

# Insight into action

Report #4  
January - March 2021

# At a glance

We have ...

- Produced dedicated Covid-19 information and advice resources on our website including:
  - [Covid-19 Vaccine Wokingham - Where and when will I get my vaccine](#)
  - [Covid-19 Vaccine Carers](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Mass vaccination site - what to expect when you visit](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Wokingham GP \(Dr Sharma\) - Video addressing common vaccine questions](#)
  - [Covid -19 - Supporting a safe return to care homes for family and friends](#)
  - [Covid-19 - Vaccine video message from well know ethnically diverse individuals](#)
  - [Childrens mental health - Practical resources - 'Little Blue Book Of Sunshine'](#)
  - [Maternity support during Covid-19](#)
  - [LGBT history month](#)
  - [Domestic abuse - 'Ask Ani' scheme launched to offer lifeline](#)
  - [Eating disorders awareness and help](#)
  - [KOOOTH - new online support for children struggling with mental health](#)

In conjunction with our Healthwatch partners in our ICS area, we published the following:

- [Addressing Inequalities in Health and Care Access and Outcomes](#). This report looks at different outcomes, different access to care the views & experiences of people who are likely to experience health and care inequalities in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire & Wokingham Borough

We have been working on a 'Carers Experience During Covid' project this quarter. This involved a survey and three focus groups with adult and young carers groups. The survey has now closed, and we are analysing the results prior to writing the report.

We also:

Shared and raised issues of concern for the public with service providers:

- Continued problems finding an NHS dentist.
  - Annual health checks for people with Learning Disabilities.
  - Local covid vaccination plans.
  - Missed vaccinations (Flu and Covid)
  - Issues relating to 'Do Not Resuscitate' orders.
  - Issues relating to service from Wokingham Medical Centre.
  - Wait times for continence assessment.
- Worked collaboratively with other Healthwatch partners in Reading and West Berkshire and voluntary and community sector groups including Learning Disability adult group, adult, and young carers groups.
  - Represented Healthwatch strategically with locality CCG's, hospital trusts and the Integrated Care System.
  - Continued our collaboration on the task and finish group for the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 10-year plan. As part of this work, we held focus groups with Learning Disabled adults and young carers to get their views on the plan and what was important to them.

# 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 the 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 January to March 2021.

# Advice and Information

In the last 3 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  
13,683 page views.**



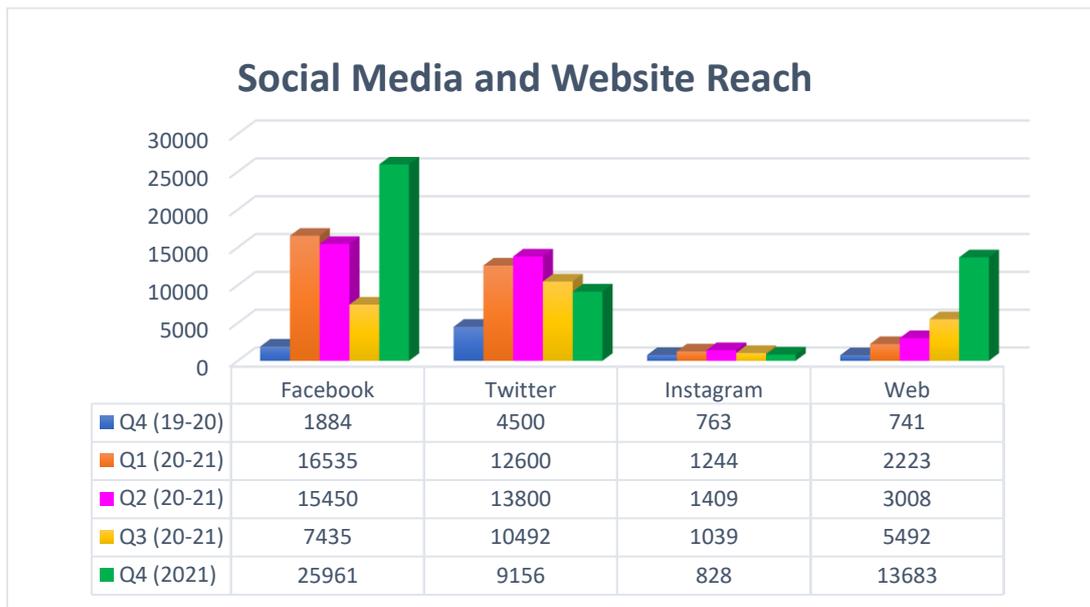
**Facebook - our posts  
reached over 25,961  
people.**



Instagram - our posts reached over 828 people.



Twitter - our posts reached over 9,156 people.



Additionally, we share information with the public via our monthly article in the Wokingham Paper. According to the paper's editor their weekly readership is around 18,000 of the print edition, there are around 130,000 unique users of their website.



# 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, newsletter and social media, digital meetings and through our surveys with communities.

Community and Voluntary organisations are playing an even bigger role in being our partners and sharing insight and members health and social care experiences with us.

# 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. Below are some examples of what people have told us:



## Dentists

### We heard

We continue to hear about residents difficulties in accessing dental appointments and registering as a new patient with an NHS dentist. This applies to adults and children.

### We did

We regularly update our advice and information pages as the situation changes. To improve access for patients who are not currently able to receive treatment from a dental practitioner within the South East, NHS England and NHS Improvement South East has commissioned additional NHS Dentist patient access sessions for the next 6 months. This has meant some Dentists have put on additional evening and weekend appointments. This information has been added to our website and circulated through social media.

We shared local peoples experience with Healthwatch England for their "[Dentistry and the impact of COVID-19](#)" report.

We also met with NHS England to share peoples experiences and raise concerns.

## Learning Disability Health Checks and Vaccine

### We heard

We heard from a member of CLASP, the adult Learning Disability group, that they had not been called forward for their vaccine as part of cohort 6. Additionally, they had not had an annual health check. We asked them to check with their GP if they were flagged on their system as someone with a Learning Disability. The individual was anxious about contacting the GP and exactly what to say.

### We did

With the individual's permission we contacted the GP surgery on their behalf regarding their vaccination and whether they were flagged as Learning Disabled on the system. The surgery responded saying the individual had now been flagged on the system as Learning Disabled and as a result would be called forward for the COVID-19 vaccine when they got their next supply and would also be called forward for an annual health check.

### We heard

When attending one of CLASP's Zoom meetings, we asked about annual health checks. Whilst most members have received a health check, it was clear some of their experiences differed in terms of quality, consistency and whether they were checked face to face or via telephone.

### We did

We raised the issue in a meeting with the CCG. They told us that whilst health check guidance had changed during the pandemic, they would expect that guidance to be followed and there to be consistency across surgeries. We have passed on the experiences of individuals for the CCG to review.

## Covid Vaccines

### We heard

We heard from various residents who wanted easy to understand information about local vaccination plans, venues, prioritisation and what to expect if they had to go to a mass vaccination site for the vaccine.

### We did

We created various advice and information articles on our web site addressing the queries we were hearing. We spoke to the CCG about the mass vaccination site and what people could expect when going for their vaccine. The CCG produced a video walk through at the mass vaccination venue explaining the venue and what visitors could expect when they arrived for their vaccine. We created a web article specifically focussing on the mass vaccination venue including the video. This was also shared via social media channels.

### We heard

We heard from two Learning Disabled individuals who work in the Voluntary Community Sector. (VCS) They had received their first vaccine at Wokingham Hospital, who were vaccinating health and care and VCS individuals. They had been given a date for their second vaccine. Subsequently the second vaccine date was cancelled via email advising they would receive a new vaccination date. The individuals were concerned and contacted Healthwatch. In communications we were informed that the date had to be rescheduled as the initial date was too early and didn't meet the NHS guidance that second vaccines should be between 11-12 weeks after initial vaccine. Individuals subsequently got a new date for their second vaccine. However, this revised date was then cancelled again via email advising they would receive a new vaccination date. Individuals contacted Healthwatch again and were extremely anxious.

### We did

Healthwatch contacted the administrator of the Wokingham Hospital vaccine program for more clarification/explanation and explained the series of events were distressing for the individuals. We also asked they were expeditious in offering a date for the second vaccine. Two days later the individuals

received an apology for any distress caused and were given a second vaccine date for the final day of the Wokingham Hospital vaccination program.

## Wokingham Medical Centre

### We heard

We have heard from several residents about the difficulty in contacting Wokingham Medical Centre to get a Doctors appointment. People would either be held in a very long queue or be faced with a voice message saying your call cannot be taken at the moment. The following is an example.

A patient tried over the last 3 weeks, unsuccessfully, to contact the surgery about a concern regarding their medication review which they had been told to ring and make an appointment for. They tried various times of the day over several days, two or three times. One morning, at 8.03 am, they open at 8am, I had the same response from answer machine, your call can not be taken at the moment please try again later. This was after the answer phone message had gone through all the process of asking about COVID etc.

The individual is currently being treated for a serious illness.

### We did

In the case of the individual example above, with the patient permission we contacted the practice manager on their behalf. The individual did receive a call from the surgery and arranged an appointment. In terms of the general issues, we are hearing about Wokingham Medical Centre, we have passed the issues onto the CQC and discussed them in a recent meeting with the CQC.

### We heard

We were contacted by the local Carers support group, Tuvida. They were concerned about one of their members, an elderly person who received an NHS letter telling them to shield. The individual had also become widowed during the pandemic. The individual had not received an invite for their annual flu vaccine. they contacted Wokingham Medical Centre several times about their flu jab without success. The individuals visiting district nurses also made contact with the surgery on behalf of the individual but without success.

### We did

With the individuals permission, we contacted the surgery manager on their behalf laying out the events as we understood them. The individual contacted us shortly afterwards to say they had now received his flu vaccination.

## Do Not Resuscitate

### We heard

We heard from Tuvida, local carers organisation. One of their carer members called to advise that both themselves and the cared for had been diagnosed with COVID-19, the cared for was in hospital. The carer has received several calls from the hospital about agreement to not resuscitate cared for. The carer insisted the cared for would want to be resuscitated and the carer would want that too. The Consultant did not agree with carer and said the cared for had advised that they did not want to be resuscitated. Carer disagreed as they had recently discussed with the cared for and was advised by the cared for they would want to be resuscitated. Carer wanted to have a chat with Healthwatch, they were feeling quite pressurised by the calls to consent. 5 calls in all. Carer is unwell and not in a good state of mind to keep receiving these calls.

### We did

With the carers permission, we raised the issue with the hospital trust, reinforcing that her wishes and the cared for should be heard and that she felt under severe pressure whilst unwell and concerned for cared for. The hospital apologised for any additional pressure they had placed on the carer and agreed she would not receive any more calls relating to resuscitation. Healthwatch contacted the carer subsequently and were told the cared for was now recuperating at the local community hospital.

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

We are 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 have 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)