



# **Voices Making A Difference**

## **Annual Report 2017 - 2018**

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# Introduction

2017-18 has been a busy year for Healthwatch Barnet. Our positive relations with partners and a strong collaboration with local charities resulted in us reaching over 187,904 Barnet residents from Barnet's diverse communities.

Our priorities were :

- Meal times in hospital and residential care
- Exploring the challenges for home care providers
- Reaching out widely by engaging with under-represented groups and people at the point they use services
- Ensuring our reports and recommendations have impact
- Increasing our social media presence

We were pleased that so many Barnet residents talked to us, from residents at Grahame Park, to the Somali Community Group, to patients at GPs and hospitals. We would like to thank all those that gave their time to do so. We welcome the responses to our recommendations to change, from care homes, from the Royal Free London Trust and from Barnet Council. Although work still remains to be done, we are pleased to work positively with so many local partners.

We are delighted to have been re-commissioned to deliver the Healthwatch Barnet contract for the next twelve months and have designed a work programme which focuses on the changing and emerging needs of health and social care users. We recognise there is still much work to be done to convert the independent views of residents using services into improvements and better life outcomes and are grateful for the continued and determined efforts of our volunteers to continue to be our 'eyes and ears' going into the community.

These achievements were only possible due to the hard work, dedication and passion of Lisa Robbins, Sara Ali, John Gribbon and Shilpa Shah, supported by Selina Rodrigues, Fran Evans, Leah Kenny and Julie Pal. No successful Healthwatch programme is possible without the contributions of volunteers and we say an enormous thank you to fabulous volunteers who give their time and expertise.



Julie Pal  
CEO  
CommUNITY Barnet



Selina Rodrigues  
Head of Healthwatch  
CommUNITY Barnet



Lisa Robbins  
Manager  
Healthwatch Barnet







# An independent voice for Barnet residents

Healthwatch Barnet is the independent voice through which Barnet residents can share their experiences of using health and social care services.

It is delivered by a Barnet based staff team, a network of Barnet based charities and community organisations and a team of enthusiastic volunteers.

Healthwatch Barnet is an arms-length department of CommUNITY Barnet, an independent legal entity and a registered charity and company limited by guarantee.

## About us

Healthwatch was established through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to give users of health and social care services a powerful voice both locally and nationally.

Healthwatch Barnet was established in 2013 and is part of a national network led by Healthwatch England. We have a seat on the Barnet Health and Wellbeing Board, the Barnet Clinical Commissioning (CCG) Governing Board and the Adult Safeguarding Board.

We are the independent voice for residents of Barnet who use health and social care services. Our vision is of a thriving and active community of Barnet people who want to influence and contribute to the development and delivery of quality health and social care in the borough.

To achieve this, Healthwatch Barnet has:

- Built a powerful relationship with residents, volunteers and service users to gather their views and experiences, capturing and presenting the voices of under-represented communities
- Promoted and supported the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local care services
- Signposted individuals to available information and advice to help them make informed choices about their health and social care.



## In numbers



**187,904**  
Barnet residents  
reached

**1,726**



contact with  
residents through  
focused engagement

**1,585**



volunteer hours



**1,549**  
followers



**570**  
stakeholder  
contacts

**513**

specific  
engagement with  
'seldom heard'  
groups

**111**



followers

**72**

stakeholder contact  
through meetings  
and engagement at  
statutory  
committees

**20**

Enter &  
View  
visits

# Our liaison with health and social care services

We attend strategic meetings with all the local key partners to make sure that the local residents' voice is presented. Healthwatch Barnet has a seat on :

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Board
- Safeguarding Adults Board
- Barnet Health and Social Care Plan/Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

We attended 72 meetings with statutory and strategic partners over 2017-18 and here are some of the statutory reports and reviews to which we provided responses:

- NHS Barnet CCG Public Sector Equality Duty
- Barnet Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Quality Accounts
- Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment

## Working in partnership

Our charity partners help promote health and social care services and gather the experiences and views of a range of local Barnet residents and communities. We would like to thank them for all the information and support they have provided to Healthwatch in the last year.





# Social media



healthwatch  
Barnet

Tweets 3,922 Following 824 Followers 1,592 Likes 493 Lists 3 Moments 0

Edit profile

Healthwatch Barnet  
@HWBarnet

@HWBarnet 1 Apr 2017

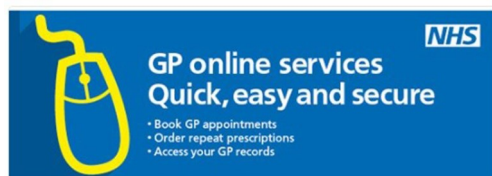
Healthwatch Barnet is 4 yrs old today!  
Thanks to all our volunteers and staff for  
their hard work over the years  
[#HappyBirthdayHealthwatch](#)



1 2

@HWBarnet 5 Mar 2018

Did you know you can access GP services online in  
[#Barnet](#)? The service is free and available to everyone  
who is registered with a GP. For more info and to  
register: <http://bit.ly/2FJYJ0I> [#charity](#) [#health](#) [#online](#)  
[@BarnetCCG](#) [@NHSChoices](#) [@NHSEnglandLDN](#)



3 1

@HWBarnet 27 Aug 2017

We're at Grahame Park Estate Urban Gamez today  
here til 4pm. Come talk to us. [@UrbanGamez](#)  
[@barnetvolunteer](#) [@BarnetHomes](#) [#barnet](#) [#charity](#)



2 8

@HWBarnet 8 Aug 2017

Did you know [@Ldn\\_Ambulance](#) treat more  
drunk people in August than December?  
After a big night out, you need your friends  
[#NotAnAmbulance](#)



9 14

@HWBarnet 10 May 2017

We are at the [#DyingMatters](#) event at  
Finchley Memorial Hospital 10-3. We want  
to hear your views about local [#health](#)  
services. [@DyingMatters](#)



1

@HWBarnet 24 Oct 2017

It was [#crohnsandcolitisawarenessweek](#) 1 Dec - 7  
Dec (better late than never)! Read  
[@charlotte\\_harte](#)'s inspiring blog about how she  
has lived with [#crohns](#) from the age of 7: <http://bit.ly/MyCrohnsStory> [#health](#) [#charity](#)



2 2

@HWBarnet 6 Jun 2017

Know Diabetes, Fight Diabetes! Find out what  
[@diabetesuk](#) have planned for [#diabetesweek](#)  
[bit.ly/2qX7vya](http://bit.ly/2qX7vya)



2

@HWBarnet 24 Oct 2017

We want to hear your experiences of  
hospitals, GPs, dentists, pharmacies &  
opticians in [#Barnet](#) <http://bit.ly/2vbtAF> [#ItStartsWithYou](#)



2 3

@HWBarnet 17 Nov 2017

We've just published our latest report on  
'patients' experiences of [#transport](#) to and from  
[#cancer](#) appointments' in [#Barnet](#): <http://bit.ly/2A4IYex> Featured in this report: [@TfL](#)  
[@RoyalFreeNHS](#) [@Advocacy\\_Barnet](#)



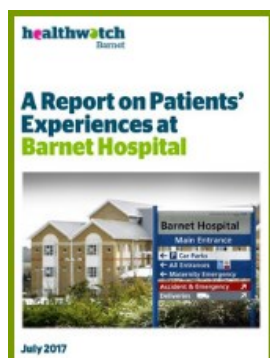
1 3



# How we used your voice to make a difference

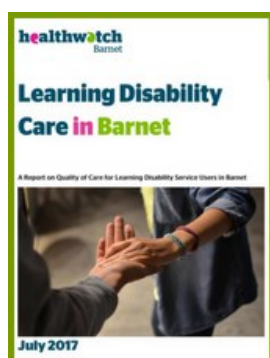
Much of this year has been spent capturing the voice of Barnet residents in a systemic way and presenting that information to the borough's strategic decision makers, commissioners and to place the patient and resident voice at the heart of decision making.

We are also working closely with other partners and providers of health and social care and sharing our findings with them and meeting with them regularly to monitor progress.



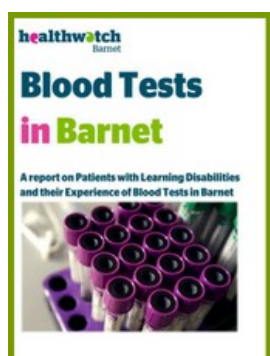
## Patients' Experiences at Barnet Hospital

We think it's essential to listen to people's experiences of hospital services. At our stall at Barnet Hospital, patients told us they found the signage clear but had difficulties finding the lifts and enormous trouble with transport - there are few direct bus routes and limited car-parking. We are pleased to say that Barnet Hospital is working on improved signage. There are now increased spaces for 'blue-badge holders' for disabled people and Barnet Hospital has committed to providing additional parking spaces over the next few years. Although this will take time, we hope to see the transport problems reducing over time.



## Learning Disability Care in Barnet

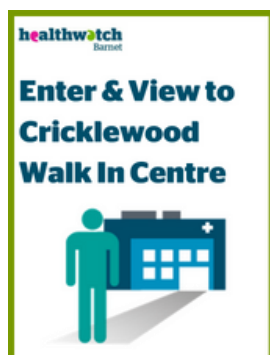
People's Choice Inclusion Barnet, found that people with learning disabilities did not always get good quality services from paid carers. The People's Choice staff team have learning disabilities and so fully understand the challenges people may face. They spoke to 72 people and found that more help was needed with benefits, independent living skills and that staff sometimes spoke rudely. Barnet Council promptly responded to this report, meeting with People's Choice and then implementing new guidance and training to the care staff to improve the service.



## Blood Tests in Barnet

Our findings indicated that the majority of people with learning disabilities who used blood test services, had a positive experience. There were some good examples of effective reasonable adjustments being made by hospitals and 65% of GP practices provided blood tests for people with learning disabilities, especially for those with higher levels of need. Friendly, reassuring staff and a quick access to this service were found to be important.

Whilst blood test services were working well for most patients, there were some cases of patients with higher levels of need reporting poor experiences. Improvements to flagging and booking systems would enable hospital and community clinic staff to be more prepared and make reasonable adjustments.



## Enter & View to Cricklewood Walk In Centre

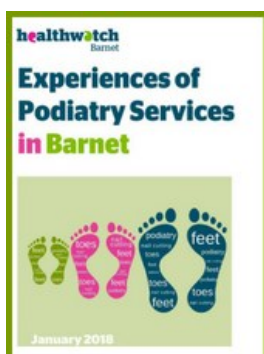
Local people can be confused about which health service to use, so we were keen to get feedback from patients using this service. We found that patients were sometimes confused about the role of the Walk-In-Centre and how this differed from the GP. We have liaised with Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) who have welcomed our report on this service.

All reports can be found on our website: [www.healthwatchbarnet.co.uk/ourreports](http://www.healthwatchbarnet.co.uk/ourreports)



## Patients' Experiences of Transport to Cancer Appointments

Patients told us about issues they had faced in travelling to cancer appointments, so we looked at the NHS England national Cancer Patient Experience survey and the recommendations from the Cancer Commissioning Board Patient Advisory Group work. We found that travel is tiring, painful and uncomfortable. We devised innovative solutions such as implementing a travel-buddy scheme, scheduling appointments closer to home and working with TfL to extend the 'Offer Me a Seat' scheme, which is currently in place for people with disabilities. We are now liaising with a range of medical and charity services to see if these can be implemented.



## Experiences of Podiatry Services

Service users told us that changes were made to the criteria for podiatry (footcare) services, delivered by Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH). Through our investigation, we were concerned that people may be using private services where staff are not qualified for those with health conditions and found that for some, no care was available. We asked CLCH to provide clearer guidance to patients about the service they provide. We have also asked that an affordable scheme is implemented for people not eligible to use the main CLCH service and that home care staff are trained to provide basic foot care. CLCH is improving its communications with patients and Barnet Public Health are considering our recommendations.



## Registering With a GP Without a Permanent Address

We heard that vulnerable people had difficulties registering with a GP because they were homeless or did not have any identification. We contacted all GPs in Barnet and found that most asked for identification when they did not need to, which creates a barrier for people accessing the health service at an early stage. We are pleased that Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have released guidance to all GPs reminding them to reduce barriers and not ask for unnecessary documentation.



## Meal Time Observational Visits at Royal Free Hospital

Trained Enter and View volunteers visited 7 wards of the Royal Free Hampstead to investigate the food and mealtime support that was offered to patients.

We made a range of recommendations and are pleased that Royal Free Hampstead has committed to re-enforcing 'Protected Meal Times' so that meals are not interrupted, that special diets will be in place, with additional guidance during staff handovers and that more support will be provided on portion size, menu choices and displays. You can read our full report to see the range of changes that will be made.



## Home Care in Barnet

People who receive care in the home can be vulnerable and isolated, and it can be difficult to recruit staff to provide the care. We sought the views of six home care agency managers and 46 staff home carers, to understand the experiences and challenges around delivering home care services locally. We found that staff receive training, 24 hour staff helplines are in place and managers have positive ways to value their staff. However, recruiting and retaining home carers is challenging, which was often attributed to low pay. Clients do not always have the same carer, which can make it difficult to provide a good quality service.

We updated commissioners on our findings, and although changes may take some time, we are pleased to hear that improving the situation is a priority for North London Social Care commissioners.

# Enter and view

The national Healthwatch network was established through the Health and Social Care Act of 2012. Through this, each Healthwatch has the legislative right to undertake announced and unannounced visits to health and social care settings for adults.

These visits are carried out by staff and volunteers who review the quality of care for patients/residents and their friends and relatives. All Enter and View representatives have current DBS checks and receive training for this as part of their role. As in accordance with the Healthwatch network, settings to visit are identified through meetings and guidance from the CQC.

The Enter and View reports are written by the Enter and View team and sent to the care provider to check for factual accuracy and to respond to the report recommendations. The reports are reviewed and authorised at each stage by Healthwatch senior staff, and once finalised are uploaded to our website.





## Visits To Residential Care Homes

We published 20 reports from our Enter and View visits this year, where we focused on residential care for older people and the quality of meal times in residential care.

### Meal Time Review in Residential Homes

Our staff and volunteer team had training on what helps residents enjoy their meals and ensure good nutrition and hydration. We visited four homes where we observed lots of good practice, including a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere at most meal times. In the best instances the manager, or nominated person, oversaw the whole process, keeping things moving at an appropriate pace. Staff were often aware of residents' likes and dislikes and supported them to eat and drink, with care and compassion.

Other examples of good practice included: Pureed food that was moulded to look like solid food, tables laid in an appropriate way with contrasting colours and condiments offered where appropriate. This was very well received and we felt more food was eaten as a result.

In some cases, we were concerned to see that residents ate in their rooms. We found that explanations on menus could be made clearer and the temperature and taste of food could sometimes be improved. We also suggested training for relatives could be helpful in encouraging residents at mealtimes.

Barnet Council Adult Social Care are pleased with our findings, which will help them implement good practice in residential homes. We have planned further visits to care homes over the coming months.

### Residential Care Homes

Through these visits, we talk to residents, relatives, staff and managers about the quality of care. In our visits this year, we found good practice, particularly where new managers were in post and keen to make improvements and a difference to their residents' lives. However, we were concerned with the number of issues that related to repairs and security of premises, which can cause alarm for residents/tenants.

It is perhaps not surprising that staff capacity, recruitment and training were also identified as issues. This is a known national concern. We were pleased to see some homes, including those with new managers, have responded with increased staffing levels and in one case, ideas to improve retention.

We were concerned about residents understanding their care plans, family members being involved where appropriate and sheltered housing tenants understanding their entitlements and care packages. There was an uneven quality of resident engagement and gathering feedback and complaints was inconsistent.

We meet regularly with Barnet Council Adult Social Care and the Care Quality Commission to share these findings.



# Our volunteers

We have a fantastic group of 35 active volunteers without whom we could not deliver our Healthwatch responsibilities. Their enthusiasm, expertise and commitment to improving the experience of health and social care and capturing and presenting their voices to strategic decision makers has enabled Healthwatch Barnet to become a trusted voice for local residents.

Here are three examples of volunteer involvement and input::

## Information and training session

We held an information/training day and thank you lunch for our volunteers. Staff and volunteers were informed about the latest care planning good practice in care homes and care technology for Barnet residents.

## Shaping Urgent and Emergency Care

Three of our Healthwatch Barnet volunteers were selected to be part of an Urgent and Emergency Care North Central London Citizen's Group and have participated in Panel meetings, online forums and co-production events to shape the new services.

## Re-designing Orthopaedics Services

One of our volunteers successfully applied to be a patient representative taking part in the North Central London Orthopaedics Review which will bring changes and improvements to the services. This will involve a monthly meeting with the multi-disciplinary review team and helping ensure the review is focused on patients.





# Reaching and empowering Barnet residents

We use Healthwatch Barnet's network to reach out to different parts of Barnet's diverse communities and, through our statutory membership, present our findings to statutory commissioners and providers. We remain committed to ensuring we place the patient and resident voice at the heart of decision making.

We set ourselves some challenging targets to increase our reach. We are pleased that we have increased the number of friends receiving our news. We focused on gathering direct views and experiences of patients at the points of care and presented these through our reports and participation at strategic meetings and liaison meetings

We value the support and sponsorship provided by the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the requests from the Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to actively comment and participate in strategic policy discussions.

Our relationship with the Care Quality Commission and other key partners has enabled us to work and share our findings with them and meet with them regularly to monitor progress.

Actively listening to communities and understanding their priorities is a key role of Healthwatch. Here are just some examples:

- Barnet Refugee Service's Jasmine Women's Group shared their experiences of using health and social cares. This has led to an up-coming project to review the availability of translation services.
- A third of students we spoke to at 'Student Success Festival' at Middlesex University told us they had not been to the dentist during their time at university, with the main barrier being the cost. We jointly created a healthcare leaflet, after finding out that many did not know the best health service to use for a range of conditions.
- We set up and ran a local engagement event at Finchley Memorial Hospital to raise awareness about 'Dying Matters' week. This has led to continued joint working with the CCG and other local charities to increase awareness of End of life care planning.
- Staff and volunteers spoke to 380 people at Millway Medical Practice to understand their awareness and use of different local health services. A leaflet was created, with very positive feedback, guiding people to the right service, during the very busy winter periods.
- Local residents at Grahame Park and other community events, gave their views on local pharmaceutical services which were part of the CCG's regular review. This is essential feedback which helps the Clinical Commissioning Group determine the number and range of services needed in each Barnet neighbourhood.





# Contact us

We want to hear your views on Barnet health and social care, contact us by email at [info@healthwatchbarnet.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbarnet.co.uk) or call us on 020 8364 8400.

## Your Local Health and Social Care Champion

Using your feedback, we can let services know what needs to change



## Our resources

Have you been to our website recently? We have recently updated our resources pages, you will find lots of useful information available.

Accessibility

Children & Young People

Care Quality Commission

Dentists

Enter & View

GP

Learning Disability

Maternity

Podiatry

Safeguarding

Transport

Winter

# Financial information

Healthwatch Barnet is funded to carry out statutory activities.  
Funding is provided by the London Borough of Barnet.

## Income

<b>Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities</b>	<b>£128,000</b>
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<b>Additional Income</b>	<b>£0</b>
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<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£128,000</b>
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## Expenditure

<b>Office costs</b>	<b>£14,343</b>
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<b>Staff costs</b>	<b>£100,625</b>
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<b>Direct delivery costs</b>	<b>£5,074</b>
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<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£120,042</b>
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CommUNITY Barnet is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee registered both with the Charity Commission and Companies House. We are governed by a Board of Trustees. Our Memorandum of Association allows us to operate in this way.

Healthwatch Barnet is a borough-wide service working in collaboration with committed and passionate Barnet focused organisations who have local knowledge, are experienced and trusted. The partnership is the eyes and ears in the community and can effectively act on complaints or concerns because it has direct access to seldom heard and under-represented members of the community. Through existing channels the partnership engages these communities with the Healthwatch agenda.

CommUNITY Barnet's Board of Trustees reviews performance, oversees risk and contributes to the promotion of the Healthwatch agenda. It is the decision-making body responsible for approving the action plan throughout the life of the contract.

CommUNITY Barnet's Board of Trustees are: Chris Cormie, Martin Edobor, Adam Goldstein, Anita Harris, Antony Jacobson, Michael Lassman, Jyoti Shah and Tony Vardy.

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