

# 'You Said, We Did' – May 2024

We regularly review the experiences you told us through public events, surveys, [Feedback Centre](#) and [Information & Signposting](#) enquiries.

These help us understand where things are working well and where they need to change. We hear positive stories about how services have supported and assisted you, as well as mixed experiences, and where things need to be better.

Healthwatch uses your feedback with health and care decision-makers to seek a positive difference, and this document sets out the changes you have helped us to deliver during May 2024.

## You Said

We were contacted by a concerned resident who had been made aware of a change to the criteria for using the Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services, who wanted to understand the changes.

We heard from an individual whose dentist had retired. They require prescription toothpaste and have been told they will now need to purchase this privately rather than via an NHS prescription.

An individual contacted our I&S Service as they were living in poor conditions with little food. They explained this was impacting their physical and mental health and they didn't know who to turn to for help.

We heard from an individual referred for hospital treatment, but who was unable to receive it as there was no interpreter at their appointment due to an error in the referral letter which requested a translator for the wrong language.

## We Did

We spoke with the [Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service](#) to understand changes to service eligibility and liaised with the [Sussex Integrated Care System](#) to understand how changes might impact patients so this can be communicated.

We signposted the individual to the Sussex Dental Helpdesk and shared a copy of the [HWIS guide to Dentistry](#). In addition, we raised this issue with colleagues from NHS Sussex who agreed to raise it with commissioners of dental services.

We provided details of support organisations and made a referral to [Health and Social Care Connect](#). We suggested the individual also contact their GP regarding their health concerns and to discuss other support available, including using a food bank.

We provided the individual with details of [Sussex Interpreting Services](#) who can offer support with translation and interpretation. We also collaborated with a volunteer at The Sanctuary Café to draft a letter to the GP explaining the situation and the person's needs.

## Our Contributions and interventions

At our monthly meeting with NHS Sussex Primary Care colleagues, we continued to share feedback from the public about difficulties using primary care services including, long telephone waits and a lack of face-to-face appointments. NHS Sussex explained these issues are being addressed through the '[Modern General Practice Model](#)' which includes investment in digital tools, making better use of the workforce and improved management of demand and capacity, which should result in a better patient experience moving forwards.

We visited the Sanctuary, a drop-in in Eastbourne for migrants, and heard about the current issues migrants are experiencing when accessing health and care services, particularly inconsistent access to interpreting and translation services. We passed this insight on to NHS Sussex, and highlighted how barriers to interpreting services leads to poor health outcomes for some patients.

We delivered an 'Introduction to Healthwatch' session to county councillors. We summarised the evolution of Healthwatch and our statutory functions and core powers. We shared examples of our work and impact, including how we use feedback, and the support our information and signposting service offers. Councillors told us what they were hearing about health and care locally.

We contributed to a consultation about proposed changes to Neighbourhood Mental Health Team Footprints in East Sussex. We highlighted the importance of ensuring providers, the public and service users are involved and have a voice in the decision-making process, and that monitoring takes place to assess the performance of any changes. We also suggested the need for footprints to align as best possible with others such as Integrated Community Teams.

**"Thank you for your help. I haven't been able to speak to anyone else as they don't answer the phone."**

**"I'm grateful for you listening to me."**

### Share your experiences with us

Used a health or care service recently? If so, please tell us about your experience by leaving a review on our dedicated [Feedback Centre](#).

### Support and assistance

If you need support in accessing health and care services, please contact our Information & Signposting service via:

[enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk) or 0333 101 4007

### Contact Us

To find out more about Healthwatch East Sussex, please go to: [www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk) or contact us via:

Email – [enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk)

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### Reports and publications

All our reports are published on our website: <https://healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/>