

Our Activity for July, August & September 2024

We received **80** specific enquiries during this quarter. We also engaged with **233** people at local events, groups, and sessions, and a further **1192** people were at our Active Healthy Families event in partnership with Heritage, Libraries, and Arts on 30 August. **1192** people attended the event throughout the morning/afternoon. The library reported: 'From 10am – 2pm on Wednesday 28 August we had **1192** visitors. To compare, the previous week on Wednesday 21 August from 10am -2pm we had **627** visitors which is an increase of **565**.' We have provided updates on the work we are doing, future projects and work plans, and local health/service updates, as well as provided information insight function and gathered insight.

Insight and Data Captured



Concerns and complaints

The number of complaints during Q2 is **19** (11 about GP Practices). This included **45** actions which took **360** minutes to complete. More details are provided in the theme table below.

Care Opinion

Care Opinion is a digital space to share experiences of health or care services. We have a subscription to this to capture local data and experiences.

July 2024: 16 Stories Published

August 2024: 12 Stories Published

September 2024: 27 Stories Published

Total for Q2: 55 Stories Published (73 Stories in Q1).

Summary of the Care Opinion stories:

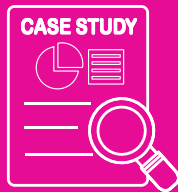
SpaMedica received the most positive feedback where patients stated that the service was professional, well-delivered and caring. Other practices had mixed feedback which ranged from positives such as great service, and staff who communicated well and negatives such as a lack of accessibility – including issues related to telephone calls and booking systems. Patients also shared their disappointment with the reception staff in some cases.

Themes of issues raised



Issue	Frequency/ Amount	Action taken by Healthwatch Oldham
Hospital Services	5	Referred and signposted patients to PALS, Cloverleaf, ICB and AVMA.
NHS dentistry	4	<p>Treatment issues x 3 Accessibility issues x3</p> <p>Information was provided on emergency dentist service and who can access this. We have also advised that this is a national issue with the lack of NHS dentistry provision and that we will update if we are made aware of any taking on patients.</p>
Social Care	18	Signposted to the social care complaints team and advised them to liaise with their social worker directly. Advised them of the Safeguarding team's contact details if they felt there were any safeguarding concerns. One case is ongoing.
GP Surgery	16	<p>Accessibility issues x 4 Poor service x 11</p> <p>Information provided on out-of-hours service, liaised with GP service on behalf of client to resolve the issue, provided information on speaking with Practice Manager, ICB, CQC, Cloverleaf where appropriate and gave information on sharing their story via Care Opinion and our 'Have Your Say' form.</p>
Request for advocacy support NHS and social care complaints.	19	Supported 19 people where they have wanted to complain about a service with referrals to NHS complaints to Cloverleaf, VoiceAbility and referrals to OPAL.

Case Studies



Case Study 1

Finding support that provided independence for someone

At our recent Healthwatch Oldham event in partnership with Oldham Heritage, libraries and arts we had a range of activities for people to participate in. One of these activities was provided by local day service members and staff from Funky Fitness and Fun – all members have a learning disability, the session provided an inclusive fun physical activity for all ages with many families taking part. There were 50 people in the session. During the hour people took part in sign and sign, circus skills and dance.

Before the activity started, a person with sight loss was keen to take part in the activity but was worried that they wouldn't be able to take part because they would need some support in the session to be able to do it. I was able to discuss with them and the lead staff member at Funky Fitness and Fun how we could make this work, which was simply for the person to be near the lead instructor throughout the session so they could see what they needed to do and to have support to and from the room.

The person took part and said she had thoroughly enjoyed the session and was keen to attend future events and sessions that Healthwatch and Funky Fitness and Fun did as it had been so inclusive, not just for them but for everyone and had meant that she had been able to get the most out of the health event.

At the same event another person who felt isolated and had a visual impairment wanted to know if any social women's groups also did health walks, as she loved walking but due to her eye condition only got to do this with her husband. I was able to connect her with Saima from BAME Connect and Aleya from Fatima Women's Groups who gave her information about the different activities they do, and both confirmed they would be able to offer support/someone to assist her with activities including the weekly walk and talk groups BAME connect run.

The person signed up for both groups and stated that she was "so glad she came along to the event as she had found out about activities, she could attend which meant she could be more active without relying on family members and also enjoy activities with other people"

Case Study 2

Helping someone get onto an exercise programme

This quarter a person made contact about being more physically active whilst living with progressive MS. Having been an active person, they have recently found that they are doing less due to progression but feel they need to do some activities but are not sure what is best as fatigue impacts their illness also.

We were able to put the person in touch with the Oldham Community Leisure exercise referral team who confirmed she can refer to their service and look at a specific exercise programme for her. We also sent her information from the MS Society on suitable exercises/ online video sessions that she could do at home. The person has confirmed that she does the exercise video sessions from the MS Society page and has got her GP to refer her to the exercise referral scheme.

Case Study 3

Supporting someone who was homeless

A lady contacted us wanting support with addressing an issue with her GP Practice. We sent her some information from NHSE website and gave her some advice and guidance on how best to address the issue as she didn't wish to make a formal complaint. She got back in touch and was struggling therefore we spoke to the Practice on her behalf. It emerged from our conversations that she was homeless and was avoiding certain areas of the town due to risks. She was experiencing MH issues and struggling with trusting others as well. We worked with her and with her consent, referred her to the social prescribing team and encouraged her to engage with them.

Case Study 4

Spreading the word and our impact

Healthwatch Oldham hosted a stand at the NWAS AGM. A group of children from a local school attended and one of them lived in a Care Home, he was aged 14 and completed a Young People's Mental Health Survey, he said he thought it was great that we were doing this research. A lot of his friends have problems with their mental health and don't recognise this or know where to go. He feels he is lucky as gets a lot of support around this and is not afraid to raise if he is struggling.

We discussed the role of HW and when going through the signposting element, pointed out some of the services we promote, like the smoking and vaping cessation service in Oldham.

He asked if he could take some of the flyers, as a high number of the Carers in the Care Home smoke and vape, he said it gets on his nerves at times, that they don't have the money for it, bad for your health and that they need to give up. He said he couldn't wait to pass on the information and when his Dad visits would also pass it to him.

We met a nurse at the event from the 2-hour response team. She gave us posters and flyers on this service which we weren't fully aware of all it entailed, and also that you can contact them directly as well as access via NHS 111. The day afterwards we passed the information on to a gentleman we met, that evening a friend of his had been discharged later on in the day home following her second knee operation.

Although she lives with her husband she was really struggling and felt she needed some extra equipment at home to help her, this wasn't necessary with her first knee operation so came as a surprise how much she was struggling. The friend (who we had met the day before and given the information to) passed on the details for the 2-hour response team, they called them and they went out to visit and soon got them the equipment they needed, without any fuss.

We are asking the ICB following the NHS 111 report we completed towards the end of last year in collaboration with them, if they can again do a winter campaign/local promotion of the service and what local services sit behind this. Residents need to know to help them decide which services to contact, what locally is available, and what funding is invested in.

Activity



Here are some of the areas we have provided signposting and information to. Enquiries are received in person at our events and local engagements. They can also be made over the phone, email, social media messages, Care Opinion stories, and our own 'Have Your Say' forms.

Most commonly, our queries are from Oldham residents looking for support/information or a family/friend member. However, we can also be contacted by local professionals who are looking to support one of their clients.

- Pharmacy first queries
- GP Access
- Adult social care
- Health and wellbeing signposting and support including health walks, weight management and healthy lifestyle advice
- Health events
- Homelessness and support
- Housing and support options
- Adult social care assessments, Assisted living and home care support
- Age UK
- Hospital related queries
- Adult autism assessment queries
- Cancer support
- Needle exchange
- Welfare rights
- Care home queries
- Dental queries including emergency dental service
- Audiology
- Podiatry
- Pharmacy queries including pharmacy first offer
- Patient transport
- Social prescribing
- Mental health support
- MS Support
- VoiceAbility
- Dementia support
- Unpaid carer support

Local health walks

We have attended 3 health walks this quarter and spoken with 40 people and updated them on our health events, and work we are undertaking – young people's mental health survey and secondary cancer insight we have provided information signposting function and taken feedback on services used. The walks continue to be a good way to connect with local people, share updates on Healthwatch work, provide advice/signposts where required and gather insight.

Active Healthy Families 30 August Oldham Heritage, Libraries and Arts

Our health and wellbeing event took place on 30 August from 11 to 14:00 in partnership with Oldham Heritage, libraries and arts. 1192 people attended the event throughout the morning/afternoon. It was a fun interactive, inclusive event with families able to take part in a range of activities including family yoga which had 40 people take part, Family boxing which had 70 people take part in and funky fitness and fun which had 50 people take part in. There was also a family health walk that went from the library to Alexandra park and back, blood pressure checks and reiki treatments which 40 people had, and the ABL Smoothie bike which attracted lots of attention with 35 smoothies made on the bike by children and young people throughout the event. There were a range of health, care and wellbeing stalls for people to come and talk to, sign up for different activities and services and find out more. It was great to work in partnership with the Oldham Heritage, Libraries and Art Team and we look forward to putting on a future health event next year. Our next health event is on October 30 and with it being the half term this is also for families and is being held at Sholver Community Centre in partnership with Hope Restoration.

Service Activity



Engagement

Healthwatch Oldham attended the following events during Q2 to talk to people about HW services, gather feedback & signpost to services:

- Health & Wellbeing Group
- Wellbeing walk – Hollinwood
- Healthwatch Oldham Family Health & Wellbeing forum
- Redcross United Reformed church drop-in sessions for Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Oldham University Campus Freshers Fair
- National Fitness Day event @ Oldham Leisure Centre
- Health Event with PCN North @ Royton Town Hall (opening)
- NWAS AGM
- Oldham College Freshers Fair
- Failsworth Town Hall community event

We have continued to support Amita from The Greater Manchester Asylum Crisis Service, at Refugee Action, and hope to attend a session this quarter in the hotel to do some joint work and review how the new dispersed model for GP services is going, which is now in operation at the Oldham hotel.

Rochdale & Oldham Maternity Voices Partnership

We have been informed by the Maternity Patient Experience Officer from the NCA, that the ROMVP now has a new Chair who will be operational in October/November. Voices for Choices is now recruiting a Co-Ordinator. We have raised concerns that there haven't been any meetings since the contract was transferred or any direct contact with us.

Other Activity

Patient Participation Groups

The poster we prepared and sent via the ICB to Oldham Practices to encourage the recruitment of PPG volunteers was also shared on social media and was well received. We have now sent a Healthwatch Oldham Guide/toolkit for setting up PPGs to the ICB for circulation to Oldham Practices.

Following on from the above we have forwarded a further in-depth guide on setting up and running PPGs to Mel Atack our new local contact for the ICB, to sign off. A section for PPG information will be added to the HW Oldham website, we will be encouraging the ICB to replicate this. We are still trying to establish how many Surgeries in Oldham have an active PPG.

Enter and view re-visit

The report was forwarded to the NCA Royal Oldham Maternity services, after the follow-up visit in June and they were pleased that it had shown some improvements, particularly concerning staff morale. The service has forwarded an action plan and already completed some of the recommendations we have made, they welcomed our feedback.

Team Building – Thank you Event

Action Together organised a Thank you event for all their projects and it was held in Alexander Park. Staff were recognised for their long service two members of the Healthwatch Oldham team received certificates for being with Action Together for 10 & 13 years. It was a great chance to catch up with both new and old colleagues, discuss work priorities/themes, and have fun in a great outdoors environment.

Cloverleaf Complaints Advocacy

We have had our quarterly catch-up meeting with Clover Leaf. They mentioned that we had sign-posted several people to them, who had gone on to make formal complaints. It is recognised that we also assist people with barriers to accessing healthcare that then means they don't need to use their services and get things sorted out quickly.

There were no common themes for complaints this quarter and the most complaints were about GP services. We are keeping an eye on this as it has been noted locally from calls and face-to-face meetings that Oldham residents are giving negative feedback about the services. Also, there has been a higher number of local people giving negative feedback on these services via Care Opinion, mainly around getting appointments and using the technology around this. We have been involved with the NHS App team and PCNs as we are hoping that further local training for this and basic IT support will be offered.

NWAS AGM Event

This was the first AGM event since before COVID-19 and was well attended. We hosted a stand and got to meet the Chair and other board Members from NWAS, along with NWAS staff who we were able to discuss and share our work on the NHS 111 services, and how hopefully in Oldham this has had some impact on residents using this service and not calling 999 when not required.

We engaged with some services that we weren't aware of and have taken flyers to share with our residents. During the event our HW Officer spoke to over 50 people about HWO services and signposted 10 people, getting some really positive outcomes.

GP Surgeries info screens

Some of the local GP surgeries are now sharing information on HW Oldham services that we sent on the information screens positioned in the waiting areas of the surgeries.