

healthwatch
Middlesbrough

Championing what matters to you

Annual Report 2021/22



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Message from our Chair

Once again, I am proud to introduce the 2021-2022 Annual Report for Healthwatch Middlesbrough. Under the banner of Healthwatch South Tees (HWST) we are the voice of users in their localities, finding out what people like about health and social care services and what can be improved.

The team has had an extremely busy 12 months. Emerging from lockdown we have adopted a hybrid model of working from home as well as coming together in a new office base.

As a consequence, internal information sharing has been improved, as we can facilitate new connections with external stakeholders who share our building. As this report will evidence, this has further extended our reach into local communities.

We have continued to recruit targeted Community Champions who connect and support locally whilst overcoming barriers to engagement. We now have a total of 31 Champions who represent the following communities and organisations.

Young People Older People Substance misuse

Neurodevelopmental Voluntary and community sector groups

LGBTQ+ Carers A variety of ethnic and minority groups

Public Health PCN's Councillors Social prescribing

Pharmacies Deaf communities Wellbeing groups

Royal National Institute for the Blind Local Authority

participation leads MIND Mental Health Practitioners

Everyday Language Solutions

Long term health conditions support groups



The logo for Healthwatch Community Champions is circular with a pink and green border. It features the text 'healthwatch' in a stylized font at the top, 'Community Champions' in a white box in the center, and the tagline 'Improving health and social care together across South Tees' at the bottom.

All the work carried out by Healthwatch Middlesbrough in 21/22 has ensured that local voices are heard, and action taken to improve services.

You can read in more detail about this throughout this report, including how Healthwatch has:

- provided a text only option for the Deaf community to request relevant health and care information and signposting.
- conducted a significant consultation that has and will continue to inform the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) mental health Community Transformation Programme over the next five years.
- achieved positive outcomes as a result of relationships and contacts made through our Information and Signposting function.
- continued to build upon our excellent relationship with the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHNHSFT) Patient Experience and Involvement Lead.

Finally, in preparation for the creation of the Integrated Care System (ICS) we have enhanced our partnership working with other local Healthwatch's across the region to ensure local voices continue to inform NHS England and Improvement's future commissioning considerations.

With the support of Healthwatch England, we have also worked collaboratively with North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch's to produce a working agreement that ensures local experiences are shared and continue to influence decisions at both strategic and place-based levels.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this report and discover more about the work of Middlesbrough.

I have no doubt the next year will continue to bring challenges across the locality and the region. Whatever these challenges are, Healthwatch Middlesbrough will continue to play a vital role in providing a voice for local communities to improve the delivery of health and social care for all.



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paul Crawshaw', written in a cursive style.

Professor Paul Crawshaw

Chair: Healthwatch Middlesbrough

About us

Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Middlesbrough is your local health and social care champion.

We work really hard to ensure that NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice for free.



Our vision

To ensure the people of Middlesbrough have the appropriate health, social care and wellbeing services – with a view to making changes for the better.



Our mission

We are an independent champion for people who use health and social care services locally. We ensure that those running the services put people at the heart of care – especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We also focus on ensuring that people's experiences and concerns about health and social care services are heard. We speak out on their behalf to inform service development – and highlight if they have met the needs of local people.



Our values

We're here to listen to the issues that really matter to local communities and to hear about your experiences of using health and social care services within the area.

We're entirely independent and impartial, and any information you share with us is confidential.



“The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown long-standing health inequalities into stark relief. With NHS and social care facing even longer backlogs, the unequal outcomes exposed by the pandemic are at risk of becoming worse. Local Healthwatch play an important role in helping to overcome these adversities and are uniquely placed to make a positive difference in their communities.”

Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England

Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

Reaching out (across South Tees)

1,051 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.



165 people

came to us for information and signposting about topics such as mental health and COVID-19.

63,684 people

were informed about the role of Healthwatch via meetings, events, radio, publicity and social media.

Making a difference to care

We published

5 reports

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.



Our most popular report was called

Mental Health, Wellbeing and You – A South Tees View

to inform the local TEWV Mental Health Transformation Programme.

Health and care that works for you

We're lucky to have

8 volunteers and 31 Community Champions

who gave up 136.5 hours to make care better for our community



We're funded by our local authority. In 2021-22 we received:

£92,500

Which is the same as the previous year.

We also currently employ

2 full time equivalent (FTE) members of staff

who help us carry out this work across Middlesbrough.

How we've made a difference throughout the year

An overview of some of the projects we worked on from April 2021 to March 2022.

Spring



Successful in gaining the Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (TVCCG) contract to deliver South Tees patient involvement. This ensures more diverse communities feed into their work.



We actively promoted Covid vaccine locations, volunteered support and provided information and guidance in a variety of languages and British Sign Language (BSL).

Summer



We created a text only facility after liaising with the Deaf community and our Champions to improve methods of communication.



We produced case studies with people with diverse needs demonstrating reasonable adjustments or suggesting how to improve GP access where needed.

Autumn



A 'Dentistry Myth Busting' document was produced to inform the public and dispel the most common rumours relating to NHS dentistry.



As recommended by us last year, The Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (TVCCG) is leading on a consultation to monitor parent/carers' experiences of the new Children's Neurodevelopmental Pathway

Winter



Completed the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board & Healthwatch England Quality Frameworks to highlight areas of good practice and identify areas for development.



Good practice in the health and care sector was celebrated through our STAR (South Tees Award of Recognition) Awards.

Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority.

This allows us to understand the full picture, and feedback to services to help them improve.



The Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust Community Transformation Programme

Introduction:

The aim of Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) is to deliver a new mental health community-based offer by the:

- Redesign and re-organisation of core community mental health teams which are placed based;
- Creation of a core mental health service which is aligned with primary care networks, voluntary sector organisations and local community groups whereby dedicated services and functions will plug in.

Healthwatch's across the Tees Valley worked in partnership to produce a standardised survey as well as a template to use when facilitating focus groups.

This case study focuses on the South Tees responses and analysis.

We received a total of **525** survey responses and engaged **65** people in six focus group sessions from the following local communities:

- Chinese
- South Asian & Pakistani
- Asylum seekers & refugees
- Older People
- Parent & carers of SEND children
- Visually Impaired



For those respondents who had received help and support from mental health services, 67% stated it had not met their needs

"I am not aware of any support due to not understanding English"

"I reached out because I was struggling with my mental health, and I needed support quickly. However, I had to wait 12 months"

"It was a short-term fix, like a sticky plaster. I felt like I had to say I was suicidal just to get an appointment"

"Parent carers have life-long responsibilities and their mental health needs should be treated as such"

Key consultation themes to consider

Information

Information is not readily available in different languages or larger print versions which also adds to the difficulty people experience in accessing services.

Waiting times

Waiting times for appointments are too long including initial GP appointments and referrals. It is crucial for people get the help and support they need, when they need it.

Venue

Appointments and support needs to be offered in community venues, drop-in centres and GP surgeries.

Appointment times

Appointments need to be flexible and responsive to individual circumstances such as carer responsibilities, childcare and working hours.

Reasonable adjustments & Accessible Information Standards

Solutions to access barriers aren't currently provided or where to request these if required isn't clear, whether this is physical or cultural.



"This consultation is already having an enormous influence in a new systems-wide approach to drastically improve adult mental health services across South Tees.

"This demonstrates how with honest public and patient engagement, and a long reach into communities, this approach can truly make change when there is a desire to ensure it is integral in each stage of development."



Lisa Bosomworth: Healthwatch Middlesbrough Project Lead



What this has influenced

- Provided a baseline for Tees Valley Mental Health Alliance co-production priorities.
- Informed the development of the new Redcar and Cleveland Mental Health Forum through an interview with an independent consultant.
- Provided evidence for the need of a mental health information platform in Redcar and Cleveland.
- Provided the foundation of the South Tees Wellbeing Network draft strategy.
- Response received from the Chair of the Middlesbrough Mental Health Partnership outlining how this report will inform their direction of work.
- Informed the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust Clinical Strategy.
- Informed the Middlesbrough Mental Health Partnership visioning event.
- The accessible information sections and considerations has informed the approach of work delivered by the Redcar and Cleveland Involvement Lead.
- Provided focused input for Task Group 5 of the South Tees Carers Forum to influence developments for data collection and evidence of outcomes.



Difference made



“Healthwatch are instrumental to supporting development in the health and wellbeing of our residents across Redcar and Cleveland.

The recent report for TEWV on the community transformation provided a valuable insight to designing the community mental health-based offer.

We are utilising the evidence to support in designing /developing a service to meet the needs of our population and to continue to gather information.

The report has been used to inform wider programmes of work including a local mental health forum. They are a valued contributor in raising awareness of local campaigns and events.

Recently they supported mental health awareness week through their communications channels and through their physical presence supporting residents to access services.

Healthwatch has the expertise and passion to engage with services and residents to continue to support in the development service provision to our population.

We continue to work collaboratively with the team and look forward to having a valued partner who represents the voice of residents independently”



**Gemma Marshall, Mental Health Development Lead,
Redcar And Cleveland Council**





“Co-produced services are at the heart of our Community Mental Health Transformation agenda. Healthwatch has been instrumental in creating opportunities for local community voices to engage and lead this transformation work.

Community representation through Healthwatch means we can engage with new audiences and populations. This is particularly important for us if we are to begin to address some of the inequalities in the access to, and experience of, the services we provide on behalf of the population of Tees Valley.

Thanks to the significant engagement exercise undertaken in September 2021 we were given a solid foundation and clear direction in the creation of a new vision for mental health services.

We will continue to work with Healthwatch to ensure our services are accountable to local communities and address the needs of all of our population.

This year is pivotal in actioning our transformation changes. We will continue to work with Healthwatch to learn from local populations, and to adapt our approaches, with the aim of providing the best possible person-centered mental health care.

We are indebted to Healthwatch for the invaluable contribution they bring”.

Dominic Gardner:
Care Group Director of Adult and Older People Services
(Durham/Tees Valley)



A film has been produced detailing how our consultation will influence the direction of the TEWV Community Transformation Programme across Tees Valley that can be found [here](#).

NHS Dentistry

Introduction



Healthwatch's across the North East region were receiving feedback from the public that accessing NHS dental services was very difficult, whether registering with an NHS dentist, getting treatment or even getting treatment at a dental hospital.

Together, we produced an online and paper survey which was distributed through local Healthwatch networks online, at planned engagement events, and with partners.

Collectively we worked with Local Dentist Committees and the commissioners (NHS England) to develop an information campaign to inform people about getting dental care. As a result of this we produced a 'myth busting' leaflet, dispelling the most common rumours relating to NHS dentistry which was shared with the public and key stakeholders locally.

During the same period, each local HW contacted local dental practices, with a series of questions, to understand the availability of services.



This case study focusses on the analysis of response from across South Tees. We had **105** responses to our survey and spoke to a sample number of dentists in Middlesbrough.

From our respondents **83%** stated that it was very difficult to find a dentist they could access.



Survey respondents told us:

"I contacted over 20 practices and searched as far as an hours drive away.

"I eventually managed to get in to one locally for emergency treatment as they'd had a DNA but was unable to register there for routine appointments."



One local dental practice said:

"We use the NHS triage system. We have a pain list for appointments which includes children, severe swelling, pain and will get an appointment on the day. We also have a cancellation list'."



Difference made

- Raised awareness of the issue with the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (NE&NC ICS), local service providers, and NHS England to improve access to NHS dentistry.
- Informed the national picture through sharing our findings with Healthwatch England who are calling for reform of the NHS dental contract alongside the British Dental Association (BDA).
- Supported improved information for patients regarding NHS dentistry.

We have received the following feedback from Stuart Youngman, Senior Primary Care Manager (Dental) North East & North Cumbria NHS England and NHS Improvement (North East & Yorkshire), in relation to this work:



"I can confirm that from an NHS England, local Dental Commissioning Team perspective the North East Healthwatch 'myth busting' leaflet has been extremely useful in helping to improve patient, public and local politicians understanding around the most common myths and misunderstandings relating to NHS dentistry.

"It is clear and easy to read and as such we have used it to supplement responses we have made as an organisation to enquiries we have received".





In 2022 we held our South Tees Awards of Recognition to celebrate all of the amazing teams, organisations, services, individuals and volunteers within the South Tees region.

Each of those shortlisted were nominated by fellow professionals, colleagues, and even patients who felt that local services warranted the acknowledgment. A panel of our Board members then had the tough decision of picking winners.

We were joined by guest speakers, Dominic Gardner – Director of Operations at Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust and Richie Andrew – Public Health South Tees (South Tees Wellbeing Network) who spoke about how our engagement has informed key elements of their work.



Winners of our categories:



Excelling in Support to Others Award: Recognising those who deliver an excellent service in health and social care.

Winner: Laura Paterson, Specialist Midwife, Infant Feeding at JCUH
For the amazing support she gave to a new Mum.



Making a Difference Award: Recognising those who volunteer their time to make a positive difference in the community.

Winner: Yvonne Theresa Bytheway
For her passion in supporting visually impaired patients with their hospital appointments, running craft classes and feeding patient experiences right to the top of the Trust as a volunteer Governor

Valued Service Award: Celebrating valuable health and social care services in the community.

Winner: Zoe's Place.
For their much needed and only baby hospice, family support and respite care service in our area.



Care and Compassion Award: Celebrating those who go the extra mile to enhance the health and social care experiences of service users, relatives and staff.

Winner: Dr Carolyn Rigby
For offering outstanding support, well above her regular duties to help a patient.

Community Innovator Award: Celebrating those who have developed valuable support services to fill missing gaps in the community.

Winners: Leanne Smith and Jen Standen – IRIS Programme

For training doctors and health care professionals to identify the early signs of domestic abuse.



Leading the Way for Change Award: Recognising those who have led a service to create positive impact.

Winners: Sophie, Michael and Sandra – Community Mental Health Transformation Programme.

For their passion in shaping the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme from their experience in their own time.

Additional Awards:

This year we also gave an additional award to two deserving projects..

Special Recognition Award: For extraordinary services during extraordinary times

Winners: Empowering Communities Team at Redcar and Cleveland Council and Middlesbrough's Vaccine Partnership

For the work they have done in partnership to provide vaccines right across South Tees. Each team helped to give vaccines to the general public and are still doing so to this day.



Middlesbrough's COVID Vaccine Partnership



Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Perimenopause support

During this year, we have produced and promoted two blogs to raise awareness of the Perimenopause Support UK Facebook group, set up by two local ladies, supporting over 11,000 women across the UK.

We also produced a short video, posted in this group on World Menopause Day, and signposted local women impacted by perimenopause symptoms to our local Information and Signposting function.

More recently, the founders highlighted a shortage of HRT treatments both locally and nationally. We attended a local meet up in Redcar which was aired on BBC Breakfast news, to share the impact of the shortages on these women.

Improving communication methods for our communities

During Safeguarding Adults Week, whilst working with Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB), we identified that there is no 'Text Only' option for communication between some of our local people and social care services.

This presents a barrier for the Deaf community and other diverse groups, such as those with autism, to report or raise a safeguarding concern and potentially access much needed services. As a result of this, local authorities, across the Tees Valley area are working to address this gap and work within the Accessible Information Standard framework.

Improving access to health and care

Sharing intelligence with the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Executive, as well as connecting with local voluntary sector organisations and our Community Champions has been instrumental in helping us to identify health inequalities. Our contacts with 'A Way Out', informed us that women on community orders and those released from prison were experiencing barriers to registering with a GP.

Our Community Champions also highlighted similar experiences for those seeking asylum in our area. We were able to raise awareness and supply GP Access Cards to these communities to inform them that having 'no fixed abode' does not present a reason for non-acceptance of patients wishing to register for GP services.

Information and Signposting

Our #JustAsk Information and Signposting function provides just that!

We're on hand to provide details of local health, social care and wellbeing services and ensure people are happy in the knowledge that their query can be dealt with.

This year we helped people by:

- Providing up to date information on local dentists and their availability
- Ensuring they know about the correct complaints procedures for NHS and GP issues
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to access the services they need

**Have
your
say**

#JustAsk



Free phone: 0800 118 1691

Free text: 07451 288 789

Email: healthwatchsouthtees@pcp.uk.net

Improving communication and accessibility

Recruiting Community Champions provided additional resources to improve communication and accessibility as well as extending our reach and engagement with people where barriers exist.

As a result of this valuable feedback, we produced a 'Text Only' service for people with sensory loss. This service helps others who prefer not to use the phone such as people with learning disability and autism.

We considered how other communities find out about our work and produced materials in multiple formats which included; 'easy read' and video material. We also provided promotional information in BSL and different languages, including Urdu and Chinese.

We increased the range of mediums used. These included local radio and Facebook interviews to raise awareness of our Information & Signposting service, particularly to ethnic minority communities.

Alongside other platforms, like Twitter, and our website, we significantly increased our reach and diversity, offering improved access for a range of communities experiencing health inequalities.

Building relations for positive outcomes

Developing relationships with the local hospital Patient Experience and Involvement Lead, provides opportunities for de-escalating and resolving public and patient issues quickly. For example:

A man contacted us following his wife being admitted to hospital where she tested positive for Covid. Further investigation diagnosed her with terminal cancer and short life expectancy.

Although clear of Covid and transferred to another ward, the family were still experiencing limitations on visiting which was causing distress. The man wanted clarification of the visiting rules for himself, and their family under these circumstances.

We contacted the Patient Experience and Involvement Lead for clarification of the visiting rules and to explore options. As a result, the lady was put on a fast-track discharge and referred to McMillan nurses for support. This provided a quick resolution to the visiting rules issue and brought the family together during this very difficult and sad time.

Community Champions and volunteers

We are supported by 39 volunteers and Community Champions whose skills, expertise and knowledge of our local communities help us to better understand people's experiences of health and social care.

This year our volunteers and community champions have:

- Participated in joint meetings to inform the direction of our work
- Judged nominations in our STAR Awards
- Extended our reach into communities
- Disseminated information and surveys
- Provided local intelligence



Here's just some of the people who volunteer for us...

Ian Holtby – Board Member

I spent most of my working life as a public health doctor and when I retired, I felt that becoming a Healthwatch volunteer would enable me to continue to play a part in maintaining the health of our local South Tees population.

Also, knowing that the knowledge and skills I acquired during my working life can still be made use of when the Healthwatch team investigates some area of healthcare provision I do find particularly rewarding.



Sarah James – Community Champion

“Speaking to patients on a daily basis via my social prescribing role gives me an insight into areas of concern in the local community. Sharing these concerns with the team at Healthwatch Middlesbrough can be really beneficial.

I became a Community Champion because this link work is vital for both myself and the patients who visit my practice.



Ross Newton – Community Champion

At Independent Age, our team are hearing directly from older people on a regular basis and will often hear about the challenges they face.

As a Healthwatch Community Champion, working in partnership with other organisations, I welcome the opportunity to feedback on issues being raised and engage in wider discussion to see positive change and improvements to local residents and their wider community.



Finance and future priorities

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

The many lockdown periods have had an impact on our expenditure as we didn't require promotional materials, staff mileage etc. The underspend will be used to produce these items now we are able to go out and physically connect to key stakeholders and communities.

Income		Income	
Funding received from local authority	£92,500	Staff costs	£57,954
Additional funding	£8,680	Operational costs	£17,628
		Support and administration	£3,255
Total income	£101,180	Total expenditure	£78,477

Top three priorities for 2022-23

1. GP Access.
2. Consultation & engagement of the public and patients to inform reviews and influence future commissioning.
3. Build on the recruitment, support and involvement of Community Champions and volunteers in our work programme.

Next Steps

The pandemic has shone a stark light on the impact of existing inequalities when using health and care services, highlighting the importance of championing the voices of those who all too often go unheard.

Over the coming years, our goal is to help reduce these inequalities by making sure your voice is heard, and decision makers reduce the barriers you face, regardless of whether that's because of where you live, income or race.

We will do this by increasing the reach we have into these communities through further development of our Community Champion and volunteer roles.

Statutory statements

The organisation holding the Healthwatch contract is the Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP). PCP is a multi-award winning health and wellbeing charity operating across the North East

For further information please visit www.pcp.uk.net.

Registered Charity No, 1067888 Company Registered in England No. 3491237
Registered address: Pioneering Care Centre, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 4SF.

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www.healthwatchmiddlesbrough.co.uk



The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch board consists of 8 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 2021/22 the board met three times as well as digital decision making contributing on matters such as our STAR Awards event and process, in addition to influencing the direction of work under key priority areas. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. For example, contacts we received through our Information and Signposting function have informed the direction and approach of our GP access priority.

Another example of this has been via our consultation and engagement of local people providing us with their experiences of finding a dentist, which informed the frequently asked questions in our Dental Mythbuster document.

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 2021/22 we have been available by phone, by email, provided a webform on our website, attended virtual meetings of community groups, strategic decision-making partnerships and forums, provided our own virtual activities, engaged with the public through social media and introduced a text only option after working with our local Deaf community.

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. This year we have increased the number of Community Champions who can extend our reach to the diverse communities they support and engage with which provides us with vital feedback from those identified as having health inequalities.

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, social media and provide links to it within relevant stakeholder publications to local people and professionals.

Responses to recommendations and requests

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we did not make use of our Enter and View powers. Consequently, no recommendations or other actions resulted from this area of activity.

However, we continued to provide relevant community intelligence on a quarterly basis to the CQC, CCG, NHS Trust and H&WB Exec and Board across the South Tees.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Middlesbrough is represented on the South Tees Live Well Board and the South Tees Health and Wellbeing Exec by Lisa Bosomworth, Project Lead. During 2021/22 our representative has effectively carried out this role by,

- Having a statutory role on our local Board.
- Highlighting the following issues this year:
 - Access to local dentistry services.
 - Access to GP surgeries.
 - No text only option for communication with social care services for the Deaf community.
 - Sharing promotion of consultation and engagement activities.
 - Contributing to recovery plans.
 - Adding value by providing qualitative data to support quantitative data.
 - Attending local Scrutiny panels to raise awareness of our work and bring a patient's perspective to discussions.

Find out more about our staff, Board and Community Champions!

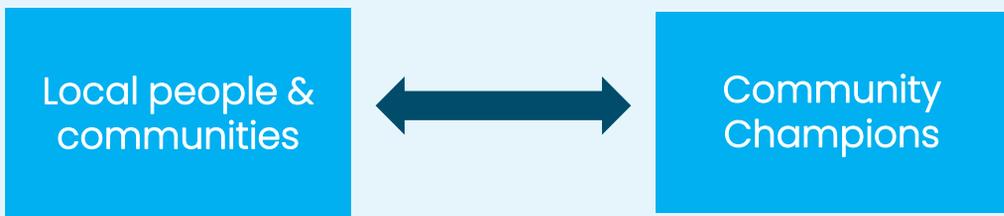
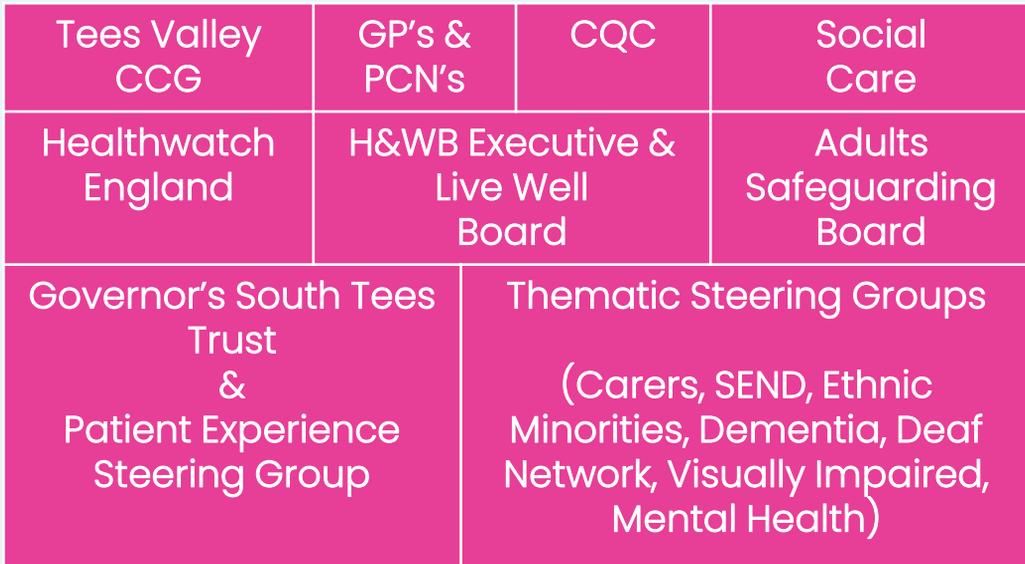
Just go to: www.healthwatchmiddlesbrough.co.uk

You can also follow us on social media:

Facebook: @HWMiddlesbrough Twitter: HwMiddlesbrough



How we share our community intelligence



Ensures that services meet needs

2021-2022 Outcomes

Below is a summary list of projects and pieces of work undertaken over the year which we haven't given a fuller account of in the main sections of this report. It is to highlight smaller outcomes we've achieved which might otherwise be overlooked.

Project / Activity Area	Changes made to services
Trans aware & non-binary training to local authority front-line and operational staff	Awareness was raised about considerations required for service delivery for this community
Text only accessible contact route for local deaf community	An additional text only number was acquired and promoted which has given the deaf community an option for requesting our support. The need for a similar option was highlighted to local authority social services and reporting safeguarding concerns. Tees Valley local authorities have now applied for funding to action this.
Pop-up vaccine staffing support	We attended community pop-up vaccine sites to raise awareness of our role and Information & Signposting function to a variety of communities, particularly from ethnic backgrounds.
GP Access card distribution	More of our local refugee and asylum seekers are accessing GP services confidently.
HWE/Traverse Vaccine Hesitancy Insights Report	We connected HWE, Traverse and Teesside University, linking evidence-based findings to inform understanding of vaccine hesitancy.
Consultation on the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) Survey questions	Clear and concise survey for wider public engagement followed by an invite to become a key stakeholder on the PNA steering group that drives public engagement.

<p>Following complaints about long waiting times in JCUH A&E.</p>	<p>Signs have now been put up to invite people to ask for refreshments if they haven't already been offered.</p>
<p>Created case studies highlighting GP access issues and solutions relating to a diverse range of groups that experience health inequalities</p>	<p>Raising awareness of how reasonable adjustments can be considered in primary care.</p>
<p>In response to parent carer requests, delivered two online workshops raising awareness of local health inequalities arising from the lack of recognition of unmet needs and poor prevention strategies.</p>	<p>Presented the findings from Tees Valley Buddies consultation highlighting issues from the perspective of neurodiverse parents and carers.</p> <p>With Neuro Key and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Network raising awareness of the current landscape and the impact on families and adults impacted by FASD.</p>
<p>We collected community intelligence indicating that families had been misinformed that their children were on the autism pathway.</p>	<p>This was escalated within TEWV and in the South Tees Health Improvement Group and informed there was a lack of communication in the service and the problem has now been resolved.</p>
<p>Adults Safeguarding Week TSAB.</p>	<p>Community Champions shared what safeguarding means to them.</p>
<p>Connected Redcar & Cleveland Service Improvement and Participation Officer with Tees Valley Buddies to support development of the R&C new website for SEND families.</p>	<p>Improved website for SEND families.</p>

<p>Provided new mental health service (Kooth & Quell) with detailed information about local mental health networks and partnerships.</p>	<p>Improved local connections contributing to quality and scope of local mental health services.</p>
<p>Linked with research re Rehabilitation and Support for People with Progressive Neurological Conditions.</p>	<p>Provided connections and support opportunities across our networks and for Information & Signposting service.</p>
<p>Provided information for dissemination about John's Campaign after discovering a lack of awareness during engagement work with carers.</p>	<p>Carers Together disseminated information to carers raising awareness of best practice for carers to accompany people with dementia during hospital visits and admittance.</p>
<p>Our seat on the South Tees All Age Autism Group</p>	<p>Ensured there has been a focus on the views of parents, carers and people with autism based on work with people with lived experience.</p>



I am confident when I say what you bring to the discussion is something different to the other attendees – the focus on the views of parents and carers will be something we need to think about as we move forward as a group.

On behalf of the group, thank you for all the work you've done to drive forward change as part of the Neurodevelopmental Pathway – It's clear to me that you've kept a strong focus on what matters and what needed to be done. You've definitely made sure the voice of autistic people and those around them have been in the 'room' during our meetings. Thank you!

Mark Davis, Chief Executive, Middlesbrough Voluntary Development Agency & South Tees All Age Autism Group Chair



Feedback from external stakeholders

Here's just some of the feedback we have received in the last 12 months:



HWST Commissioning

"Healthwatch South Tees fulfil their statutory responsibility well; they have developed excellent breadth and reach of local communities and a willingness to engage in consultation involving a wide range of partners. This has allowed them to reflect the needs of the local population and advocate effectively on their behalf."

Polly Wright, Commissioning Team Leader, Middlesbrough Council & Carol James, Commissioning Officer, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group (TVCCG)

"Healthwatch South Tees have supported NHS Tees Valley CCG to capture the views of patients and members of the public on a variety of subjects, ranging from Covid-19, hearing services, neurodevelopmental pathways and more sensitive topics such as termination of pregnancy services."

"The team are always friendly and supportive and help us to reach seldom-heard communities across South Tees, ensuring that we get the feedback we need to commission representative and efficient services for the people of Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. We look forward to continuing to work with Healthwatch South Tees."

Jake Graham, TVCCG Communications and Engagement Officer

South Tees Primary Care Network:

"Healthwatch have been fantastic in providing us with advice, support and challenge in how we plan and deliver care. They have an unapologetic focus on patients and communities, always acting in their interest and championing their needs in a way that promotes equality, fairness and better quality provision. Healthwatch are an instrumental place-based partner, and we're really fortunate to have such a knowledgeable, collaborative and accessible Healthwatch service in South Tees"

Lisa Jones, Public Health Strategic Manager, Public Health South Tees





Healthwatch South Tees STAR Awards:

“What a fantastic and well organised event, full credit to you and the team’s hard work. I agree that every detail matters to create an atmosphere and buzz and you nailed it right down to the A Team theme at the end.

In all seriousness, it was a privilege to present at this event, and I am very grateful to have been asked., well done!

It all ended with a few excellent conversations with new contacts to me who made it clear that the clarity of the wellbeing network offer was communicated at the right level, and they got it. Again, humbled by the work of people there; a proper feel-good event, lots of work to get on with”.

**Richie Andrew, Health Improvement Specialist,
Public Health South Tees**

“A huge well done for an excellent awards event. I never underestimate the planning, co-ordination, time and dedication it takes to ensure these things run smoothly. Thank you so much!!!

Everyone I spoke with was thrilled to be nominated and the winners were outstanding. People were delighted to be able to share in each other’s success and to be able to come back together was just what the doctor ordered. Using the event to raise awareness of Healthwatch, highlight current agendas such as Mental Health Transformation and encouraging connections through the Wellbeing Alliance were added bonuses to the celebrations; this mix of acknowledging achievement whilst using the platform to share and learn was genius!

It was an absolute pleasure to be part of the day, thank you so very much for everything you do. You truly are brilliant ambassadors not only for Healthwatch but also for PCP”.

Carol Gaskarth, Chief Executive, Pioneering Care Partnership

“The event was very well co-ordinated, and the team were so organised and professional. Other members of staff from the Trust were impressed, felt it was very much needed and would nominate staff in future. Well done to you and your brilliant team”.

**Jen Little, Patient Experience and Involvement Lead,
STHNHSFT**



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