

Healthwatch Milton Keynes Priorities 2022–23

**Have your say on our plans
and activities for the year
ahead**

Welcome, Healthwatch Member

Healthwatch Milton Keynes is the independent champion for people using health and social care services in Milton Keynes. We form part of a national network of local Healthwatch organisations with a statutory role to:

- Provide advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services.
- Obtain the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known. We do this by making reports and recommendations about how local care services could, or ought to be improved and direct these to commissioning and providers of service and people responsible for managing or scrutinising services.
- Promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services

Our mission is to provide an effective local voice for people in Milton Keynes, influencing and shaping Health and Social Care services to meet their needs.

Healthwatch Milton Keynes' remit reaches to all aspects of health and social care in Milton Keynes and to represent the views of a diverse population of roughly 270,000 people. We are a small service, and it is essential that we focus our efforts on the raising the key issues and concerns of our population as well as aligning some of our work with the priorities of the NHS, Public Health, Social Care and the VCSE so we can ensure that people are involved at the right time in designing services.

Every year, Healthwatch Milton Keynes designs a plan of activities around a set of priorities from:

- Common experiences and views collected by people contacting us and sharing their stories
- Common themes and issues we've heard through face-to-face and virtual engagement with our community

- The views of members of Healthwatch Milton Keynes
- The views of our volunteers, staff and Trustees through an annual staff and volunteers survey
- The priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Board, who set specific areas of focus on parts of the Milton Keynes Health and Wellbeing strategy each year
- The priorities of the Integrated Care System, a partnership of health and care leaders, commissioners and providers across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes

As a Healthwatch member, you have an important role in shaping our activities and supporting the Board of Trustees in their decision making about the services and health conditions that we prioritise.

What key priorities are we consulting on this year?

What we have heard by people contacting us – our top 10

The top themes and issues that we heard about from people contacting us last year:



- 1 – Access to NHS Dentistry
- 2 – Access to Services – GP Appointments
- 3 – Access to Services – Covid Vaccinations
- 4 – Quality of Communications – GPs
- 5 – Access to Services – Mental Health
- 6 – Quality of Care and Treatment – Milton Keynes University Hospital
- 7 – Quality of referrals, support and integration between services
- 8 – Quality of Care and Treatment – GPs
- 9 – Access to Advice and Support – Adult Social Care
- 10 – Access to Services – Registering with a GP



What

we've heard through our face-to-face and virtual engagement

In 2021-22 we relaunched our face-to-face engagement events in the community, with a focus on exploring the health inequalities that people in our community experience. There is, and will continue to be, a big focus on understanding and learning more about what inequalities people experience by the ICS with the intention to address those inequalities and improve the way health and care services support people who experience greater health inequalities.

We want to ensure the ICS hear directly from the community about where some of those longer term inequalities in health outcomes might stem from and not make decisions about services based solely on health population data (people

as an age, gender, ethnicity, and condition statistic) – and the ICS wants that too.

We are still pulling together all the stories we gathered this year into a report, but we can share some of the key inequalities that people who spoke to us are facing so you can help inform what you think we should focus on in the year ahead:

Common experiences of inequalities	Who told us this
Having to have several appointments with a GP to receive the right diagnosis, treatment and care because of language barriers, having a strong accent.	Both men and women and people from Black, Asian, and Eastern European backgrounds.
Experiences of feeling judged, or having health and wellbeing experiences and needs being dismissed as mental health issues, or because of autism	Trans people and people with existing mental health issues and/or autism. Black and people from White backgrounds.
Experiences of challenges in being listened to by health professionals as an expert of their own body, receiving correct diagnosis and support	Trans people, women with Gynaecological problems. People from both Black and White backgrounds.
Challenges receiving the right assessments and support	People with SEN, ADHD, autism, carers and people with Mental Health. People from Black and White backgrounds.
Poverty impacts on access to health services (transport), healthy food and dental care	Women from Black and White backgrounds.

What we heard from our staff, volunteers and Trustees

Our staff and volunteers work together to collect views and experiences from the people we make contact. Our team are in a unique position to get a fuller picture of the plans and challenges local services, and service users face. Each year, we ask staff and volunteers about their experiences and from what they see and hear tell us which key health and care issues we should prioritise. This year they asked us to prioritise the following:

Service Area	What should Healthwatch MK do
Integrated Care System (ICS) Development	Monitor, challenge and support the ICS to develop programmes of genuine patient/public involvement that creates change in services for

	the benefit of people that use services
Mental Health	Focus on the provision and quality of mental health services for children
Primary Care (GPs)	<p>Monitor how digital and face-to-face methods of GP appointments are developed and delivered – making sure all patients get the type of access they need</p> <p>Challenge the high levels of feedback from patients about poor access to appointments with GPs</p> <p>Monitor access to Cancer Screening services</p>
NHS Dentistry	Continue to challenge the poor provision of NHS Dentistry in Milton Keynes
The impacts of Covid-19	Monitor how health leaders are reducing waiting times for diagnosis, treatment and operations (also known as the elective backlog)
Secondary Care (Hospitals)	Focus on how people experience discharge from hospital
Adult Social Care	Focus on how people experience home care upon discharge from hospital

What are the priorities of our Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board has selected the following priorities for focus from the Health and Wellbeing strategy for 2022-23:

Theme	Proposed priorities
Mental Health	Help Children and young people to better mental health
	Improve the lives of everyone living with mental illness through raised awareness and more effective support services
	Promote positive mental health and reduce social isolation through strengthening social support and social networks

Physical Activity	Make it easier for children and young people to become more active
	Reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and stroke through increasing healthy living
	Older citizens are supported to stay healthy and maintain their independence
Poverty and Inequalities	A system focus on reducing smoking prevalence amongst more disadvantaged communities and groups

What are the priorities of our Integrated Care System

Priority 1: Start Well

- **Every child has a strong, healthy start in life, from maternal health, through the first thousand days to reaching adulthood. Our areas of focus are:**
 - All mothers, parents, children and young people will have access to the support they need to achieve good family health and wellbeing outcomes.
 - To improve educational outcomes for all to better prepare children and young people for employment.
 - Support children, young people and their families who are the most vulnerable and have the most complex needs.

Priority 2: Live Well

- **People are supported to engage with and manage their health and wellbeing. Our areas of focus are:**
 - Health improvement and disease prevention through population-based and individual-based interventions, including action to address social factors and inequalities.
 - Early detection of health conditions.
 - Optimal management of long-term conditions, through increased self-management and better coordination of care for people with complex needs.

Priority 3: Age Well

- **People age well, with proactive interventions to stay healthy, independent and active as long as possible. Our areas of focus are:**
 - People staying well and functionally independent and socially engaged.
 - Providing proactive care for people at risk of poor outcomes.

- Putting in place complex coordinated care when needed, including at end of life.

Priority 4: Growth

- **We work together to build the economy and support sustainable growth. We are working closely across ICS partners to deliver:**
 - Increasing levels of economic growth, including making the most of our status as Anchor Institutions and maximising opportunities for inward investment and the Oxford/Cambridge Arc.
 - Increasing employment levels and quality of employment, including building skills in our population through mentoring and apprenticeships.
 - Improving access to better living conditions and a focus on sustainability.

Priority 5: Reducing Inequalities

- **In everything we do we promote equalities in the health and wellbeing of our population. This is a focus for all of our priorities, and some specific areas include:**
 - Continue to roll out the COVID-19 vaccination programme and implement solutions to target under-represented people.
 - Population health management targeting resources to most in need.
 - Personalised care working with individuals and local groups to develop services to meet their needs.
 - Prevention, detection, and management including smoking cessation, weight management, diabetes, CVD, respiratory and stroke.
 - Digital inclusion improving connectivity by access to hardware and internet and providing skills training.
 - Annual checks for people with severe mental health and learning disabilities.
 - Increase employment opportunities for local people.
 - Quality and affordable housing and a multi-agency approach to homelessness.
 - Increase in social engagement with those who are isolated.

Now it is your turn to tell us what you think

Thank you for taking the time to read all the information and as you can see Healthwatch Milton Keynes receives a lot of information from people who use health and social care services as well as the health and care services themselves each year. Whilst our team of staff and volunteers have the passion to do it all, our capacity means we must prioritise key areas to focus on. This is to make sure that the activities we do focus on are approached with the support of members and have reasonable resources so that we're able to make a positive impact with our activities.

We've pulled together all the common themes into 20 key areas. The next step is to head to our survey where you will be asked to prioritise them in order of importance.

Your views will steer our plans for the year ahead and we'll publish a summary of our business plans with you in April.

The survey will run until 31st March 2022.

[Take me to the survey](#)



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