013 and is hosted by Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) in Brierley Hill.

We actively gather community feedback and ensure that everyone's views are considered by those who commission and deliver services. Our role also includes signposting individuals to relevant resources and providing essential information to help navigate the health and social care system.

By supporting individuals to express their views and experiences we aim to ensure that local people have a meaningful impact on the services they receive.

To find out more about us visit : www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk

Our Statutory Responsibilities

- **Gather and share views** on local health and social care services with commissioners and providers.
- **Produce reports and recommendations** for service improvement.
- **Encourage public involvement** in health and social care planning and delivery.
- **Provide information and advice** on accessing services and available options.
- **Share local views and experiences** with Healthwatch England to fulfil the role of a national champion.
- **Escalate concerns** to Healthwatch England and local decision-makers when necessary to advocate for change.

Our priorities for 2024–2025

Accessing NHS Dental Services in Dudley Borough



This project aims to understand local experiences of accessing dental services in Dudley, focusing on challenges faced by individuals, especially those who may face additional barriers. Collaborating with stakeholders and engaging volunteers will help gather valuable insights.

The findings will guide recommendations for improvements and be shared publicly to enhance local dental services.

Residential Care Home Conversations

The aim is to capture the voices of residents and relatives in Dudley-based care homes through Enter & View visits. This project will identify health and wellbeing needs while exploring resource gaps. It will also foster relationships with local oversight bodies and regulators.

Findings will be compiled into separate reports and shared with key stakeholders to influence service delivery positively.



Enter & View Insights



Our Enter & View visits will capture the experiences of local people while accessing various Health and Social Care Services. We'll stay alert to any important insights and be ready to conduct visits as needed. Staff and volunteers will receive the latest training and resources, ensuring all policies and documentation are current and easily accessible.

We plan to carry out at least six Enter & View visits, with findings shared with relevant stakeholders to improve service delivery.

Voices in Safeguarding

Our proposal focuses on listening to individuals who have experienced the safeguarding process in the Dudley Borough to understand their feelings about how their situations were handled.

We will then share this feedback with the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership (DSPP) by publishing a report that includes our insights and recommendations.



Ongoing Efforts

Here's what we're continuing to work on:

Listening to Local Voices

We are committed to making sure that people's experiences with health and social care are heard. Through meetings and face-to-face conversations, we are gathering feedback by engaging with the community.

What's happening:

- Sharing insights with those who can take action and create improvements.
- Attending local Health and Social Care boards and strategic meetings to raise further insight into policies and delivery.
- Participating in events and engagements to collect views and experiences from across the borough.
- Continue supporting engagement initiatives at Russell's Hall Hospital to gather insights on accessing hospital and related health and social care services.

Making Information Accessible

It's important for everyone to easily find clear information about health and social care. We will continue to share community information online and in person, to help keep people connected.

What's happening:

- Enhancing our website to be more user-friendly and helpful.
- Increasing our social media presence across all our platforms.
- Engaging in outreach across the community to raise awareness of how Healthwatch Dudley can support them.
- Providing information on local services and resources to the community.
- Helping individuals navigate health and social care options through direct support.
- Distributing printed materials and reports to raise awareness and share our research.

Research that Drives Change

By listening to the community, we can identify the changes needed to improve health and social care services. Local stories and experiences guide our research and help us share recommendations.

What's happening:

- Conducting research on key issues such as health inequalities and access to healthcare services.
- Gathering feedback from local residents to shape future services.
- Sharing findings with decision-makers to influence positive outcomes and strategic policies.

Supporting Volunteers and Collaboration

Volunteers play an essential role in delivering our goals. By connecting with the community and offering support, we aim to make a bigger difference together.

What's happening:

- Providing support and training to ensure volunteers are confident in any tasks undertaken.
- Collaborating with local organisations to work towards shared goals.
- Encouraging involvement from underrepresented voices, including young people, in our activities.
- Create accessible ways and online options for people to get involved in our activities.

Promoting Health Equality

We are committed to supporting equal access to healthcare, particularly for women and minority communities. By championing for better, more inclusive services, we look to address health inequalities.

What's happening:

- Supporting initiatives that focus on women's health and addressing inequalities.
- Championing for better access to healthcare for all communities.
- Partnering with local groups to raise awareness and improve services, especially for under-represented groups.

Reaching More People

We are dedicated to engaging with our community and making sure everyone stays informed.

What's happening:

- Engaging with the whole community, attending events and community activities and carrying out outreach across the borough.
- Sharing the annual report and key updates with local GP surgeries and community hubs.
- We will continue to build relationships with stakeholders to champion our recommendations from recent research, such as those on GP access and the over-representation of young Black youths in the criminal justice system, to create a real impact and a positive legacy.
- Exploring new ways to engage people, such as podcasts and different media channels.
- Keeping our website and social media channels updated with timely information.

Digital and Technology

We are improving our systems to better collect and use data, ensuring our projects are well-informed and aligned with community needs.

What's happening:

- Using new research tools to improve our projects.
- Keeping CRM systems updated to capture and report valuable insights.
- Engaging with the community through social media and preferred channels to listen to their feedback.
- Providing training and updating work processes where needed.
- Reviewing and improving research methods to ensure they are effective.

How We'll Show Our Impact

We'll keep the community informed about our progress through:

Quarterly Updates: Highlighting key findings and statistics and the community voice from our outreach and engagement activities.

Annual Report: Offering a comprehensive overview of our year's work and its impact on the community.

Insight Bulletins: Regular updates shared with stakeholders and the public via our website, mailing lists, and social media.

Website and Social Media: Keeping everyone informed with timely updates and important information shared through our website and social media channels.

Research Findings and Enter & View Reports: Sharing insights from our research and Enter & View visits through printed reports and accessible versions available on our website.

