healthwatch

Healthwatch and Volunteering

About Healthwatch

Healthwatch is the health and social care champion. It is for anyone who uses health services or needs care, we want to hear about all experiences.

Healthwatch England works nationally.

Every local authority has a local Healthwatch.

We have the power to ensure that NHS and social care leaders listen to feedback and improve standards of care. We can also help people find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.

Our mission

To make sure that people's experiences help make health and care better.

Our values

- **Equity:** Working in an inclusive and compassionate way, with a strong link to the communities we serve, and empowering them.
- **Collaboration:** We will build relationships, internally and externally, communicating clearly and co-producing with partners to amplify our influence.
- **Impact:** Our agenda will be driven by the public, being a purposeful, critical friend to decision-makers.
- **Truth:** Having integrity and honesty, speaking truth to power
- **Independence:** Being ambitious about creating change for people and communities, being accountable to them and holding others to account

Our people

The Healthwatch network is present in every community.

Nationally

37

staff work with the public, policymakers and partners to improve care

Locally across 153 services

570 Full-time equivalent staff deliver the Healthwatch service for local communities

3,997 Volunteers kindly give up their time to understand local people's views, provide advice and help improve services.

4.08 On average each local Healthwatch has four full-time equivalent staff.

Our reach

Last year one and a half million people with information, or to have their say on care.

Nationally

219,761 People used our service for clear information and advice

13,505 People shared their experiences of care

Locally

929,544 People used our service for clear information and advice

390,049 People shared their experiences of care

Healthwatch Volunteers - overview

Then and now

The health and social landscape is changing, and so are we.

Staff

2014/15	595
2023/24	570

Volunteers

2014/15	3,700
2023/24	3,997

Funding

2013/14	£33.2m
2023/24	£25.5m

Healthwatch Volunteers

National Support:

- Volunteer Lead Network Meetings
- Learning and development opportunities
  - Recruitment, induction, management, impact reporting
- Best practice sharing
- Media and communications support
- Online engagement platform

Benefits for local volunteers:

- Positive contribution – to genuinely help people and communities
- Learn new skills
- Connections and meet others
- Being part of the change to health and social care locally

Healthwatch Volunteer Roles

Roles include:

1. Online Feedback Collector Volunteer
2. Information and Signposting volunteer
3. Digital Communications Volunteer/ Social Media Volunteer
4. Publications and Document Editor Volunteer
5. Enter and View Volunteer
6. Virtual Visitor Volunteer
7. Board Members/Trustees Advisory Group
8. Community Engagement and Outreach Volunteer
9. Research Volunteer
10. Administration Volunteer
11. Healthwatch representation Volunteer
12. Healthwatch Champion/Ambassador Volunteer

Our Volunteers

Sheila Burridge – Volunteer Officer

healthwatch
Somerset

We are fortunate to have a team of volunteers who help us carry out our work

Our volunteers are an integral part of all we do

What our volunteers do

- Spoke to young people at fetes, fun days, and youth groups
- Carried out visits to care homes and hospitals under our Enter and View work.
- Took part in surveys
- Supported a COPD singing group for people with respiratory issues
- Helped to publicise our projects.
- Took part in focus workshops e.g. at carers groups

Volunteers are our eyes and ears in their local community

- They told us how people were struggling due to pharmacy closures in Glastonbury
- We heard about GP access issues in West Somerset
- And the difficulty getting ADHD medication in Bridgwater
- Volunteers gave us personal case studies for our Dental Access report
- And shared their experiences of caring for a family member with social workers at a community training session

Volunteers feel they can make a difference

- By speaking up about issues
- Sharing stories from their communities
- Encouraging their networks of family and friends to complete our surveys
- Taking a lay person perspective when carrying out visits to services
- Representing the public or patient voice when attending meetings on behalf of Healthwatch

Most recently our volunteers have:

- Attended a Men's Health event in Glastonbury
- Talked to carers at a carers assessment day
- Carried out a GP surgery visit
- Supported us at a Diversity celebration day
- Chatted to people at a wellbeing/mental health hub

Thank you

Any questions?

For more information

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