The value of listening

Healthwatch Oldham Annual Report 2023-2024



Oldham



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"Over the last year, local Healthwatch have shown what happens when people speak up about their care, and services listen. They are helping the NHS unlock the power of people's views and experiences, especially those facing the most serious health inequalities."

Louise Ansari, Chief Executive at Healthwatch England



Message from our Chair

Introduction

Listening to local people's views on how to improve health and wellbeing is critical to the work of Healthwatch Oldham and throughout 2023/24 we engaged with a diverse range of communities to meet this goal. We worked in partnership with other local organisations to run several events that were both accessible and engaging for key groups including those from Oldham College and people with autism and learning disabilities. Each event included representatives from a wide range of health and wellbeing services who were able to provide information, advice and health checks and to signpost people where they needed further support. This provided rich intelligence about what matters to you and we shared this anonymised information with services, to highlight where they are performing well, and to help identify opportunities for improvement. We also used this information to develop our own work schedule and identify key areas for future projects.

Our information and advice is highly valued, and we have many examples that have enabled Oldham residents to access the services they need. Our work with maternity services has helped improve how the Care Quality Commission will carry out future inspections of maternity services. Our engagement with people seeking asylum and refugees in a local temporary accommodation hotel highlighted the need for change in how they access primary care services and we have seen changes and improvements in those services and how planning for future services is more joined up.

Partnership with other organisations is crucial to our work. We continue to work closely with Healthwatch colleagues across Greater Manchester (GM) by contributing to joint projects to support system-wide improvements and sharing local intelligence to amplify the voices of Oldham residents within GM. We also work closely with the Oldham health and care organisations responsible for planning and delivery of local services to ensure the experiences of residents influence their strategies and act as a critical friend where we hear of opportunities for improvement.

Our staff, Advisory Board members and volunteers work hard with limited resources to ensure we have an impact on health and social care to improve services for Oldham residents.



"I would like to thank anyone who attended our events or gave us feedback about their experiences. Our work would not be possible without the continued hard work of our staff, volunteers and Advisory Board members. I am proud to work with them and thank them all for their ongoing dedication.

I would also like to thank Action Together, which hosts Healthwatch Oldham, and all our funders and partner organisations for their continued support. I very much look forward to continuing to work with you all over the next year."

Jacquie Wood – Healthwatch Oldham Chair



About us

Healthwatch Oldham is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our vision:

To champion the voices of and work together with local people to influence positive change and to ensure their health and care experience is the best that it can be.



Our values are:

- Work as a Team We will work effectively together and support each other to work flexibly as a team in a compassionate and empathic way.
- **Listening and Including -** We are here for everyone. We will listen to, engage with and include local people to hear everyone's voice regarding their ideas for change in health and social care.



- **Strengthen Others -** We want local people to have the confidence and information to access the care they need. We will act upon the information, feedback and ideas shared with us to enable this to happen.
- Be True We will analyse and report upon experiences and feedback we receive from local people and services to honestly represent their views and to independently make recommendations for change.

Year in review

Reaching out:

624 people

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



1,823 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as general health, mental health, local health walks and the cost-of-living crisis.

Making a difference to care:

We published

2 reports

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



Our most popular report was

Review of GP services at a temporary hotel accommodation

which looked into asylum seeker's and refugee's experiences of accessing GP provisions at a temporary hotel accommodation.

Health and social care that works for you:

We're lucky to have

11 outstanding volunteers

who gave up over 60 hours to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2023 - 24 we received

We currently employ



£139,200

which is 3% less than the previous year.

5 staff

who help us carry out our work.

How we've made a difference this year



We concluded our Maternity Services engagement to understand the experiences of partners and loved ones, who accompanied mothers through the maternity journey.



We continued our support of local health walks within the Oldham Borough.



We continued our support of the Rochdale and Oldham Maternity Services Partnership.



We undertook a project to better understand people's understanding and experiences of NHS 111.



We carried out an Enter and View within Royal Oldham Hospital looking at maternity services.



We hosted a Health and Wellbeing Event for Adults with a Learning Disability and/or Autism.



We undertook a project to look into GP services for those seeking asylum or who had refugee status whilst staying in temporary hotel accommodation.



We hosted a Health and Wellbeing Event at the Eastern Pavillion to engage with seldom heard communities.

Your voice heard at a wider level

We collaborate with other Healthwatch to ensure the experiences of people in Greater Manchester influence decisions made about services at Greater Manchester Integrated Care System (ICS) level.

This year we've worked with Healthwatch in Greater Manchester to achieve:



Gathered opinions from across our local communities and used our knowledge to contribute towards the development of the Greater Manchester Dementia United Quality Standards, the Greater Manchester ICS People and Communities Engagement Strategy and the Shanley Report.

Undertook a Greater Manchester Children and Young Peoples (CYP) Mental Health Project, with a focus on on pathways to mental health support. This project gathered peoples lived experiences of existing service provision across Greater Manchester. Recommendations and findings will be fed back to GM and local commissioners and providers to help shape future service delivery.





The appointment of 3 key roles to the Healthwatch in Greater Manchester partnership. These include an Independent Chair of the Network, Chief Coordinating Officer and Administration and Data Officer. These roles will drive forward the leadership, coordination and delivery of the All Age Strategy 2022-2025 alongside partnership working across the Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network.

Worked in collaboration with Greater Manchester Patient Services to co-produce ongoing reports throughout the year which identify challenges and share the lived experiences of the people of Greater Manchester. We have and will continue to ensure their voices are heard throughout the Greater Manchester ICS through their Quality and Performance Committee.





Listening to your experiences

Services can't make improvements without hearing your views. That's why, over the last year, we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.

Review of GP Service at temporary hotel accommodation informs commissioning decision

Healthwatch Oldham engaged with people who were seeking asylum or had refugee status and were staying in temporary hotel accommodation.

We wanted to understand if the residents could access the primary care services they need and what improvements could be made.

29 residents

responded engaged in this project and provided their views and experiences



What did we do and what did we find out?

We visited the Hotel to gather residents' views using a prepared set of questions. The majority of people we spoke to were registered with the GP. However, there was inconsistency in the length of time after arriving at the hotel that this registration occurred. There was also a delay regarding patient health checks being carried out, and confusion about whether they had been completed and when the GP visited the hotel. Findings also showed that people felt their appointment was rushed, where people didn't feel listened to or that their medical needs were addressed.

As a result, we recommended;

- Every new patient receives a new patient health check.
- A mechanism to check the quality of the experience with the GP, including the time taken at the appointment is sufficient for the patient to feel their concerns are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.
- There is effective communication between the resident and the GP, including appropriate interpretation services where required.
- A consistent and clearly communicated system to inform residents when individual appointments will take place at the hotel.
- Provide information in appropriate formats to ensure residents know how to access GP services outside of the dedicated slots provided by this service.

What difference did this make?

Following our report, the GP Practice served notice on the contract and ceased provision of the enhanced service on 31st March 2024, but have continued to register and see residents as part of mainstream provision. The report has highlighted opportunities for the wider system to come together to ensure holistic care and communication is provided through partnership and collaboration.

Health and Wellbeing Event for Adults with a **Learning Disability and Autism**

On 28 September 2023 we held our health and wellbeing event for Adults with LD and Autism at the Cotton Rooms in Oldham Town Centre.



What difference did this make?

We organised an event for Adults with LD and Autism and their carers as there is evidence that they are at higher risk of health inequalities. People were able to come along and find out about Health, Care and Support services and projects in Oldham in a fun, relaxed, informal environment with a focus on getting involved in the activities on offer.

Throughout the event, 97 adults with LD, Autism and Carers attended, as well as 50 people who were there to share information on their service and find out what other services offered. We linked with Funky Fitness and Fun CIC who are a local day service for adults with LD and Autism promoting independence and focusing on all aspects of health wellbeing.

Funky Fitness and Fun provided the day's activities which included exercise and dance, circus skills, laughter Yoga and insightful role play scenarios looking at issues that adults with LD and Autism face around their independence and how we can all use better ways to support adults with LD and Autism to better develop confidence and independence.

People's Choice Award Winners

At the end of 2023, Oldham residents were asked to nominate individuals they feel have provided them with excellent service, going above the call of duty and deserve recognition for their hard work.



A massive congratulations to all the winners who were selected and thank you for your service to Oldham residents. The full list of winners is as follows:

- Dr. Stewart from Royton Medical Centre
- Dr. Wilshere from Quayside Medical Practice
- Dr. Pilkington from Quayside Medical Practice
- Linda Bardsley who is an Oldham General Nurse
- Paula Clarke for her visual, interactive or descriptive learning support for her students
- Women's Group at the Salvation Army at Fitton Hill
- · Aaron Walters from ABL Health

"I am honoured to receive this award, nominated by patients. Quayside Medical Practice has won a few awards this last 12 months following our achievements in care provision, but this award is special to me and our team because it is from the local residents that we serve. We have had significant challenges with local practice closures locally, unexpected withdrawal of funding, and difficulty recruiting staff, all alongside the issues currently facing the NHS. But we have managed to overcome many of the challenges, and I thank everyone in our team for all their hard work and dedication.

On behalf of my team, thank you to everyone who nominated me. This is a special award. Thank you." – Dr Mark Wilshire

NHS 111 - Looking into people's experiences of using the service

Our project was to better understand people's experiences of the NHS 111 services following on from our engagement with local people late last year. A total of 257 people engaged with us.

Following a discussion and challenge to NHS Oldham Integrated Care Partnership (NHS Oldham ICP) about the impact of the closure of Oldham's Walk-in Centre, additional investment had been made to the NHS 111 service. Healthwatch Oldham was therefore keen to understand people's experiences of the NHS 111 services and promote the service locally to help people access the health services they require at the time they need it. NHS Oldham ICP were also keen to raise awareness of the NHS 111 service and planning a winter publicity campaign.

What did we find out and recommend?

- Most of the people we spoke to broadly knew what the NHS 111 service is and its offer, although there was some useful insight into the ways it is perceived, that could be helpful when producing further communication to widen its reach and increase the uptake of the service.
- Consider a targeted approach to future awareness-raising campaigns, taking into account the different needs of people who do not speak English as a first language, have a learning disability or are not confident or able to access digital services.
- Promote written and digital campaign material in different languages, this was highlighted as a gap by people experiencing racial injustice.
- Raise more awareness of the online services of NHS 111 as there seemed to be less awareness of this than the phoneline.

The work helped support the winter campaign that NHS Oldham ICP put together to better inform patients of the benefits and uses of NHS 111.

It also allowed us to better share information with Oldham residents on when it is best to make use of the NHS 111 service and better explain the limitations to help and prevent people from accessing the wrong services such as the local emergency department when it isn't required.



"'I couldn't get to speak to someone in my language, they only could offer an English speaker'"

Patient statement to Healthwatch Oldham

Three ways we have made a difference in the community

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

Creating empathy by bringing experiences to life

It's important for services to see the bigger picture. Hearing personal experiences and the impact on people's lives provides them with a better understanding of the problems.

We engaged with people seeking asylum and refugees in temporary accommodation to understand their experiences of the primary care service specially commissioned to support them. Our report led to changes and improvements in the service and improved partnership planning of support and services in the temporary accommodation.



Getting services to involve the public

Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

Leesbrook Surgery approached Healthwatch Oldham to understand patient views on their matron service. Matrons can be experts in assessing complex medical problems and supporting people who live with long-term conditions. The findings helped confirm that patient needs were being met and informed how the matron service could continue to gather feedback from patients.



Improving care over time

Change takes time. We often work behind the scenes with services to consistently raise issues and bring about change.

We gathered experiences on behalf of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) from partners and or family members who had supported a pregnant or birthing person through the maternity journey. Our findings informed how the CQC could make it easier for people to share their experiences with them in future inspections of maternity services.



There's a summary of other outcomes we've achieved this year in the Statutory Statements section at the end of this report.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year, we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard, and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- · Hosting our Health and Wellbeing Events in a variety of locations in the Oldham Borough to help reach seldom-heard groups
- · Our Health and Wellbeing Events have also been specifically targeted at different communities such as young students at Oldham College and our forum for adults with a learning disability and/or autism
- Proactively engaging with Pakistani communities living around the eastern pavilion area, with targeted door knocking and worked with local community groups to promote the event in the community.

Access to services at our Health and Wellbeing Event led to positive health changes

We received positive feedback from a person who attended our Health and Wellbeing Event at Eastern Pavilion, who had started to make lifestyle changes as a result of the advice and guidance she received at the forum.

The person had a Health MOT which showed that she was classed as in the overweight category and that her blood pressure was a little higher than normal. She was able to sign up that day for a weight management program that ABL Health was running and has been attending weekly. She has also been in contact with her GP to have her blood pressure checked.

As a result of this experience:

She has started walking more and is attending regular health walks as well as walking on her own and has signed up for Water Adventure Centre free sessions (who were also there on the day). As a result, she has started to lose weight and feel better. She stated that attending the Health Event in January started her journey to being a healthier weight, being more active and improving her overall health and wellbeing. She got to speak to a range of services and try different activities including Nordic walking and Static Kayaking and is looking forward to attending future forums.

Supporting a mother and her daughter with Asperger's

A mum rang regarding problems her adult daughter was facing around employment/short-term contracts.

She explained that her daughter had Asperger's and she and her daughter felt that this was not being considered when she began new employment on a 3-month probationary period.

The caller shared her concern that the employer and other colleagues did not support her daughter and that she missed out on opportunities available to other staff in the team. Mum felt helpless because her daughter was feeling low about this and was not sure how things could improve going forward.

We contacted the Disability Employment Advisers (DEA) at the Department of Work Pensions (DWP), with consent from the client and her daughter. We checked eligibility as well as funding possibilities which could be useful for them to apply for.

The DEA-DWP also gave their contact details to pass on to Mum and her daughter so that they could contact her directly to talk through things and arrange a meeting to look at the best way they could help the daughter. After the call, we fed this information back to the family who stated they were very happy about this and that they would be making contact.

Mum thanked Healthwatch Oldham for all the help provided, they had no idea that the DEA role even existed and did not know about the funding possibilities to support adults with LD or Autism in gaining and staying in employment.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, making a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we've helped people by:

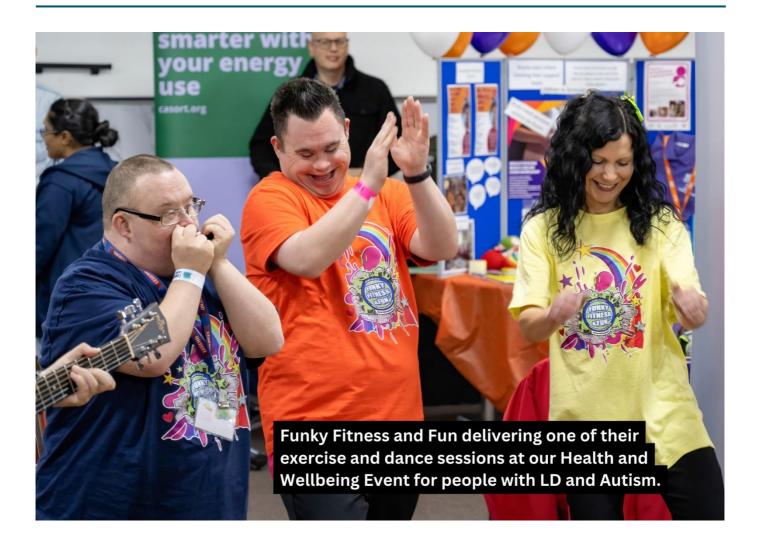
- · Providing up-to-date information people can trust
- Helping people access the services they need
- Helping people access NHS dentistry
- Supporting people to look after their health during the cost-of-living crisis

Audiology

It's essential that people have clear, accurate communication about their care.

A lady rang regarding her brother who accessed the audiology department in the Integrated Care Centre (ICC). The lady made appointments for her brother as he is hard of hearing and has learning difficulties. The sister had missed a call from audiology so called them back. The staff member who answered wouldn't speak to her and said they needed to see a copy of a power of attorney to enable them to do this. The sister was confused as the first contact had been made to her by the audiology department. The sister was often in touch with audiology on his behalf regarding problems with the aids breaking. In the end, the staff member put the phone down on her. She called back to speak to the Manager who wasn't in, they gave her the number for PALS which was the incorrect number.

We called the audiology department and spoke to the receptionist. They agreed they would get the Manager to call back. This didn't happen so we called back again the following day. The Manager called back and was sympathetic and seemed to understand the problem. We suggested that the next time the gentleman visits he could give verbal consent for his sister to arrange appointments on his records. The Manager called back and said he had spoken to the sister and would ensure a note was added to her brother's file following his next appointment to ensure that they have consent to speak to his sister. The lady spoke to us afterwards and she was very grateful for the support to resolve this.





Volunteering

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.

This year our volunteers:

- · Visited communities to promote Healthwatch Oldham and what we have to offer
- Sat on our Advisory Board to help guide the team in making decisions on what areas of work we undertake
- Supported the team at our Health and Wellbeing Events
- Collected experiences and supported their communities to share their views
- Supported the team when carrying out our enter and view visit at Royal Oldham Hospital



"I felt privileged to be involved in our Health and Wellbeing Event and was truly overwhelmed by the wonderful community spirit in Oldham which is like no other place I've seen. I have worked in health for many years, yet as a volunteer, this was a completely different and rewarding experience for me.

I felt that I had the time to truly listen to people in the community, understand their positive and negative views and navigate these discussions with service providers in a positive, mutually beneficial way.

For me the volunteering did not just take place at the event but continues even now, I continue to raise awareness of the benefits of this event and of Healthwatch with professional colleagues and the importance of meeting the needs of people in the very heart of the community."



Julie -Healthwatch Oldham Volunteer and Advisory Board Member





I started volunteering for Healthwatch Oldham in 2017, one of the main reasons being I liked the work they did around health and wellbeing at the forums/health events they ran. These events showcase all the good work that is done in Oldham in a collaborative and friendly environment which enable people to find out what could help them to improve their own health and wellbeing in a relaxed and fun environment.

My main role is to support these events - which I do by helping promote the events, helping on the day and providing Nordic walking taster sessions too. I also help to promote and raise awareness of the surveys and projects they are working on and regularly signpost people to the team for help and support around health and care.

Away from my volunteer role, I am an outdoor instructor with a focus on getting people active in the outdoors, as part of this role I lead several health walks a week, on these walks we now have a member of the Healthwatch team coming along to talk with the group to tell them about the work they are doing, events in the communities, get feedback and insight from people on their own health and care experiences and to provide information and signposting where appropriate. This is done on a quarterly basis and is something that the walkers find very useful. Because of this, many have gone on to sign up to the newsletter, follow Healthwatch on Social media, contact Healthwatch for additional support and attend the Health and wellbeing events.

I think it's important to support Healthwatch because they do great work to help people better understand Oldham's health and care services and help people to have their say.



Alan -Healthwatch Oldham Volunteer

Do you feel inspired?



We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.



www.healthwatcholdham.co.uk/volunteer



0161 622 5700



info@healthwatcholdham.co.uk



Finance and future priorities

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

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from Government	£139,200	Expenditure on pay	£129,192
Additional income	£2,345	Non-pay expenditure	£7,019
Brought forward balance from restricted reserve	£26,666 Office and management fees £32,000		£32,000
Total income	£168,211	Total expenditure	£168,211

Additional income is broken down by:

- £1,000 received from 10GM in participation in the Big Conversation locality focus group.
- £1,345 received from Healthwatch Bury as part of our Greater Manchester Healthwatch Network meetings.

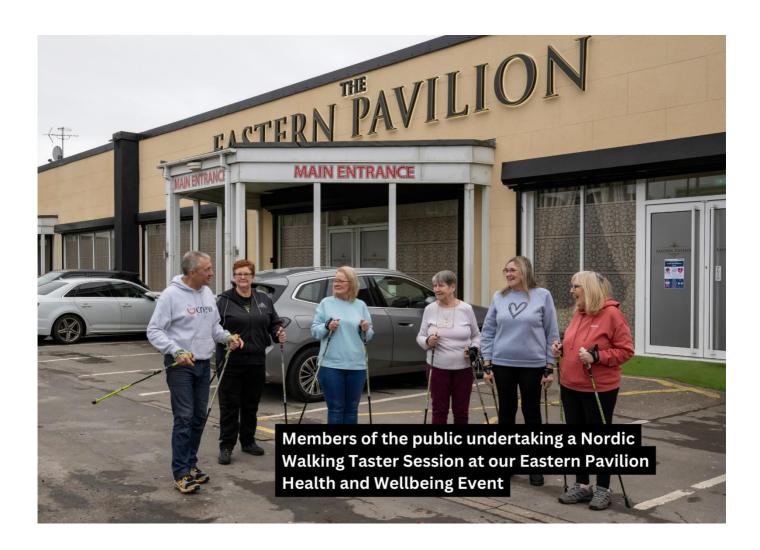
Next steps

Over the next year, we will keep reaching out to every part of Oldham's communities, paying particular attention to those people who are most likely to face health inequalities so that local decision makers hear their views and experiences.

We will also work together with partners and our local Integrated Care System to help develop an NHS culture where, at every level, staff strive to listen and learn from patients to make care better.

Our top three priorities for the next year are:

- Understanding people's experiences of the secondary/metastatic cancer pathway 1.
- Listening to the experiences of diabetes services by people with learning disabilities
- 3. Focus on gathering experiences of Royal Oldham Hospital





Statutory statements

Healthwatch Oldham, Action Together CIO, Medtia Place, 80 Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DJ

Healthwatch Oldham uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

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

Our Healthwatch Board consists of nine members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny of our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2023/24, the Board met four times and made decisions on matters such as approving our Enter and View policy and co-designing the vision and values of Healthwatch Oldham.

We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight into their experience of using services. During 2023/24, we have been available by phone, and email, provided a web form on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We ensure that this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We will publish it on our website, and it is presented at our Health and Wellbeing Board.

Responses to recommendations

We had no providers who did not respond to requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision-makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insights and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area, for example, we take information to the Health and Wellbeing Board, Oldham ICP Board, Health Scrutiny Committee, Adult Safeguarding Board, Strategic Risk Provider Group, the OCO Patient Experience Group and the Mental Health Locality Board

We also take insight and experiences to decision-makers in Oldham Integrated Care Partnership and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. For example, we work closely with Healthwatch Greater Manchester to ensure our data is included in intelligence shared with the Greater Manchester Integrated Care System. We also share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Enter and view

This year, we made two Enter and View visits. We made six recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location	Reason for visit	What you did as a result
Royal Oldham Hospital Post Natal Ward (joint visit with Healthwatch Rochdale)	Concerns around services	HW Rochdale prepared the report from the Enter and View visit to the Post Natal ward, and HW Oldham contributed to this. The Maternity services at the Northern Care Alliance have responded positively and agreed with our findings, they have an action plan to make improvements.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Oldham was represented on the Oldham Health and Wellbeing Board by Healthwatch Oldham Manager Tamoor Tariq until January 2024 and then subsequently by Liz Windsor-Welsh, Chief Executive of Action Together. During 2023/24 our representatives have effectively carried out this role by providing updates on Healthwatch Oldham's activities and sharing the recommendations of reports such as the CQC Report on experiences of maternity services.

Healthwatch Oldham is represented on Oldham Integrated Care Partnership by the HW Oldham Manager Greater Manchester Integrated Care Boards by Healthwatch Greater Manchester.

2023 - 2024 Outcomes

Project/activity	Outcomes achieved
NHS 111	We supported the winter for NHS 111 and allowed us to better share information with Oldham residents
Access to health services for people seeking asylum and people with refugee status	Changes and improvements to services for the temporary accommodation and improved joint working on service planning
Maternity Services Project	Helped inform CQC inspection activity of maternity services

healthwatch Oldham

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