

# Insight into action

Report #3  
September - December 2020

# At a glance

We have ...

- Produced dedicated Covid-19 information and advice resources on our website including:
  - [Helping with anxiety when returning to school](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Updated advice on shielding and clinically vulnerable](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Wokingham Borough Council Advice and Information](#)
  - [Getting and NHS Dentist appointment](#)
  - [Flu vaccine and who is eligible](#)
  - [Carers - Vital sources of support and information for unpaid carers](#)
  - [Deaf and hard of hearing - Information and resources](#)
  - [Staying healthy and well this winter](#)
  - [Covid-19 vaccines - Video message from Imam Monawar Hussain](#)
  - [Blood testing - New booking system at Royal Berkshire Hospital](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Vaccine roll out plans](#)
  - [Video message from local GP - Why its important to seek help when you need it](#)
  - [NHS 111 First - Booking a time slot at A&E](#)

We have been working on several reports over the last few months and the following have been published:

- Our [Covid-19 Report On Peoples Experiences of Services and Information](#). This report was based on the findings from our survey of the same name which had 174 responses from local residents.
- Our report on [Experiences of Perinatal Mental Health Support in Wokingham Borough](#). Looking at what are Mothers mental Health needs before and after having a baby. What can services do to meet those needs?
- Our report on [GP websites - How easy is it to find information](#). This report was conceived from the feedback we received in our Covid-19 report on peoples experiences of services and information. This highlighted some difficulties residents had when trying to find information on GP websites.
- Our report [Wokingham Borough Dentists - Website Review](#). Again, this report was conceived from the feedback we received in our Covid-19 report on peoples experiences of services and information and where analysis showed that access to information about dental care was difficult to find.

We also:

- Shared and raised issues of concern for the public with service providers, specifically:
  - Continued problems finding an NHS dentist
  - Ongoing issues for residents finding clear, timely easy to understand information
  - Access to phlebotomy services
  - Notification and access to flu vaccinations
  - Access to Covid testing
- Worked collaboratively with other Healthwatch partners in Reading and West Berkshire and voluntary and community sector groups.
- Represented Healthwatch strategically with locality CCG's, Hospital Trusts and the Integrated Care System. Collaborated on the task and finish group for the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 10 year plan. As part of this work, we will run two focus groups, one with Learning Disability adults and another with carers.

# Background

During Covid 19 the work of Healthwatch to understand the experiences of the public has not stopped. With a fast-moving response to COVID-19, real-time intelligence for services about the issues the public are facing is valuable.

It is also important that health and social care services understand the impact these changes are having more broadly - especially when they concern people's safety or will have implications as services begin the return to normal. Healthwatch Wokingham is therefore clear that feedback we provide can help the NHS and social care services during this time by helping them spot and address issues caused by the COVID19 crisis.

## Our priorities

During this time, we believe Healthwatch services can play the most useful role by:

- Providing advice and information to the public
- Supporting NHS and social care services in their communications with the public
- Alerting services to issues that could impact on the safety of people or their experience of care
- Supporting the wider community response to COVID-19
- Supporting communities who find it hardest to be heard or get the support they need

This briefing aims to provide a snapshot of activity and our impact from June-August 2020.

# Advice and Information

In the last 4 months we have continued to have a greater focus on our information, advice and signposting service, to help people get the information they need from a trusted source. We have continued to utilise our social media presence to keep the public informed and updated regarding government and local health and social care services and where to get help and support from the voluntary and community sector. The number of interactions on our website and on social media has increased since the previous report figures.



**Our website - over  
6,700 page views**



**Facebook - our posts  
reached over 7,800  
people**



Instagram - our posts reached over 1,500 people



Twitter - our posts reached over 14,800 people

## Where is our insight coming from?

At present, our opportunity to directly engage with Wokingham residents has had to change due to social distancing requirements.

Our telephone based signposting service has remained open throughout the period and the helpdesk team have been responding to calls and emails from the public.

We also continue to actively seek insight about health and social care experiences through our website, newsletters and social media and through digital meetings, through our surveys and with communities.

Community and Voluntary organisations are playing an even bigger role in being our partners and are currently supporting our “eyes and ears” campaign so we can capture and understand the experiences of those they support.

## What have people been telling us and what action have we taken

We have created specific Covid-19 advice and information documents on our website, working with stakeholders, based on what we are asked by the public and community and voluntary sector partners. We review our advice and information weekly to ensure it is current. We have also used social media to highlight advice and information to the public



### Dentists

#### We heard

Numerous residents have raised the issues they are having accessing dental appointments and in particular registering as new patients at local NHS dentists.

#### We did

We created advice and information articles on our website about how to find an NHS dentist, what options you have if you have a dental emergency and can't access a local dentist. We have also provided information on how to raise a complaint about services and have reported the difficulties to the local dental council.

Additionally, we carried out a mystery shop review of Wokingham Borough dentist websites as people had told us it was difficult to find the information they were looking for. We wrote a report based on the findings and shared the report with the local dental council.

Shared local peoples experience with Healthwatch England for their upcoming "Dentistry and the impact of COVID-19" report.

## Carers

### We heard

We heard from some people have become new carers during the pandemic. Also, existing carers whose caring responsibilities have changed, for example they are now caring for longer hours than before the pandemic as caring responsibilities have changed as too have some services and support.

### We did

We created an unpaid carers resources and information article on our website with links to local and national help. Additionally, we wanted to understand in more detail what unpaid cares experiences have been during the pandemic. Therefore, we created a survey to gather carers views, both known carers and those not known to services. The survey will end in February 2021 and we will write a report based on the findings.

## D/deaf and hard of hearing

### We heard

We heard from a D/deaf person about the difficulties in finding information and resources on services in general but particularly relating to Covid-19.

### We did

We created a Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Information and Resources article on our website with links to local and national information that also provided BSL videos relating to Covid-19.

## GP Surgeries

### We heard

The findings from our Covid-19 Survey of peoples experiences of services and information, in addition to other feedback we were getting, highlighted that some residents were finding it difficult to get the information they were looking for that was easy to find, easy to understand, was timely and accurate.

### We did

We carried out a mystery shop of all GP websites looking for specific pieces of information, we were assisted in this by CLASP the Wokingham Borough adult Learning Disability group. We made six recommendations in our report, the West Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group accepted all the recommendations and have set up a project to implement the recommendations across all GP websites in West Berkshire

## Phlebotomy Services

### We heard

We heard from residents about the difficulty of accessing phlebotomy services at the Royal Berkshire Hospital during Covid-19. Some of the service had been moved to the Bracknell Health Space but this was difficult to access for some people, the services at the Royal Berkshire Hospital were greatly reduced resulting in delays for individuals' tests.

## We did

With partners at Healthwatch Reading and West Berkshire we raised this issue several times in our regular meetings with West Berkshire Clinical Commissioning group and also Royal Berkshire Hospital. The phlebotomy services were adapted to make them Covid-19 safe and new booking system was put in place and the service was able to increase the amount of blood testing. We created an advice and information article on our website about phlebotomy services and the new booking system.

# For help, advice and information or to share your experience

We're the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need. We also help people find the information they need about services in Wokingham Borough.



Here to help you on the next step of your health and social care journey

We've the power to make sure that the government and those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

**Telephone:** 0118 418 1418

**Email:** [enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)

**Facebook:** @Healthwatchwokingham

**Twitter:** @HWwokingham

**Web:** [www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwokingham.co.uk)