

The value of listening

About this presentation



Kevin Dixon, Chair of Healthwatch in Devon Plymouth & Torbay (HWDPT)

This presentation talks about all the different ways Healthwatch has connected with, represented, and made an impact on people in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay over the past year.

It shows the hard work and dedication of the Healthwatch volunteers and staff.

It shows why listening to patients is so important.

I want to thank everyone who has supported Healthwatch in our goal to monitor and improve health and care.

How Healthwatch works in Devon

Healthwatch Devon, Healthwatch Plymouth and Healthwatch Torbay are independent services with a statutory obligations under the Health and social Care Act 2012.

Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council work together to commission local Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (HWDPT).

Although they work together, each area keeps its own separate local Healthwatch service. They are run by a partnership of three organisations: Colebrook (SW) Ltd, Engaging Communities Southwest and Citizens Advice Devon.



Who funds us?

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) fund the work of Healthwatch nationally. DHSC gives money to local councils so they can commission an effective independent local Healthwatch service. Although local Healthwatch are funded by and accountable to local authorities, they are completely independent.

Our Mission Vision and Values

Our Mission

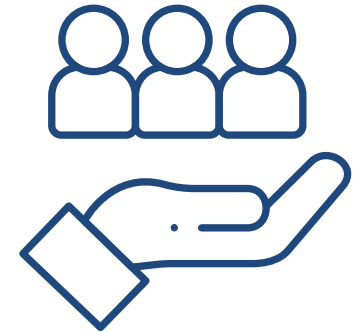
To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.

Our Vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.

Our Values

- Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Including everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- Analysing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- Acting on feedback and driving change.
- Partnering with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.



Working and volunteering in HWDPT



- We to have **26** excellent volunteers and continue to recruit on a regular basis.
- We employ **13** staff members – not all are FTE (still have two vacancies).
- We offer dedicated walk-in centers in Torbay, Plymouth and in wider Devon.
- Our Citizens Advice (CA) Healthwatch Champions are located at offices based in East Devon, North & West Devon, Exeter, South Hams, Torridge & Mid Devon and Teignbridge.

Healthwatch Assist Network



Our Healthwatch Assist Network helps us connect with people in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.

Sharing helps find what works well.

It helps make health services better.

We now have **150** organisations in our Healthwatch network from across Devon.

They are from local groups, school councils, parent groups, committees and sports groups.

How many people we reached in 2023/24



- **3395** people shared their experiences with health and social care services. This helped raise awareness about issues and improved care.
- **620** people came to us to get clear advice and information. This was on topics like dental services and doctor appointments delays to a wide range of services.

How we share advice and information



This year over a thousand people got help from our HWDPT contact centre. The contact centre helps by phone, email, and online chat.

Many people visited our **3** websites and followed us on social media.

Over **3000** people now sign up for our Email Bulletins. We share the newest updates from Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay.

Examples of what people tell us



"At the worst of my complex trauma, I felt listened to. I felt like I mattered and their advice was warm and caring. Very congruent staff enabling me to take responsibility on my journey into healing thanks to their empathy and empowering doctors. Very grateful"



★★★★★
#yourvoicecounts
healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



"I've tried everything to get an appointment. I am 84 and all I get is go online and book one. Well 4 of us have tried and it's still impossible. Bring back the old system this is just ridiculous, its very upsetting."



★★★★★
#yourvoicecounts
healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

Examples of what people tell us

"Made an emergency appointment, tried to cancel because of an emergency at my home and was told I had to pay regardless of my circumstances."



#yourvoicecounts
healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



"I've attended several appointments in different departments recently and have had positive experiences each time. Twice I have been seen and left the hospital before the scheduled appointment time! No waiting, cheerful and professional staff."



#yourvoicecounts
healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



Examples of what people tell us

"I have been on the waiting list for the pain management team since June 2021 for an appointment. They have not written to me even though my GP wrote to them to exasperate my case."



#yourvoicecounts

healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

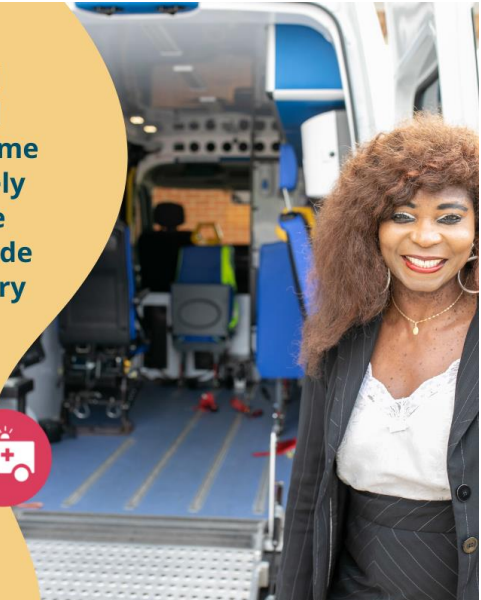


All the staff are caring and supportive, the stroke and medical team took their time to explain as I am extremely deaf. The paramedics were exceptionally kind and made me feel at ease as I was very confused and afraid."



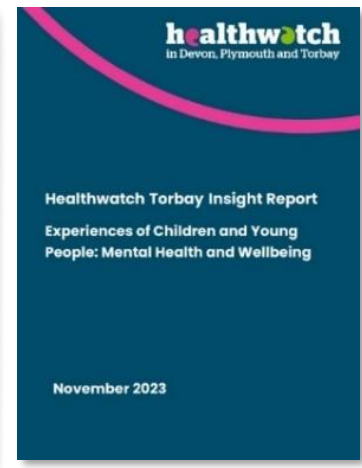
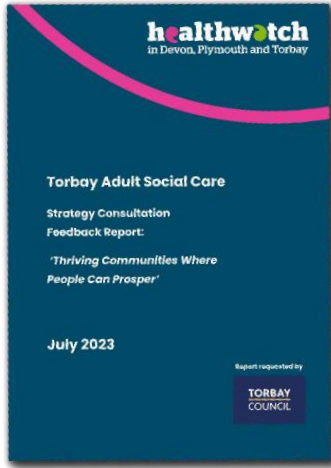
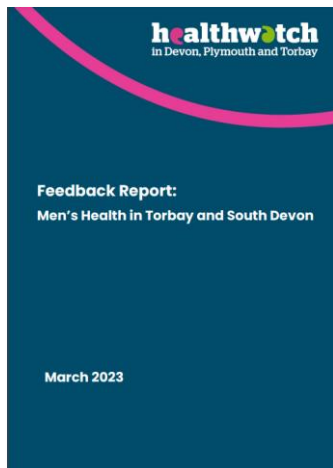
#yourvoicecounts

healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



What we did with these experiences

We published 10 reports about the improvements people would like to see in health and social care services, including:



More details on some of these key reports are on the next few slides

Men's Health in Torbay and South Devon

- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust approached Healthwatch in Torbay and Devon to support them in collecting feedback from men of all ages, to help them to understand what matters to men and how they can be better informed about their health and wellbeing.
- The feedback formed part of a wider engagement project by Torbay and South Devon NHS Trust, to find out how local health services could be developed and improved to ensure men are better informed about the health issues that affect them now and in the future.
- 132 men responded to the survey. On analysing the data, we found that:
 - ✓ 81% of respondents said they wanted to know more about prostate issues and prostate cancer
 - ✓ 77% of respondents said they had never been shown how to carry out a testicular examination or told what to look for
 - ✓ 65% of respondents said they found it difficult to talk about erectile dysfunction.

What is the impact of this work?

- At a national level, the evidence that we gathered through this joint project with Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, was presented to the [UK Parliamentary Health and Social Care Committee Inquiry into Men's Health](#), to be considered at Parliamentary level.
- Locally, the report findings enabled us to shine a spotlight on and raise awareness of men's health issues during [Men's Health Week in 2023](#), particularly around:
 - Prostate Cancer
 - Erectile Dysfunction
 - Testicular examinations and
 - Mental Health.
- The report and the experiences men shared around mental health helped to inform the [Torbay Suicide Prevention Plan 2024 – 27](#).



Adult Social Care in Torbay

Torbay Council approached us to facilitate discussions directly with people across Torbay on their new draft Adult Social Care Strategy. We ran six focus groups with 70 residents, who provided their feedback and experiences of local adult social care services.

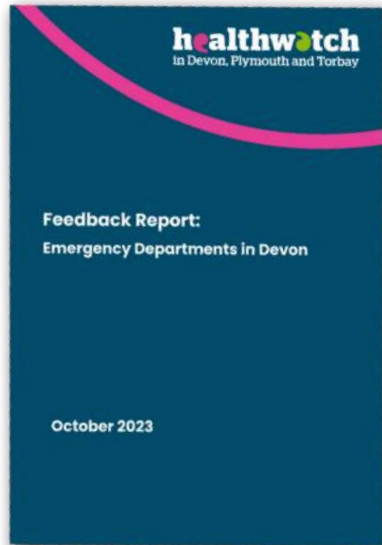
The overall response to the strategy was positive, with participants feeling it was a good approach, however the following was noted:

- Participants highlighted the difficulties of finding the right service or someone who can help them with the information they need.
- Communication is a key issue and a barrier for people who are in receipt of services and for those seeking support.
- Access to services, including housing, health and care services, replacement care and preventative support was discussed frequently. The delays and waiting lists for services was evident in the discussions.
- Participants recognised the difficulty of the current economic climate and the financial requirements placed on Torbay Council.

What is the impact of this work?

- The opportunity to work with Torbay Council on this engagement provided valuable insight about people's experiences and knowledge, particularly those in caring roles, or those who experience difficulties accessing information online or in accessible formats.
- The flexibility in approach taken by Torbay Council in working with Healthwatch enabled participants to engage in a meaningful way, face to face, ensuring that people felt listened to and that their views and experiences were important.
- The report and our findings were used to further develop Torbay Council's Adult Social Care Strategy, ensuring it was reflective of what people think is important to them. The Strategy was approved by the Council in Autumn 2023.

Emergency Departments across Devon



In Spring 2023 we were commissioned by NHS Devon to visit Emergency Departments at Devon's four main hospitals.

- We interviewed 511 people (122 from RUDH, 133 from NDDH) during 34 visits at different times and days, including daytimes, evenings and weekends.
- Our report was shared with NHS Devon and all key stakeholders, including Urgent and Emergency Care Boards.
- The report was also given to the NHS Devon Primary Care Commissioning Committee.
- The Southwest Clinical Senate invited NHS Devon and HWDPT to give a joint presentation on the work at their Annual Conference in Exeter.

What is the impact of this work?

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust took the findings relating specifically to the experiences at Torbay Hospital and formed an action plan to directly address the issues raised, which related to:

- ✓ The comfort of the waiting room
- ✓ Triage of patients who had been referred from III
- ✓ Patient waiting times and
- ✓ Information screens

The Trust has recently reported back several changes that have been made to improve the environment in the Emergency Department which include:

- ✓ The waiting area being reconfigured to improve patient flow.
- ✓ The hard seats have been replaced with padded seating.
- ✓ Patient waiting times have significantly improved within the department.

Peninsula Acute Sustainability (PAS)



- NHS Devon asked HWDPT for support to run some focus groups to find out more about people’s experiences of Acute Medical Services, Surgical and Pediatrics across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- Working with Healthwatch Cornwall, we provided feedback from 335 people which was summarised in a full report and shared with NHS Devon.
- HWDPT will remain involved with the PAS programme as it moves forward.

What is the impact of this work?

- NHS Devon have welcomed the findings of the report and have shared it with the local NHS Trusts and the Urgent and Emergency Care Boards. The report has also been presented to the NHS Devon Primary Care Commissioning Committee and the South West Clinical Senate to help them to make the best possible decisions about health and care provision across the southwest peninsular.
- The report demonstrates the value of patient experience in service design and improvement, which has prompted the need for further engagement with the public as the programme moves forward.

Patient Experiences of Pharmacy Services



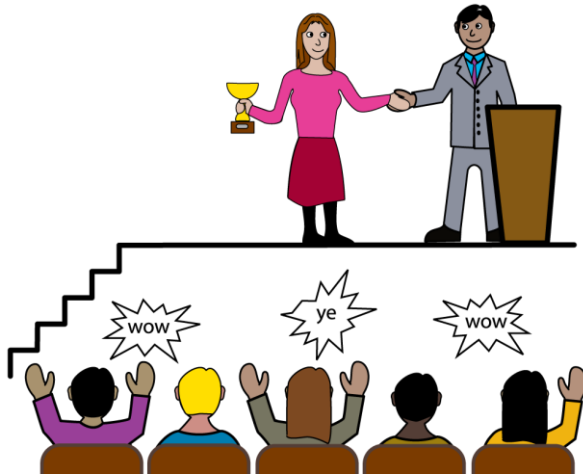
- 141 people shared their experiences with pharmacy services.
- We shared our report and recommendations with NHS organisations in Devon.
- After we released the report, Plymouth Hospital NHS Trust said they will be providing a new pharmacy for outpatients which supports those visiting from surrounding areas.
- NHS Devon said they will use our report to help develop their Pharmacy strategy for the local community.
- Community Pharmacy Devon said they will use all our recommendations to improve pharmacy services.

Other examples of communities we have supported to have their say this year

We have worked hard to make sure we can speak to as many people in our communities as possible and to share our findings with key stakeholders.

- **Children and young people** – We submitted evidence to Torbay Council’s Children’s Scrutiny Committee CAMHS Spotlight Review, sharing concerns on behalf of parents, families and representatives from local community groups in relation to young peoples’ access to emotional wellbeing support.
- **Carers** – We gathered feedback from 224 Carers about the impact their caring role has on their own health and wellbeing.
- **Local communities** – we ran a social media campaign to find out how the cost of living crisis was impacting on people and their health.

Recognition – This year we have:



- **Attended different national Healthwatch England events.**
- **Shared the work we did around urgent care national leadership conference in London.**
- **Won a commended award at the National Healthwatch Impact Awards.**
- **Shared lots of briefing documents about the work of the wider Healthwatch Network.**
- **Presented our Emergency Department report at the South West Clinical Senate Conference in Exeter.**

Our Priorities for Healthwatch Torbay 2024 – 25

Over the next year we will keep reaching out to every part of our community – especially in deprived areas – so that people can share their experiences and have their voices heard.

Based on public feedback, our priorities for next year are:

- **Health:** Accessing Primary Care, Secondary Care and Mental Health services.
- **Mental Health:** Accessing Mental Health services under the Community Mental Health Framework.
- **Social Care:** Accessing Social Care Services and residential and home support services.
- **Children & Young People:** Development and integration of Children & Young People services.
- **Wellbeing:** Impact of cost of living on individual/family health & wellbeing.



Quote from Devon Integrated Care Service



**Steve Moore –
Chief Executive
Officer for NHS
Devon**

“Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay provides a patient voice which is vital for the delivery of NHS services locally.

Healthwatch is a valued board member of the One Devon Partnership, a committee that includes a range of organisations and groups who can influence people’s health, wellbeing and care. The committee’s primary aim is to drive integration by producing a strategy to join-up services, reduce inequalities, and improve people’s wellbeing, outcomes and experiences.

Healthwatch continues to provide important feedback from patients, on big themes and small, so that as we redesign services, we can better tailor them to meet the expectations of our local population. Our mission at NHS Devon is to provide equal chances for everyone to live happy, healthy lives, and we need ‘critical friends’ such as Healthwatch to help achieve this.

We look forward to another year of close working with our partners in Healthwatch Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.”

Quote from Devon & Cornwall Police



**Alison Hernandez –
Devon & Cornwall
Police and Crime
Commissioner**

“Health and social care organisations play a critical role in building the types of communities in which people can thrive, leading healthy and productive lives.

I’ve worked with Healthwatch to assure me that patients who have come to the awareness of the police are being managed well in our community. They know who to approach and the right questions to ask to ensure services meet required standards.

In the same way I am there to represent the voice of the people in policing, Healthwatch is there to be that ‘critical friend’ to some of the most vital services our communities will ever need. People can turn to them and get actively involved or seek guidance on what steps to take. It is an invaluable organisation.”

healthwatch
Devon

t: 0800 520 0640

e: info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk

www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk

healthwatch
Plymouth

t: 0800 520 0640

e: info@healthwatchplymouth.co.uk

www.healthwatchplymouth.co.uk

healthwatch
Torbay

t: 08000 520 029

e: info@healthwatchtorbay.org.uk

www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk



Thank you – any questions?