

# Healthwatch Bucks update (June 2022)

This paper summarises recent project work we have undertaken in relation to health and social care services, as aligned with the priorities of Joint Health & Wellbeing strategy.

## Live Well

### Cancer Services during Covid

We wanted to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected people's experiences of accessing cancer services and treatment.

We worked with local cancer services to develop a question set to use. During in-depth telephone interviews, we covered the following topics:

- Initial appointments for assessment
- Being told you have cancer
- First appointments with the cancer team
- Treatment and care

#### Why did we do this project?

In 2021-22 we have been looking at the COVID-19 response. We wanted the patient experience to contribute to COVID-19 recovery plans for local cancer services.

We have sent the report to Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust and have requested a response to our recommendations. Once we receive the response, we will publish it here on our website.

You can read our findings and recommendations in the full report here;

<https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2022/03/our-report-on-cancer-services-during-covid/>

We recently received a response to our recommendations from Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust; <https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2022/06/cancer-services-during-covid-response/>

## Talking to South Asian communities in Bucks

We are keen to talk to people who are part of the Bangladeshi, Indian, Nepalese, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan community in Bucks

We're running a project to hear about experiences of using a Bucks hospital service. This could include a clinic, outpatients' appointment, tests or an operation. People can tell us about their experiences anonymously via an online survey or during a one-to-one interview. More information about the project can be found here [Are you a member of a South Asian community in Bucks? – Healthwatch Bucks](#)

## Enter and View visits to Community Opportunity providers

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows these representatives to watch how services are delivered and to talk to service users their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP & dental surgeries and others. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first-hand.

In 2021/22 we are looking at Covid19 response and recovery in Health and Social Care. Together with our cross-cutting interest in lesser heard voices, we decided to visit locations where community opportunity services are provided. These had to close in 2020 at the height of the pandemic and then adapt to changing circumstances as they opened through 2020 and 2021.

We wanted to hear from those who attended this provision in Buckinghamshire; what they gained from the experience and how it promotes wellbeing and self-reliance, one of the aims of [Our Ambition | Buckinghamshire Council \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](#). In this strategy, Bucks, Council are looking to develop 'meaningful and appropriate day and employment opportunities in the community to enable people to live fulfilling lives. We want to support a culture of choices for individuals rather than the current culture of dependency and having to fit into services.' We also wanted to identify good practice and ways to improve service delivery.

Reports published since the last committee can be accessed here via the reports section of our website here;

[Results Archives – Healthwatch Bucks](#)

## Our strategic priorities for 22/23

Our annual priorities help us understand what areas we will focus on. They also help us to target our efforts.

This includes our engagement with lesser-heard groups; engagement with other organisations; which meetings we go to and which individuals we talk to; and what projects we do.

Following consultation with staff and volunteers, the Board has agreed that we should have the following priorities for 2022–23:

- Health Inequalities
- Social Care (with a particular focus on dementia)
- Primary Care

We will also take a cross-cutting interest in:

- Digital delivery in health and social care
- Community Engagement

We have put together a report that sets out how and why Healthwatch Bucks has chosen its Strategic Priorities for the year. This is because it will help our partners and the public to understand our choices.

<https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/2022/04/our-strategic-priorities-for-2022-23/>