

Outreach & Engagement Strategy 2021/2023

(last updated Oct 2022)

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Who are we?

Healthwatch Halton is your local health and social care champion. If you use GPs and hospitals, dentists, pharmacies, care homes or other support services in your area, we want to hear about your experiences. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to local feedback and improve standards of care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice. Last year, the Healthwatch network helped nearly a million people like you have your say and get the support you need.

Healthwatch Halton is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across the country. We're here to listen to the issues that really matter to people in Halton and to hear about your experiences of using local health and social care services. We're entirely independent and impartial, and anything you share with us is confidential.

Healthwatch uses your feedback to better understand the challenges facing the NHS and other care providers and we make sure your experiences improve health and care for everyone – locally and nationally. We can also help you to get the information and advice you need to make the right decisions for you and to get the support you deserve.

Our engagement aims:

1. Ensure Healthwatch Halton effectively engages with and listens to the voices of patients, citizens, community groups and other organisations around health and social care issues.
2. Ensure Healthwatch Halton provides an effective signposting and advice service for navigating the health and social care system, by listening to those who are struggling to do it themselves.
3. Ensure Healthwatch Halton works effectively as a powerful and independent patient champion on behalf of all health and care users in the borough.
4. Ensure Healthwatch Halton can effectively share the feedback and views of those using the service; and help to influence service design and delivery on their behalf, by having relevant connections and networks within the health and social care system.

Our engagement objectives

1. Ensure we have all the tools and processes we need as an organisation, to engage effectively with our communities and stakeholders.
2. Work to give the people of Halton a voice and ensure we are listening to health and social care issues by implementing an effective engagement programme.
3. Work collaboratively with community and voluntary organisations when developing engagement projects.
4. Provide a range of effective methods for the public and stakeholders to engage with Healthwatch Halton.
5. Ensure inclusivity is at the top of our engagement agenda for every single piece of work carried out.
6. Work in partnership with other organisations across Halton who are also looking to engage with the same audiences as us, to avoid repeating messages.
7. Build up the case for organisations to engage with us as partners to highlight the support and help we can offer when it comes to engaging with the public in Halton.
8. Build strong relationships with community organisations, voluntary organisations and the health and social care sector across Halton to ensure Healthwatch Halton is an influential patient champion.
9. Be open and transparent about all our engagement work through regular reporting and publication of our project results, to a wide audience across the borough.

Who do we want to engage with?

Broadly speaking, we have two distinct audiences who we need to engage with on a regular basis, to be able to operate effectively.

These are:

1. Our NHS and wider health and social care partners
2. The public/patients across Halton

Engaging with these two distinct groups requires a different approach and different tactics, however, all engagement needs to start with a strong message about who Healthwatch Halton is, what we do, and why they need to work with us, all of which will be developed as part of our Engagement Work Plan.

Target audience

Our key target audiences for engagement include:

The public

- Adults and older adults
- Children and young people
- Protected characteristic groups
- Seldom heard groups

Community

- Groups /Organisations for communities of interest
- Groups / Organisations for Health Conditions
- Local media
- Voluntary and community groups within health and social care

Health and Social Care Stakeholders

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| • Care Quality Commission | • One Halton |
| • Cheshire & Merseyside
Healthcare Partnership | • Local NHS Trusts |
| • Dentists | • Local Councillors and MPs |
| • GPs | • Nursing and care homes |
| • Halton Borough Council | • PCNs |
| • Halton Health and Wellbeing
Board | • Pharmacists |
| | • Registered social care suppliers |

Engaging with the public across Halton

There are two key elements which are essential for successful engagement; knowing who you want to engage with and what you want to engage with them on.

Knowing our communities

Our approach to engaging with our communities and stakeholders starts by knowing and understanding who lives in Halton – what kind of social and health care needs they have, and the best methods we can put in place to listen to their views and encourage them to share their experiences with us.

It's important not to assume what communities might need or want, or what their concerns are, but to find out by listening to them, and encouraging them to share their stories and experiences.

Healthwatch Halton needs to have effective data and intelligence about the communities we serve before we can begin to start engaging them effectively.

Reasons to engage our communities

We need to work in partnership with our local community groups, voluntary organisations and seldom heard groups, to listen to what they need, what they know and what they require from us.

Good engagement means listening, not making assumptions about what they want. Healthwatch Halton needs to adopt an engagement programme, working collaboratively with groups and organisations in partnership.

We need to provide regular opportunities for community groups to talk with us, share their views and co-produce projects with us, to help grow, build, and strengthen relationships across the Borough.

Our Engagement Plan highlights ways to achieve this.

With those partnerships and relationships in place, we will have plenty of reasons to engage with our communities and the public on a regular basis, as they will be telling us what their issues are.

Engaging with NHS and other health and social care partners

While we need to listen to, and engage with the public, the point is not only to hear their views, but to give them a voice within health and social care services, and influence over these services are developed and delivered.

Healthwatch Halton can only do this effectively if it has strong relationships within the health and social care sector, which is why working in partnership and networking with our stakeholders is the next vital element of this strategy.

All statutory and voluntary organisations working within this sector need to know and understand the vital role which Healthwatch Halton plays.

Healthwatch Halton needs to be represented on all relevant committees and meetings, to ensure we can share the feedback we receive from our communities and the public.

Healthwatch Halton needs to ensure that all reports and project outcomes are shared publicly with relevant stakeholders, so that the results of all community engagement are widely shared with the right people, to make a difference.

Healthwatch Halton needs to work with all health and social care providers on a regular basis, so that we are aware of any proposed changes to service delivery, which might have an impact on patients.

A programme of work to ensure we engage with our stakeholders is the second important element which needs to be a clear priority within our Engagement Work Plan.

How do we want to engage with people?

This section looks at the methods we can use to effectively engage with people across Halton and the tools which are currently available.

It's important that engagement offers a two-way conversation, it's not just us communicating about what we are doing, it's offering people the chance to share their feedback with us. Here are some of the key engagement tools available:

- Joint outreach with our partners
- Listening events
- Public meetings
- Community champions
- Using our volunteers
- Participation Groups
- Telephone
- Online surveys
- Emails
- Zoom/Teams events
- Working with partner organisations who are talking to the same audiences
- Community mapping
- Workshops and focus groups
- Conferences
- Street stalls or stalls at events
- GP Patient
- Website
- Social media
- People's panel
- Online workshops and focus groups
- Online conferences
- Online meetings
- Joint events with our partners

Our engagement protocols

When carrying out any kind of engagement work, it is important that Healthwatch Halton adheres to clear processes which will help to ensure that every aspect of work is inclusive and effective.

Our engagement work needs to be guided by a clear set of protocols and a practical toolkit to ensure a consistency of approach.

- We need to make sure all Halton voices are being given the chance to be heard
- We need to share the feedback from the public, with the right people at the right time, to have maximum influence
- We need to be aware of all proposed service changes before they happen, so we can give the public the opportunity they deserve to have their say

We will achieve this by:

- Developing an engagement toolkit for all staff to be used for engagement activity
- Actively monitoring all engagement projects to make sure we know we are reaching all the right audiences and giving everyone a voice
- Making the best use of online engagement tools and other opportunities to give as many people as possible the chance to have their say
- Being open and transparent about who we are and what we do, with all our stakeholders
- Delivering on a yearly Engagement Work Plan which will offer practical ways to implement everything outlined within this strategy

Monitoring and reporting on engagement work

We will monitor progress against our engagement aims and objectives throughout the year and will report on all engagement activity through our regular reporting methods.

To measure the success of this three-year strategy, our required engagement outcomes are:

Year 1 – 2021 outcomes -completed

1. To have set up and established effective engagement working practices, including a toolkit, and having successfully taken part in the Engagement HQ digital platform trial. – **YES**
2. To be effectively represented on relevant stakeholder groups and boards across Halton, to ensure good stakeholder relationships – **YES**
3. To be working in co-production with other voluntary sector or other organisations on key health and wellbeing projects – **In progress**

2022 outcomes

1. To be running a regular programme of face-to-face engagement events across the borough
2. To be building on our network of community and patient group connections through our engagement plan.
3. To have organisations approaching us directly to engage further with Healthwatch Halton and procure our services
4. To have a strong network of community and patient group connections which is continuously growing.
5. To have a clear partnership arrangement for working at ICS and place level within the new structures
6. To be raising our profile across Halton.

2023 outcomes

1. To be working in close partnership with our stakeholders on key health and wellbeing projects, on a regular basis
2. To be working closely with our strong network of community and patient group connections, to hear their voices and share their views
3. To be actively engaging with other organisations across Halton on health and wellbeing projects
4. To have increased the numbers of people who are talking to us and sharing their stories over the past three years
5. To be planning our engagement strategy and work plan for the next three years

Reporting

Healthwatch Halton will be open and transparent around engagement activity being carried out and will report regularly on the outcomes of all projects. The planned reporting schedule is outlined below:

Monthly

- Communication and engagement summary reports to the Advisory Board
- Our workplan to be published on our website

Quarterly

- Engagement activities featured in our e-bulletin

Half Yearly

- Communication and engagement report to our commissioners

Yearly

- Our annual report will include engagement information
- Yearly performance report to the Advisory Board

As and when

- Public updates on work published on our website
- Project outcome reports published on our website as and when they are ready
- Project outcome reports shared with all our relevant stakeholders as and when they are ready

Healthwatch Halton Engagement & Outreach Plan 2022–23

We will aim to carry out a minimum of 20 Outreach & Engagement sessions per month.

These sessions will take place at venues across the borough and also hospital sites covering Halton.

The outreach and engagement team will gather people's experiences of using local services and also provide signposting and information when possible on local Health and Care Services.

Our website events and activities calendar will be updated on an ongoing basis. Details of upcoming events will be promoted through social media, our e-bulletin and across local networks.

Details of upcoming events will be available at

<https://www.healthwatchhalton.co.uk/events>

Call us: 0300 777 6543

We're Healthwatch

**Tell us what you think
of local services.**

We're here to help make it better

- Care homes
- Community services
- GP Surgeries
- Mental Health services
- Pharmacies
- Carers at home
- Dentists
- Hospitals
- Opticians



www.healthwatchhalton.co.uk