



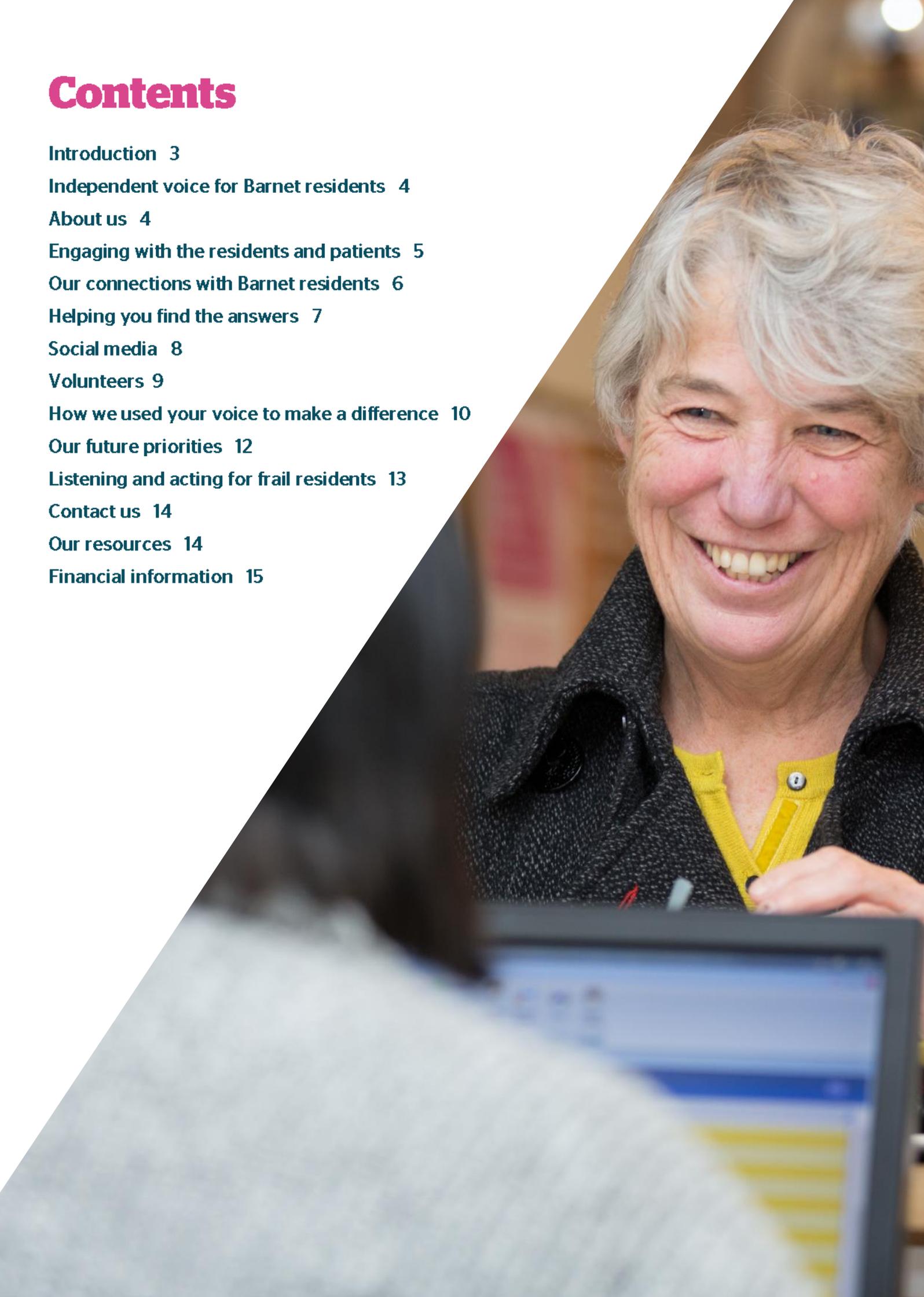
People's Voice in Times of Change

Annual Report 2018 - 19



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Introduction

This year has been a time of change for health and social care services. Our Healthwatch Barnet volunteers and staff have been at the forefront of these changes, bringing local voices and experiences to the attention of decision-makers.

With input and contributions from residents, volunteers and staff, we have been able to achieve our key priorities which were:

- Developing the quality of GP services
- Helping shape the future of health and social care across North London
- Listening and acting on the views of 'seldom-heard' communities
- Reviewing services in residential care homes

We have been particularly pleased to see changes for local residents as a result of our work. Just some highlights are:

- working with Royal Free London so that vulnerable patients who were previously refused hospital transport had this re-instated
- creating clear and accessible information for patients on appointments systems, through language services and in new digital records and
- finding out the needs of how isolated and vulnerable residents in care homes to make their voices heard.

NHS England has recently published its 'Long Term Plan' of how services will be delivered in the next 10 years. Health and social care will be working together closely. We would like to thank our active and dedicated volunteers whose feedback and ideas are helping shape these services. Our staff team past and present have shown their energy and commitment in these times of change to ensuring your voices are heard.

This year we have been able to work with regional and national forums enabling Barnet's expertise and input to be shared with national services, from reviews of Royal Free Hospitals to feedback on the new Friends and Family Test.



Julie Pal
CEO
CommUNITY Barnet



Selina Rodrigues
Head of Healthwatch
CommUNITY Barnet



Rory Cooper
Manager
Healthwatch Barnet



Lisa Robbins
Manager
Healthwatch Barnet
(Apr 18–Sep 18)

An independent voice for Barnet residents

Healthwatch Barnet is the independent voice through which Barnet residents can share their experiences of using health and social care services.

It is delivered by a Barnet based staff team, a network of Barnet based charities and community organisations and a team of enthusiastic volunteers.

Healthwatch Barnet is an arms-length department of COMMUNITY Barnet, an independent legal entity and a registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

About us

Healthwatch was established through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to give users of health and social care services a powerful voice both locally and nationally.

Healthwatch Barnet was established in 2013 and is part of a national network led by Healthwatch England. We have a seat on the Barnet Health and Wellbeing Board, the Barnet Clinical Commissioning (CCG) Governing Board and the Adult Safeguarding Board.

We are the independent voice for residents of Barnet who use health and social care services. Our vision is of a thriving and active community of Barnet people who want to influence and contribute to the development and delivery of quality health and social care in the borough.

To achieve this, Healthwatch Barnet has:

- Built a powerful relationship with residents, volunteers and service users to gather their views and experiences, capturing and presenting the voices of under-represented communities
- Promoted and supported the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local care services
- Signposted individuals to available information and advice to help them make informed choices about their health and social care.





Engaging with residents and patients

Healthwatch's engagement with health and social care providers, Barnet's considerable voluntary and community sector and the residents and patients has continued this year. Our relationship with those providing and receiving services in the borough ensures that we are in a strong position to advise and signpost the public and provide informed, patient focused and evidence based recommendations to service providers.

This year the engagement team have attended over 50 engagement events in Barnet and been represented on over 60 forums representing the patients' voice predominantly in Barnet but also at a regional and national level.

We collected feedback from the public in a variety of ways:

- Face-to-face interaction at a huge variety of engagement events, stalls and community events
- 'Tell us your story' cards, which can be filled in and posted to us free of charge
- Focus groups on specific topics to allows us to engage in more detail with the public
- Surveys inviting people to answer questions about a particular topic
- Our 'Speak Out' form available on Healthwatch Barnet website
- Our Information and Signposting service.

Our connections with Barnet residents



Helping you find the answers

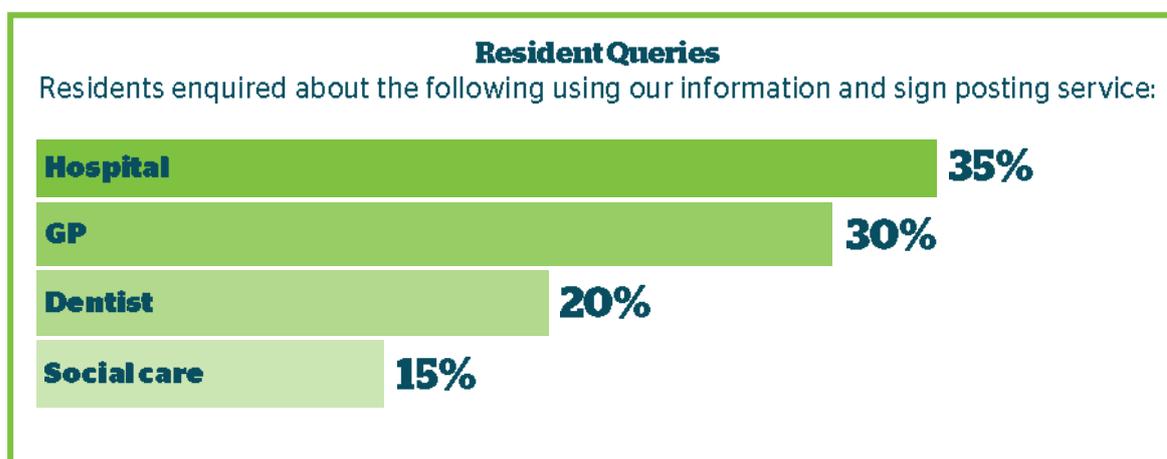
Information and signposting service

We help residents find the health and social care they need and provides details and signposting to other services.

There are many reasons why we may need to offer information and signposting to service users. For example, health and social care service users may need to find out more about a service or find out what services there are in the local area. We also signpost people looking for extra support for their needs. Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There are a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look.

Across the year residents have been supported to access support with formal complaints processes, local advocacy services, information and advice, community based groups and activities and support groups.

Our most common questions in 2018/19 included how to change GP, how to make a complaint with regard to hospital services and how to find out more about adult social care services.



We provided help in these ways:

- A patient wanted to know who to contact and how to complain following a complicated case history with various hospital providers. We listened carefully and provided them with relevant advice and details of who to contact as well as referring them to Pohwer, the health advocacy service.
- A patient wanted to be seen by a different GP but the practice did not allow them. We clarified their rights as a patient and advised them on what they can do.
- Important diagnostic health checks were frequently cancelled by a hospital department. We supported the patients in contacting PALs and alerted the CCG. The patients had their appointments scheduled.

Complex cases and safeguarding

Some patients, service-users and their relatives can find real barriers to services and can get 'lost' in the system, with staff not responding to or ignoring their concerns. This affected those in outpatient services of gastroenterology and cardiology and also relatives who needed further support from ward staff and consultants. Where appropriate, we escalated these cases to Adult Social Care, CCG staff and Safeguarding teams which resolved the difficulties. We were pleased that the BCCG Board Members learnt from one of these 'case-studies' of the impact on patients' health and wellbeing.

Social media



Share your views and help make local NHS services better in Barnet



@HWBarnet 1 Apr 2018

It's our birthday today - we are 5 years old! We wanted to thank you for your work to help improve #health and #socialcare in our #community.



@HWBarnet 25 Feb 2019

Healthwatch is @MDXUni part of #FairtradeFortnight2019 talking about health services and trying out #FairTrade treats



@HWBarnet 17 May 2018

What is on your bucket list? Come find us at @brentcross_sc near Fenwick where we're raising awareness of #DyingMattersWeek in our pop-up shop! @DyingMatters #WhatCanYouDo #youonlydieonce



@HWBarnet 5 Jul 2018

Happy 70th birthday #NHS! Find out more about the NHS at 70, take the quiz or get involved: bit.ly/2MRDNB3 #NHS70 #health #Barnet



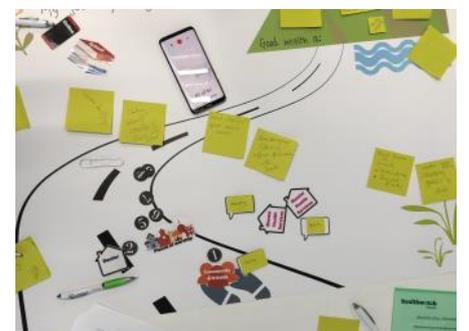
@HWBarnet 30 May 2018

Really enlightening course on Trans Awareness with NCL Healthwatch. Thanks to @HWIslington for hosting and @Genderintell for a great session. #health #LGBTIQ #LGBTI



@HWBarnet 18 Jul 2018

A great quote from one of the young people from @NCSTheChallenge attending our #mentalhealth and #wellbeing sessions "health isn't just about your physical and mental health it's also about good social health"



Volunteers

Healthwatch Barnet is able to achieve so much more because of the dedicated team of volunteers that contribute huge levels of time, experience and expertise to dozens of Healthwatch projects each year.

Healthwatch Barnet has over 30 very active volunteers who are passionate and dedicated local residents and patient representatives, and also active in their local communities and have many years of professional and voluntary experience in the health and social care sector.

Enter and View

Our Enter and View volunteers give their expertise and insight to the planning, preparation and report writing as well as conducting the visits to care homes and other services. They are skilled and empathic so can help residents easily and safely express what they like and don't like about services. We would like to thank Tina Stanton, the volunteer Chair of our Enter and View Group, supported by Helena Pugh .

Primary Care

Our Primary Care Group of volunteers have been involved in a number of broader health schemes as well as providing considerable input to Primary Care projects.

The volunteer Co-Chairs, Sue Blain and Stewart Block, have led this group through a time of change with the development of Sustainability and Transformation Plans, the start of Primary Care Networks and the sensitive issue of shared care records. We are grateful for their good-humour, constructive approach and commitment, and that our volunteers have remained constant and committed. All the volunteers use their great 'people' skills, integrity and experience as local patients and residents to work with health and social care bodies who may not always understand or be receptive to the role of Healthwatch.

We are pleased to say that, led by our Co-Chairs, the Primary Care Group has:

- worked with BCCG, resulting in a new and improved patient information leaflet on bank holiday closing
- generated interest, commitment and attendance at the Borough-wide PPG network
- led the project to produce a ground-breaking, patient-friendly leaflet on patient records for north London
- identified the poor performance in cancer targets, resulting in our recent engagement with local communities, particularly those without fluent English or newly arrived to the UK
- monitored and reviewed the relocations and plans for GP closures
- and advocated for better use and publicity of GP extended hours

This has led to BCCG increasing its engagement with patients and also, with Healthwatch Barnet joint branding with NHS on national pilot patient leaflets and very positive feedback from commissioners and engagement leads.

A big thank you

Many of our volunteers chose not to share their own daily personal challenges and difficulties. We know that they have experienced their own and family challenges in health and wellbeing and other areas, but have nonetheless continued to support Healthwatch. We would like to say a big, heart-felt thank you.

How we used your voice to make a difference

We have captured the voice of Barnet residents in a systemic way and presented that information to the borough's strategic decision makers, commissioners and placed the patient and resident voice at the heart of decision making.

We have also worked closely with other partners and providers of health and social care and shared our findings with them and met with them regularly to monitor progress.

Improving the quality of GP services



GP Language Interpreting Services

Patients told us they were not provided with the language support they needed and struggled through their appointment. Many residents are keen to develop their English skills, but specialist support is needed for the technical and important information used at the GP. We undertook a mystery shop of all Barnet GPs and found that whilst GP staff knew about the service, many did not advertise it or inform patients. We are now working with Barnet CCG and GPs to improve this.



GP Extended Access

We know patients find it hard to get a GP appointment. We realised that information about new, additional GP appointments were not being promoted to residents. We reviewed all 52 GP websites and found a third had no information and on many sites, the information was hard to find. Barnet CCG endorsed our report and committed to working with GPs to make improvements. We continue to monitor patient understanding and experience of GP extended access and are currently working on a follow up report to further improve the service.



GP Closures and Patient Letters

Our volunteers told us the information they received about why a GP has closed and what to do next were very complicated. Healthwatch Barnet reviewed the letters that were sent out to practice patients and recommended simplifying and changing these. Based on our feedback, NHS England has now changed the letter so they are simpler and clearer.



Using Health and Care Systems

Many patients, including those with emerging and long-term conditions find appointment systems and referrals to hospitals difficult to use. It is a complicated process. Working in collaboration with the CCG and with GP practice managers, Healthwatch created a referral management leaflet and poster for patients. These are now available in all GP practices in Barnet and have proved extremely useful for both patients and practice in terms of understanding and time saved. A local practice manager reported back that the poster 'was really useful for patients and staff'.



Young People and Health

Healthwatch is keen to engage with young people and learn about their experience of health and social care. We spoke to a 100 young people at Middlesex University who told us their experience of accessing GP and dentist services. A third of students had not been to the dentist and were not registered with a GP. An information leaflet was produced by Healthwatch Barnet and Middlesex University for the Fresher's Fair.

Changing systems for the next 10 years



Digital Services from GPs

We were part of a national project to find out what digital services local residents would like to use. We spoke to 250 residents, including older people, those with disabilities and those with English as a second language. We are pleased that our findings are helping shape the future of NHS services.



North London Partners in Health and Social Care

The NHS is working with social care services to make changes and improvements across our 5 North London Boroughs. This will involve some services working more closely and changes to where and how these are delivered. Our staff and volunteers have been active in planning for these changes, including digital records and orthopaedics and representing residents' views at senior level meetings. The NHS lead officer frequently gathered views from our staff and volunteer team saying, "Thank you for your input. Another great meeting."



Digital Records for North London Patients

Healthwatch Barnet volunteers made a big difference to the information that patients will receive about how their health records could be shared between different health and care services. (Patients can 'opt-out' if they chose.) The lead NHS officer gave our volunteers "A HUGE thank you" for the improvements they made to this essential patient leaflet.

All reports can be found on our website : www.healthwatchbarnet.co.uk/ourreports

Out and about in the community and hospital



Adults Orthopaedics Services

We are pleased at how the NHS leaders have ensured that patients' views have been included in the re-design of this service. One of our volunteers, has been an active patient representative, both on senior panels and also out and about in Barnet, engaging and encouraging feedback on the service.



Barnet Mencap Cancer Screening

Our charity partner, Barnet Mencap was concerned about the low level of awareness and take-up of screening by people with learning disabilities, compared with other areas. Patients told us that information in Easy Read, reminders from their GP about appointments, more time with nurses and having support in the appointments would help. We are pleased that health and care professionals are working with Barnet Mencap to put this in place.



Continence

Many patients are concerned or embarrassed to talk about their need for continence services. Through patient surveys at Finchley Memorial Hospital, we produced a thorough report of patient experience on these services. We were pleased to hear that patients found the service good, including staff and follow up appointments. As patients can self-refer, we recommended promotion and explanation of the service and also importantly, offering sign language and language interpreters for patients. We were pleased that Central London Community Healthcare responded to our recommendations and produced more patient information.



Hospital transport

National changes to the criteria meant that some patients were no longer eligible for hospital transport. However, we found this had mistakenly affected frail and vulnerable patients who were left without support and were missing appointments. Our action with Royal Free London resulted in the transport being re-instated and also meant that more training was given to staff to improve the service.

Our future priorities

These are our main projects for this year. These have been identified through feedback from local residents, our volunteers and staff from health and social care. We always welcome residents' views so please do contact us with your comments, suggestions and experiences:

- Review of Accident and Emergency Services
- Cancer
- Hospital Services
- Supported Living Services
- Mental health services
- Complaints

A close-up photograph of an elderly person's hand, showing wrinkled skin and a ring on the ring finger. The hand is resting on a fabric with a black and white checkered pattern. The background is blurred, showing more of the person's arm and the fabric.

Listening and acting for frail residents: Enter and View

The national Healthwatch network was established through the Health and Social Care Act of 2012. Through this, each Healthwatch has the legislative right to undertake announced and unannounced visits to health and social care settings for adults.

These visits are carried out by staff and volunteers who review the quality of care for patients/residents and their friends and relatives. All Enter and View representatives have current DBS checks and receive training for this as part of their role. As in accordance with the Healthwatch network, settings to visit are identified through meetings and guidance from the CQC.

The Enter and View reports are written by the Enter and View team and sent to the care provider to check for factual accuracy and to respond to the report recommendations. The reports are reviewed and authorised at each stage by Healthwatch senior staff, and once finalised are uploaded to our website.

We visited a range of locations this year, to hear from patients and residents and relatives in care homes and those in sheltered accommodation.

Starting in January 2019, our review of safeguarding in residential care looks at the awareness and implementation of good safeguarding standards and processes. This will continue until summer 2019 with at least 5 residential homes being reported on.

We completed our review of mealtime in care homes, having visited 6 key homes in total, finding that there was good practice to be shared, including presenting food in an appetising manner, encouraging communal meals and 'training' relatives to support residents with eating. We made recommendations for improvement, such as more support for frail residents, monitoring food and drink intake and improving menus. Barnet Council Adult Social Care said that our findings will be valuable in their future work with staff.

While most of our Enter and View work this year has been focused on Adult Social care in the form of care homes, we also followed up on a recent Enter and View visit to Cricklewood Walk in Centre and the team conducted a visit in September 2018. Cricklewood Walk-In Centre staff were keen to hear feedback from our visit, and we were pleased the Centre responded to our recommendations to clarify the Walk-In and GP systems and information for patients.

Contact us

We want to hear your views on Barnet health and social care. Contact us by email at info@healthwatchbarnet.co.uk or call us on 020 8364 8400.

Your Local Health and Social Care Champion

Using your feedback, we can let services know what needs to change

Information

Please visit our website for more information and resources

healthwatch
Barnet



Our resources

Have you been to our website recently? We have recently updated our resources pages, you will find lots of useful information available.

Accessibility	Children & Young People	Care Quality Commission	Dentists
Enter & View	GP	Learning Disability	Maternity
Podiatry	Safeguarding	Transport	Winter

Financial information

Healthwatch Barnet is funded to carry out statutory activities.
Funding is provided by the London Borough of Barnet.

Income

Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£128,000
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Additional Income	£14,018
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Total Income	£142,018
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Expenditure

Office costs	£43,800
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Staff costs	£83,836
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Direct delivery costs	£12,832
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Total Expenditure	£140,469
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CommUNITY Barnet is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee registered both with the Charity Commission and Companies House. We are governed by a Board of Trustees. Our Memorandum of Association allows us to operate in this way.

Healthwatch Barnet is a borough-wide service working in collaboration with committed and passionate Barnet focused organisations who have local knowledge, are experienced and trusted. The partnership is the eyes and ears in the community and can effectively act on complaints or concerns because it has direct access to seldom heard and under-represented members of the community. Through existing channels the partnership engages these communities with the Healthwatch agenda.

CommUNITY Barnet's Board of Trustees reviews performance, oversees risk and contributes to the promotion of the Healthwatch agenda. It is the decision-making body responsible for approving the action plan throughout the life of the contract.

CommUNITY Barnet's Board of Trustees are: Chris Cormie, Martin Edobor, Adam Goldstein, Anita Harris, Antony Jacobson, Michael Lassman, Jyoti Shah and Tony Vardy.



t 020 8364 8400

e info@communitybarnet.org.uk

1st Floor Barnet House
1255 High Road
London N20 0EJ

www.communitybarnet.org.uk

t @communitybarnet

f @communitybarnet

t 020 8364 8400

e info@healthwatchbarnet.co.uk

1st Floor Barnet House
1255 High Road
London N20 0EJ

www.healthwatchbarnet.co.uk

t @hwbarnet

f @healthwatchbarnet

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