

Healthwatch Bucks update (January 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

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 \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](https://www.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 for visits in November and December 2021 can be accessed here;

- [Enter & View visit to Missenden Walled Garden - Healthwatch Bucks](#)
- [Enter & View visit to The Princes Centre - Healthwatch Bucks](#)
- [Enter & View visit to Thrift Farm - Healthwatch Bucks](#)

Patient Participation Groups in Bucks

The CCG asked us to conduct a survey to find out what support Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) need. The aim of the survey was to identify:

- examples of what PPGs are doing that can be shared with other practices and PPGs in Bucks

What did we do?

In June 2021 we invited PPGs and practices to complete our online survey. The survey closed on 9th July. We asked about:

- PPGs want further support.

- the recovery of PPG work in a COVID-secure way
- the development of PPGs
- PPGs networking within a Primary Care Network (PCN).

We were pleased to hear about PPGs in 19 practices (out of 48 in Bucks). You can read what we found out here [Healthwatch Bucks - report of 2021 PPG survey](#)

What are we doing next?

We have shared these results with the CCG and will also be sending every Practice in Bucks a link to the report through the CCG. Based on the feedback we have suggested some ways that the CCG and/or Healthwatch Bucks could help PPGs. These ideas will be discussed at a PPG networking event planned for later in January.

This work was funded by Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Voices report

Part of our role at Healthwatch Bucks is to collect feedback on local Health and Social Care services. We do this in a number of ways including our signposting service and the 'rate and review' facility on our website;

<https://www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk/your-voices-interactive-report/>

Below are some of the main observations from October through December 2021 (Q3).

Signposting

The main concern raised through our signposting service is still **access to services**. This means people either unable to find a suitable provider or get an appointment with a provider. This accounts for around a third of the total contacts we received.

Around 70% of the concerns about access to services were, again, related to **NHS dentistry**.

General Practice

On the positive side, we heard about services were **well-run** and where the **quality of treatment** was good.

On the negative side, we again heard about **access to services**, **staff attitudes** (mostly in relation to receptionists) and the **appointment booking process** (not being able to reach the surgery to book).

Secondary Care

We heard from less than 20 people about Secondary Care, so we should not infer too strongly. There was next to **no positive feedback** in this period. The main issues were around **Quality of Care and Treatment**. There was one case of very poor care at Wexham Park (Frimley Health) but unfortunately, we couldn't gather any more information from the contact.

Urgent Care

We heard from less than 10 people about Urgent Care services but that was **mostly positive**. There was good feedback about [Stoke Mandeville A&E](#). There were also positive comments about the [UTC at Wycombe](#) but also one very poor experience.

Mental Health

We continue to hear of poor experiences under Chiltern Adult Mental Team and the Chiltern Crisis Team. The public tend to view these as a single service. While these experiences are few in number (around one a month) they all have very similar themes in common:

- Promised calls never come
- Patients find staff rude, condescending and dismissive of their perceived needs

Over the past 3 years, 90% of the feedback we have had for this service has been negative. Half of all feedback relates to poor staff attitudes.

