

Healthwatch Islington

Update and work planning

Health and Care Scrutiny, September 2023

Our vision and role

Improved health & social care outcomes for all local residents

- Part of a national network (in which we lead on impact measurement)
- Part funded by LBI to fulfil statutory functions of Health and Social Care Act 2013):
- Gather and report views on health and social care,
- Provide people with information on services,
- Collaborative, ‘critical friend’ approach, working in partnership wherever we can.

Our work in 2022/23

- 1,133 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us.
- 390 residents came to us for advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost of living crisis.
- Reports: GP Access, Pharmacy, Cancer screening, Long Covid, Smoking cessation and pulmonary rehab, LGBTQI+ residents' experiences of health and care services.

Our volunteers

49 outstanding volunteers gave their time across 135 days to make care better for our community:

- Hosting stalls at community venues to gather feedback on services and raise awareness of dangers of high blood pressure, giving over 800 blood pressure checks to local residents.
- Mystery shoppers rang all Islington GP practices to evaluate the quality of messaging on GP phone lines.

Our volunteers

- Volunteer digital champions and learners, and volunteer researchers came together to identify ways to improve how information is presented on GP websites.
- We co-produced a resource for general practice ‘Getting the best out of your practice website and phonenumber’ which has been distributed by the ICB to support GPs to improve their messaging so we can have *“the best websites and phone messaging in London!”*

Our partners

- **Diverse Communities Health Voice:** Since 2014 we've raised around £560,000 for the partnership to help us reach residents across language and cultural barriers.
- **Equalities Toolkit** for mental health providers: co-producing a tool to help us all provide more equitably.
- Clarion, Cloudesley, Digital Unite, Good Things Foundation to help ensure **our digital offer** is robust and our volunteers have access to great training. However, there is very limited funding.
- 3 Mental Health Partnerships Coordinators. Helping to bring **mental health support out in to the community**.

Our plans for 2023/24 onwards

- Continuing our work to improve access to GP services and mental health services.
- Gathering feedback on home care services.
- Working with Evidence Islington to improve how feedback from residents is gathered and used by statutory services.
- Our 'Just One Thing' survey is helping us identify new priorities based on resident feedback.

Equalities Pledges

As a result of HWI's work, all commissioned providers are being asked to sign up to three equalities pledges (this includes us):

We have been successful in taking steps to improve ethnic diversity of our Board, the diversity of our staff team, and the diversity of gender and age of the community represented through our partnerships and work programme.