



Season's Greetings

As 2019 draws to a close we'd like to thank all our volunteers and the people who have shared their views about health and care in Gloucestershire over the past year - it is your enthusiasm and support that will help improve services in our county.

We started the year with the publication of Healthwatch England's priorities list. After engaging with over 400,000 people across the country, the top three issues were primary care (including access to GPs), children and young people and mental health.

Here's a quick recap of some of the highlights from our year at Healthwatch Gloucestershire:

- We published an [End of life report: Evaluation of non-clinical support](#), based on findings from over 50 responses to a survey of the public's experiences on accessing information around end of life care in the county.
 - We took to the roads in March on our Campervan and comments tour where we spoke to over 500 people and covered 400 miles in a classic 1969 VW campervan.
 - We asked people in Gloucestershire to share their views about how they want local health services to improve in the NHS Long Term Plan. Over 240 people participated and we collated your feedback into a report which we shared with Healthwatch England and other partners in early Summer.
 - The top four things people in Gloucestershire would like to see improved were: quicker access to a named GP with longer appointments; easier and cheaper ways to access exercise classes, gyms and cycleways; a 'care navigator' to be provided for those living with dementia; and increased mental health support around transition for the trans community.
 - We appointed former BBC journalist Bob Lloyd-Smith as Chair of the Healthwatch Gloucestershire Local Board.
 - Over 430 people took part in our research on local mental health services which revealed many people are frustrated with complicated
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referral processes, often being passed from service to service with long waiting times and little information. The findings were published in a report: [Exploring the views of Gloucestershire people on mental health services in the county](#) and presented to the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board.

All in all, it's been a busy year. We celebrated our sixth birthday in April, we welcomed our Volunteer Officer George Soars and we said goodbye to our Manager Julia Butler-Hunt. It has been a great privilege to support the people of Gloucestershire and make sure you have the opportunity to share your experiences of health and care.

We wish you the all the best for the Christmas season and the coming year.

The Healthwatch Gloucestershire team



Meet the new Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager Helen

Helen Webb, from Stroud, has just taken on the mantle of Healthwatch Gloucestershire Manager. From her first job working Saturdays in Boots the Chemist in Stroud, she became an operational manager in care and support services. More recently she moved into managing customer and community engagement for Guinness Care and Support nationally.

“It was my responsibility to make sure that all of our service users had a say and could make a difference. I was also responsible for delivering community projects with health and wellbeing outcomes,” she said.

Now she brings her enthusiasm and experience to make sure the voices of the people in Gloucestershire are heard and that the commissioners and providers can make good decisions based on the evidence Healthwatch provides.

“I am really excited to start this role. It feels like such a privilege to work with our partners, volunteers and people across the county. Healthwatch is an essential part of making sure that health and care services in Gloucestershire are the best that they can be. This is important work and I am passionate about making it count,” Helen said. [Read more...](#)

Opening Hours at Christmas

The Healthwatch Gloucestershire office will be closed from 5pm on Friday 20 December for a Christmas break and staff will be back in the office on Thursday 2 January.





Share your views with us

We are always happy to hear your views on health and care in Gloucestershire. You can email us at info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk, phone us on 0800 652 5193 or contact us through our social media platforms.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is the county's independent health and social care champion. We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care.

Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved.

These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference.

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