



Our yearly report

2021 to 2022



**Easy
Read**

Contents

Introduction.....	3
About us	4
What we did in 2021 to 2022	6
Your care, your way	9
Sharon’s story	12
People from different backgrounds	15
Dentists.....	16
Social Care	17
Seeing your local doctor.....	19
Patient transport.....	22
Hospital waits	24
Next year	26
For more information.....	28



In this Easy Read document, hard words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after we have used them.



Some words are pink and underlined.

These are links that will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



Every year Healthwatch England writes a report to explain what we have done and what we plan to do next.

We are an independent organisation that:



- Helps people who have a problem with their health or care services.



- Looks into health and care services and writes reports which say how they should improve.



- Tells health and care managers what people think about their services.



This is our report for 2021 to 2022.

About us



We listen to what people think about health and care services.



We listen to everyone, especially to people who find it difficult to be heard.

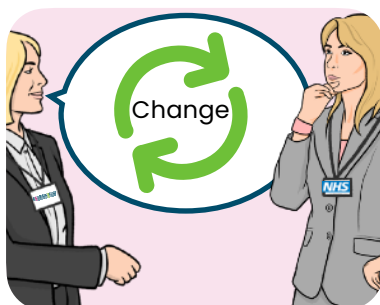


We think about what people say and work out how health and care services should change and get better.

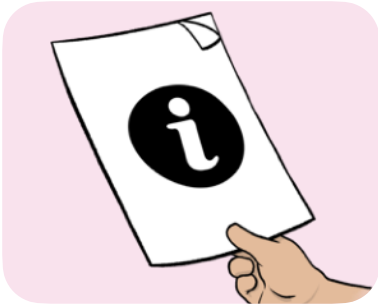


We tell managers of health and care services:

- What people think about their services.



- What changes they should make so their services get better.



We give people advice and information about health and care services.



We work with other organisations, like the Government and community groups to improve health and care services for everyone.



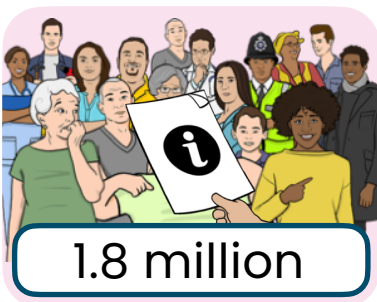
There are many local Healthwatch groups around the country. We, at Healthwatch England, work closely with these groups.

What we did in 2021 to 2022



This year:

- 423,600 people told us what they think about health and care services.

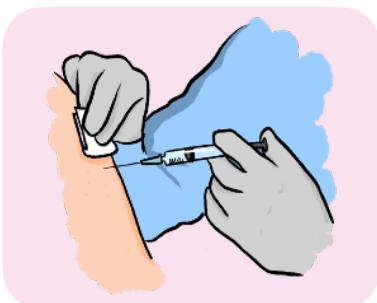


- We gave more than 1.8 million people information about health and care services.



We also:

- Looked at what people thought about having a **vaccine**.



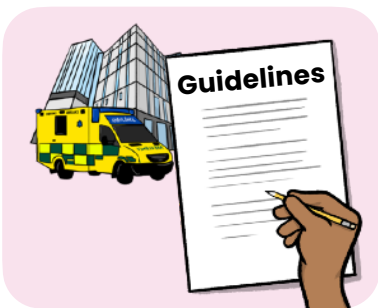
A **vaccine** is an injection or jab that helps to stop you being ill with a certain illness.



- Looked at ways health services could be run.



- Told health services that people were worried about how they look after your personal information.



- Supported the Government to write new guidelines for how staff help patients leave hospital.



- Helped NHS England make transport to hospital better.



- Worked with the Government to deal with the long time people have to wait to go into hospital.



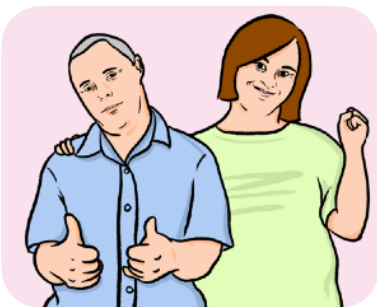
- Told the Government that NHS dentists are not giving people a better service.



- Helped health services think about making information easier to understand.



- Found that most NHS services are not making information easy for:
 - People who have difficulty with eyesight or hearing.



- People with a learning disability.

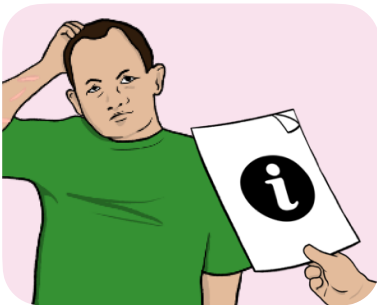
Your care, your way



We have a **campaign** called 'Your care, your way'.

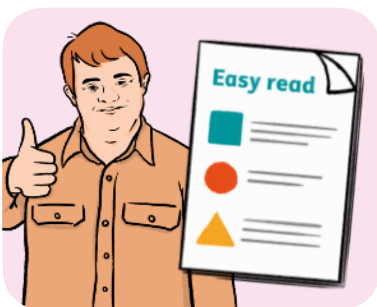


A **campaign** is work to try and change something.



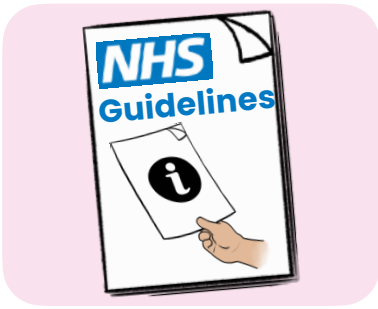
This campaign aims to:

- Find out if people are getting health information in a way that they can understand.

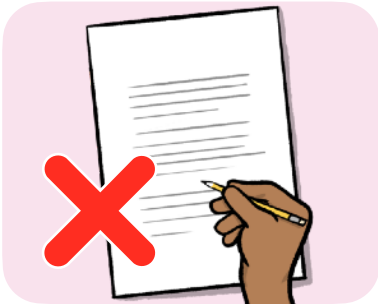


- Work with NHS England to make sure health services are giving people information in a way that they can understand.

We found that:



- Many health services do not follow the NHS guidelines about giving people information.



- Many health services don't keep a note about how people want to get information.



- Many health staff don't understand how to help people get information in a way that they can understand.

People told us that:



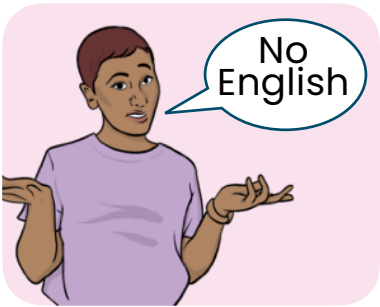
- During the time of COVID-19, many services stopped giving people information in a way that they could understand.



- Many patients have to use family or friends to help them understand information from health services.



- People who use lip reading, could not understand health staff wearing face masks.



- People who don't speak English very well have many problems getting the healthcare that they need.



NHS England are now looking at the rules for how health services give information to people.

Sharon's story



Sharon got a letter from the hospital about getting a check for **breast cancer**.



Breast cancer is when lumps form in your breast. It is a very serious illness. It can get better from it.



The letter was not in Easy Read. It was hard to understand.



The words were very small. She couldn't see them.



Healthwatch Sunderland helped her to ask the hospital for the letter in Easy Read.



The hospital said they didn't have letters in Easy Read for breast cancer checks.



We spoke to the NHS about this.



This helped to get Easy Read letters about breast cancer checks for everyone.

#ItsBoobEasy



All women should get checked for breast cancer.



Sharon with Healthwatch Sunderland have set up a campaign called 'It's Boob Easy'.



The campaign helps you to get letters in Easy Read.



You can get more information about this here:

www.healthwatchesunderland.com/news/2022-11-17/itsboobeasy

People from different backgrounds



We work hard to make sure people from different backgrounds get the healthcare that they need.

This year we have:



- Helped local doctors open at different times so people who work on fishing boats can get the healthcare they need.



- Helped Asian women get a check for cancer at the local mosque, where they felt more comfortable.

Dentists



We have been working so that people can go to a dentist that they can afford.



We have helped NHS England to make changes to how NHS dentists work, including:



- How NHS dentists work with disabled people.

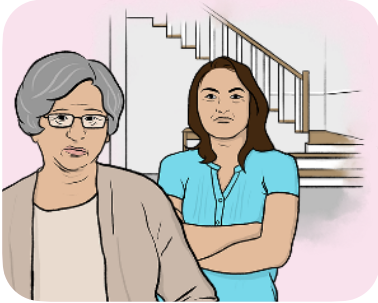


- Making sure that dentists say if they are taking NHS patients.



- Giving more money to the dentists that are doing the best work.

Social Care



Social care is the support some people need with everyday living.

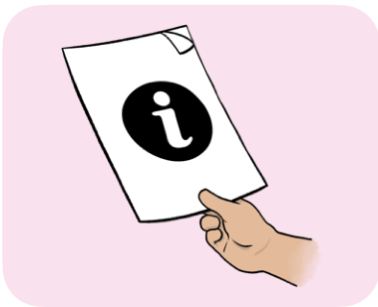


People often cannot get the social care that they need.

Not enough information



We found that people often do not know about the social care that they could get.

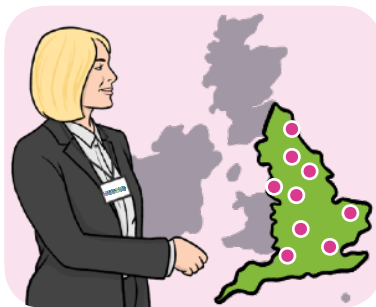


We helped social care organisations to try better ways of giving information.

Who needs social care?



We found that the Government does not know how many people are not getting the social care they need.



We are working with local Healthwatch groups to find out how many people need social care.

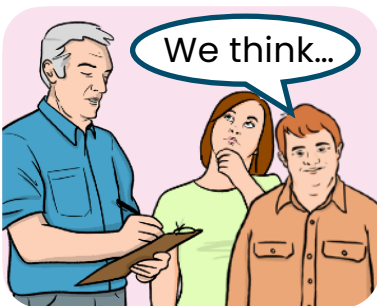


We will share this information with the Government so they can plan better services.

Seeing your local doctor



During COVID-19 many doctors started to see their patients mostly online.



We asked people what they thought about this.

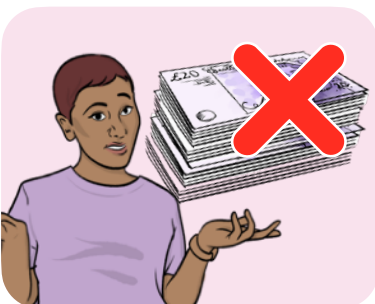


Many people had difficulty seeing their doctor online.



This might be because:

- They did not know how to use computers well enough.

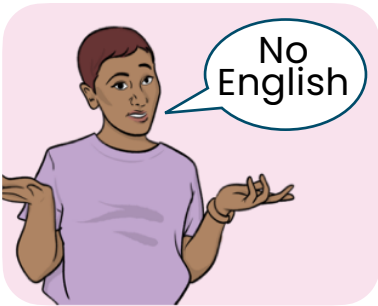


- They could not afford a computer.



It might also be because:

- Their disability made it difficult to see the doctor online.



- It was hard to understand the doctor because they could not understand English well enough.



We think that:

- Doctors should see patients in the best way for the patient.



- Health services should help people to understand how to meet their doctor online.



- Everyone should be able to get the same healthcare - online or face to face.



- Doctor's surgeries should keep a note of how people would like to see their doctor.

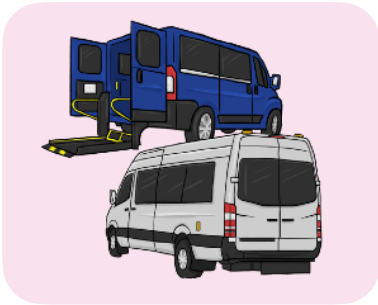


- The Government should make sure that everyone can get on the internet.

Patient transport



Many people need **transport** to get them to and from hospital.

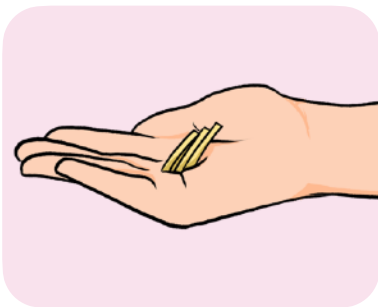


In this report, **transport** means a minibus or taxi paid for by the NHS to help people get to and from hospital.

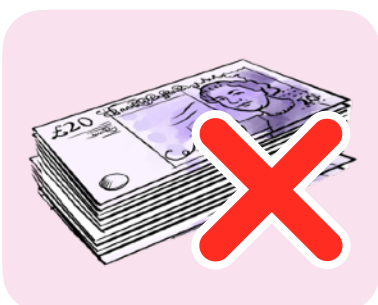


Some parts of the country have worse transport than others.

Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme



There is a Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme that will pay the cost of travel.



It is for people who can't afford to pay for their own transport.

What we think

We think that:



- The NHS should always ask how someone is going to get home from hospital.



- No-one should leave hospital without a way to get home.



- Every part of the country should have good transport.



- There should be changes to the Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme so that people quickly get the money for their travel.

Hospital waits



People are having to wait a long time to get the treatment they need at hospital.



People from the poorest households had the worst time while they waited.

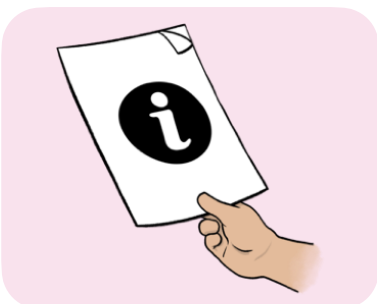


Women and disabled people had a difficult time while they waited.

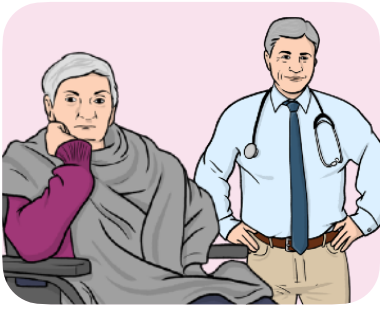
What should happen?



We asked people who were waiting what should happen.



Nearly half of people said they needed more information while they were waiting.



Nearly half of people said they needed more help with their health condition while they were waiting.



More than half of people had not been given the name of someone they could contact while they were waiting.

Next year



The NHS is having a difficult time.



People are having a difficult time because the cost of things we need to live is going up.



We will carry on:

- Working for a better dentist service.



- Asking for healthcare information that everyone can understand.



- Looking at how prices going up affects people's health.

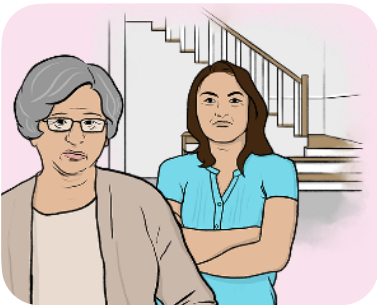
As well as this we will:



- Help more people to know about how Healthwatch can help them.



- Look at how people can get:
 - To see their doctor.



- The social care they need.



- Work with the NHS to make health services better.



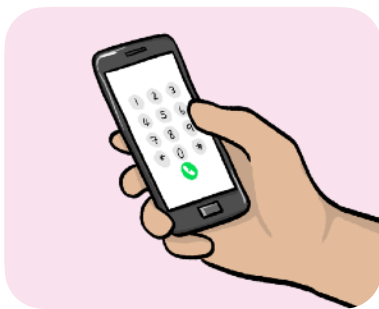
- Look at how the Healthwatch groups can work in better ways.

For more information



You can look at our website here:
www.healthwatch.co.uk

If you need more information
please contact us by:



- Phone: 03000 683 000



- Email:
enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk