



Annual report 2019-20

Guided by you

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Message from our Chair



Janet Underwood
Healthwatch Rutland
Chair

“We may be a small county but, by working together, we can and do send out some powerful messages.”

This time last year we, at Healthwatch Rutland, were gathering people's views about the 2019 NHS Long Term Plan. Although we carried out this project in conjunction with Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire, we also produced our own Rutland report. This was widely distributed to providers and commissioners of care and to the public. One of the issues consistently highlighted in the survey by Rutland people was their transport difficulties in accessing healthcare. Many other local Healthwatch highlighted this problem to Healthwatch England who then raised the issue with Sir Simon Stevens, the NHS chief executive.

Towards the end of 2019 the Government awarded £450 million to the University of Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) for a major reconfiguration of their hospitals. We were very aware that, over the years, there had been a lot of public concern about UHL plans for the number of hospital beds. We carried out substantial research about bed numbers and were able to pose evidence-based questions to the UHL senior team at our quarterly meeting. We were pleased they responded positively to our comments and questions. We are still monitoring developments closely and will seek always to put the concerns of Rutland people forward.

Another concern has been the ongoing Community Service Redesign Phase 2 which is looking at future services in community hospitals. We know that Rutland people want more care closer to home and we have been persistently passing this message to commissioners and transformation teams.

Then, along came Covid-19 and it feels like it has disrupted everything! At the time of writing, Healthwatch Rutland is operating predominantly online and by telephone. Nevertheless, we have been busy carrying out research into how people have experienced health and care services during the pandemic.

So, it has been a busy year. As last year, I remain very grateful to the Healthwatch Rutland and Connected Together Community Interest Company staff, our board members and volunteers, and the commissioners and providers of care who have consistently offered their support. I also thank everyone who has given their time so generously to tell us about their own experiences, concerns and hopes for health and social care services in Rutland.

About us

Here to make care better

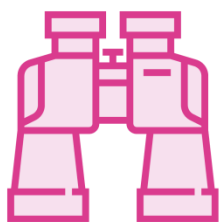
The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally. Thanks to the thousands of views shared with Healthwatch we were also able to highlight the issue of patient transport not being included in the NHS Long Term Plan review – sparking a national review of patient transport from NHS England.

We simply could not do this without the dedicated work and efforts from our staff and volunteers and, of course, we couldn't have done it without you. Whether it's working with your local Healthwatch to raise awareness of local issues, or sharing your views and experiences, I'd like to thank you all. It's important that services continue to listen, so please do keep talking to your local Healthwatch. Let's strive to make the NHS and social care services the best that they can be.

 "I've now been Chair of Healthwatch England for over a year and I'm extremely proud to see it go from strength to strength, highlighting the importance of listening to people's views to decision makers at a national and local level."

Sir Robert Francis,
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 who 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.



How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. 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



Find out more about us and the work we do

Website: www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk

Twitter: [@HWRutland](https://twitter.com/HWRutland)

Facebook: [@healthwatchrutland](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchrutland)

Highlights from our year

Find out about our resources and the way we have engaged and supported more people in 2019-20.



Health and care that works for you



16 volunteers

helping to carry out our work. In total, they gave up **1,455** hours

109 meetings

attended with commissioners and providers

Listening to you and providing support



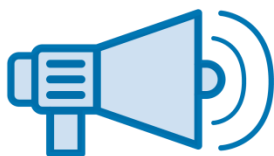
362 people

engaged with across eight events to listen to their experiences

37 people

contacted us for advice and signposting

Reaching out



We upgraded the quality and look of our newsletter and increased distribution by

140%

Our social media following (Twitter) increased by

8%

3,000 people

have visited our brand new website since it's launch in October

How we've made a difference



**Speaking up about your experiences of health and social care services is the first step to change.
Take a look at how your views have helped make a difference to the care and support people receive in Rutland.**

Health and social care needs of the Armed Forces community

Through early 2019, Healthwatch Rutland and Connected Together CIC colleagues asked members of the Armed Forces community to tell us more about themselves and their health and social care experiences and needs. This included regulars, reservists, volunteers, veterans and family members of past and present service personnel. Over 700 people responded to the survey, run in conjunction with Rutland County Council and South Kesteven District Council and Harborough District Council.

The report, launched in October 2019, calls for better access to suitable mental health help for veterans and serving personnel, further support with transition to civilian life for those leaving the Armed Forces, support for lonely or isolated families of serving personnel, and greater awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant.

A partners' workshop generated ideas about how the valuable feedback and recommendations could be responded to and acted on. The outcomes from the workshop were included in the report and work on the actions continues.



"A massive thank you for what you've done on behalf of the Ministry of Defence and the whole veterans' community in your efforts to really understand the challenges and make the transition easier for people who are leaving [the Armed Forces] and make sure the Armed Forces Covenant is honoured in your part of the world."

- Johnny Mercer MP, the Minister for Military Personnel and Veterans in the Ministry of Defence and Minister for Veterans' Affairs in the Cabinet Office

Read the report at bit.ly/HWRarmedforces

Peoples Experiences of care at their GP surgery

The NHS Long Term Plan announced that people in England would, as early as July 2019, be experiencing new ways of delivery of primary care through the creation of Primary Care Networks. As a result, Healthwatch Rutland volunteers prioritised a project to understand how people are experiencing care from their GP surgery. The project gathered feedback through semi-structured interviews. Although curtailed by the coronavirus lockdown in March, the report will be published in Summer 2020.

Ambulance matters


Our quick poll asking people for their experiences of calling for an emergency ambulance revealed that three quarters of respondents reported a positive experience and half described the paramedics who attended their emergency as 'kind', 'professional' or 'reassuring'.

The negative experiences were mostly related to experiences with hospitals (rather than with the ambulance service) or, in several cases, to a long response time, e.g. "the ambulance finally arrived after two phone calls".

One elderly respondent recognised that their emergency call was of low priority but expressed concern that the case took up ambulance time unnecessarily. Having fallen, and been initially attended by a single paramedic, protocol required that the paramedic must wait for a two-man crew to lift the patient from the floor. This took several hours, during which time the paramedic was unable to respond to other calls.



In following up the results, we have agreed with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) to hold a café-style drop-in meeting for EMAS to engage directly with the Rutland public. We also raised the desirability of setting up a local "falls" response service at the "Putting Health into Place in Rutland" scoping meeting in February. We look forward to following these activities through when coronavirus measures ease.

 "The ambulance arrived remarkably quickly."

Urgent Care Centres

Following the start of a new urgent care services contract across East Leicestershire and Rutland in April 2019 Healthwatch Rutland quickly became aware that some patients were having difficulty accessing walk-in care at Rutland Memorial Hospital – sometimes being turned away if they did not have an appointment. In addition, many complained of lack of clarity on the respective opening times of urgent care and newly recommissioned minor injuries clinics.

Healthwatch Rutland met with the CCG to emphasise the need for clear and consistent communication with the public and helped them to assure the public that walk-in services were available, and that all patients would be assessed based on their need and seen if urgent. If less urgent, the patient would be offered a slot later or referred elsewhere for treatment. Further to this the CCG committed to ensuring that out-of-hours public transport issues in Rutland would be taken into account by the NHS111 service provider when booking patients into urgent care centres.



Proposed reconfiguration of acute services at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL)

The proposals suggest many changes, including the closure of Leicester General Hospital (the acute facility that is the closest and most easily accessible to Rutland residents) and the closure of St. Mary's birthing unit in Melton Mowbray, and will be subject to full public consultation. Many people in Rutland believe this centralisation of acute services is a contradiction of their desire to see more services available in their own community.

Further to this, the second phase of the Community Services Redesign transformation during 2020 is looking at options for what the community hospital will offer, including the future of inpatient beds, diagnostics and minor surgery. The background work for this redesign is taking place at the same time as the public consultation is due to be launched on hospital and maternity reconfiguration.

However, feedback to Healthwatch Rutland throughout the last year showed that people want to understand clearly how the two sets of potential service

changes would affect care pathways for their communities.

In response to strong representations to UHL and to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) responsible for consultation have committed to provide additional information in the consultation documentation regarding:

- What facilities would be removed from Leicester General and where they would go.
- Why Leicester General Hospital was selected for down-grading.
- Clarity over increases in bed capacity.
- Transparency over what engagement has been undertaken with which service user groups, especially in relation to maternity proposals.
- Clarity that proposals for reconfiguration would not include dependencies on changes in community services.

In addition, the CCGs confirmed that the Strategic Plan and the Pre-Consultation Business Case would be published for public scrutiny once approved by NHS England/Improvement and before the consultation begins.

Long Term Plan

#WhatWouldYouDo

Highlights



Over 200 people from Rutland shared their views with us and nearly 600 surveys were completed across Rutland, Leicester and Leicestershire.



People shared their views through two #WhatWouldYouDo surveys and we held four focus groups to get the views of those often under-represented.



These findings are helping Better Care Together* shape the development of health and care services in Rutland, Leicester and Leicestershire.

“The findings are not a surprise to us ... and the recommendations are sound and link to [the] system’s future intention which is positive in terms of direction of travel. I think this will help support the mandate for change around more services accessed closer to home.”

- Mark Andrews, Strategic Director for People and Deputy Chief Executive, Rutland County Council

NHS Long Term Plan

In Spring 2019, we joined with Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire to gather the opinions of people about their local health and care services and what their expectations and hopes were for the future. Over 200 Rutland people took part in the survey and people who have previously been under-represented in public engagement were specifically sought out through focus groups and interviews.

The Rutland view

People sent clear messages, many of them not new, that they want more health and care services to be delivered locally. Our recommendations, detailed in the Rutland-specific report included:

- More health and care services to be provided in Rutland to avoid lengthy

and difficult journeys out of the county.

- Improvements to public transport to avoid inequities in accessing health and care.
- Increased availability of GP appointments and improved communications, especially between GP practices and hospitals.
- More and faster support for mental health issues.
- Consideration of people who may be excluded through lack of digital literacy, lack of access to appropriate devices, or poor mobile/broadband communication signals. This was of particular concern for people living with dementia and young people with learning disabilities, autism and additional needs.

Read the Rutland report at bit.ly/HWRLTPreport



The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland view

Nearly 600 people responded to the survey across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). Key messages are being used by the Better Care Together* partnership to inform the LLR five-year strategic plan and the Community Services Redesign programme, and included:

- People want choice regarding their treatment through joint decision-making between patient and professional.
- They want to stay in their own home for as long as it is safe to do so.
- Most patients are prepared to travel for appointments, if it is not too far or too time consuming.
- When someone is reaching out for help and support through their GP, they want to feel listened to.
- Cancer patients and their carers reported a much better experience of the NHS than other patient groups.

People with a mental health diagnosis had the worst experiences.

- Communication with patients and carers throughout an illness needs improvement.
- Primary Care services could be improved if patients were better informed of local support services and if professionals had a better understanding of how people experience living with long term conditions.

The Rutland focus groups that contributed to this project welcomed us back early this year to report on the feedback we had received, and they look forward to hearing more about how their views have been used to shape the five year strategic plan when it is finalised and published in 2020.

* Better Care Together is the partnership of commissioners and providers of health and care that are working together in our area to oversee integrated care services.

Read the LLR report at bit.ly/HWLLRLTPreport

“The findings of the report are being examined against other insights from our population received by NHS organisations and other partners. This is, and will continue to be used, to shape our plans to improve the health and well-being of people. It will also provide a lasting legacy helping us provide more personalised and joined up services across health and social care.”

- Sue Lock, Interim Better Care Together Partnership Lead

Helping you find the answers



Finding the best place to go for health and care support can be worrying when you don't know where to look for it. Healthwatch can play an important role in providing this advice and signposting people to the correct service.

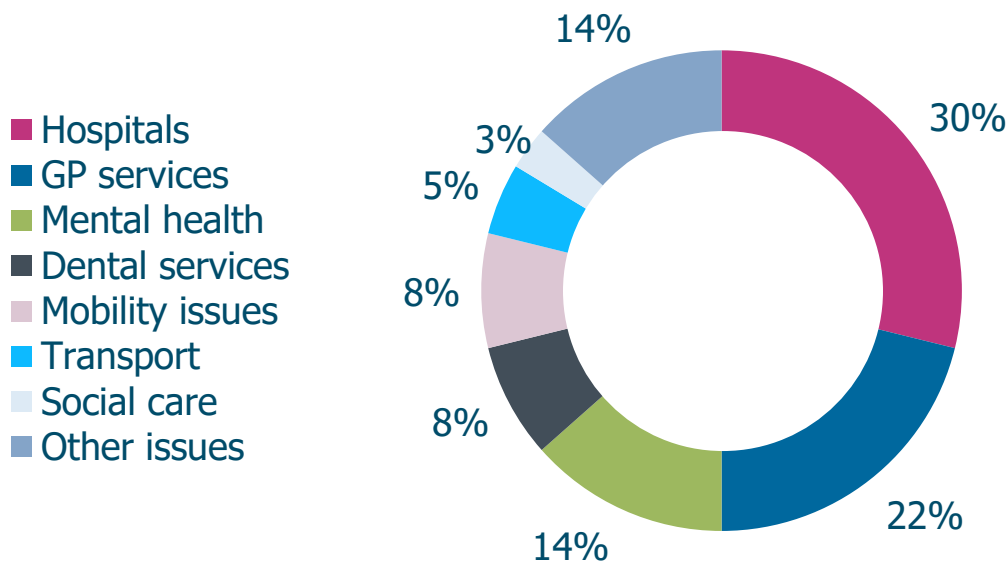
During the year we gave advice and information to 37 people and signposted 14 people to relevant organisations that could support them with their needs.

We also:

- Provided advice and information articles on our website.
- Talked to people at community events.
- Promoted services and information that can help people on our social media.

Often people wish to provide feedback on a particular service or make a complaint (for example regarding their GP surgery, a hospital, or dental surgery). They might find it useful to discuss their concerns before making a complaint or to enquire about organisations that could support them with the complaint process.

Here are some of the areas that people asked about:



We signposted people to organisations that would further support them to access the advice and information they need. During the past year we have signposted people to the following organisations: Armed Forces Officer at Rutland County Council, Rutland County Council Carers Team, JDRM dental care for NHS dentistry, Beacon advocacy support, Rutland Healthcare Support, Peppers mental health support, Voluntary Action Rutland, LAMP (advocacy for mental health care and support), Rutland Wellbeing Service, Citizen's Advice, Cruse Bereavement Care, Let's Talk Wellbeing, Admiral Nurses, Age UK, Rutland Community Ventures and TASL (Thames Ambulance Service Limited) patient transport.



We provided people with signposting advice for general queries, but also more unusual ones such as:

An enquirer had recently split from their partner, a serving member of the Armed Forces in Rutland, and needed advice and support to help them relocate to live near the rest of their family. We referred them to Armed Forces Officer for Rutland at the County Council, who discovered they are moving to an area where local understanding of the Armed Forces is strong and pointed them in the direction for appropriate support there.



We advised people about services they may not have been aware of:

A caller explained that they had various mental health issues and disabilities, and needed help. They requested some information about how to get assessed for social care support. We provided the details needed to contact Rutland County Council and signposted them to Peppers (mental health support).



We have raised issues that people have told us:

A member of the public was unable to get a procedure done in their preferred location and where they previously received care. This would cause transport issues and would be expensive. We signposted them to the Voluntary Action Rutland Community Transport Scheme and raised the issue with the Clinical Commission Group.



Contact us to get the information you need

If you have a query about a health or 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.

Website: www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk, and see our advice and information articles, or complete the 'have your say' section

Telephone: 01572 720381

Email: info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk

Volunteers

As one of the smallest Healthwatch in the country, we pride ourselves on our volunteers and the hard work they do for us!



We currently work with and support sixteen volunteers who have helped us throughout the year by:

- Raising awareness of Healthwatch Rutland and what we do.
- Engaging people, explaining what we do, listening to people's experiences of health and care services and offer signposting advice at community events including the Alzheimer's Celebration of Involvement, Choice Unlimited and Rutland County Show.
- Helping us to undertake projects collecting experiences from the public, such as the NHS Long Term Plan engagement and the recent Primary Care Experiences projects.
- Conducting interviews and collecting patient stories as well as coding information from our qualitative data gathering.



Daphne at the Rutland County Show

We could not do what we do without the support of our amazing volunteers. Meet some of the team and hear what they get up to.

Brian – Healthwatch Rutland Volunteer

"After a career working mainly in the NHS, volunteering for Healthwatch Rutland provides an opportunity to use my knowledge and skills to help contribute to improving local services and benefitting the community"

Joe – Young Healthwatch Rutland Volunteer

"I have only been part of Young Healthwatch Rutland for a short while, but I have already been able to play a role in engaging with other young people from the community, discussing future plans for projects in Rutland, as well as providing support in writing short pieces for social media posts and updates. These are small acts, but it's great to know that, as a team, we are engaging with the community in order to understand what matters to local people regarding health services."



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch:

Website: www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk/volunteer

Telephone: 01572 720381

Email: info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk

Our young volunteers

Young healthwatch Rutland

At the Rutland County Show in June members of Young Healthwatch, wearing t-shirts of their own design helped raise awareness of their group and asked young people about how seriously they take their health and their experiences of care.



Young Healthwatch at the Rutland County Show

In July Young Healthwatch Rutland met with members of the Leicestershire Partnership Trust Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) team. Young Healthwatch presented the patient experience feedback they had gathered during their survey on young people's health and the CAMHS team were able to listen to families' experiences of the service first-hand.

In October we supported the annual "Restart a Heart" campaign which aims to improve survival rates after cardiac arrest. The young people attended a session run by East Midlands Ambulance Service where

they were trained in life-saving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).



Lee Brentnall from EMAS demonstrating CPR

In January 2020, new staff member Ellen and the Young Healthwatch team took part in team building exercises to get to know each other. New members Joe and Eve quickly became part of the team as they discussed ideas for a new project and how best to provide information about health matters to people in their age groups.

Team members felt there was a lack of awareness of sexual health matters and that a project to understand what services are available to young people in this area, and to provide more information, would be top of their list for action in 2020.

The young volunteers also considered how they can best get information out to their contemporaries in an engaging way and agreed that they would like to start recording podcasts.



Want to know more about Young Healthwatch?

You can follow Young Healthwatch Rutland on social media or find more information on the Healthwatch Rutland website.

Website: www.healthwatchrutland.co.uk/young-healthwatch-rutland

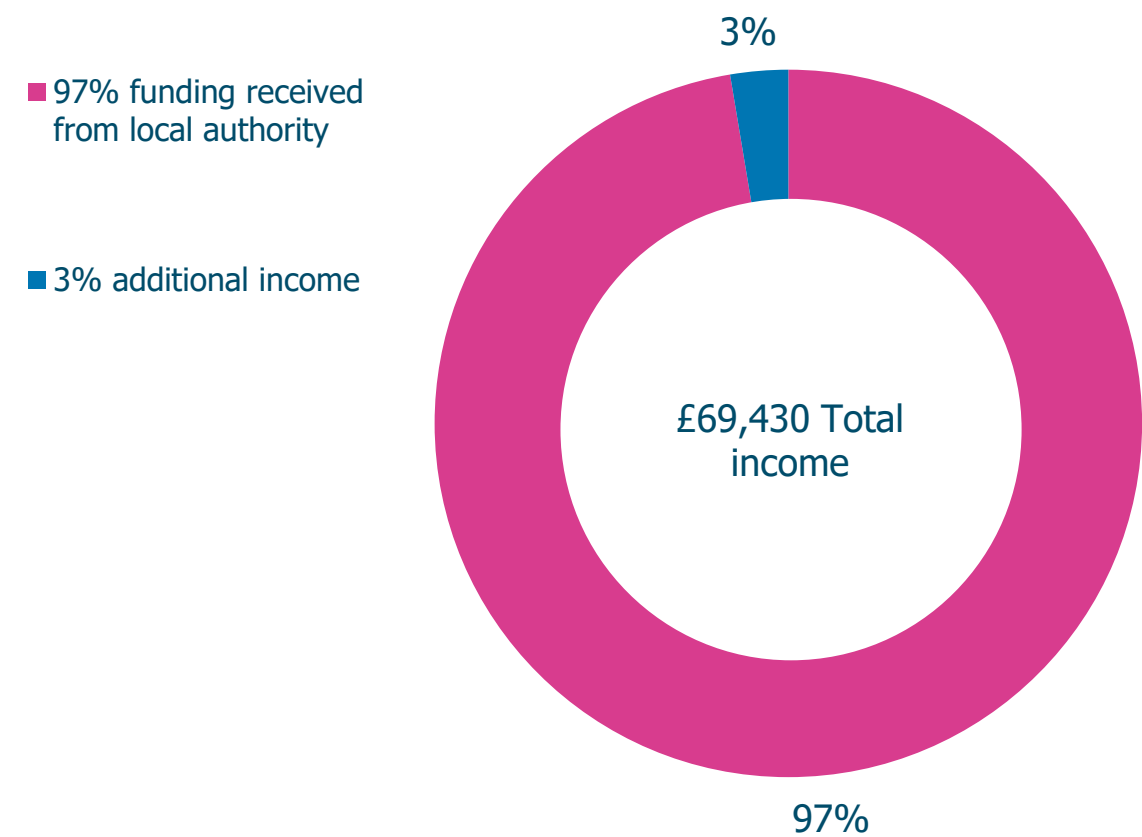
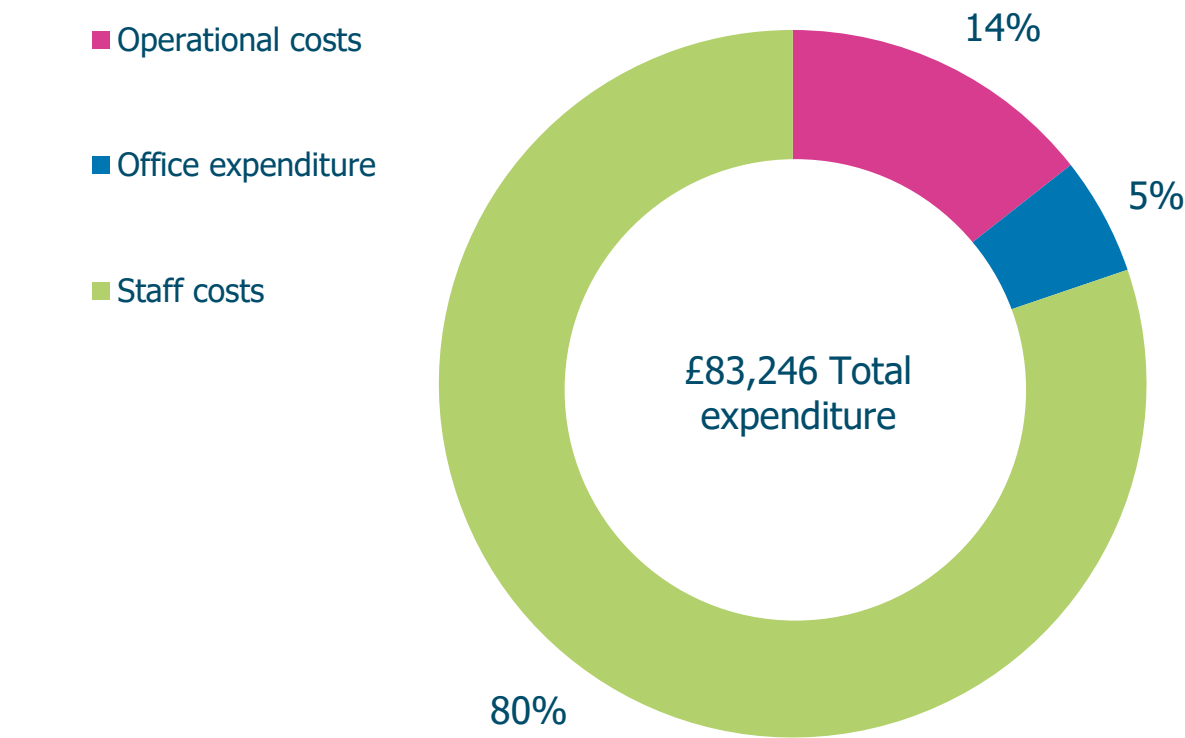
Twitter: @YoungHWRutland

Instagram: @YoungHWRutland

Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). In 2019-20 we spent £83,246



Looking ahead



Healthwatch Rutland has continued to assert itself as an independent champion throughout 2019 to put Rutland people at the heart of decisions as the health and care environment moves towards an integrated care system and single strategic commissioning body.

Our volunteers play a huge part in extending our reach, and I thank them all for the time and help they give us.

We have been particularly keen to involve people in our work who do not always push themselves forward to be heard. By working very closely with support groups run by the voluntary sector such as Age UK and Rutland Out of Hours Club we have helped people living with dementia and people with learning disabilities and autism to voice their experiences of care and their aspirations for care in the future.

As an early adopter of the Healthwatch England Quality Framework in late 2019 we have sought to improve our governance processes through self-assessment of our activities, review with commissioners and Healthwatch England, and forward planning to address areas of development. This work will be continued in 2020.

Before coronavirus was named a worldwide pandemic in March, the coming year was set to bring wide-ranging changes in how services may be delivered in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland as health and care transformation activities came to consultation stage. Covid-19 measures that were rapidly deployed at the beginning of the crisis have forced new ways of working that will be embedded, and other changes that will be discarded, as the health and care system restarts and recovers. Our mission at Healthwatch Rutland is to champion the

public's voice and ensure that it is their experience and views that drive those changes.




Healthwatch Rutland Manager, Tracey Allan-Jones

Our priorities will include:

- Completing work on how people's health and care is being affected during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Maximising public engagement on proposals to reconfigure Leicester's hospitals.
- Understanding patients' experiences of communications and administration within and between the NHS and social care.
- Shining a light on how young people access and experience sexual health services in Rutland.

Tracey Allan-Jones
Healthwatch Rutland Manager

 "I look forward to listening, asking questions, finding answers, and engaging creatively with people to ensure that it is they who are helping to drive and design service change as partners in their health and care."

Thank you

Thank you to everyone helping 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 our amazing volunteers.
- The voluntary organisations that have helped us to extend our reach.



Contact us

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Connected Together
First for Community Engagement

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.

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