

# Healthwatch Hillingdon

Annual  
Report

2014/2015







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# Note from the Chair



**Welcome to the second Annual Report from Healthwatch Hillingdon. We made real progress in 2014/15. There is no doubt that the people of Hillingdon now have a stronger voice to influence the health and social care services that matter to them.**

One of the most pleasing things about the past year is the extent to which we made a difference to the quality of care services in the borough. Thanks to our intervention, healthcare agencies have improved the way they work in the treatment of individual cases, and also more generally by improving standards in some services. Details of some of the changes we have helped to bring about with the help of local feedback are set out in this report, but there is still much to be done. Healthwatch Hillingdon must use its limited resources carefully to achieve maximum impact.

Much of our work is carried out behind the scenes by engaging with local health and social care agencies on issues where improvement is needed. Working in this cooperative, partnership-based way has worked well in most cases. But there were exceptions that demanded a different approach - for example, we publicly highlighted the serious deficiencies in mental health services for children and adolescents. Some of the issues raised for these services called for immediate improvements and concerted action by all relevant partners.

Our achievements this past year have only been possible as a result of the tireless work and effort of our Chief Executive Officer, Graham Hawkes, his staff, our hard working volunteers and helpers and the Members of our Board. I would like to express my appreciation here for all those who have contributed.

Significant challenges lie ahead of us. We need to be even more proactive in seeking out the opinions and experiences of people using care services in the borough, particularly from seldom-heard groups. Young people with mental health and similar problems will certainly continue to be one of our priorities. We will also look at the problems faced by older people living in care homes or receiving care in their own homes.

A big issue for all residents of the borough is the reconfiguration of health services across the whole of North West London. This could have significant implications for patients, in terms of both how and where services can be accessed and their quality and effectiveness. These changes have had a relatively low public profile so far, but we will monitor them closely, gather local views and raise public awareness as appropriate.

The activities of Healthwatch can only be successful if local agencies listen to us and act upon our concerns. This report sets

out some of the successes we have had in this respect, and we aim to build on this in the coming year. Above all else, our job is to give people more opportunity to shape services to meet local needs. The Board, Healthwatch Hillingdon's staff and

volunteers will put this at the heart of everything we do.

**Jeff Maslen**  
**Chairman**  
**Healthwatch Hillingdon**





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# Note from Councillor Philip Corthorne, Hillingdon Council



**I congratulate Healthwatch Hillingdon for the work it has undertaken on behalf of residents and as set out in this annual report.**

Healthwatch has developed into a key partner on the borough's Health and Wellbeing Board and as a critical friend in the development of more integrated health and social care in the borough.

As we move towards further pressure on services and budgets, it will be as important as ever that the "voice of the customer" is heard loud and clear in the changes ahead and as we seek further improvement with our health partners.

I'm also delighted that we were able to secure ongoing support for Healthwatch for 2015/16 and 2016/17 to enable it to continue its good work. My thanks go to the staff, the voluntary Board of Trustees

and the extensive support network and volunteers who have supported Healthwatch to thrive in Hillingdon.

**Cllr Philip Corthorne MCIPD  
Cabinet Member for Social Services,  
Health and Housing  
London Borough of Hillingdon**



**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON



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# About Healthwatch Hillingdon

**Healthwatch Hillingdon is an independent organisation that represents the views of everyone who uses health and social care services in the London Borough of Hillingdon. We make sure that these views are gathered, analysed and acted upon, making services better now and in the future.**

We give local people the platform to improve the delivery of their health and social care services. We monitor local services to ensure they reflect the needs of the community, and where necessary, use statutory powers to hold those services to account.

We are completely separate from the NHS and the local authority, from commissioners and providers of services. Healthwatch Hillingdon is part of the Healthwatch network in England, one of 152 community-focused organisations nationally led by Healthwatch England.

## Our vision

Our vision is to become the influential and effective voice of the public. We want to give adults, young people, children and communities a greater say in - and the power to challenge - how health and social care services are run in Hillingdon. This vision is founded on the belief that services work best when they are designed around the needs and experiences of the people who use them.

## What we do

- We listen to patients, their families and friends and tell health and

social care commissioners and providers about their views and experiences of services.

- We ensure that the voices of everybody in Hillingdon are heard and that no person or community is disadvantaged.
- We review, monitor, challenge, influence and shape how health and social care services are commissioned and provided in Hillingdon.
- We recruit, train and develop the skills of volunteers to help with our work.
- We give local people and communities the opportunity to be involved in the planning, development and delivery of local care services.
- We support and empower people to make informed choices and decisions about their care.
- We help people when they want to raise a concern, or a complaint about a service they or their family and friends have experienced.
- We recommend investigations or special reviews of services to Healthwatch England or directly to the Care Quality Commission.
- For everything we do, our Board, staff and volunteers strive to be fully inclusive and reflect the diversity of the community we serve.



## Healthwatch Hillingdon Shop

The generosity of the Pavilions Shopping Centre enables us to run the Healthwatch Hillingdon shop in a busy central location in Uxbridge. The shop provides a fantastic opportunity to engage with local people and promote Healthwatch and the wider voluntary sector. We advertise numerous events in our shop and on our notice boards and offer a full range of information on health and social care issues and services.

This local hub is vital to our work and we look forward to continuing our excellent relationship with the Pavilions in the coming year.



*Making our presence felt on the high street - the Healthwatch Hillingdon shop*

## About Hillingdon

The London Borough of Hillingdon is the westernmost borough in Greater London and is the second largest of the 33 London boroughs. The population is 274,000 according to the 2011 Census. This is expected to rise above 300,000 by 2016.

It is home to a diverse population, representing a vast range of cultures and nationalities - 40% are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, with 25% who are Asian.

The borough is home to Hillingdon, Mount Vernon and Harefield hospitals, Heathrow Airport, RAF Northolt, and both Brunel and Buckinghamshire New Universities.





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# Engaging with people who use health and social care services

## Overview

2014/15 saw Healthwatch Hillingdon building on its success at engaging with the people of Hillingdon by expanding our activity to learn about residents' experiences of health and social care services. We used diverse methods to raise awareness of our role to encourage as many people as possible to share their views with us. Our strong presence in key public places enabled a broad cross-section of the community to express their views, while tailored outreach activity gave seldom-heard and vulnerable groups the chance to share their experiences.

## Raising awareness of our role

We can only get local people to share their views and experiences with us by reaching out into the community, gaining trust and raising our profile. Our staff and volunteers threw themselves at this with a passion in 2014/15. We made contact with thousands of Hillingdon residents through attending community events, workshops and fairs, our presence at the borough's three hospitals and by presenting to the public and community organisations.

Examples of our communications activity include:

- a strong web presence - our site had over 68,000 unique visits over the year, with 20,000 documents downloaded

- guest appearances on Hillingdon Hospital Radio and Hayes FM
- a bus advertising campaign run in partnership with Healthwatch Ealing & Hounslow
- building our social media profile; our Facebook friend numbers rose by over 50% to 350, Twitter followers more than doubled to 725 and our interim report on children's mental health received over 1,000 retweets
- the delivery of 55,000 annual report summaries to residents in the south of the borough by the London Borough of Hillingdon Youth Offending Team
- advertising in the local press, hospital radio magazines and the borough care directory
- distributing 10,000 promotional book marks in partnership with Hillingdon's libraries
- extensive local press coverage of our stories and calls for evidence
- promoting our role through our shop in the Pavilions Shopping Centre in Uxbridge.

Although difficult to quantify, we estimate that our media exposure, attendance at



public events and location within the Pavilions shopping centre in Uxbridge allows us to indirectly engage with more than 100,000 Hillingdon residents.

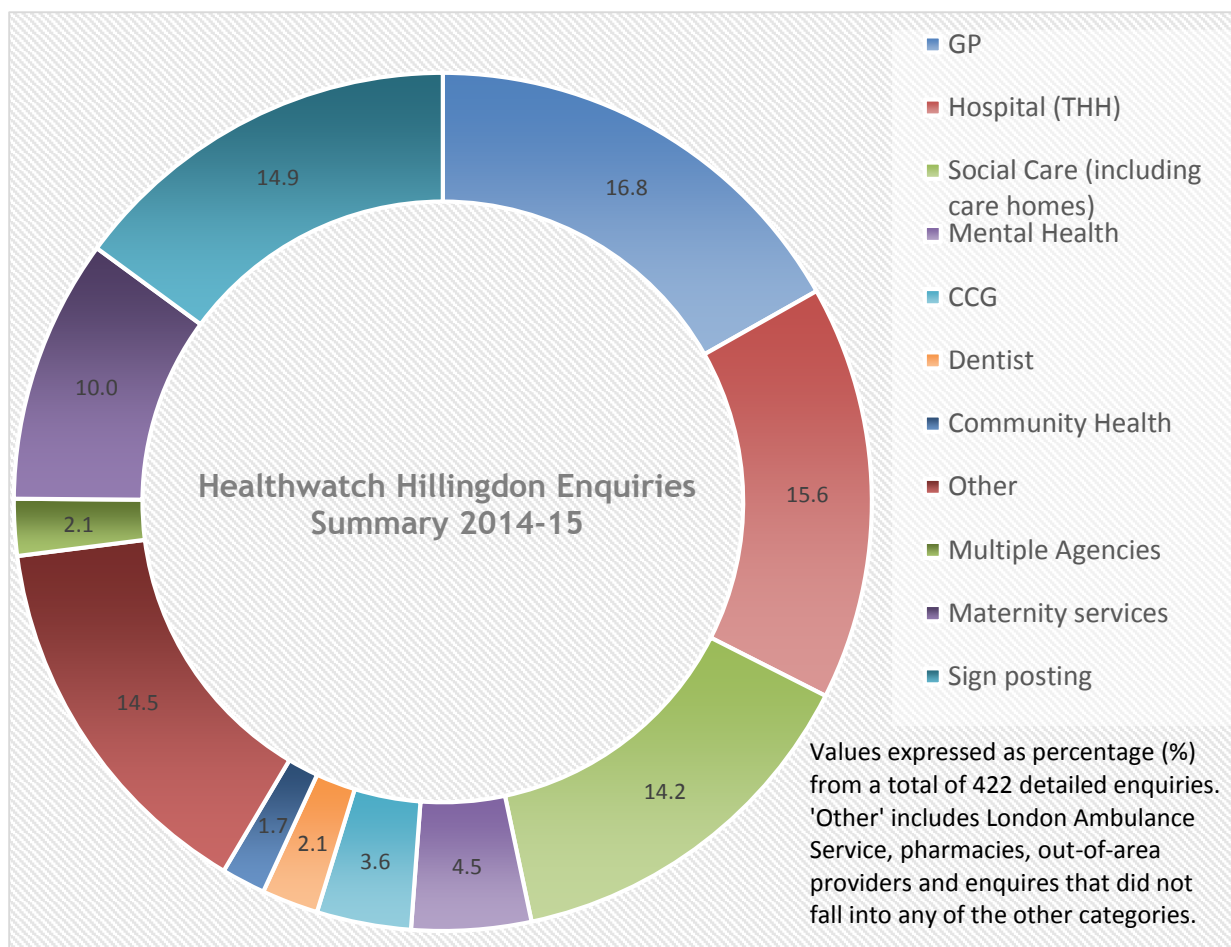
## Understanding people's experiences

Healthwatch Hillingdon's staff and volunteers engaged widely across the borough to gather residents' feedback on health and social care. This included targeted work with a number of seldom-heard groups, including young carers, the Gurkha Community, Hillingdon Traveller Forum and the deaf community. The information from this engagement work feeds into our patient experience data, a rich mix of information that helps us monitor service performance and identify where improvements are needed.

During 2015 we:

- actively sought the views of 1,826 people through our outreach activity
- gathered 784 instances of feedback (including complaints, compliments, information requests and patients' views) from all the methods we use to stay in touch with Hillingdon's residents.

Of these 784 enquiries/views, we analysed 422 in detail. The chart below breaks these down by type/subject of enquiry.





Hillingdon hosts three major hospitals and borders on to four counties and three other London boroughs. It is inevitable therefore that we also attract comments from service users, staff and volunteers from outside of the borough. As our contract with the London Borough of Hillingdon stipulates that we support borough residents, we direct these people to their local Healthwatch or NHS Complaints Advocacy provider as appropriate.

### *Gathering views at Hillingdon's hospitals*

Our community outreach programme includes a regular presence in the reception area of all three of the borough's hospitals. All manner of patient experiences are captured at these stalls, and in early 2015 we enhanced this opportunity by introducing comment boards. This enables people to use Post-it Notes to write comments, visible to all, under two headings:

- What I like about the NHS and Social Care Services
- If I could change anything it would be....

Collating these views enabled us to take forward issues with the hospitals. In one case we worked with Mount Vernon Hospital on communication to ease staff concerns about the issue of parking tickets.

### *The Healthwatch Hillingdon shop*

Healthwatch Hillingdon is one of the few local Healthwatch organisations that has a prominent high street presence. Our office and shop is located in the Pavilions shopping centre in Uxbridge near a busy underground tube station. As well as serving as a thriving information hub, it also provides a great opportunity for

visitors to tell us about their experiences of care.



### *Gathering views at Hillingdon's hospitals*

We are keen to share our shop facilities with other organisations. This makes the most of a valuable community resource and helps to strengthen our links with vulnerable/seldom-heard groups and other partners. Organisations that have benefitted from this facility include:

- Hillingdon Action Group for Addiction Management
- Refugees In Effective & Active Partnerships
- EACH Counselling & Support's Pukaar Project for women experiencing domestic violence
- the Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group.

### *Listening to young people*

Partnering with the National Citizens Service (NCS) was an excellent way of engaging with young people. Our work with a group of 15-16 year olds culminated



in them volunteering for Healthwatch Hillingdon as part of an NCS 'Challenge Day'. After a morning spent befriending and organising activities at the Young Carers Club in Harlington, our volunteers took to the streets of Hayes to carry out peer-to-peer wellbeing surveys with young people aged 12-24. The 32 completed surveys formed a vital part of our work on children and adolescent mental health.

### *Listening to people with poor mental health*

We identified a number of issues in our investigation of unsafe hospital discharge for mental health patients, conducted via interviews and workshops. The patient experiences we obtained were passed to Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, who decided that they warranted an internal investigation.

Anonymised data was also passed to the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch England as part of a wider Special Enquiry into unsafe discharge. We sent submissions representing the views of 20 individuals to this enquiry, more than most other London-based Healthwatch organisations.

### *Listening to people over 65*

Healthwatch Hillingdon engaged widely with the borough's older generation in 2014/15.

- We worked with local organisations and projects such as the Live at Home Scheme, the Pensioners Alliance, the Older Residents' Forum, Community Voice Health, Residents' Associations and Hillingdon and Mount Vernon Hospitals.
- We arranged/participated in activities such as Older Persons' Assemblies (three events),

dementia cafés, coffee mornings and a wellbeing event for housebound older people.

Healthwatch Hillingdon also worked closely with the Hillingdon branches of Age UK, Alzheimer's Trust and Hillingdon Carers. Work is ongoing with these groups to identify better ways of gathering feedback on people's experiences of care.



### *Listening to the Gurkha community*

Healthwatch Hillingdon was one of a number of organisations invited to participate in a wellbeing event for the elderly among the Nepalese Gurkha community concentrated in the south of the borough. We discovered that some struggled to access GP services because of language difficulties and problems with obtaining interpreters.

We worked with the CRI London Gurkha Settlement Service to produce a bilingual factsheet explaining how to access an interpreter for medical purposes. Gurkha group HGNC distributed two hundred copies throughout this community.

### *Listening to the deaf community*

We acted when feedback from the deaf community alerted us to the refusal by some GP surgeries to arrange for sign language interpreters to attend



appointments. A ‘speed dating’ session at a Disability Forum event, organised jointly with Hillingdon Council, gave us further insight into the difficulties this was causing. We informed the Clinical Commissioning Group of the need to raise awareness among GPs of their obligations, and produced a factsheet for deaf residents to present to their GP practice. Reports of this problem continued to surface for GP and hospital appointments; including a case where a ten-year-old child was asked to act as a translator. The feedback we gathered enabled us to submit evidence on this London-wide issue to the North West London Quality Safety Surveillance Group.

We encountered a similar lack of awareness among other primary local care providers. Problems with NHS England’s commissioning of interpreting services for dentists and opticians were highlighted when we helped an optician to establish the invoicing process for interpreter services after a request for payment had failed.

## Enter & View

As an independent consumer champion, Healthwatch Hillingdon has the power to ‘Enter and View’ health and social care services. These visits can be used to identify good practice and areas for improvement by talking to service users, relatives, carers and staff.

We prefer wherever possible to work closely with our statutory partners as a means of gaining a comprehensive overview of care quality. This approach worked well last year, and Healthwatch

Hillingdon did not need to exercise its formal powers of Enter and View in 2014/15.

We will not hesitate however, to use these powers if necessary, or to direct the Care Quality Commission to further investigate any concerns we uncover. Our Decision Making Policy, published on our website, sets out how Healthwatch Hillingdon can use its formal Enter and View powers.

## *Other approaches to viewing care quality*

Healthwatch Hillingdon leads on PLACE assessments (patient-led assessments of the care environment) in the borough. Seven volunteers helped with PLACE assessments at the Hillingdon Hospitals Foundation Trust and the Central North West London Foundation Trust in May 2014. It was a positive experience for our team and a number of improvements were logged for the Trusts’ Improvement Programme action plans.

We also conducted a meal audit at Hillingdon and Mount Vernon Hospitals to assess meal quality. Our comprehensive improvement plan helped the Trust and the Director of Nursing and Patient Engagement take appropriate action.





# Providing information and signposting for people who use health and social care services

## Helping people get what they need from local health and social care services

Healthwatch Hillingdon provides information and signposting in diverse ways to reach as many residents as possible. We have excellent links to and knowledge of service providers in the borough, enabling us to empower people to make choices about their care.

Key methods used to provide information and signposting include:

- our shop within the Pavilions shopping centre in Uxbridge
- attendance at community events and fairs
- our stalls in the reception areas of the borough's three hospitals
- our user-friendly website
- prompt replies to email and telephone queries

Although Healthwatch Hillingdon has not been commissioned to provide direct support for individual complaints about health and social care services, we strive to inform people about complaint or feedback processes. This can include referring people directly to the independent NHS Complaints Advocacy service (provided by VoiceAbility), to

DASH (for social care services) or other agencies. In 2014/15 we made:

- 43 direct referrals to VoiceAbility
- 5 referrals to DASH
- 2 referrals to SEAP (NHS Complaints Advocacy service provider for non-London Borough of Hillingdon residents)
- 1 referral to the General Medical Council.



*Pointing the way at the Ruislip Fun Day*

Our staff and volunteers try to help individuals resolve local issues wherever possible. This approach has worked well; it helps us connect with our local community and allows us to work co-operatively with providers to improve the quality of care. This approach can only work through strong partnership working, and we thank those organisations, such as Hillingdon Hospital and CNWL, that have embraced and supported this approach.



## Signposting and support - our impact

*Here are just a few examples from the many residents of Hillingdon who have benefitted from our help to find and access local services.*

We succeeded in stopping GP surgeries using expensive 0844 phone numbers in 2013/14 in accordance with NHS England guidelines. The last practice in the borough using such a number was brought to our attention by a patient, understandably frustrated at the cost of making appointments on her mobile and the lack of an online booking system. After the surgery repeatedly failed to act on our request to stop using their 0844 number, we escalated the issue to NHS England. The surgery finally agreed to change their number after NHS England's intervention. This has benefitted the practice as well as patients, as fewer people now walk in to make an appointment.

A carer contacted us after her elderly, frail mother was discharged from hospital, twice in quick succession, without an assessment of her care needs. With the family struggling to provide adequate care at home, we contacted the London Borough of Hillingdon Adult Social Services to request a proper assessment. The family subsequently got the help they needed - an outcome they feel was impossible without our intervention.

We supported a family at a Best Interest Meeting to discuss the discharge process for the mother who had been hospitalised for several months following a stroke. Our presence helped the family, social services and the hospital address the

complex set of needs, and the patient was discharged to the appropriate setting with the right package of care in place.

A carer contacted us after struggling to arrange a home visit by a community dentist for her mother with dementia. We discovered that the community dentist contract had been awarded to a private dental provider, and after attempts to contact the new provider failed, the issue was escalated to NHS England. The home visit was subsequently arranged.

A Chinese engineering student at Brunel University was experiencing severe pain from kidney stones. After unacceptable delays while waiting for an operation, alongside months of absence from his studies, he contacted Healthwatch Hillingdon. Our advice and intervention with the hospital helped him get the treatment he needed.

**'I hate to think what would have happened if I hadn't met Healthwatch Hillingdon. Maybe I would still be waiting for the operation.'**

**Mr L, Chinese student**

## Helping our partners to improve their information services

As well as constantly trying to improve our own signposting and information services, we use evidence from local people to encourage partners across the health and social care network to do the same.

For example - our analysis of enquiries and feedback to Healthwatch Hillingdon



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identified an interest in the right to be referred to a hospital of choice. Further investigation revealed the lack of local information on the public's rights and obligations under the NHS Constitution - even though the NHS Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) are duty bound to promote awareness of this.

As a result of Healthwatch Hillingdon's recommendations, the HCCG website now provides clear information on this issue. This information is also available on our own website and that of Hillingdon Council. We will continue to press for more action to raise public awareness of the NHS Constitution.





# Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people

## Producing reports and recommendations to effect change

Our mission to become the influential and effective voice of the public will only be realised if our work results in tangible improvements to services.

Each year Healthwatch Hillingdon provides a written response with recommendations to feed into the Quality Accounts for the four NHS Foundation Trusts that operate in the borough. Our role in influencing service quality, however, is a year-round responsibility, not just an annual focus. We hold regular meetings with providers, using patient experience data to challenge service quality and recommend improvements on an ongoing basis.

In this section we provide examples of how we used evidence from local people to influence decisions on health and social care in Hillingdon in 2014/15.

## Improving children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)

CAMHS was a big focus for Healthwatch Hillingdon in 2014/15, demonstrated by our employment of a Children's Engagement Officer. We worked very closely with Hillingdon Mind to gather evidence from young people. In December 2014 we published '*Listen to me!*' an interim report with far reaching recommendations, and presented it to the Hillingdon Health & Wellbeing Board.



This report has been a catalyst for change. A Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing multi-stake holder group has been formed to oversee improvements to services. A number of our recommendations were incorporated into the *Joint Social, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy 2015-2018* developed by Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group and London Borough of Hillingdon commissioning colleagues. These included:

- conducting children's mental health needs assessments
- more involvement of young people, parents and a wider group of



professionals (including the voluntary sector) in the development of services

- closer collaboration with schools
- a clearer focus on prevention and early intervention
- more universal support services for children and their families.

A second phase of in-depth engagement and evidence gathering has been undertaken during 2014/2015 and the findings from this work will be published in our second CAMHS report (due for publication in July 2015).

### *Improving domiciliary care*

When the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) wrote to recipients of domiciliary services to advise them of a change in service provider, we persuaded them of the value of adding Healthwatch Hillingdon's details to the letter. This enabled residents to feed back any concerns about the change and their experiences of care in general - valuable insights that we fed back to LBH. Residents continued to contact us about issues they experienced during the transition. Our recommendations helped LBH and the new providers to tackle teething problems and improve services.

### *Improving access to NHS Continuing Health Care*

Feedback gathered by Healthwatch Hillingdon indicated that many residents were not being told about or getting appropriate access to NHS-funded Continuing Health Care (NHS CHC). Not even NHS Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group's (HCCG) own website provided relevant information -

requiring us to request CHC checklist assessments directly on behalf of individuals.

Our recommendations led directly to HCCG making additional funds available to the Hillingdon Hospital to support assessment for NHS CHC prior to patient discharge. Information on access to this service was also placed on the HCCG website. We feel there is still scope for further improvement, including the training of frontline NHS and social care staff on NHS CHC eligibility and assessment processes.



### *Improving the equality of access to services*

Healthwatch Hillingdon has continued to act as a strong independent advocate for the implementation of National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines as a way of improving service quality and ensuring equality of access to NHS treatments. Our representations on the unfair provision of knee replacement operations led to the eight Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) across North West London agreeing to remove the clinically unjustified weight criteria in 2015/16.



We also pressed the case for changes to the referral criteria for inguinal hernias, identified by the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) as clinically unjustified and unsafe. Our intervention led to a recommendation by the North West London Policy Development Group (on which we have a non-voting seat) that the referral policy should be changed to reflect the standpoints of the RCS and NICE. This is a major step forward for the safety and quality of care for hernia patients across North West London.

Not all of our efforts to improve the equality of access to care have been rewarded. Women across North West London continue to face a postcode lottery for access to life-changing in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment. Our proposals for the staged implementation of NICE guidelines have not been fully explored by the CCGs. We will continue to highlight the injustice of this situation to commissioners, Healthwatch England and NHS England.



### Putting local people at the heart of improving services

Healthwatch Hillingdon continued to champion the full and effective involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and management of services in 2014/15. We used our seat on the NHS Hillingdon CCG's Patient and Public Involvement Committee to push for robust processes for involving local people

in the full commissioning cycle. Examples of local people influencing services with our support in 2014/15 are set out below.

#### *Improving maternity services*

The Hillingdon Maternity Services Liaison Committee (MSLC) oversees local maternity services by bringing together midwives, clinicians, commissioners, public health, Children's Centres and local mothers. The Committee's ability to recommend service improvements based on women's experiences is enhanced by having a Healthwatch Hillingdon volunteer, a local mother, as its Chair. We provide the Chair with advice and administrative support to help her play a full and equal role on the Committee. Crucially, the intelligence we gather from new mothers in the area helps to inform the MSLC's work. This input is making a real difference to services. One example is the new perinatal service set up at Hillingdon Hospital - see the impact story on page 24.

#### *Procuring a wheelchair service*

As part of the planning for the procurement of a joint wheelchair service, Harrow and Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Groups held informal workshops to learn about the experiences of wheelchair users. We invited four wheelchair users to attend, along with our Board Member (and wheelchair user), Allen Bergson. These contributors felt their input helped to shape the proposed contract, and a further meeting enabled them to improve the draft contract. The group also has the opportunity to get involved in the procurement process when the specification goes out to tender in 2015.



### *The mystery shopper*

A Hillingdon resident volunteered to act as a ‘mystery shopper’ and keep a diary throughout her pregnancy journey, from antenatal stages to the birth of her child. She provided valuable insights into the maternity services at Hillingdon Hospital, a mix of positives and areas for improvement. Her experience was presented as a patient story at the Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Trust board meeting, and the Trust agreed to act to improve services.

### *Membership of the Health & Wellbeing Board*

Our Chair, himself a volunteer, represents Healthwatch Hillingdon on the Health and Wellbeing Board. He fulfils his role as an influential and valued Board member by drawing on support from Healthwatch Hillingdon which includes:

- briefings, reports and advice
- training and experience sharing opportunities
- national good practice guidance on the role of the Board.

### *Working with others to improve local services*

2014/15 saw Healthwatch Hillingdon continue to build on its strong operational relationships with organisations within the NHS, Local Authority and the voluntary sector. These relationships see us take the role of “critical friend” and valued partner for Hillingdon’s health and social care providers. Our partnership working and stakeholder engagement gives us considerable strategic input into the shaping of services, ensuring that the experiences of patients and the public are not only heard, but are influencing

decisions and improving health and social care in the borough.

We represent residents on a number of multi-stakeholder, provider and commissioner groups in the borough, making the most of these opportunities to use local feedback to inform and influence service change. Initiatives covered by these groups include integrated care, Better Care Fund and Access to London Ambulance Service, GPs, Urgent Care Centre and Accident and Emergency.



### *Turning complaints into action*

Our work with VoiceAbility, the NHS Complaints Advocacy service, alerted us to the potential for using complaints data more effectively to influence care quality. We piloted a series of regular meetings with VoiceAbility to identify mutual concerns based on complaints and our own local intelligence. Joint work is ongoing to turn these insights into recommendations for service improvement, and our



relationship with VoiceAbility is stronger as a result.

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**“Healthwatch Hillingdon remains one of the CCG’s key strategic partners”**

Ceri Jacob, Chief Operating Officer,  
NHS Hillingdon CCG

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### *Joint co-commissioning of GP services*

We feel one important issue should be highlighted that needed more input from local Healthwatch. The development of joint co-commissioning of GP services was one of biggest changes to NHS commissioning processes during 2014. There are widely accepted benefits to this change, but questions remain about the risks. These arise mainly from actual or perceived conflicts of interest arising because local Clinical Commissioning Groups (led by independent GP contractors) will be able to buy NHS services from themselves as independent, private providers.

We believe that NHS England could do more to address this issue. Although the local Healthwatch network had an opportunity to share their views with NHS England, it was disappointing that these discussions occurred near the end of the implementation process. We will continue to monitor and engage with the development of the new commissioning arrangements, and do our utmost to ensure that the needs and views of local people are reflected in any proposed plans.

### *Working with the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch England*

Healthwatch Hillingdon did not make any formal recommendations to the Care

Quality Commission (CQC) in 2014/15 to undertake special reviews - either via Healthwatch England or directly.

Healthwatch Hillingdon values our growing relationship with the CQC. We have shared the feedback we have gathered with the CQC prior to their inspections of local GP practises, The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Trust and Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL). As well as submitting a large volume of feedback, we also publicised and attended listening events prior to the inspections and took part in Quality Summit meetings when the reports were published (for the NHS Trusts).



We have also passed on intelligence and patient feedback to the CQC on other local health and social care providers in the London Borough of Hillingdon, including identifying potential providers not registered with the CQC. Regular meetings with our local CQC team are also a valuable opportunity to discuss areas of mutual interest. We look forward to strengthening our relationship with the CQC during 2015/16.

We continued to develop our strong relationship with Healthwatch England and regularly shared relevant local information with them, including our contribution to their Unsafe Discharge Special Enquiry. We have a particularly strong relationship with Healthwatch England’s London Development and Policy teams, and value the contributions they make to our work. Our regular attendance at the London Healthwatch Network meetings provides a



valuable opportunity to share intelligence and good practice with others in the London Healthwatch network.

### *Responses to requests for information*

The stakeholder statements in this report are testimony to the strength of our relationships with local commissioners and major providers, and the value they place on us as a trusted ‘critical friend’. This appreciation of our role helped to facilitate satisfactory responses to our information requests. On occasions where the initial response was inadequate, strong working links helped to resolve any issues quickly. We therefore had no cause to resort to the formal Freedom of

Information route. The success of the cooperative approach, however, was no doubt encouraged by making partners aware that we have this tool at our disposal.

Healthwatch Hillingdon has continued to champion full public openness and transparency from all statutory partners as recommended in the Francis Report. This change requires a culture shift in the system, but we are seeing positive signs of this in the NHS. There is still room for improvement and we look forward to working with local health and social care partners to drive this forward.





# Impact stories

## Case study one

### *Exposing the need for change when services fail*

Angela Kelley was convinced that her mother had been neglected in a Hillingdon nursing home. But her quest to discover the truth would run for three years before she was finally vindicated.

An independent judgement by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman finally revealed the failings of the many organisations involved. The findings highlighted the unnecessary delays faced by complainants and the lack of support for individuals when faced with large organisations.



*Angela Kelley*

Healthwatch Hillingdon supported Angela in the latter stages of her campaign. The case shows the role that local Healthwatch organisations can play in highlighting the lessons to be learned from bad practice. We reported Angela's shocking experience to Healthwatch England. Our work with Healthwatch England saw the story featured in the national and local media. Healthwatch

**“As the complainant, the odds are stacked against you. You're up against the professionals.”**

England's CEO, Dr Katherine Rake, also used this case as part of evidence submitted to the Public Administration Select Committee to highlight the need for improvements to the complaints system and the impact on families when it fails.

**“I wish I had known of Healthwatch Hillingdon when my complaint was ongoing. I am glad they are there now for other people.”**

We will continue to work with both the local NHS and social services to ensure that lessons are learnt from the LGO judgement and that complaints about the care people receive meet the key principles set out in Healthwatch England's report *“My expectations for raising concerns and complaints”* (2014).





## Case study two

### *A new perinatal service for Hillingdon*

Healthwatch Hillingdon has continued to support the Hillingdon Maternity Services Liaison Committee (MSLC), the group which oversees the quality of maternity services in the borough. Based on the feedback we collected from women using maternity services, we highlighted the lack of a perinatal mental health services for local women.



*The future is bright - a new service for mothers and children*

We worked with the MSLC to alert commissioners to this service gap. The NHS Hillingdon Clinical Care Commissioning Group (CCG) accepted this need, and agreed to fund an intermediate perinatal service at Hillingdon Hospital. This service went live in December 2014, and we anticipate that this service model will be fully developed on a more permanent basis.

This has been a great achievement for both Healthwatch Hillingdon and NHS Hillingdon CCG. We are among the first regions in London to commission a dedicated perinatal service. The additional support during and following childbirth will be a huge benefit to Hillingdon mothers. We will continue to support the development of this service across North West London so that it meets NICE national guidelines.





# Stakeholder statements

## Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)

*Maria O'Brien, Divisional Director of Operations*

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“CNWL continued to build a mature and constructive relationship with Healthwatch Hillingdon in 2014/15. We seek regular feedback from our service users to help shape our services and improve quality. The feedback we receive from Healthwatch Hillingdon is an important component of this.

As a Trust we embrace a model of co-production with our patients and their carers. We look to Healthwatch Hillingdon to help us achieve this, whether this involves informing our Trust-wide quality priorities or helping redesigning services at a local borough level.

There are regular meetings in place between Healthwatch senior officers and the CNWL Borough Director and Divisional Director of Operations. We recognise the valuable contribution of our local Healthwatch as the voice for our service users and as a critical friend to the organisation to drive improvements. We welcome their visits to our sites and value their regular feedback - dialogue between us is open and transparent, enabling early intervention to address any concerns.

Healthwatch Hillingdon has worked with the Trust on a variety of issues. We thank them for their contribution in 2014/15, including informing our model for redesigning our community mental health services and CAMHS commissioning, and their proactive membership of the Hillingdon in-patient PLACE inspection teams.

We look forward to working with Healthwatch Hillingdon in 2015/16 and the continuation of their challenge function that has become such an important part of our drive for continuous improvement.”

## NHS Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

*Ceri Jacob, Chief Operating Officer*

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“Healthwatch Hillingdon remains one of the CCG’s key strategic partners. They play a full part on many of our committees and our Governing Body, contributing to discussions on priorities within the CCG and key strategic plans. Healthwatch Hillingdon is also a member of our Conflict of Interest





Panel, working with us to manage potential conflicts of interest arising from Primary Care Co-Commissioning robustly and transparently.

In addition to input at a strategic level, Healthwatch Hillingdon provides a valuable link to our local population. Local concerns and compliments are shared with the CCG on an ongoing basis, supporting service redesign and evaluation. In the past year this has included work with children and young people accessing local Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS) and meeting with our emerging GP Networks to raise awareness of patient engagement at a network level.

Hillingdon CCG looks forward to continuing this constructive dialogue in the coming year.”



## The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

*Shane Degaris, Chief Executive Officer*

“The Trust has continued to work in close partnership with Healthwatch Hillingdon and appreciates the valuable contribution they provide to the organisation. Representatives from Healthwatch Hillingdon have regularly attended focus groups and committees and have attended meetings of the Trust Board, Council of Governors and People in Partnership.

This year the Trust has worked closely with Healthwatch Hillingdon on the consultation for the priorities for the quality report, PLACE inspections and follow up action. Healthwatch Hillingdon and Healthwatch Ealing attend a quarterly quality meeting, to check progress and gain insights into how the Trust is performing against a number of quality indicators. The Trust has benefitted from the involvement of Healthwatch Hillingdon in Executive appointments at the Trust.

The Trust has provided facilities on a regular basis at both Hillingdon and Mount Vernon Hospital to enable Healthwatch Hillingdon to speak to and capture feedback from patients and the public about their experiences.

Healthwatch Hillingdon has direct access to the Chief Executive and meets bi-monthly with the Chief Executive and Director of Nursing to provide feedback from patients and local residents who are in receipt of services provided by the Trust.”





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# Our plans for 2015/16

Our plans for 2015/16 will reflect Healthwatch Hillingdon's aims and values.

## Our aim

Our aim is to become the influential and effective voice of the public. We want to give adults, young people, children and communities a greater say in - and the power to challenge - how health and social care services are experienced in Hillingdon.

## Our values - we are:

**Inclusive** - we work for everyone in the community including the seldom heard and those not able to speak up for themselves.

**Influential** - we listen to residents and set our agenda on what we hear and use innovation and creativity to secure change.

**Independent** - we are independent and act only on the behalf of consumers, we challenge those in power to improve services and will speak loudly to highlight failures if necessary.

**Credible** - we rely on and value evidence and objective data so that we can challenge effectively.

**Collaborative** - we learn from people's experiences and work positively and in partnership with people, the health and social care sector and the voluntary and community sector in order to get things done.

## Opportunities and challenges for the future

Healthwatch Hillingdon is currently finalising a two-year work plan which will provide the framework for our priorities up to March 2017. There are a number of work streams that were not fully completed in 2014/15 which form our early priorities for 2015. These include:

- the oversight and challenge of the Shaping a Healthier Future Programme (especially maternity)
- access to GP surgeries
- the Better Care Fund
- The Care Act
- Primary Care Co-commissioning
- the quality and safety of Health & Social Care Services.

We will also gather the views and experiences of Hillingdon residents on:

- home care
- care homes
- maternity
- discharge from hospital.

We have identified a group of new work streams that will start in late 2015 or early 2016. These will include:



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- accident and emergency
  - ‘Like Minded’ - an initiative to transform adult mental health across North West London
  - Improvement in Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services - one year on
  - primary care services
  - the impact of the Prime Minister’s Challenge Fund to increase access to GP surgeries.





# Our governance and decision-making

## Our board

- Jeff Maslen, Chairman
- Stephen Otter, Vice Chair
- Allen Bergson
- Richard Eason
- Turkey Mahmoud
- Baj Mathur
- Kay Ollivierre
- Rashmi Varma
- Martin McElreavey (resigned 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015)
- Edlynn Zakers (resigned 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015)

## How we involve lay people and volunteers

Healthwatch Hillingdon is governed by a Board of Trustees that consists entirely of lay people and volunteers. Selection and recruitment to our Board is through an open and transparent recruitment process. Meetings of our governing Board are held in public and agendas, minutes and reports of our meetings are routinely published on our website and additionally are freely available upon request.

We continue to encourage members of the local community to attend our Board meetings and provide opportunities for them to question the Board or bring our attention to any relevant issues. We have published our 'Relevant Decision Making Policy' on our website, setting out how the Healthwatch Hillingdon Board makes relevant decisions. This policy is reviewed

annually to ensure that the decisions taken by Healthwatch Hillingdon follow national best practice and reflect any guidance from Healthwatch England.

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**“Healthwatch Hillingdon gives me the opportunity to make a real contribution towards the standard of care for members of the community, often at a time when they are at their most vulnerable. Working as a Patient Assessor has been both educational and enjoyable. It is particularly rewarding to know that Healthwatch Hillingdon can use the experiences and concerns of patients and the public to suggest improvements to services.”**

Healthwatch Hillingdon volunteer

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# Financial information

INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		175,000
Additional income		100
Brought forward from 2013/14		14,441
<b>Total income</b>		<b>189,541</b>

EXPENDITURE		
Office costs		8,392
Staffing costs		133,612
Direct delivery costs		31,068
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>173,072</b>
Balance brought forward		16,469



# Contact us

## Get in touch

### Address:

Healthwatch Hillingdon  
20 Chequers Square  
The Pavilions Shopping Centre  
Uxbridge  
UB8 1LN

### Key staff:

Graham Hawkes  
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Tarlochan Grewal (Raj)  
Operations Co-ordinator

Nina Earl  
Community Engagement Officer

Pat Maher  
Administration & Support Officer

Victoria Silver  
Engagement Officer Children & Young People

Phone number: 01895 272997

Email: [office@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk)

Website URL: [www.healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchhillingdon.org.uk)

**Company Number: 8445068 | Registered Charity Number: 1152553**

We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2015 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, and our local authority.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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