

The following table describes various health and social care projects that Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is currently working on or actively planning. The information contained is accurate as of 10 January 2023. Should you require any further information, please contact [lester@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:lester@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)

Project	Detail	Reporting (target date)
<b>In progress</b>		
1. Access to GP appointments across Sussex – public opinion	<p><b>Summary</b> This was run as a Healthwatch in Sussex project, which is a collaboration between the three Healthwatch teams in Sussex. The project was led by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.</p> <p>The aim of this project was to assess people’s views about accessing GP appointments and, for some questions, to see whether people’s views and experiences about remote GP appointments have changed two years since the pandemic began (by comparing some findings from a <a href="#">project</a> undertaken in June 2020).</p> <p>An online survey was live during November 2022 and achieved 851 responses. As the survey was a re-run of a similar one delivered in June 2020, during the heart of the COVID pandemic, we were able to compare some findings.</p> <p><b>Impact</b> The results from this work will support our ICS’s understanding of how people access GP services and their preferences for doing so, which can be used to further develop the remote appointment offer and identify how best to promote the range of services and what support people require in order to do that.</p> <p>Some headlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a sizeable proportion (53.7%) of people describing themselves as having their ‘day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months’ – up from 39.2% in 2020. Those reporting a mental health condition had increased from 17.9% in 2020 (among those reporting a disability) compared to 28.7% in 2022.</li> </ul>	January 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A hybrid system of appointments, remote and face-to-face when needed, is the most appealing option for GP patients, some 25 percentage points ahead of the next preferred option (appointments by phone).</li> <li>• Around 1 in 6 people objected to all remote options and preferred exclusively face-to-face appointments.</li> <li>• Compared to the earlier survey in 2020, a greater proportion of people showed some criticism towards remote GP appointments – more agreeing that ‘only having phone or video appointments with my GP would put me off from getting support’ and less agreeing that ‘I think you can get just as much advice from a GP by phone or video compared to a face-to- face’.</li> <li>• A significant proportion (over 50%) of people have delayed or postponed appointments with their GP and have sought alternative advice from Accident and Emergency departments, NHS111 and the NHS App. Waiting times to contact the surgery, or appointments only available a few days or weeks away compounds this issue.</li> <li>• Most people showed a strong preference to having appointments as soon as possible and having a more precise time when they will receive a phone or video call, overriding the preference to see their regular GP. A preference to see a GP as soon as possible increased significantly between 2020 and 2022.</li> <li>• Differences by age were a consistent theme in the data. Older people were less likely to use an online booking system, less likely to prefer remote appointments, and saw less importance in being able to book a phone and/or video appointment via an online booking method. These differences by age were also present in the 2020 report and show evidence of an ongoing variation in opinion.</li> </ul>	
<p>2. Access to GP appointments across Sussex – public opinion</p>	<p>Building on the above survey</p> <p>Open-ended questions from the above survey have generated over 1000 comments. These are being thematically analysed to explain some of the quantitative findings. This work is being led by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.</p>	<p>April 2023</p>

<p>3. People’s views of Direct Payments</p>	<p>This funded work is being delivered by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove for Brighton and Hove City Council.</p> <p>The aim of the survey is to assess various aspects of the Direct Payment system, including ease of applying, useful sources of advice, and experience of recruiting and being supported by Personal Assistants.</p> <p>Direct payments are local authority funds which allow a person to employ a care worker or personal assistant to help with their day-to-day needs.</p>	<p>April 2023</p>
<p>4. The dementia pathway across Sussex – patient and care experience</p>	<p>This is funded work delivered for Sussex Health and Care.</p> <p>This will be run as a Healthwatch in Sussex project, which is a collaboration between the three Healthwatch teams in Sussex. The project will be led by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.</p> <p>The project aims to interview 45 people across Sussex, including both people with dementia and their carers.</p> <p>The project will explore the pathway from initial concerns about memory loss, seeing the Memory Assessment service, post diagnostic support and transitions (such as in and out of hospital, and admitted into a care home).</p> <p>We will present our findings to Sussex Health and Care so that these can be used to make recommendations to improve services.</p>	<p>May 2023</p>
<p>5. Maternity and mental health support</p>	<p>This work is funded by <a href="#">Healthwatch England</a> for whom maternity is a priority area.</p> <p>Healthwatch Brighton and Hove interviewed 5 mothers who had at least one child born after March 2020. All mothers had experienced mental health challenges during the perinatal period (pregnancy through to babies first year). Through our interviews, we have looked at the mental health support they received or were offered during the perinatal period and what they would recommend to others in a similar experience.</p>	<p>Pilot – February 2023.</p> <p>Larger study – October 2023 (TBC).</p>

	<p>We have worked in partnership with Maternity Voices Partnership and others to deliver this project, receiving support from University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust.</p> <p>We will be submitting our results to Healthwatch England shortly.</p> <p>What has become apparent through this project is the need to expand this engagement to other mothers and fathers across Sussex. We have developed an outline project scope and are exploring options to deliver this. Maternal health is identified as an area where health inequalities exist (CORE20PLUS5) and local maternity services at our Trust received a poor CQC inspection in the summer 2022, so our work can support wide-ranging improvements.</p>	
6. Healthwatch Annual Report	It is a statutory requirement that Healthwatch Brighton and Hove produces an Annual Report, published by 30 June	30 June 2023.
7. Home care checks	<p>This project is funded by Trust for Developing Communities and delivered on behalf of Brighton and Hove City Council.</p> <p>The project was reimagined into our nationally recognised Hospitals Discharge Project during the pandemic to support people who were recently discharged but has now been re-established in its original format.</p> <p>The project involves trained Healthwatch volunteers interviewing people in their home or in extra care homes to explore their views and experiences about their care (the project was formerly known as the Lay Assessors project).</p> <p>We submit anonymous data to BHCC who use this to identify where improvements, or changes are needed.</p>	Ongoing
8. Environmental Audits of University Sussex	<p>Our visits to the University Hospitals Sussex estate use our Enter &amp; View powers.</p> <p>With the full support of the Trust, our trained volunteers conduct lay checks of the ward environment using the NHS 15-step challenge as a guide. Our findings are reported back via the Trust's Director of Patient Experience and Engagement and result in direct improvements being made.</p>	Ongoing

<p>Hospitals and PLACE<sup>1</sup>.</p>	<p>The pandemic had prevented our visits, but in July 2022 we conducted our first relaunched visit. We followed this work up by supporting UHSx and Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust to undertake their more extensive PLACE visits in September and October.</p> <p>We plan to hold a further round of visits to maternity wards across Brighton and Hove and West Sussex with the support of Healthwatch West Sussex and Maternity Voices Partnership.</p>	
<p>9. Dentistry</p>	<p>Healthwatch Brighton and Hove have been heavily involved in raising issues affecting NHS dentistry since the pandemic. We have conducted surveys and dentist website reviews, produced a leaflet for patients on their rights and guidance about dental care, and highlighted local concerns in Parliament by working with a local MP.</p> <p>In January, all three Healthwatch teams jointly launched a survey to understand what – if anything – has improved since changes to dentistry were announced at the start of December 2022.</p> <p>A further survey for people who were pregnant and what their experiences were like e.g. what was their experience like of using a Maternity Exemption Certificate to access dental care.</p> <p>In addition, a desktop review of the NHS website is being conducted as from December 2022, all practices are now required to update their information and availability so it will be interesting to see which practices have responded to that call.</p> <p>Healthwatch teams in Sussex will be meeting with the ICS lead for dentistry shortly to discuss our findings and how we can support the commissioning of services.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<sup>1</sup> Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment

<b>Potential new projects</b>		
<p>1. Delivering a toolkit to support a wellbeing check for people recently discharged from hospital.</p>	<p>Healthwatch Brighton and Hove delivered wellbeing checks for people recently discharged from hospital from April 2020 to June 2022. Our project was nationally recognised, receiving a Commendation from Healthwatch England and praise from our local NHS Trust.</p> <p>From the experience of speaking to over 4000 people we wanted to deliver a toolkit to support others in setting up this offer. It will include detail on managing patient lists, dealing with data protection, reporting findings from the conversations and a guide for volunteers delivering the calls. We are applying for funding to support us in this work.</p>	<p>November 2023.</p>
<p>2. Outpatient Transformation: Deliberative Engagement of Patient Experience.</p>	<p>We have submitted an Expression of Interest to deliver a deliberative engagement project and are awaiting to hear from NHS Sussex.</p> <p>This project will focus on the Sussex-wide transformation of Outpatient services, including obtaining patient views, thoughts, ideas and experiences of Patient Initiated Follow-ups (PIFU), Single Points of Access and Diagnostic Hubs, Advice and Guidance, and Reducing 'Did Not Attends.' The aim will be to obtain patient insight to improve communications on these initiatives to help people engage with them and support their success. This work directly supports efforts to reduce planned 3 care waiting lists.</p>	<p>Unknown but would take 4 months.</p>
<p>3. Maternal mental health</p>	<p>As referenced above, we are aiming to build on our pilot project (above) and are seeking support from across NHS Sussex to deliver a wider project examining maternal health.</p>	<p>Unknown but would take 6 months.</p>