

Quarterly Report: April–June 2022

Headlines

Heard from **516** people about their views and experiences



Launched a project supporting people with learning disabilities to influence the Working Age Adults framework



Published our #SpeakUp Summary Report



Ran information and advice sessions about maternity services



Published our Annual Report for 2021–22



Had **2,809** visitors to our website – 62% more than last quarter

1. Introduction

This quarter we made a good start on our work plan for the year – our priorities for 2022/23 are:

- Long Covid
- Maternity Services
- Older people in care homes
- Citizen voice in the new structures for both NHS and Council services.

In each of these areas we have started work on the activities that will take place over the coming months to ensure that we involve, and hear from a range of local people in order to influence how local services are delivered.

We described in our last report the recruitment to a new role of **Information and Advice** Officer, a post which is designed to help us pro-actively reach different communities with information in different formats, tailored to their needs. Now firmly established in post, our Information Officer has worked with a range of groups this quarter to develop useful resources such as a simple leaflet on Long Covid, and a guide on what to expect from the Autism diagnosis process as an adult.

This year's round of **#SpeakUp Grants** have also been awarded – we are looking forward to working collaboratively with the recipients in our new model for SpeakUp, which will see fewer but larger grants. This approach means we are able to invest more time and resource into each of the projects enabling them to have greater impact.

Finally, this quarter we were pleased to be successful in a joint tender with Disability Sheffield, to run co-production and involvement activities for adults with learning disabilities. This is a short term project, working with commissioners and decision makers in the council to inform the development of a 'Working Age Framework' for learning disabilities. This project will give people with learning disabilities a chance to have their say, and speak directly with commissioners about what they want services to look like.

2. Enquiries, Information and Advice

Members of the public can tell us about their experiences of health and social care services in Sheffield so that we can then share their views and opinions with decision makers. We also offer specific information and advice – giving information about health and social care services is one of our statutory duties.

Enquiries we receive may include finding out about people's rights to treatment, what services may be available to them, or how to raise a concern about a negative experience they have had. We help people to find the right information as well as

signposting them to further support if needed. Sometimes we can help people with their question immediately, whilst other situations may be more complex and may involve supporting the individual for a longer period of time.

Between April and June 2022, we received 117 pieces of individual feedback relating to people’s experiences of health and social care services. This was a slight rise in comparison to the previous quarter. Prominent themes have continued around people’s experiences of being unable to access NHS dentistry and long waiting lists across the city. We have also heard about the persistent struggles of trying to get through to GPs via phone to access both routine and urgent appointments. People are still being held in long queue systems and have told us that despite feeling ill they have often had to give up trying to get through. We have also heard about delays accessing mental health services with some individuals waiting over 6 months to get the treatment needed from when their GP initially referred them.

We have also continued to work closely with organisations to help develop beneficial information for their service users. This quarter we have produced an easy read information leaflet related to long Covid which has been used and distributed by the Covid Community Champions. We have also developed a leaflet specifically designed for our sessions with the Sheffield Maternity Cooperative giving guidance to parents and families on how to raise concerns or make a complaint if they have been unhappy with the care they have received. Acting upon feedback from DePaul service users, we also created a leaflet explaining the correct steps to take if an individual would like to seek an NHS adult autism diagnosis.



Case Study

Transport in Northern General Grounds

*Shane contacted Healthwatch to tell us he was extremely disappointed and frustrated with the fact that he was unable to attend an important appointment based at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals. Shane is housebound and a wheelchair user, he relies upon patient transport services to be able to attend all of his hospital visits.

On the morning of his appointment, Shane waited for his usual mode of hospital transport, however to his surprise a taxi arrived instead. Shane was all set to go but was left disappointed as he was told by the driver he could not use the taxi service due not have a safety lap belt fitted to his wheelchair. Shane understood the health and safety implications around this, however stated that if he had known he would be using the taxi service he could have been prepared and tried to get a belt fitted in good time. Shane was not told his usual mode of transport would change nor was he asked if he had a lap belt fitted, which could have prevented a waste of resources, time and disappointment.

After Healthwatch contacted the hospital we were told Yorkshire Ambulance Service had changed the booking and requested the taxi be sent to Shane's home. Shane has since logged a complaint and is waiting for his case to be investigated to try and fully understand why this situation happened. Shane tried to reschedule his appointment however was told he would have to wait up to another six weeks for a new one. We contacted the hospital on his behalf and explained the situation, luckily, he was rebooked in in a matter of days. Shane reported on his next visit the right mode of transport was booked to take him, meaning he was able to attend his much-needed appointment.

We have further supported Shane to obtain the right type of safety belt needed for his specialist wheelchair so that he is fully prepared if this situation was to happen again in the future.

**Name has been changed*

Using Voice for Influence



We continue to hear from patients who are being impacted by the crisis in NHS dentistry; we regularly report on this issue and feedback to regional commissioners, and to Healthwatch England who raise concerns from across the Network at a national level. This quarter, Sheffield MP Paul Blomfield raised the issue in Parliament, and referenced work done by Healthwatch to shine a light on this serious situation.

There is a snippet of his speech [here](#).

3. Website / Gathering Feedback

This quarter was very busy on our website. It saw 2,809 visitors (a 62% increase on last quarter) and 9,136 individual page views (a 56% increase on last quarter).

Some of our most popular pages were our #SpeakUp small grants page and our Strategic Advisory Group page – during this quarter we were advertising our latest round of grants and were recruiting to our Strategic Advisory Group, so were sharing these pages widely on social media and elsewhere.

Our most popular reports were our 'What have we been hearing?' insight report for March 2022, and our #SpeakUp summary report for the 2021–22 round of grants.

4. CQC / Sharing intelligence

- **CQC** – this quarter we shared 4 pieces of feedback about 2 separate services with the CQC.
- **Healthwatch England:** Every quarter, the themes and key issues from enquires and feedback are routinely shared with Healthwatch England via our CRM system, and also by sharing with them our monthly roundup. In addition to this we have regular regional network meetings, attended by representatives from Healthwatch England to give us a chance to hear about their work and feedback on issues and themes that we are seeing.
- **What have we been hearing?:** This quarter we have shared three roundup reports with statutory partners, commissioners and service providers to highlight the issues that people are talking to us about. These are picked up in different ways, and have become a regular item for discussion at the Health and Wellbeing Board.

5. Young and Student Healthwatch

During this quarter, staff changes meant that there were no focussed projects linking to children and young people – our new Community Outreach Lead joined us at the end of April and spent her first weeks in post visiting different community organisations to do introductions and talk about possible future work.

Work Experience Placement

In June, we had a Y10 student join us for 2 weeks on work experience placement. He carried out a micro project which involved talking to people at DePaul and designing an information leaflet about health and care services relevant to them. DePaul offers a Young Peoples Dispersed Accommodation Service provides housing and

support to vulnerable young people (including couples and young parents) who are resettling after a period of living without a permanent home.

6. Community Partnerships

The Community Partnership programme is way for us to connect with voluntary sector organisations, working together to raise the voices of the people they support. We now have 12 [community partners](#), who help link us to a range of communities. We produce regular newsletters for our community partners, but there is no fixed approach for the way the partnership works; we work flexibly to find ways that we can support each other in helping people have their say about health and social care services in Sheffield.

This quarter, our new Community Outreach Lead spent time meeting with our Community Partners to introduce herself and talk about ways of working together in the future.

We also worked with our Community Partner **Disability Sheffield** to successfully tender for a project leading Co-production on the new Working Age Adults Framework in the council's Learning Disability Services (for more information on this see the Engagement and Projects section).

7. #SpeakUp Grants

This quarter we launched the 2022 round of #SpeakUp grants.

This round is a new approach to the grants programme (see our [news article](#) launching this round for more details). We decided to award fewer grants than previously, but to give each voluntary or community sector group a larger amount of money, and dedicated time from our staff team to help organise or deliver the project, help with information provision, and to write the report. We also want to ensure that local people and decision-makers are brought together, either as part of the projects or as a follow-up, to make sure that people's voices are being heard.

We opened #SpeakUp applications in April, the panel (a mixture of Healthwatch staff and volunteers) met in May, and grants were awarded in June. We received 17 applications for the 5 grants of £2000 that we were offering. Many of the applications were interesting and had a lot of promise, so it was more difficult than ever to narrow them down.

The groups we will be working with on #SpeakUp projects this year are:

- United Women's Affiliation
- Sheffield Foyer
- Champions in Achieving Better Health in Sheffield (CABS)
- Sheffield ME & Fibromyalgia Group
- Sheffcare

These groups will be working with a wide range of communities in Sheffield on a range of different projects – we will share more details as the projects develop.

8. Projects, Involvement and Engagement

GP Website Audit

Staff and volunteers have been working on an audit of the websites belonging to General Practice (GP) surgeries across the whole of Sheffield – this exercise was to look at the quality of information offered on sites, as well as usability.

We've heard from many patients that they are struggling to get through to their GP on the telephone line, and are sometimes unable to access the services otherwise. With more GP services being offered online, the hope is that this is one way to improve access for patients and reduce the pressure for GP staff to be on the phone for long periods. In this context, we wanted to know how effective websites are at helping patients to navigate and access healthcare and support.

The audit looked into several aspects of the services including the following:


- The registration process for new patients including availability of information for non-English speakers and patients with other communication needs.
- The opening times of the GP Surgeries and the availability of appointments.
- How appointments could be arranged and managed online and through other ways.
- How repeat prescriptions could be requested for.
- If patients can easily access their own medical records online
- The availability of information and advice for carers are provided including how to register as a carer.
- The importance of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), their functions and whether patients are warmly welcomed to join them.
- The availability of an online feedback/complaints system with a named contact to whom they could be addressed to at the GP Surgeries.
- How accessible the websites were especially for people with sensory impairments or language needs.

Most of the GP Surgery websites contain a great deal of information and offer online services to manage the above mentioned. However, there are still areas that can be improved on.

We have been collating all this information into a report. We are also writing to each of the GP practices individually with feedback specific to them, to give suggestions on how they might make their websites more accessible and informative for patients. We had anticipated completing this work during this quarter but for a variety of reasons, including staff absence, we will be sharing this next quarter.

Primary Care Hubs

Last quarter we described our involvement in the work to hear people's views on the proposal to build new primary care hubs in the City. People had told us that they wanted a forum to directly hear information and ask questions, so we supported the CCG to run some public meetings in each of the areas for the proposed new hubs. This gave an opportunity for people to get more information on the proposals and share their views with staff from the CCG. In some of the meetings there was also an opportunity to hear from Primary Care staff who had come along to give their perspective on the proposals, and listen to their patients' views. We have continued to be involved in the development of the plans for the formal consultation stage which will launch in the next quarter, and we will carry on promoting the importance of ensuring that the voices of people and communities are listened to as decisions are made on whether or not to go ahead with the proposals.



The poster is for a public meeting. At the top left is the Healthwatch Sheffield logo. At the top right is a Zoom logo with the text 'Zoom in (Ctrl+Plus key)' and the SOAR logo. The main text reads: 'Public meeting: 12 April 2022, 6pm - 7pm'. Below this, it says: 'Healthwatch Sheffield and SOAR invite you to a public event to find out more and ask questions about potential plans to build up to five new health centres in Sheffield.' The event details are: 'Tuesday 12 April 2022, 6pm - 7pm', 'Firth Park Academy - Main Hall, Fircroft Avenue, Sheffield, S5 0SD'. It also states 'NHS staff will be in attendance'. At the bottom left, it lists 'For patients of:' followed by a bulleted list: 'Shiregreen Medical Centre', 'Elm Lane Surgery', 'Firth Park Surgery', and 'Dunninc Road Surgery'. On the bottom right, there is a photograph of a woman holding a baby.

Maternity Outreach Project

Healthwatch Sheffield has partnered with Sheffield Maternity Co-operative and Firvale Community Hub to create an exciting new project to engage with families to provide information and advice on different topics including pregnancy journey, birthing choices, and looking after newborns.

The project involves ante/post-natal outreach sessions in 2 locations. We have already delivered two sessions at the Firvale Community Hub where we have engaged with families from the local neighbourhoods. We offered them a safe space to discuss their ideas, concerns and expectations with expert healthcare professionals as well as gain peer support. Translator services and food was also provided at these sessions to ensure that participants were given a warm welcome.

The next session will be on 22nd September at Firvale Community Hub – the main discussion topic will be managing safe infant sleeping practices.

We have also been gathering anonymous feedback on the new parents' experiences to help understand the good practice and care they have received, how some areas of care and support need to be improved, and to identify gaps in maternity health service provision. This includes the barriers they may have faced and any impact of race on their personal experiences. We will be writing a report at the end of our project to share with Maternity healthcare services.

Older People in Care Homes

One of our priority areas of focus this year is the experience of older people in care homes. In the context of their recently developed Adult Social Care Strategy, Sheffield City Council are looking at future models of care. We will be talking directly to Care Home residents to hear their views on what residential and nursing care should look like. During this quarter we met with the Council to better understand how these views might be able to inform and impact on the Council's work, and a new member of staff joined our team who will be focusing on this project over the summer.

Chance to Choose

During this quarter Sheffield City Council put out an opportunity to tender for a project leading co-production work on the city's new Working Age Framework for adults with learning disabilities. This framework will include a range of services including Supported Living, day opportunities and respite care. We partnered with Disability Sheffield to successfully tender for this project, and in this quarter we met with commissioners and put together a work plan for the project which will be taking place July–September. We will use a range of approaches to involve people in different ways including:

- Creative activities (drama, art, creative writing) to involve people to have their say in different ways – these will be run in a variety of settings, with a range of groups
- Bigger events taking place focussed on a particular theme, where council staff come together with people with learning disabilities to talk about how services are now, and how they could be in the future
- An accessible survey
- Events focussed on involving and hearing from carers

Sheffield Voices Self-Advocacy Group (hosted by Disability Sheffield) decided the name for this project – Chance to Choose.

Festival of Debate

In May we held [an event](#) as part of the Festival of Debate. Inspired by the 'Child of the North' report, we hosted a panel discussion to explore the inequalities faced by

children and families, how this is impacting on communities in Sheffield, and what can be done to make a difference.

We welcomed expert speakers – Professor Sarah Salway from the University of Sheffield and contributing author to the report; Julia Thompson from the Public Health team at Sheffield City Council; Patrick Meleady and Terezia Rostas from Pitsmoor Adventure Playground.



Supporting Healthwatch England to develop their approach to involvement

This quarter our Community Outreach Lead started work with Healthwatch England to support them in developing the approach to Engagement and Involvement across the network. We have received a grant to enable us to release her for this work, and recruited a new Community Outreach Lead for 12 months to cover this role. The work with Healthwatch England is centred around an aim to ensure that Healthwatch better involves people and communities in all stages of our work, including in the development and design of projects.

We anticipate that the learning from this work will help strengthen our own approach at Healthwatch Sheffield and help us in our work to develop joint approaches across South Yorkshire, within the context of the new Integrated Care System.

Quality Accounts

Five of our volunteers helped us to read and respond to this year's [Quality Accounts](#). We comment on the general accessibility of these accounts, as well as responding to each organisation's priorities for the year ahead, progress against last year's

priorities, and the opportunities for patient and public involvement in their work. This year we responded to Quality Accounts from the following organisations:

- Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust
- Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- St Luke's Hospice

9. Reports

What have we been hearing?

This quarter we published three of our monthly insight reports – from [March](#), [April](#) and [May](#). These round ups highlight ongoing trends and emerging issues in health and social care, and are based on our enquiries, engagement work, and other intelligence.

In June we were approached by Healthwatch England and asked to present at a reports showcase in July – they want to highlight our monthly insight reports as a good example of the format, and would like us to share our learning about the development and the impact of the reports with the wider local Healthwatch network in England.

#SpeakUp

After publishing all of the individual reports from the 2021 round of our grants scheme, this quarter we published a [summary report](#). This report gives an overview of all the projects that were funded last year and their key findings, as well as drawing out some common themes and key recommendations for local commissioners and service providers to consider.

We asked these commissioners and providers for a formal response to this report, and the recommendations it makes, and will publish these on our website.

Our Annual Report

In June we published [our annual report](#) for the year 2021-22. This was an opportunity for us to share what we've been working on over the past year, and how local people's experiences have made a difference to health and care in Sheffield.

Some of our highlights include:

- Hearing from 2,547 people about their experiences of health and social care services

- Developing our information and advice offer and helping 5,776 people get the right information about their options
- Amplifying people's voices through 25 reports and briefings, which helped get people's views heard by local decision makers

10. Health & Care Public Forum (Sheffield)

The Health and Care Public Forum has continued its work this quarter, with members hearing about and commenting on a range of issues. These included:

Compassionate Sheffield – members learnt about the Compassionate Sheffield programme, and shared stories about compassion and bereavement.

Young Carers – representatives from Sheffield Young Carers and Sheffield City Council attended and the group heard about the current legislation on Young Carers, as well as support available to them in Sheffield (including the work of Sheffield Young Carers). A Lack of consistency in identifying young carers across the health and care system was raised as an issue with the HCP team and will be discussed further at Primary Care Board in September.

Health Inequalities and the role of the Race Equity and Inclusion Group – the group heard from the Co-Chair of the HCP Race Equity and Inclusion Group (REIG).

What Matters To You (WMTY) Day on 9th June – 2 members of the group shared stories for this.

11. Local decision making

The Health and Care Bill is new legislation which has made changes to the way the NHS is organised – from 1st July new **Integrated Care Boards** (ICBs) will be set up across the country in each sub-region. These boards will work with partnerships of local organisations such as voluntary sector organisations and local authorities, as part of an **Integrated Care System (ICS)**. Sheffield will be part of the **South Yorkshire ICS**.

This is important to the work of Healthwatch because our role is to influence and improve the way services are run. In the new system, some decisions about Sheffield services will be made at a South Yorkshire level – this means we need to have routes to influence decisions in this new structure.

During this quarter we continued our work with other South Yorkshire Healthwatch to promote the importance of public involvement and citizen voice in the new structure. We joined together to give our comments on the 'People and Communities' (Engagement Strategy) which set out the South Yorkshire approach to involving citizens in its work. We have also continued work on our own collaboration

agreement, and our approach to working together as local Healthwatch in South Yorkshire.

In the new structure, Healthwatch has a non-voting place on the ICB where we will have the opportunity to bring insight from our work, and constructive challenge to the system in our role as a critical friend. As an interim measure, the Healthwatch Sheffield Chief Officer will be taking this place while we develop a longer term plan to ensure we can be fully effective in our work with the board.

Locally, our Chair has started attending the **Health and Care Partnership Board** meetings, and has been active in contributing to discussion around the future of how services will work together as Sheffield Place. This also links to the role that we have currently facilitating the Health and Care Public Forum, giving people and patients an opportunity to directly hear about and comment on locally developed plans (see section above).

We will continue to advocate for the importance of involving people in decision making, wherever those decisions are made.

12. Supporting services to involve people

Primary Care Hubs

As described above, we supported the CCG in running public meetings to talk to people about plans for new GP Hubs in the North East of the city.

Mental Health Services

We have attended a variety of mental health meetings this quarter, and been involved in a range of discussions to support services in thinking about how they can involve people in the way services are designed. This included:

- **Outcome measures** – we have promoted the importance of involving people in the development of the outcome measures which will be used in Community Mental Health services; plans are now in place for some events to involve people who use services in this work.
- **CMHT Transformation Programme Board** – as members of this board we have pushed for action to be taken to involve service users/carers in influencing transformation plans.

Children's Hospital Clinical Strategy

We met with staff developing the Children's Hospital Clinical Strategy, to support them in thinking about ways to involve children and families in the work. As well as giving feedback on the approach, we shared relevant existing Healthwatch feedback

with them, and will use opportunities over the summer to speak with families about their views on services provided by Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust.

Long Covid

During this quarter we received funding from Sheffield Teaching Hospitals to do some focused work on Long Covid over the next 12 months. There is a need to better understand the experiences of people living with Long Covid in Sheffield, including their experiences of accessing care and support. This work will involve the public and patients coming together with a range of other stakeholders to help shape what Long Covid services and support look like in the future. In future quarterly reports, we will be updating on this in the Projects and Engagement section.

13. Volunteers

Strategic Advisory Group

This quarter our Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) continued to meet regularly. SAG currently has six members, including our Chair. We have been recruiting for new volunteers to [join this group](#), to bring additional perspectives and experiences to our work and share the responsibilities involved in this volunteering role.

Shared Lunch

In June, we held a shared lunch for our staff and volunteers. This was a chance to reconnect with volunteers – some of whom we hadn't seen face-to-face since before the pandemic – and thank them for their continued support. In total, 20 people came to eat and chat with each other.

At this event we also began a conversation about how volunteers would like to be involved over the coming year, when we hope more face-to-face activities will be possible. We will continue this conversation with volunteers who were not able to come to the lunch, and begin to shape our future volunteering opportunities with this learning in mind, as well as identifying gaps where we will need to recruit additional volunteers.

14. Healthwatch Team

This quarter two new members of staff joined our team:

Katie Knox –Community Outreach Lead. Katie is covering this role while Sarah Fowler works with Healthwatch England for a 12 month project.

Natasha Munoz– Natasha has joined us as an Engagement and Involvement Officer to work on our Care Homes project which will take place in the next quarter.

15. Coming up – What next for Healthwatch Sheffield?

We will speak to older people in residential and nursing homes across Sheffield

We will set up a steering group to guide our work on Long Covid, and start developing our work plans

We will work collaboratively with recipients of this year's SpeakUp Grants to hear from the people they work with

We will publish our report on GP websites

Using Voice for Influence



As well as sharing our intelligence in our written round ups, staff and volunteers regularly raise feedback and share experiences in the meetings they attend. Taking part in meetings helps us stay informed about developments in services, and enables us to promote the importance of listening to, and involving people, in shaping those developments. This quarter, we have attended the following meetings, boards and committees:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- CCG Governing Body
- Children & Young People's Health & Well Being Transformation Board
- Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Primary Care Commissioning Committee
- CCG Quality Assurance Committee
- Sheffield CCG Strategic Patient Involvement, Experience and Equality Committee
- Sheffield Mental Health, Learning Disability, Dementia and Autism Delivery Board
- Mental Health Crisis Care Board
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Public Health Group
- Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- Area Prescribing Committee
- Community Mental Health Team Review
- Adults Service Improvement Forum
- Neurodevelopmental Task and Finish Group (children's hospital)
- Sexual Health Networking Meeting
- Community Covid Hubs meetings
- Health and Care Strategy meeting – voluntary sector
- Joint Committee of Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Addressing Health Inequalities – Children's Hospital