

A close-up portrait of a Black woman with short, dark, curly hair. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. She is wearing a black top, a silver necklace, and a silver hoop earring. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office or public space.

# **Equality and human rights**

**Our statement for 2017-18**

# About us

**We are the independent consumer champion for health and care. Our job is to make sure that those who run health and care services understand and act on what really matters to people.**

---

## Our role

Our remit covers all health and social care services and we work for everyone, not just those who shout the loudest. As part of this, we have a role in promoting and protecting equality and human rights for everyone who uses health and social care services.

**It is therefore important that our work:**

- Is inclusive, accessible and meaningful to everyone;
- Is underpinned by the human rights principles of fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy;
- Responds to the needs of different groups and individuals and every section of the community; and
- Takes into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and carers.<sup>1</sup>



---

[1] Protected characteristics are defined under the Equality Act 2010.

---

# Our commitment

## At Healthwatch England we are committed to:

- Building the ability of local Healthwatch to promote equity of access to services and the inclusion of all voices in discussions about health and care;
- Working with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) nationally and locally on equality and diversity matters;
- Collaborating with others to engage and understand the views of communities in the right way at the right time;<sup>2</sup>
- Helping to address the gaps that exist when it comes to understanding different communities' experiences of care;
- Appointing a Healthwatch England Committee member as an equality and diversity champion to help ensure we deliver our commitments; and
- Ensuring that equality, diversity and human rights are considered throughout our work.



---

[2] By communities we mean seldom heard groups and those within the nine protected characteristics.

# Our statement

**For 2017-18**

**1.**

Support the Healthwatch network to engage communities in terms of the following characteristics:

- Religion and belief;
- Sexual orientation; and
- Those who are carers.

**2.**

Support the Healthwatch network in their ongoing work with communities in terms of the following characteristics:

- Age
- Disability;
- Gender;
- Gender reassignment;
- Maternity; and
- Race.

**3.**

Support the Healthwatch network to seek views on health and social care from disadvantaged groups, including:

- People who are homeless;
- People who live in poverty;
- People who are long-term unemployed;
- People in stigmatised occupations (such as sex workers);
- People who misuse drugs;
- People with limited family or social networks; and
- People who are geographically isolated.

**4.**

Support the Healthwatch network to work with NHS organisations in the delivery of the national Equality Delivery System<sup>2</sup> framework.<sup>3</sup>

[3] The Equality Delivery System<sup>2</sup> framework is designed to support the NHS to deliver better outcomes for patients and communities and better working environments for staff, which are personal, fair and diverse.

# healthwatch

Healthwatch England  
National Customer Service Centre  
Citygate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA

[www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

---

t: 03000 683 000

---

e: [enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk)

---

 [@healthwatchE](https://twitter.com/healthwatchE)

---

 [facebook.com/HealthwatchE](https://facebook.com/HealthwatchE)