

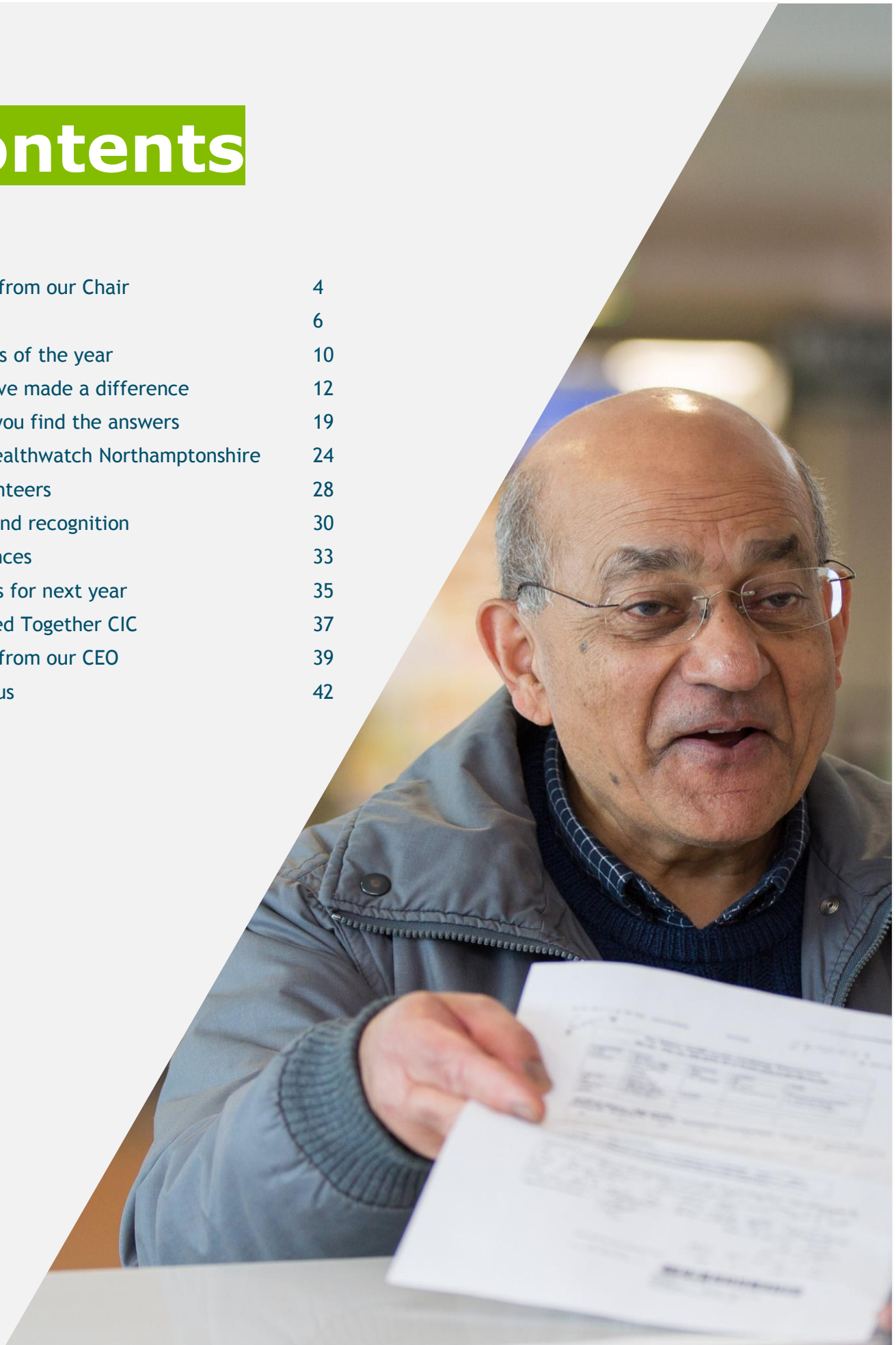


Healthwatch Northamptonshire

Annual Report 2018-19

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Message from our Chair

This report covers a period which has been extremely challenging for health and social care services in our county and especially so for Healthwatch Northamptonshire. We aimed to retain our primary focus on the experience and wishes of those who use health and social care services in the county and to ensure that these are presented to decision makers and others who influence the shape of local services.



We hope that this report will demonstrate that we have been true to that statutory role and the core values of Healthwatch.

I joined the Board of Healthwatch Northamptonshire in June 2018 so this report looks back over my first twelve months. Whilst the financial year ends in March, it is inevitable that this report, written in June, reflects on the subsequent weeks. It is salutary to remind ourselves of the context for our work:

- + The county council announced extreme financial challenges.
- + The government announced a consultation (to which we contributed) on a major upheaval in local government which resulted in a decision to abolish the county council and all seven borough and district councils and to form two new unitary authorities.
- + The Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) announced a decision to move towards close joint working.
- + There was an extremely critical report by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) of the delivery of services to older people and of the effectiveness of partnership working between the key public bodies involved, also drawing attention to the need to strengthen engagement with service users and local communities.
- + Kettering General Hospital (KGH) was working to improve after an earlier inspection which was highly critical of the quality of services.
- + All the main statutory service providers have acknowledged significant workforce challenges with shortages in some key professional groups.



On the more positive side:

- + NHFT achieved a rare ‘outstanding’ judgement in a CQC inspection and won a national award as HSJ ‘Trust of the Year’ in 2018.
- + Working with partners, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire won an award with KGH.
- + KGH improvements were recognised in a CQC inspection in 2019, whilst highlighting several areas for improvement. The hospital was removed from ‘special measures’.
- + The work of the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership (NHCP) has resulted in a stronger focus on improvements in all these services but still has a long way to go.
- + The Health and Wellbeing Board is working more effectively, with a commitment to joint financial planning.

The Healthwatch Board and volunteers have been challenged by the volume and speed of developments, given our very small budget intended to hold these organisations to account on behalf of the general public. We have been visible in formal meetings and the media and have responded to consultations. All our comments and submissions are available on our website.

An effective health and social care service for adults and children is a sign of a healthy and creative community and a vibrant democracy. It is a crucial foundation for economic success and social cohesion. We welcome the recognition by all partners of the need to achieve rapid improvement in services across the county and their commitment to achieve that. Healthwatch will do our utmost to support that ambition, including voicing constructive challenge and criticism when needed.

Dr David N Jones

Healthwatch Northamptonshire Chair



About us

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people value about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.

If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.

If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch Northamptonshire, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.

If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Robert Francis'.

Sir Robert Francis QC
Healthwatch England Chair

Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- + Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support across the country. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.



Our values:

We will...

- + be accessible and visible
- + be independent and objective
- + be open, honest and transparent in all that we do
- + be inclusive and embrace diversity and equality, reflecting the diverse needs of local people
- + listen to and understand the views and needs of local people
- + speak up for local people and enable people to speak for themselves
- + be fair and credible
- + seek out and use evidence, including from the public, to inform our work
- + strive to make a positive difference and campaign for the best possible health and social care for local people

Our priorities

To deliver our vision and values we...

- + Find out your views using a range of different methods
- + Make these views known to service commissioners and providers
- + Promote and support local people to be involved in the decision-making processes
- + Enable people to monitor the quality of local care provision
- + Report on the quality of services and make recommendations for improvement
- + Provide advice and information
- + Provide Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to form a national picture of the quality of care

Where necessary we escalate concerns to the County Council's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee locally and to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) nationally.



We will continue to strive to make a positive difference for people using local health and care services



Meet the team



Kate Holt

CEO



Jo Spenceley PhD, CMRS

Research and
Communications Manager



Esther Stimpson

Project Manager and
Young Healthwatch Lead



Becky Calcraft PhD, CMRS

Healthwatch
Northamptonshire
Manager



Natasha Mansukhani MSc

Research, Reporting and
Intelligence Assistant



Julie Curtis

Personal Assistant



Katie Bayliss

Healthwatch
Northamptonshire
Officer



Lauren Gibbons

Communications
Apprentice



Highlights from

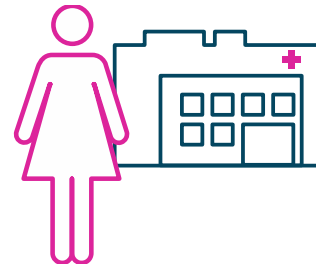
our year



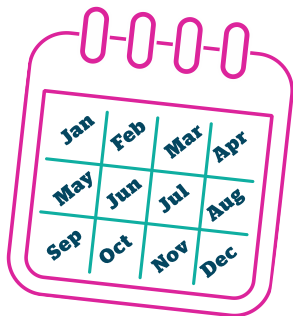
Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported people in 2018-19.



Over the course of the year we attended 30 events and talked to approximately 1,500 people.



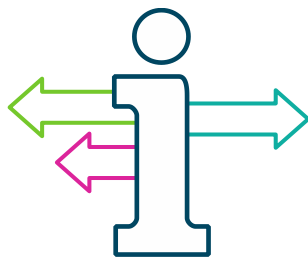
We carried out over 70 Enter and View visits to hospitals and care homes.



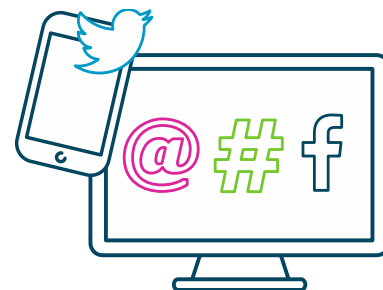
We currently have 48 volunteers helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave us 2,000 hours of their time last year!



Our survey about the health and care needs of the Armed Forces community was taken by 454 people, over half being veterans.



We logged 156 individual pieces of feedback received by phone, email or on one of our 'comment cards' and signposted 93 people to further help, advice or support.



We gained 600 new followers on social media, an increase of nearly 30%.



How we've made

a difference

Listening to people

Over the course of the year we attended 30 events and talked to approximately 1,500 people.

At all the events and groups we gather the views and experiences of health and care from people, and this feedback contributes to the regular reports that we produce and share with the county's health and care providers, commissioners and inspectors.

In addition to what people told us in surveys and focus groups, we logged 156 individual pieces of feedback received by phone, email or on one of our 'comment cards'.

Events attended include:

- + Northampton Carnival
- + National Playday
- + International Youth Day
- + BBC Northamptonshire's 'Big Health Check' events (Rushden, Daventry and Northampton)
- + 'Moving Ahead'¹ events (Corby and Daventry)
- + Rockin' Roadrunner Festival

We also spoke to groups, including:

- + Different Strokes (a support group for younger stroke survivors)
- + Wellingborough Rotary Club
- + Northants Parent Forum Group (parent carers of disabled children)
- + Northampton Support Group of Bipolar UK

¹ www.nhft.nhs.uk/movingahead



Carers' Voice



Meetings held on the second Thursday of each month at Northamptonshire Carers, 123 Midland Road, Wellingborough, between 10.30 am to 12.30 pm

Carers' Voice is a county-wide organisation, working with Healthwatch Northamptonshire to seek carers' views and opinions, making sure they get heard so they can influence the planning and provision of carers support services for the future.

Carers' Voice believes good practice needs to be praised and its value acknowledged. They also believe that when a carer feels let down by the system, it may be the system that needs changing. Any carers can tell Carers Voice about their experience of carers support and what could be improved.

For more information about Carers' Voice, visit: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/carersvoice or email carersvoice@connectedtogether.co.uk

Improving services

During 2018 and 2019 we carried out a programme of 'Enter and View'² visits to residential and nursing homes for older people.

We worked with the CQC as well as quality monitoring officers in the county council and clinical commissioning groups to visit homes that could make a useful contribution to ongoing inspection and quality monitoring programmes. Two of the visits were made to care homes in the previous year and five visits were made in the current year.

The focus of our visits was on nutrition, hydration and activities for the residents. From January 2019 we also looked at oral healthcare as part of the visits, in response to concerns raised nationally by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) about oral healthcare provision in care homes. We identified some examples of excellent practice around oral healthcare in some homes and highlighted concerns about the lack of access to regular dental check-ups for residents in some homes. We made recommendations around registering residents with a local dentist, obtaining training for care home staff in oral health care and making referrals to the specialist dental service where appropriate.

Reports from each visit have been published individually and a summary report drawing on the themes and lessons learned from all the visits will be published soon.

In the time period that this report covers we carried out visits to the following homes:

- + Sandalwood Court, Corby
- + Bell Lodge, Byfield, Daventry
- + K Lodge, Rushden
- + Brockfield House, Stanwick, Wellingborough
- + Linden Manor, Wellingborough

The authorised representatives who carried out these visits were Ric Barnard, Sandra Bell, Christine Drage, Susan Hills, Margaret Moss, John Rawlings, Dora Shergold (all volunteers) and Sonia Bray (staff member at the time).

In addition, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire undertook a visit with National Citizen Service to Elm Bank care home in Kettering in July 2018 - this was similar to an Enter and View visit but the tool was adapted based on the age and number of the young people involved in the visit, which was very successful. The visit took place over two days so that the young people could get to know the residents and get a real feel for what Elm Bank was like.



² Enter and View is the power that Healthwatch has to go into health and care premises to hear and see how people experience the service and gather their feedback.

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/enter-and-view

'15 Steps' ward visits to Kettering General Hospital

Our volunteers Wendy Patel and Sheila White undertook a total of 64 visits to wards and departments at Kettering General Hospital, using the 15 Steps Challenge tool³. Amongst other issues, the visits highlighted the lack of activities and entertainment for some patients which have resulted in positive changes by the hospital.

'15 Steps for Maternity' visits

In March 2019 our staff and volunteers also carried out 15 Steps visits to maternity services at Northampton General Hospital (NGH) and Kettering General Hospital (KGH) in conjunction with Northamptonshire Maternity Voices Partnership.

At NGH the visit team found the staff were friendly and approachable, they were enthusiastic about how the service was developing and positive interactions were witnessed between staff and patients. The team were positive about The Barratt Birth

Centre and how it allows women the choice of where to give birth. However, they thought pictures and posters needed to promote more diversity in ethnicity and family types and display information on what the various staff uniforms mean.

At KGH the visit team found that staff were friendly, positive and were able to explain how their aspirations are in line with national guidelines (Better Births). Posters were eye-catching, easy to read and in the relevant places with nice pictures and decals on walls. However, it was again felt that posters and pictures needed to reflect more diversity in ethnicity and different family forms and the number of different roles and posters were not clearly showing the distinction in uniforms.

"The staff were passionate about the development plans for the Bereavement Suite and this was something of which they were very proud."
Kettering General Hospital visit team

³ The 15 Steps Challenge focuses on seeing care through a patient or carer's eyes, and exploring their first impressions. For more information, visit: www.england.nhs.uk/participation/resources/15-steps-challenge/

15 Steps for Maternity visit at Kettering General Hospital



Working in partnership with others

During 2018-2019 we have continued to work in partnership with local health and care organisations. We attend a wide range of meetings with commissioners and service providers to ensure that the voice of the public is heard in the planning and delivery of health and care services. In particular we play an active role in the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership⁴, attending monthly Collaborative Stakeholder Forum meetings and jointly planning an engagement event with the public about implementing the NHS Long Term Plan. This event took place in May 2019 and was attended by over 90 people. It is the beginning of an ongoing conversation about what improvements need to be made for a positive lifetime of health, wellbeing and care in our community.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire works closely with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), quality monitoring teams of Northamptonshire County Council and Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups to plan Enter and View visits, share feedback and discuss any urgent concerns. We attend information sharing meetings and circulate our Enter and View reports. In April 2018 we gave a presentation at a workshop with colleagues from these organisations to explain our role and activities. We also gave a presentation at the Patient, Service User, Carer and Public Networking event organised by the East Midlands Academic Health Sciences Network (EMAHSN) in October 2018 and the Northampton Borough Council Scrutiny Panel on Adult Social Care Facilities in December 2018.



⁴ www.northamptonshirehcp.co.uk

Sharing feedback

During the year we have shared our quarterly feedback reports with the CQC about all three NHS trusts in the county (Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospital and Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust), St Andrew's Healthcare and social care providers (care homes and home care). This feedback informs CQC inspections.

We also share our feedback reports with the county's health and care providers and commissioners, and we sit on the patient experience groups of the three NHS Trusts. Our project and feedback reports are also shared with Healthwatch England, so that they can identify themes from across the local Healthwatch network.

“As there a number of quality issues here I have asked for the monitoring officer to arrange a visit to look at these issues.”

Service Manager Quality and Performance Northamptonshire County Council, in response to feedback we shared

Consultation responses

We responded to the following consultations run by Northamptonshire County Council in the year 2018-2019:

- + Provision and delivery of universal children's services and de-designation of Children's Centres
- + Changes to direct payments and personal budgets
- + Decommissioning prevention service for adult social care - Visually Impaired Services
- + Decommissioning prevention service for adult social care - Hearing Impaired Services
- + Northamptonshire All Age Autism Strategy
- + Local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire

Health and social care needs of the Armed Forces community in Northamptonshire

Between January and May 2018 we carried out a survey on behalf of the Armed Forces Covenant Northamptonshire to find out more about the health and social care needs of the Armed Forces community locally, so they can be addressed by commissioners and service providers.

We sought the views and experiences of people living in Northamptonshire who were currently serving or a reservist in the British Armed Forces, or were a veteran of the British Armed Forces. We also asked people who are married to someone, in a relationship with someone, or related to someone serving or a veteran, or who had been bereaved by the death of someone who served.

Our survey was shared widely and 454 people took part. Over half of the people who took part in the survey were veterans.

Most people said they had not used the health and care services we asked them about, but nearly one-third told us they had struggled to access one or more service. GP and Mental Health services were those that people had the most difficulty accessing.

Mental and physical health needs and adapting to civilian life

We found that one-fifth of veterans thought they had a mental health need relating to their military service, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety and that these issues also affected the families of veterans. One-quarter of veterans told us they had a physical health need relating to their military service, such as arthritis, joint

and back pain, and hearing problems. Only one-fifth of veterans had been spoken to directly by a healthcare professional about their mental health and one-third about their physical health since leaving the Armed Forces.

Nearly half of veterans found it relatively difficult to adapt to civilian life, with work, social life and finances being the most difficult things to adapt to. People told us civilian life was very different because services were not 'on tap' and the work ethic of people varied from what they were used to. Further comments also highlighted issues with a lack of preparation for transition to life outside of the Armed Forces.

The final report had three recommendations:

1. Greater awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant
2. Specific and timely support to meet the mental needs of veterans and serving personnel
3. Help with and preparation for transition to civilian life

The Northamptonshire Armed Forces Covenant responded to all three recommendations, addressing each one.

Part of their response said:

“All partners on the Covenant Board are working hard on awareness and training but this needs to be expanded beyond the partners and be regularly updated particularly within Health to ensure the importance of this is not lost and that our Armed Forces community do not slip through the net.”

The findings of the survey have helped to build a picture of the Armed Forces community locally, where previously this was unknown. We plan to revisit the recommendations later this year.

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/armedforcesreport

Supporting children and families where ASD and ADHD is suspected

This project aimed to explore families' experiences of the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) pathway in Northamptonshire and how effective it is. We also sought to identify potential improvements and highlight good practice already taking place.

We talked to twelve families who had experience of the process of assessment for a diagnosis of ASD or ADHD in the previous twelve months. We also spoke to professionals who are involved in the assessment process or who provide support to families of children with ASD and ADHD. Sixteen interviews were carried out in total.

We found the process of seeking a diagnosis of, and help for, ASD and ADHD often took so long and was so fragmented that children and their families were struggling. There was often little or no support for the families to address the behavioural problems that lead them to seek professional help or a diagnosis. Delays in assessment had a significant impact on a child's wellbeing and educational outcomes.

Our recommendations included:

1. Increasing education and healthcare staff

training on autism awareness

2. Improving communication and coordination of services, with clearly defined responsibilities
3. Reducing delays in the referral and assessment process
4. Offering support to families irrespective of diagnosis
5. Providing extra support and careful co-ordination at the time of transition to secondary school

Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust responded to all of the recommendations in detail and thanked us for the report. They recognised the challenges identified by parents and carers and reassured us that they are doing everything they can to provide an evidence based, holistic diagnostic service. Northamptonshire County Council also thanked the parents and carers for sharing their experiences, acknowledged the issues and told us more about the co-produced action plan due to come out of the Autism Strategy consultation taking place.

"I am really grateful for the advanced sight of the Healthwatch Northamptonshire report, which is an extremely valuable resource. It highlights important failings in the autism assessment process, as well as the wider challenges facing children and families where an autistic spectrum condition is suspected. There is a real injustice which seems to be happening right across the country."

Sir Norman Lamb MP

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/ASDandADHDreport



Have your say

Share your ideas and experiences and help services hear what works, what doesn't, and what you want from care in the future.

w: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

t: 0300 002 0010

e: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



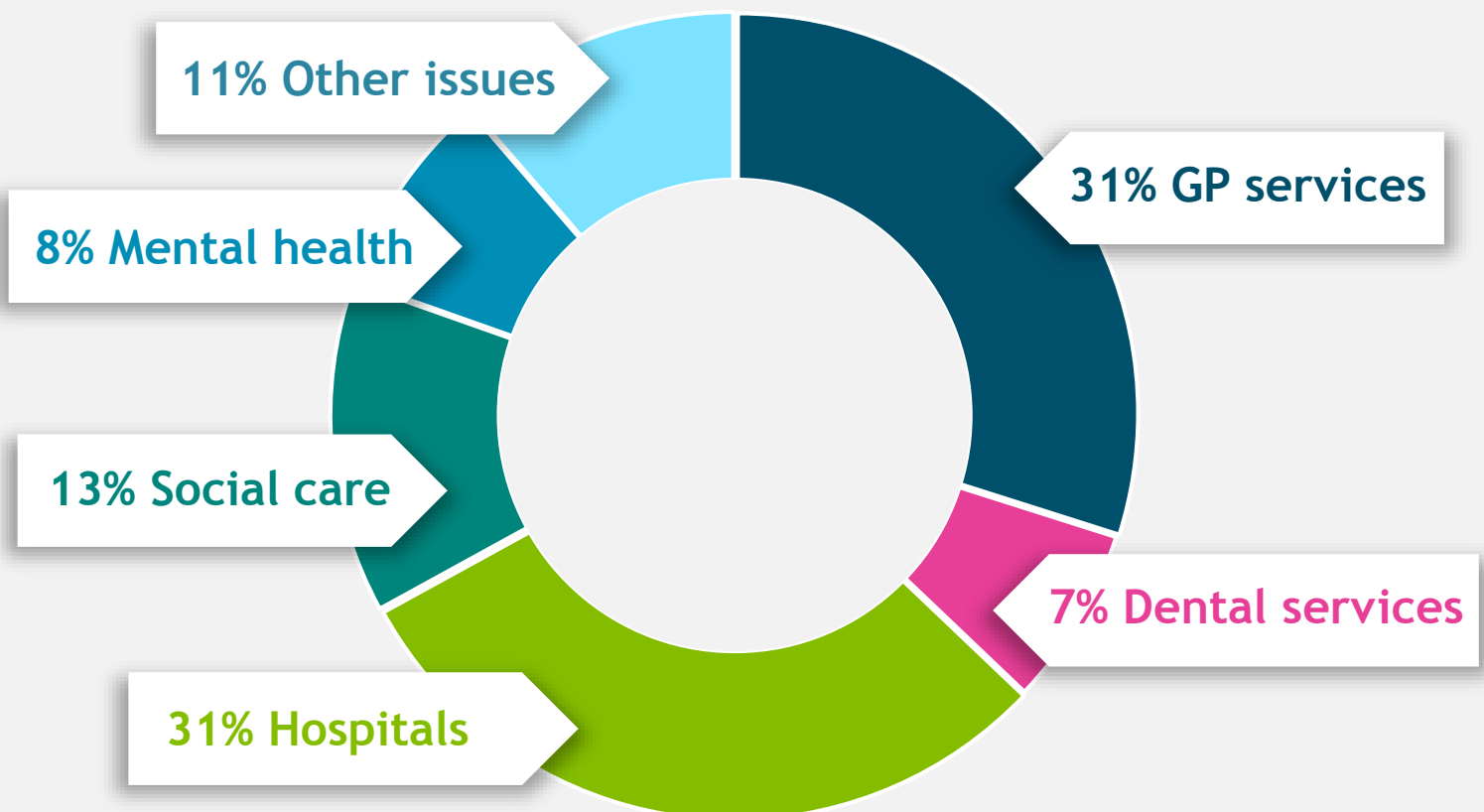
Helping you find

the answers

What services do people want to know about?

People don't always know how to get the information they need to make decisions about their own health and care. Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction for the support they need.

We signposted 93 people in 2018-2019. Here are the most common things that people contacted us about or asked us for advice on:



How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support for a health issue can be worrying and stressful. There a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't always know where to look.

We helped **93** people access the advice and information they need in 2018-19. Many people contact us to seek guidance and ask for information about how to make a complaint about a health or care service they have used (such as their GP surgery or hospital). People also benefit from being able to discuss their issues or complaints with us to confirm they are making contact with the correct organisations or find out who else could help

them. Others are helped by our online [complaints guide](#), which can support them to make a complaint, inform them of advocacy support and provide them with details of other relevant organisations that could guide them

In order to obtain the information you are looking for, you can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways:

- + Our contact us form
- + Post, phone, email or mobile voice/text
- + The 'contact us' form on our website
- + Through social media channels
- + Visit the advice section of our website

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/complaints-guide



Egg free flu jab investigation

Many people have not been able to find answers to their questions or gain the help they need from elsewhere, so they have contacted us for this support. An individual contacted us to find out if there was anywhere in Northampton that could supply and administer an egg free flu jab. They suffered with an allergy, were asthmatic and experienced chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) so were keen to protect themselves from the flu. They tried to research this issue themselves but experienced difficulty in finding the answer. We contacted NHS England on this person's behalf and provided them with the information they required.

"I would like to thank you very much for looking into egg free flu jab for me. You are the only person that has really looked into it, and given me advice. I have decided not to risk it, for fear of complications. I really appreciate you taking your time."



Help finding information to make a hospital complaint

We were contacted by a member of the public who was in the process of preparing a complaint about their partner's treatment by an individual consultant at a hospital. They were unable to find the information they needed online. We provided this individual with a list of suitable contacts and advice. The caller found this to be useful.

“Thank you so much for your prompt and comprehensive reply. I will need some time to assimilate the information before deciding which course of action to take. I intend to be doing that over the coming few days”

Raising concerns about poor care of a resident with dementia at a care home

The relative of a care home resident contacted us to tell us about the resident's need for emergency medical treatment. They were suffering from possible dehydration and were very unwell, but there appeared to be a delay in the care home seeking medical advice and the care home worker did not wait with the patient in Accident and Emergency. With the caller's permission we shared this feedback with the Care Quality Commission, Northamptonshire County Council and the

Clinical Commissioning Group and this person made a safeguarding referral on our suggestion and advice. Our support and advice was appreciated.

“Thank you so much for your advice and support during this difficult time - I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it.”



During the past year most of our signposting has been to the local NHS complaints advocacy service (VoiceAbility), NHS England for GP complaints, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman and Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS) at the local NHS trusts.

We have also signposted to Wheelchair Services, Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups, Maternity Action, Dementia Action Alliance, General Medical Council, Northamptonshire County Council Adult Social Care, local County Councillors, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Northamptonshire Carers, Mental Health Navigator Team (NHFT), Changing Minds Team, First for Wellbeing, Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council, British Red Cross,

POhWER (an advocacy organisation) and the Care Quality Commission.

We frequently make enquiries to the Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Trusts and others to find out the answers to more unusual questions and we make suggestions to people (such as informing their GP of their veteran status).

This year we also made four safeguarding referrals to the county's Safeguarding Team with the enquirer's permission.

Providing people with relevant information, and listening to and understanding their concerns requires sensitivity and effective listening skills. Two members of the team attended Healthwatch England's Call Handling Training this year to strengthen our ability to give information and signpost effectively, compassionately and competently.



Are you looking for help?

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/advice

t: 0300 002 0010

e: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



Young Healthwatch

Northamptonshire



Young Healthwatch Meeting

This year has seen Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire go from strength to strength. They have continued to work with partners and have won some fantastic awards. The group elected their new Chair, Tanzi, and has been working extremely hard to make sure that young people across Northamptonshire have a voice.

In April 2018 Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire, along with Shooting Stars⁴, visited [Kettering General Hospital \(KGH\) to carry out a 15 steps visit](#). This was the first time that Young Healthwatch and Shooting Stars have collaborated in this way. The visit was a great success. The final report and recommendations were well received and KGH responded with an action plan to improve the service. The good work was highlighted by NHS England who awarded us a community grant to make a short film about the visit: <https://youtu.be/L-oz2EAHeLY>

The work with Kettering General Hospital hasn't stopped there. In November four of our Young Healthwatch members took part in Takeover Day. They spent a full day experiencing working in the NHS, including attending a Patient Experience Steering Group

meeting and giving a presentation about their work to senior leaders in the hospital. Esther Stimpson, Lead for Young Healthwatch, said: *"It was a really fantastic day. The hospital gave Young Healthwatch a real taste of the working world and gave them the opportunity to take over the Patient Experience and Involvement Steering Group. The young people involved really enjoyed the experience"*. The day was captured on film: https://youtu.be/E6_SLXAlFzg

We have continued to work with KGH to ensure that the voice of children and young people is considered across the hospital. This was recognised at the end of the year when Kettering General Hospital and Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire won the team of the year at the Patient Experience National Network Awards (PENNA) (see page 33 for more details). Watch the award presentation online: <https://youtu.be/Z2vBtUUUONA>

Chair of Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire, Tanzi, said:

"It has been amazing to work with Kettering General Hospital, every time we visit we see more of the recommendations we have made become reality. It is fantastic that the views of young people are taken on board and acted upon."

⁴ Shooting Stars are a group of young people from Northamptonshire between the ages of 13 and 25 years that have SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Working with others

We worked with the **East Midland Ambulance Service (EMAS)** and Northamptonshire Carers to train young volunteers as part of **Restart A Heart Day 2018**. We trained volunteers aged between 11 and 19.

We supported the **Royal Society for Public Health** in their **Scroll Free September** campaign. The campaign looked at the impact that social media can have on wellbeing. We held a focus group for them and gave them some input into the campaign.

One of our Young Healthwatch members created a weekly Vlog for the campaign that was shared on the RSPH website and in their newsletter. She also did interviews for BBC Breakfast, giving the campaign national exposure.



Anya said:

“Taking part in Scroll-Free September, as a teenager who usually never goes a day without scrolling through Instagram, was definitely a new experience. The first week went easier than I thought it would but in the last week of September I couldn’t wait to be back online. During September I joined a new school so not being able to add my new friends on Snapchat really frustrated me but it did allow me to focus on my schoolwork a lot more than I would have.”

During this time I did a live BBC Breakfast interview about the campaign, had a BBC camera crew and reporter come to my house and monitor my progress through the month, featured in Amazon Audible podcasts to discuss social media in regards to mental health and was then invited to Parliament as part of a select committee to talk about the issues linking mental health to social media. Even though I wasn’t so keen on the Scroll-Free September idea at first, the month off was definitely worth it!”

Visit to Elm Bank Care

Home, Kettering

In July 2018, 15 young people completing the National Citizenship Service (NCS) scheme and Young Healthwatch visited Elm Bank Care Home, in Kettering. The visit took place over two days so that the young people could get to know the residents and get a real feel for what Elm Bank was really like for the residents. The report was written by the young people in their own words:

www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/NCS/ElmBankreport

Recognition!

In October 2018 at the Healthwatch England Conference Awards Young Healthwatch were highly commended in the Volunteering category. Although we did not win the overall category we continue to be extremely proud that the work of our young volunteers is recognised at such a high level.

Our social media reach has doubled!

- + Instagram - 379 followers - nearly double from last year
- + Facebook - Total reach 51,416 (last year 25,761)
- + Twitter - Impressions this year 58,875 (last year 27,097)

Emotional wellbeing in young people

In spring 2018, Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire was asked by the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership to gather young people's views on local mental health services.

To do this they devised a survey to ask young people across the county about their emotional wellbeing and access to services, specifically their frustrations and what services they would like to support them.

To gain these views we asked every young person if they cared for anyone with a long term illness or disability and if they were looked after, but we also engaged with local young carers groups and the children in care council to make sure that the voices of these young people were heard.

749 young people between the ages of 11 and 19 responded to the survey, including 45 young people who identified as being a 'young person in care' and 71 who said they looked after

someone with an illness or disability (carers).

We asked young people to score their emotional wellbeing across the range of one to ten, and received a full range of scores, with boys reporting better emotional wellbeing than girls. The young people we spoke to valued knowing where to go to get support for their emotional wellbeing and over one-third had needed to access support.

Young people had differing experiences of services, with many finding Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) difficult to access or finding long waiting times for services an issue. Support at school and self-help services were things that young people would find useful to support their emotional wellbeing.

The report aimed to improve service provision for young people accessing mental health and wellbeing services in Northamptonshire, especially where those young people do not fit the criteria for services such as CAMHS. It ensured the voices of young people are heard at a strategic level by feeding into the Health and Care Partnership and local 'Future in Mind' Transformation Plan refresh.

Key findings from our report:

- + Young people rated their emotional wellbeing on average as 6 out of 10.
- + The average score given by boys (7.1) was higher than for girls (5.9).
- + 43% of 231 young people who said they had accessed Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) said they had found it hard or very hard to use.

Response from Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership:

"The organisations who work together as part of the Partnership are very grateful and appreciative to the individuals who have taken the time to complete this survey. The recommendations from the survey have informed the development of the programme of work planned to begin the transformation of services for Children and Young People (CYP) in Northamptonshire. Based on the initial feedback from the survey, Well-being and Mental Health services for Children are a priority of the CYP work stream and work has already commenced in a number of areas, including school nursing and Mental Health services working together to improve pathways. We will continue to use the valuable information within the report to ensure transformation of services are in line with the wants and needs of our young people."

Read the report at: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/YHWemotionalwellbeingreport2018



Our volunteers



How do our volunteers help us?

Healthwatch Northamptonshire currently has 48 volunteers, including those involved in Young Healthwatch, and we would like to thank them all for their continued commitment and engagement.



Healthwatch volunteers from around the country at the NHS70 celebration event at Westminster Abbey

Our volunteers are a diverse group of local people who are determined to improve local health and social care services through their involvement in Healthwatch. Volunteers are involved at all levels of our work, from serving on our Board and representing Healthwatch Northamptonshire at meetings, to visiting care homes and hospital wards, helping to design and distribute surveys and attending local outreach events alongside staff.

In April 2018 we achieved our [Investing in Volunteers](#) accreditation, demonstrating that we meet high standards for involving, developing and supporting our volunteers. We continue to strive to meet the criteria of good volunteer management and we regularly participate in the local volunteer managers' network organised by Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire.

Over the course of the year our volunteers put in over 2,000 hours of service and together with staff members, Healthwatch Northamptonshire is represented at meetings of over 55 different bodies and organisations.

Thank you to everyone who makes a difference in local health and care services.

What has been the most satisfying part of being a Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteer?

"Knowing that we have achieved some changes for the better for patients."

Board member and Volunteer

"Seeing the work we undertake is making a difference, knowing we are helping to keep standards of Health and Care up."

Board member and Volunteer



Volunteering helps our volunteers too!

Veronica Male is a Chartered Legal Executive at a Northamptonshire solicitors, specialising in Court of Protection work and has been a volunteer with Healthwatch Northamptonshire for almost two years.



Veronica

We spoke to Veronica about her role and why she thinks volunteering helps her in her job as a Legal Executive.

“My firm is very supportive of my volunteering with Healthwatch. It is important for us to understand the issues facing our clients in the county, as this not only helps us provide a better service but enables us to raise concerns.”

Veronica added: “Being part of the Healthwatch Northamptonshire Planning Group, which covers adult health and social care issues as part of its work, enables me to be aware of issues around the county, how Healthwatch is engaging with agencies to look at improving services and understanding the difficulties facing those agencies particularly at such a difficult time within the county.”

Working full time and volunteering does have its challenges, says Veronica: “The challenge can be ensuring that I am able to effectively pass information between the various bodies I am involved with, so that they know what is happening in the county and how to work together and share information to provide a fuller picture.”

Veronica expressed the best parts about volunteering and reasons why she volunteers: “I really love hearing people’s experiences, the issues that they have raised as part of their role as a volunteer and how that information has been passed back to the organisation and informed a review of their procedure, sometimes leading to a change which benefits all users.” Veronica continued: “For example, *I was really pleased when an issue I had raised from a client’s experience about not being appropriately supported by social care after discharge from hospital started a discussion around the table with people who knew of others with the same experience. This concern was then adopted as one of Healthwatch’s work priorities for the next year.*”



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? If you are interested in volunteering get in touch.
www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/volunteer
 t: 0300 002 0010
 e: enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk



**Awards and
recognition**

It has been a fabulous year of awards and recognition for Healthwatch Northamptonshire

At the Healthwatch England conference in October 2018 we were Highly Commended for our work with Young Healthwatch in the volunteering category, Highly Commended for the '#ItStartsWithYou' category where Sandra Bell, Healthwatch volunteer, was personally recognised for her work raising the issues around access to health and social care services for those with a hearing impairment.



Sandra Bell, Healthwatch volunteer said, *"It is rewarding to be recognised for the work within this category. However, there is a very long way to go, particularly around health, before it becomes the norm for deaf and hard of hearing patients to be treated with the additional services they require and are entitled to under the Equalities Act, for example British Sign Language Signers being provided at appointments with any health care professionals. Healthwatch Northamptonshire remains vigilant around these and many other issues"*.

Then to top it all, we were category winners for 'Helping people have their say' for the work we have done helping over 500 new parents share their views and experiences of local maternity services.

Kate Holt and David N Jones receiving the 'Helping people have their say' award

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More awards for Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire

In March 2019 Kettering General Hospital and Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire won a national award for work they have undertaken with young people, including Shooting Stars.



The two organisations entered the Patient Experience Network National Awards (PENNA) in the 'Team of the Year' category. The joint entry was called 'It's my health - youth voice'.

The entry described the way that members of Young Healthwatch were encouraged to carry out a visit to children's services at KGH in April 2018 and produce a report - which was then acted on by the hospital.



James Allan (KGH) and Esther Stimpson (Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire) at the PENNA awards

The report recommended improvements - which the hospital has made - to children's services including:

- + Improving signs to direct people to children's services - for example, colourful footprints on the floor signposting the paediatric area in A&E
- + Adding more colour to paediatric areas to make them more child-friendly
- + Having more books and games available for children in waiting areas in children's A&E and outpatients
- + Using brightly coloured fun staff name badges so children can better understand who they are talking to

Kettering General Hospital's Head of Patient Experience and Involvement, James Allan said:

"The perspective that Young Healthwatch brought was refreshing. We learned a lot from their visit and will be using the new perspective they gave us - looking at things through the eyes of a young person - in other pieces of work in the future."

"We plan to continue to work with Young Healthwatch and visit local schools to capture more of the experience of children when they visit hospital - either to be treated or with relatives."

The good work was also highlighted by NHS England who awarded us a community grant to make a short film about the visit: <https://youtu.be/L-oz2EAHely>

Read the report at: www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/YHWvisitKGH2018



Our finances



How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we are funded by our local authority. In 2018-19 we spent £226,528.

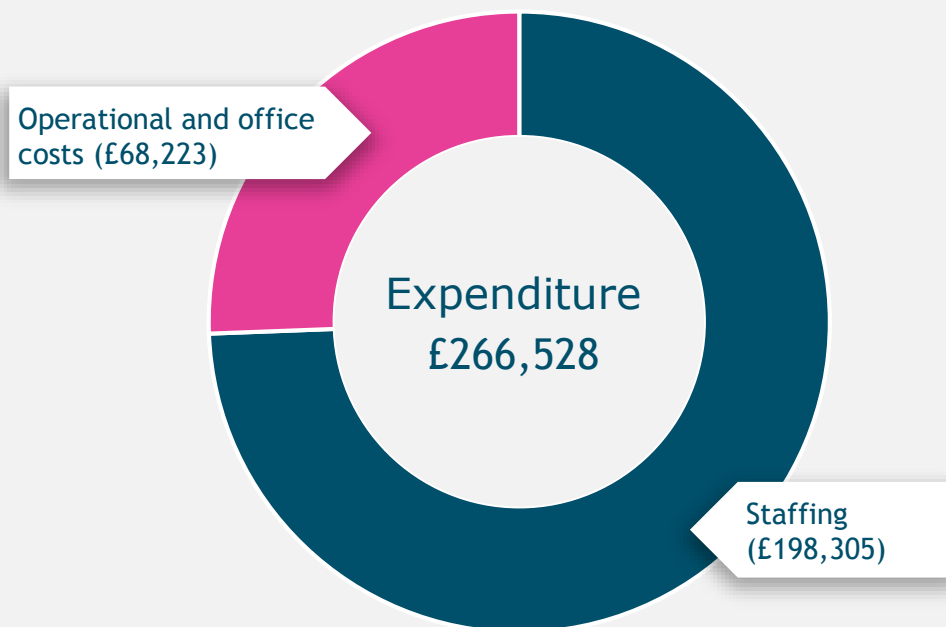
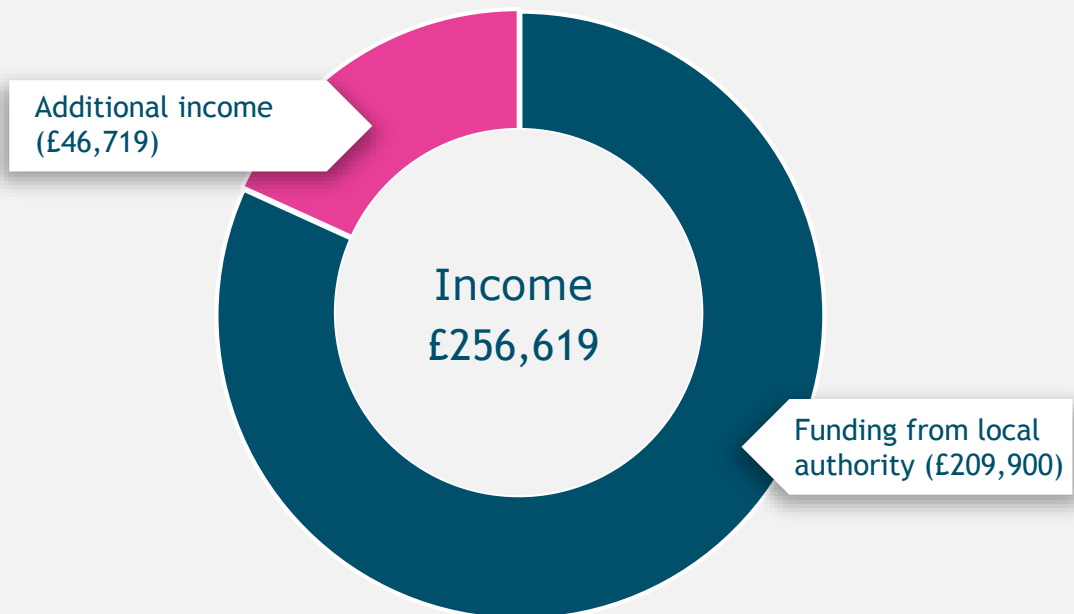
We also received £46,719 of additional income.

Income:

- + Funding received from local authority
- + Additional income

Expenditure:

- + How much it costs to run Healthwatch
- + How much we pay our staff
- + Our operational costs





**Our plans for
next year**

Our plans for next year

It has been a busy year for Healthwatch Northamptonshire and we continue to work hard to monitor the challenges to health and care in the county and to encourage improvements in all areas. We are determined to provide a channel for Northamptonshire people to comment on changes and enable them to influence the delivery and design of local services. We also strive to ensure that people in Northamptonshire have ready access to the information and support they need when making health and social care choices.

In 2019 we were pleased to welcome two new members of staff to the team: Lauren Gibbons as our Communications Apprentice and new Healthwatch Officer Katie Bayliss to support us in our work.

Statutory functions

We will continue to fulfil our statutory duties as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012, gathering and disseminating local intelligence to key stakeholders and the public, holding providers and commissioners to account and responding to consultations as and when required.

- + to support Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire's work with children and young people
- + to undertake projects on hospital discharge and primary care

As always, our workplan remains flexible and we aim to respond to other issues or opportunities as they arise during the year.

Our priorities

Our volunteer-led Planning Group continues to carry out the work of Healthwatch Northamptonshire. We will engage at a senior level with the Health and Wellbeing Board and contribute to the ongoing public engagement work of the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership.

Using the information gathered through our feedback and signposting service, and drawing on the experience and concerns of our volunteers, we have identified the following priorities for the coming year. These are:

- + to continue with our mental health project, including ward visits to St Andrew's Hospital



Becky Calcraft
Healthwatch Northamptonshire Manager



Connected

Together CIC

Connected Together CIC - First for community engagement

Connected Together Community Interest Company (CIC) is the legal entity and governing body for Healthwatch Northamptonshire.



The remit of the Connected Together CIC includes:

- + Contract compliance
- + Legal requirements
- + Financial and risk management
- + Sustainability and growth
- + Agreeing strategy and operations
- + Agreeing policies and procedures

Connected Together CIC is a social enterprise and a partnership between the University of Northampton and Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire. It aims to be first for community engagement across the county of Northamptonshire and beyond.

Connected Together CIC is the organisational hub behind projects, enabling joint working and access to knowledge and resources where relevant and commercially viable. It brings a business focused approach to helping other organisations work together for the benefit of Northamptonshire.

Vision

To be a financially sustainable independent and professionally run organisation, that manages effective and sustainable community projects and initiatives.

Values

- + Professional
- + Community focused
- + Sustainable

We welcome ideas and suggestions for projects that benefit Northamptonshire and its community.

Find out more at

www.connectedtogether.co.uk

Message from our CEO

2018-19 has been another challenging year!

Looking back

We set a deficit budget, using reserves and additional income, to deliver our statutory responsibilities, avoid making further redundancies and ensure we continued to deliver the best service possible for the people of Northamptonshire.

We also went through two unforeseen office moves within the year and my sincere thanks go to staff for making this happen as smoothly and seamlessly as possible.

Our biggest achievements have been getting national awards and recognition for the work we do as highlighted in this report. Achieving Investing in Volunteers in April was also a great start to the year. We rely heavily on the time, commitment and dedication of our volunteers to help deliver the work we do and make us sustainable. Without them much of what we have achieved would not be possible.

Looking ahead

Going forward Healthwatch Northamptonshire has set a challenging work plan for 2019/20 as there is so much happening on the health and social care landscape. Next year we will continue with engagement on the NHS Long Term Plan, the Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership and primary health care services. We will continue to ensure that Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Young Carers will have their

say through the NHSE sponsored Takeover Challenge.

We will also ensure that as local government in Northamptonshire is reorganised into two unitary authorities the voice of local people on health and social care issues continues to be heard on a countywide basis.

I continue to feel very privileged to work with such a dedicated team of staff and volunteers and cannot thank them enough for everything they have achieved this year.



Kate Holt
CEO
Healthwatch Northamptonshire
Connected Together CIC

Thank you


Thank you to everyone who helps us to put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- + The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work

“Well done on winning these awards. I know your team will have worked very hard to achieve such success and this is a great achievement. On behalf of Corby CCG I would like to congratulate you on this national recognition, and for all the hard work you undertake for all the people of Northamptonshire.”

Dr Joanne Watt
GP Clinical Chair, Corby CCG





“I’m proud when I see Healthwatch calmly and clearly asserting people’s right to be heard about big changes that will have long-term effects.”

Neil Tester

Healthwatch England Deputy Director on Twitter, in response to Healthwatch Northamptonshire Chair talking about the impact of local council cuts

Contact us



Connected Together
First for Community Engagement

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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 need this in an alternative format please contact us.

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