

**Healthwatch brief to Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) Joint Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC). January 2024.**

The Local Healthwatch at Place within the BOB ICB footprint consist of Healthwatch Bucks, Healthwatch Oxfordshire and three Healthwatch across Berkshire West (Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire). Whilst all have the responsibilities of local Healthwatch under Health and Social Care Act (2012) each of us is independently constituted and works in response to place, population and setting.

Together, we work jointly to support and champion the voice and involvement of our local populations in health and social care decision making across the BOB ICB.

As a group, we have supported the development of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Primary Care Strategy in the following ways:

- Healthwatch attendance at the Primary Care Strategy Away day in November hosted by BOB ICB on the draft strategy. We have advocated throughout for greater patient and public engagement and involvement in its development.
- Promoting the strategy consultation on social media, website and news bulletins to our networks and public.

**At Place:**

- **Healthwatch in Berkshire West** has focused on a GP access project to find out about public understanding of new ways of working within GP practices. This was initiated before the Primary Care Strategy work. Project findings will be fed into the strategy prior to publication of the final report which is expected in March 2024.
- **Healthwatch Bucks** will be holding a webinar with BOB ICB on 30 January 2024 aimed at representatives from Buckinghamshire Patient Participation Groups to hear from the ICB about the draft strategy and give feedback.
- They shared feedback from the public on primary care, notably difficulties in accessing general practice and NHS dentistry. They shared numerous [reports](#) which look into patient and public experience of primary care including [GP care when you're deaf, Deaf or hard of hearing](#).
- **Healthwatch Oxfordshire** hosted a webinar in December 2023 to enable members of the public to feed into the Primary Care Strategy development, attended by 39 people and available to see on our website. This was attended by Dan Leveson ICB Place Director and other reps from the ICB primary care teams.
- They also provided all relevant research reports giving insights on primary care in Oxfordshire with KPMG as part of baseline for the strategy. An additional summary report was published in Nov 2023 '*What you told us about Primary Care*' based on feedback on primary care services via online feedback reviews. (See: [Reports - Healthwatch Oxfordshire](#))

We encourage BOB ICB JHOSC to reflect on the engagement and involvement process undertaken for patients and the public in the development of the Primary Care Strategy.

Statutory guidance from NHS England [Working in partnership with people and communities](#) clearly lays out the importance of involvement of public and service users from the start in development of strategies and services. The process, route and communication for patients and public on engagement in the Primary Care Strategy was not clearly mapped from the start, and was initiated well into strategy development. Learning, evaluation and reflection on this process will be key to building better patient engagement by the system when planning future strategies and programmes.

Of relevance to this, Healthwatch Oxfordshire published a series of reports, '[Community Research in Oxfordshire](#)' (November 2023) based on interviews with both community members and systems partners- highlighting barriers to authentic co production and engagement. This is of direct relevance to BOB ICB engagement and insight gathering, and identified key principles noted by community members:

- Nothing about us without us
- Commit to action
- Value lived experience and time
- Be open, transparent and accountable