



Our story so far

Annual report 2022-23

Healthwatch Westminster and Healthwatch RBKC

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"In the last ten years, the health and social care landscape has changed dramatically, but the dedication of local Healthwatch hasn't. Your local Healthwatch has worked tirelessly to make sure the views of local people are heard, and NHS and social care leaders use your feedback to make care better."

Louise Ansari, Healthwatch National Director

Message from Service Manager

Where we are now

When reflecting on the past year of The Advocacy Project's delivery of Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC, one word comes to mind - progress. We've come a long way since we began delivering the Healthwatch contract in July 2022. My journey as Healthwatch Service Manager started in January 2023, with an understanding there was work to do. We've restructured and recruited to the advisory groups, developed our volunteers, and built our team. We've created impact through our residents' stories and our statutory service commitments. As we head into the year ahead we have an amazing team and new volunteers coming aboard. **We're looking forward to continue to serve residents in Westminster and RBKC in the coming year.**



Danni O'Connell
Healthwatch Service
Manager Westminster,
RBKC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Danni O'Connell'.



'Thank you for listening to me, and letting me talk about my worries' Resident

About us

Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

The people of Westminster and RBKC understand and can access health and social care; services are fit and fair for all communities.



Our mission

To understand our communities and their needs, finding the common concerns.

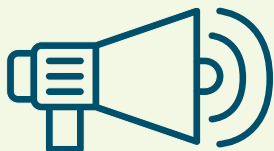


Our values

- We provide an independent voice that amplifies what we hear from our engagement work
- We will be fair, accessible, and accountable
- We will be creative, solutions-focused partners – adding value to or leading service improvement
- We will be nimble – fast, flexible and active
- We collaborate and support other groups
- We connect and support communities so they can drive change locally, while we work at borough level
- We will empower communities by building sustainable networks, skills and knowledge.
- We keep our finger on the pulse, identify key issues and amplify them to decision-makers
- We will provide a check and balance to ensure services are fit and fair

Contract year in review (July 22 – July 23)

Reaching out



346 people

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and

improve care. We have **196 new followers** on our social media pages.

51 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as access to dental care and how to make a complaint.

Making a difference to care

We worked on

6 reports about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services. We're a formal member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Meeting.

Our most popular report was **Lost for Words.**

This report explored the struggles people who don't speak English face accessing services.



The Healthwatch team



We're lucky to have

2 Advisory Groups across Westminster and RBKC. We have 5 advisory group members in Westminster and 8 in RBKC.

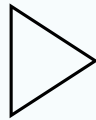
We're funded by the local authority and have established great connections with our statutory partners.

We've built a passionate and dedicated team, recruiting

6 new staff members

Highlights from the contract year

Summer



The Advocacy Project won the Healthwatch contracts for Westminster and RBKC in July 2022



A Healthwatch consultant laid the foundations for the two projects.

Autumn



Teaming up with Healthwatch England, we created an engagement strategy to help us work on key issues within health and social care.



We developed our service, including our advisory groups, which are essential to setting our service priorities.

Winter



We carried out "enter and view" projects on St Charles Hospital and London Ambulance Services..



A new service manager and WCC lead officer joined the team. We increased our community engagement activity.

Spring



Further new team members joined us. We played an active role in the Health and Wellbeing Board and attended scrutiny meetings for the Bborough.



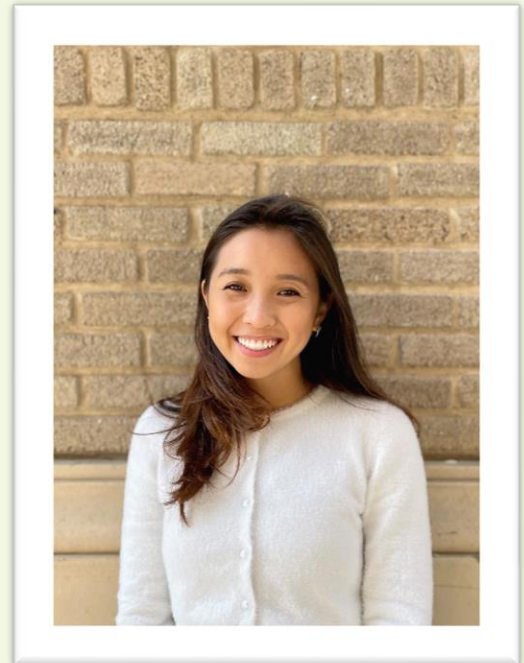
During the spring we worked on five reports, 19 community engagement visits, and coproduction activities – all underpinned by regular advisory group meetings.

Who we are...

Here's a brief overview of Healthwatch's RBKC and Westminster Lead Officers

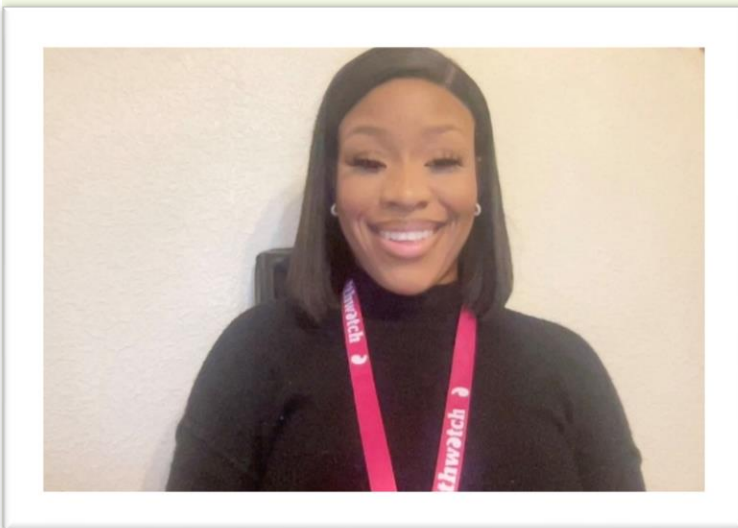
Jamie Chan, Healthwatch Lead RBKC

Jamie joined the team in spring 2023 and is already making a huge contribution. Jamie is passionate about community development and community-centred approaches to promoting health equity. She has a background in global health and mixed-methods research. Having grown up in Hong Kong, she speaks Cantonese and Mandarin. In her free time, you'll most likely find her on a run or reading in the park.



Blessing Ogunoshun, Healthwatch Lead Westminster

Blessing is a real asset to our services. She has a breadth and depth of experience creating systemic change in healthcare, with an emphasis on equality. She brings a background in leading initiatives, bringing challenge and change to the health and socio-economic infrastructure, preserving the right to health, especially within marginalised communities.



Get in touch!

Blessing Ogunoshun: blessing.ogunoshun@advocacyproject.org.uk

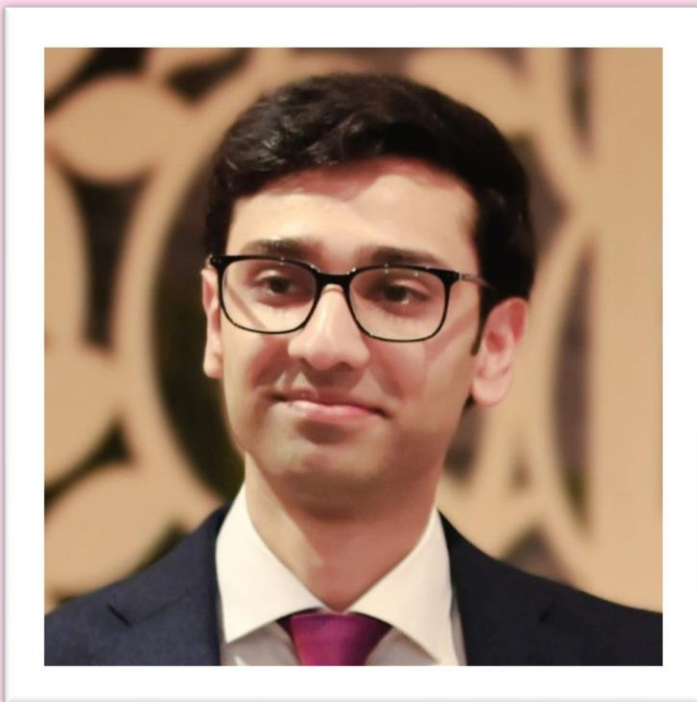
Jamie Chan: Jamie.chan@advocacyproject.org.uk

Who we are...

Spotlight on two of our team members

Gio Pascarella, Engagement and Communications Coordinator

Gio started with us as HR and Admin Assistant. She quickly proved her passion and skill, stepping up to become Engagement and Communications Coordinator. She enjoys fostering connections and reaching different audiences through effective communication. Her background is in public health and bioethics research. Gio is fluent in English and Italian.



Sajil Shadid, Data and Insights Officer Healthwatch

Sajil's role covers analysing insights and outcomes across our three Healthwatch services: Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster, and Brent. Sajil is passionate about making data accessible to everyone. With a knack for data research and analytics, he's got a sharp eye for detail and a real love for digging into the numbers. He speaks English, Urdu, Hindi, and German.

Follow us on Instagram!

@westminsterhealthwatch and @RBKHealthwatch





RBKC Lead Officer Jamie Chan with Healthwatch National Director Louise Ansari at the 75th NHS Anniversary

Community Engagement



How we connect with our communities

Our core aim is putting residents and their experiences first. Throughout our first year delivering Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC, we focused on developing a direct link with our communities.

- During our 'We are what we eat' project we attended **19** foodbanks, pantries and drop-in clinics across the Biborough.
- We attended **5** Stowe Centre drop-in sessions and carried out **14** focus groups to inform our report.
- We collaborated with **23** different organisations across both boroughs to gather insights to feed into our reports. We've built a grassroots network through our work.
- We've trebled referrals into our signposting and advice services.

We're committed to deepening our understanding of and engagement with the communities we serve. We're proud to be based in our communities on a monthly basis in Bay20 and Westminster Abbey Centre.



Collaboration

Working closely with key stakeholders across both boroughs is essential for us to support local residents in developing health and social care services.

We've paved the way for a number of coproduction activities looking forward into 2023-4. In the spring, we ran the first of a new series of coproduction activities with key stakeholders and partners. The focus was on patient experience, bringing together our colleagues in the Public Health Team, NHS Patient Experience Team and our advisory group members. The session will examine patient trends we witness across health and social care.

We're planning three coproduction meetings a year highlighting resident issues. In September 2023, the topic will be mental health services and will include a Q&A with mental health stakeholders.

For more information please contact Blessing Ogunoshun:
blessing.ogunoshun@advocacyproject.org.uk

St Charles Hospital: Enter and view report

In January 2023 we carried out an “enter and view” project at St Charles Hospital with our trained volunteers. The project was one of the largest “enter and view” initiatives carried out by Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC.

Our volunteers talked to people in every ward at St Charles Hospital. It was an incredibly insightful experience hearing the issues patients and staff were facing. We wanted to understand more about the experience of receiving care in these wards – in particular if patients were receiving care that met their individual cultural and religious needs.

Response from the service

We're pleased to see a commitment from St Charles Hospital to act on the key findings in our report. All the ward managers have been helpful and responsive to our recommendations. Several changes are already under way and an action plan is in place to make sure improvements are made.

Recommendations included...



- improving overall cleanliness on the wards
- staff need to be aware of any prior health needs of the patients and work with the patient to ensure these are met
- refresher training for staff, particularly in communication skills
- better access to religious/spiritual leaders and religious items, such as prayer mats or books
- a wider range of meaningful activities.

Following on...

Following our report on St Charles Hospital, the Biborough Social Care Scrutiny Committee asked us to work on a project exploring the impact of the closure of Gordon Hospital. We look forward to starting this project in summer 2023 and will present our findings in autumn 2023. For more information on getting involved with this project please contact Jamie Chan on Jamie.chan@advocacyproject.org.uk

“Lost for Words” our report on translation services

Our advisory groups across both boroughs noted an issue around how communities that don't speak English access health and care services, and the translation services that are offered to them. Our lead officers carried out an in-depth project involving 81 residents and two focus groups to find out how global majority residents access services.

There was mixed feedback among the residents who responded to the survey and participated in the focus group discussions. Positive feedback included appreciation that the service was offered, interpreters' professionalism, and quality of the interpretation services. Negative views were focused on challenges accessing the service, the lack of diversity in languages and dialects offered, and quality issues such as miscommunication and misinterpretation.



“I cannot make an easy appointment through the receptionist”

“It used to be easier to receive a translator when I went to the GP in the past.”

“Poor. You always have to request it. It is never a permanent action for GP appointments which is rather annoying.”

“We are what we eat” our report on food aid

Foodbanks, pantries and drop-in clinics have become a lifeline for communities. Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC carried out a project on food aid and the need to diversify food.

Many of the food aid service users we spoke to were aged 50–79 years and reported having long-term health needs. Over half the residents described not having enough food to meet their basic needs. Overall, people using the food aid services reported positive experiences. However, some described concerns about there not being enough food offered, administrative issues with the services, and not enough foods catered to different needs and identities of residents (see appendix for ethnicities breakdown). Staff and organisers of the food aid services shared mixed feedback. While they generally believed food provided by their organisations was diverse and reflected residents' needs, there were still certain groups whose needs weren't met. Several staff suggested strategies to help residents achieve long-term food security, instead of relying on temporary food aid.



“I was going to commit suicide and was walking along the street saw the pantry and was curious”

For all reports, please see www.healthwatchwestminster.org.uk and www.healthwatchrbkc.org.uk



Hearing from all communities

We've worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. It's important to us to reach out to under-served communities, to gather their feedback, make sure their voices are heard and make sure services meet their needs. We're continuing to work with communities through the following.

- Visiting community centres, food banks, community kitchens and local charities to collect feedback from different communities.
- Partnering with Citizens Advice Bureau Westminster at the Stowe Centre drop-in (Thursdays, 10am-1 pm).
- Sharing feedback directly with local service providers and creating opportunities for services and communities to come together.
- Targeting our engagement work in Westminster and RBKC's struggling wards.

Forthcoming projects

Our advisory groups set our priorities via our findings from communities. Here are our priorities and projects for the forthcoming year.

	Short term projects	Details	Timescales
	"Enter and view" of local GPs / care homes (c. two per borough)	Both boroughs to produce work based on the core offer of Healthwatch. The "enter and view" totals of last quarter was low due to lack of coordinator and requests from residents, service providers.	Summer 2023 to autumn 2023
	One-off reports on findings in boroughs	Both Healthwatch to develop and deliver key messaging around health and social care issues in each borough. This should be regular and one-off pieces of work. We've been noted to work in partnerships with other organisations in order to attain more of an audience and focus within communities.	Every 6 weeks
	Work with communities to develop reports on case studies	Carry out hospital visits and focus groups (with support). Promote online survey to all relevant groups. Carry out one-to-one interviews as appropriate.	Ongoing
	Long term projects	Details	Timescales
	Closure of Gordon Hospital	This project will explore the effect on care in both boroughs due to the closure of The Gordon Hospital.	Autumn 2023
	Young People's Mental Health	This project will be a breakthrough piece of work around one of the biggest issues in the boroughs and will support our Healthwatch mission to empower communities to think differently. Lead officers to distinguish the different services and create recommendations on their findings. The project will link with the launch of Young People's Healthwatch – developing a volunteering opportunity for younger residents.	Autumn 2023



"Healthwatch Westminster provides the opportunity for residents to have their say, and get an accurate picture of what is going on, rather than what heads of services would have us believe." **Social care professional**



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn to get information on health and care services, Healthwatch is here for you. We can give confidential support and free information so you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can reach out to us.

This year we've helped people by:

- offering an advice / information service five days a week via email and phone
- running information stalls in community drop-ins, food banks and events
- producing local resources on key health topics, shared via our websites
- supporting people to access the right support for their different issues

Three ways we've made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't always heard.

Developing partnerships



Partnering with other organisations is essential to our research, reports, resources, and helping everyone see the bigger picture.

For example, working with Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) has been integral to gathering information which feeds into our priority-setting. Through having a presence at the CAB Stowe Centre drop-in sessions, we've become aware of communities, client groups and wards that need our attention, and been able to note resident issues and trends. Our upcoming projects – on young people's mental health, and effects of the closure of Gordon Hospital – have come about through being present at our partners bases.

Developing connections with communities in need



Services need to understand the benefits of involving local people to help improve care for everyone.

We've noted some residents find it hard to trust services. Notably, in RBKC there seems to be an added tension between residents and services after Grenfell. We look to create positive relationships between residents and health and care services by building pathways for resident involvement. We've done this by attending events based in communities and creating opportunities for residents to come forward with their issues through one-to-one meetings.

Improving services through our reports



We're working to increase accessibility and make sure everyone can contribute to service improvement.

This year, we've published two reports on hospital services. This has been incredibly successfully in feeding back residents' experiences to decision-makers. In the next year we're working closely with the quality assurance team across the Bborough. We've set a target of four "enter and views" to be carried out on care homes, GP surgeries, and other NHS health services.



Volunteering

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are at the heart of what we do. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving.

Within the next year we aim to:

- carry out enter and view visits to local mental health in-patient wards
- recruit younger volunteers to take part in our Young Person's Healthwatch
- develop our volunteer support through our new Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator
- carry out six more enter and view projects throughout the Bborough

We're recruiting volunteers for our Young People's Healthwatch! We're looking for people between the ages of 18 to 25 who live in Westminster or RBKC, and who have an interest in health and social care and equality.

For more information please get in touch:

giovanna.pascarella@advocacyproject.org.uk

Finance and future plans

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from Westminster and RBKC local authorities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Our income and expenditure

WCC Healthwatch	
Income (FY 22-23)	116,787.81
Additional (ambulance project)	5,000.00
Total income	121,787.81
Expenditure	
Expenditure on pay	86,104.11
Non-pay expenditure	8,499.63
Office and management fee	25,014.67
Total expenditure	119,618.42

RBKC Healthwatch	
Income (FY 22-23)	113,739.16
Additional (ambulance project)	5,000.00
Total income	118,739.16
Expenditure	
Expenditure on pay	70,031.25
Non-pay expenditure	8,095.14
Office and management fee	20,634.88
Total expenditure	98,761.27

Next steps

Our next steps in 2023 to 2024 is to focus on creating more high impact work within our communities around mental health services around residents aged 18 to 25 years old. We are looking forward to working with our new Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator to recruit, train and retain new volunteers and new advisory group members. In addition, we will be focusing on working in communities more regularly and hosting our Co Production events within struggling wards of the borough.

We are also looking to create more opportunities for our residents to come forward and discuss their case studies and stories through working closer with The Advocacy Services across both boroughs.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

- Young Person's mental health and building a young Healthwatch volunteer programme.
- Building our grassroots network wider
- Reports on our findings on the closure of Gordon's Hospital



Statutory statements

The Advocacy Project holds the contract for Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC. Registered office: The Advocacy Project c/o SEEDs Hub, Empire Way, Wembley HA9 0RJ

Healthwatch Westminster and Healthwatch RBKC use the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

The way we work

Involving volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making

The Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC advisory groups consist of residents who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our advisory groups make sure decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local communities. Throughout 2022/23 the groups met five times each and made decisions on matters such as which community groups to focus our research on, and how to prioritise partnership working. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities, and use the information gathered from the public to steer our projects and engagement.

How we gather people's experiences

We use a range of approaches to make sure as many people as possible can give us insight about their experience of using services. During 2022/23 we've been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending meetings of community groups and forums.

We make sure this annual report is made available to as many members of the public and partner organisations as possible. We'll publish it on our website and share it directly with the community groups we work with.

Responses to recommendations

All providers responded to our requests for information or recommendations. There were no issues or recommendations escalated by us to Healthwatch England Committee, so no resulting reviews or investigations.

Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We make sure people who make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

For example, in our local authority area we take information to the Bborough Adult Social Care Scrutiny meetings where we are a board member. Sitting on the board and presenting our findings have enabled a bigger impact from our findings.

We've also worked closely with public health teams on all our reports and at our coproduction meetings. We share our data with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Enter and view

This year, we carried out two enter and view projects. We made 32 recommendations or actions as a result of this activity.

Location		Reason for visit	What you did as a result
St Charles Hospital London	London Ambulance Service- Chelsea and Westminster Hospital	We received information about lack of complaints from certain demographics, suggesting patients may not have access to advocacy.	Wrote a report with recommendations – the service has followed up with an action plan to improve patient experience and access to information.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Westminster and RBKC is represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board by Danni O’Connell, Healthwatch Service Manager. During 2022/23 we’ve attending meetings, given updates on our progress and shared key priorities. In addition, we’ve helped with delivering an easy read version of the Health and Wellbeing Board’s 10-year strategy for the Bborough.

2022–23 Outcomes

Project/ activity	Changes made to services
St Charles Hospital (enter and view)	Increased training for staff, improvements to appointment systems
London Ambulance Service (enter and view)	Priorities of improved relationships between LAS and hospital staff, better mental health training included in strategy
Translation services (survey and focus groups)	Increase awareness of residents who do not have English as a first language.
Podiatry services (survey and focus groups)	To create appointments around client groups’ needs.

healthwatch

The Stowe Centre, 258 Harrow Rd, London W2 5ES, London

07985 461766 (Monday- Friday, 9am-5pm)

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