

# Championing what matters to you


Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham  
Annual Report 2021–22



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## Statement from Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC)



I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the second annual report for Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham (H&F) under Your Voice in Health and Social Care to reflect on what has been a hugely successful and ultimately challenging year. A year that has seen Health and Social Care continue to respond magnificently to extreme circumstances with the continuing pandemic. During this time, Healthwatch H&F have continued their statutory responsibility to obtain the views of people about their needs and experience of local health and social care services, make those views known to those involved in the commissioning and scrutiny of care services, provide reports and make recommendations about how those services could or should be improved and promote and support the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services. Healthwatch H&F received 4766 patient experiences to better inform our understanding of health and social care provision and to raise awareness of any on-going issues to improve care provision. 264 members of the community came to us for clear advice, this year the main areas were COVID-19 and mental health.

This year, working with our partners in health and social care, Healthwatch H&F launched a blood donation awareness campaign, highlighting the need for Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic communities to donate blood. Created a mental health directory to highlight suicide and bereavement support services and ran a month long stress awareness campaign.

Despite the circumstances Healthwatch H&F produced 19 reports on health and social care and made 10 Enter and View visits. Our most viewed report so far has been into Young People's Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

34 Volunteers contributed 338 days of their time to support the service and as a result of this involvement and the staff team we have been able to provide advice and information to over a 1000 people.

As we continue our pandemic recovery journey I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Healthwatch H&F staff and volunteers, who have continued to work with dedication to ensure a responsive and vital service continues to support the local community.

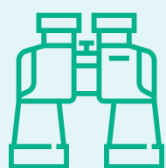
Tim Spilsbury  
Your Voice in Health and Social Care CEO (YVHSC)



# About us

## Your health and social care champion

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham is your local health and social care champion.



### Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



### Our mission

To make sure your feedback is used to help make health and care better.



### Our values

- Listening to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Including everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- Analysing different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- Acting on feedback and driving change.
- Partnering with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

"I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Healthwatch Staff, Volunteers and Student placements whose dedication, enthusiasm and tireless contributions are at the heart of the work we do. Your service and commitment towards Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham has allowed us to champion for Hammersmith and Fulham residents across many of our services in the health and social care sector. You should feel very proud.

I would like to thank each member of our Committee for their commitment, guidance and advice for the benefit of local residents. It is with great sadness and deepest sympathy I report on the loss of our dear committee member John Marshall who died earlier in 2022. He was a tireless fighter and advocate for patient rights across the whole of North West London. He will be greatly missed!

I would also like to thank our Health and Social care partners and providers for your determined efforts to improve patient safety and experience. I hope we can continue to do the same over the upcoming year. It has been a privilege to join Healthwatch and work with you all over the last 10 months."

Carleen Duffy, Ops Manager of Healthwatch Hammersmith

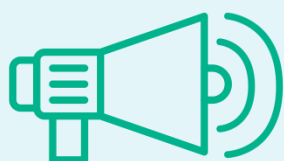
and Fulham



# Our year in review

Find out how we have engaged and supported people.

## Reaching out



**5,581 people**

shared their experiences of health and social care services with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

**264 people**

called us for clear advice and information about topics such as COVID-19 vaccination sites and Mental health support in the borough.

## Making a difference to care



We published

**19 reports**

about the improvements people would like to see to health and social care services.

Our most popular report was

**Young People's Mental Health During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

which highlighted the struggles young people have finding help for and expressing their own mental health needs.

## Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

**34**

outstanding volunteers, who gave up **338 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2021–22 we received:

**£122,000**

We also currently employ

**4 staff**

who help us carry out this work.



# Advice and information







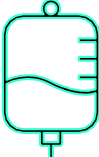

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. In times of worry or stress, we can provide confidential support and free information to help you understand your options and get the help you need. Whether it's finding an NHS dentist, how to make a complaint or choosing a good care home for a loved one – you can count on us.

This year we helped people by:

- Explaining how and where to register for a GP or Dentist.
- Linking people up to local charities they could trust
- Supporting the COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme
- Helping people to find the Mental Health services they need



How we offered advice and information from April 2021 to March 2022

Spring		
	Our volunteers placed weekly orders and signposted isolating residents who needed food to the local foodbank/charities	To support the COVID-19 vaccination Programme we took calls from local residents and signposted them to their closest vaccination centre.
Summer		
	Teaming up with the North West London team we translated Covid-19 symptoms and Lateral flow testing information into several other languages.	When people struggled to find a GP or Dentist we shared information on where they could go to register at services taking on patients.
Autumn		
	With online appointments becoming the norm we campaigned for digitally excluded residents. Whether it was a device or digital skill training we signposted residents to the relevant charities.	We created a mental health directory signposting residents to local and national suicide and bereavement support.
Winter		
	We ran a blood donation awareness campaign alongside a team of consultants and patient at Hammersmith hospital, highlighting the importance and need for Black, Asian and Multi Ethnic communities to donate blood.	We ran a month long stress awareness campaign signposting residents to local services. We shared information on the signs of stress and burnout and provided daily tips to combat it.

## Making hospital discharge safer

In 2020 rules around hospital discharge changed during the pandemic, to speed up the discharge process and free up beds. Following the implementation of the new discharge model, Healthwatch England conducted a research project together with British Red Cross where they spoke with nearly 600 people that had been discharged from hospital during the pandemic. This report highlighted the hard work by the NHS staff, but also raised some inconsistencies in the implementation of the model across NHS Trusts in England.

Based on their findings, Healthwatch England made a number of recommendations on how to improve the discharge model. In October 2021, an updated hospital discharge guidance that makes improvements to the issues highlighted was published.



**“It means so much to me that someone is finally listening to what we need here. It's really helped to have someone to talk to.”**  
Hospital Patient



The improvements include ensuring patient safety first by avoiding discharge at night and always informing patients of the next steps in their care. Other improvements include signposting to voluntary and housing sector partners; holistic welfare checks to determine the level of support needed; involving and assessing needs of carers in the discharge process; and ensuring clarity of which staff members are responsible for each step of the discharge process and arrangements.

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham completed four visits to the Discharge hub in Charing Cross Hospital to observe how the patient discharge process is currently being implemented locally. From this we created a report that made 11 recommendations.

### What difference did this make

- On our recommendation a new bedded area was built in the Discharge hub. This will allow frail patients to wait for transport in the lounge freeing up ward capacity.
- Recommendations were made to improve coordination and communication between the wards and discharge lounge. In response to this, the discharge unit will be included as part of any new staff's induction and the discharge unit team will also be invited to participate in periodic ward team meetings.
- We recommended that all patients in the discharge unit should be given a choice of whether they would like a meal and have the option to take it home if necessary, as we found a few patients had not received meals or had a lack of food at home on discharge. Following this feedback, the unit will now ask all patients if they have food at home and provide a lunch box if not.
- Recommendations to improve communication regarding waiting times for patient transport were also made – As a result, the discharge unit has said they will ensure the discharge lounge staff are using their current automated transport ordering and monitoring system, which will enable them to provide regular and realistic waiting times.



## Primary Care Access

In October 2021 our GP access report highlighted the tremendous efforts GP staff had made to continue to provide a high standard of care during the Pandemic. It also identified that access to primary care was limited for digitally excluded residents and those for whom English was a second language. We also received negative feedback for eConsult apps and GP websites.



**“Thank you for taking the time to listen and find me help. I've been feeling so stressed over this.” GP Patient**



To follow up on these finding in 2021/2022 We

- Provided 48 recommendations on primary care access directly to the GP practices. Some were provided to improve an overloaded GP booking system which caused frustration among patients.
- Compiled RAG ratings of GP practice websites.
- Completed 6 Enter and Views in GP practices in Hammersmith and Fulham in the PCN with the highest percentage of digitally excluded residents.
- Along with 6 other local Healthwatch, Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham have engaged with and co-designed a survey with the public on GP digital services, feeding the patient voice into the commissioning of a new consultation tool.

### What difference did this make

- GP practices assured us there are alternative booking methods available for patients and that improvements have been made to their triage system in order to offer more same-day appointments and minimise delays
- Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham made recommendations to include more material in multiple languages to increase accessibility. Practices have responded to this and implemented the appropriate changes.
- We signposted 163 residents to the digital exclusion project so they were able to book appointments online and avoid long waiting times via the phone.
- We collected 384 survey responses from Hammersmith & Fulham for the NWL GP online consultation project. Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham will go on to recommend improvements to the North West London digital and data strategy workshops.



**“Actively listened and took the time to find a range of organisations that could support me.” GP Patient**



## Finding Mental Health Support



The pandemic's effect on mental health is likely to continue longer than its impact on population physical health. Although some people describe better mental wellbeing due to a more balanced work/homelife and new hobbies/interests. Some people still suffer the effects of social isolation, disruption to education, unemployment and economic consequences of the pandemic. Furthermore, the effects of mental health are distributed unequally across society, with some social groups carrying a greater share of the mental health burden. With mental health highlighted as a key concern in Covid Recovery we have

1. Conducted a survey with young people aged 11–18 to find out how the COVID–19 pandemic has affected their mental health. The survey received 324 responses in total. From this we produced a report outlining 15 evidence–based recommendations intended for borough health partners to collaboratively action.
2. Worked on the Hammersmith and Fulham Suicide prevention strategy. We provided 10 recommendations into the suicide prevention strategy.
3. The West London NHS Trust have supported and encouraged our recent prioritisation of Mental health support. We have worked with the West London NHS Trust providing them with feedback and helping them to develop their patient engagement programme and improve their communication with residents and patients.
4. Provided 6 recommendations to the IAPT Back on Track service.
5. Our Ops Manager was invited to the NIHR School for Public Health Research where we fed into the young peoples future projects. Going forward we will look to join up with some UK wide schools on the importance of trauma informed schools in the Borough.

### What difference did this make

- All IAPT patients are able to access face to face appointments, telephone appointments or video appointments and the team will be reminded to offer these options routinely. The newly introduced MINT teams will hope to fill the gaps in service provision for H&F patients.
- IAPT team exercises were completed in the June and July 2021 with the whole team meeting reflecting on the changes that were made and what was working well. Time was also spent considering what was working less effectively and how this could be improved.
- From our young person study we have formed a co–production group that will take the recommendations forward and look at the local offer in Hammersmith and Fulham, particularly any gaps in the young persons mental health service.
- We signposted 48 unidentified Carers to Mental health services through our Carers Project
- We created the Local suicide directory of services for Health and Social Care partners.

# Listening to Patient Experiences

Services cannot make improvements without hearing your views. That’s why over the last year we have made listening to feedback from all areas of the community a priority. Through a mixed methods approach to patient engagement we collected 4,766 experiences from Hammersmith and Fulham residents throughout 2021/2022. During social distancing and infection control measures we utilised phone calls and online reviews. We have restarted our face-to-face engagement in GPs and Hospitals ensuring the safety of all staff and patients remain a priority.

In their feedback, patients highlight areas of good practice alongside recommendations for further improvements of the service. From this we produce quarterly reports outlining key themes and trends of areas of service delivery that are worth celebrating as well as those that can be further developed.

”

“The staff are highly skilled and professional and always treat their patients as individuals and with respect.”

IMPERIAL COLLEGE NHS TRUST

”

“The service is great; the staff are helpful and understanding. The doctors are excellent. Easy to book an appointment over the phone. You don’t need to wait long for the appointment.”

GP SURGERY

”

“Very good, very fast , never issue with my medication when you go there it’s ready.”

PHARMACY

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham has continued to develop our methods of outreach and improve the way in which we represent the voices of Hammersmith and Fulham communities in the borough’s decision-making processes.

In collaboration with YVHSC and our neighbouring Healthwatch, we have produced an organisation-wide action plan to improve our Patient experience programme requesting feedback from commissioners, Healthwatch managers, Practice managers, committee members and patients.

This year we have created several patient experience reports on primary care, including; how individual communities and residents from differing ethnic backgrounds experience their GP and Hospital care. As well as a two-year comparative review of Hammersmith and Fulham GP surgeries ratings in comparison to other NWL borough GP patient experience data collected.

”

“The waiting times are too long. I had my appointment cancelled 3 times with no explanation”

IMPERIAL COLLEGE NHS TRUST

”

“The receptionists can be so rude that it actually makes you feel like a burden when calling.”

GP SURGERY

”

“It was fine, but it was not well organised, there was a long queue and I had to wait for my prescription.”

PHARMACY

# Volunteers

We're supported by a team of amazing volunteers who are the heart of Healthwatch. Thanks to their efforts in the community, we're able to understand what is working and what needs improving in NHS and social care.

This year our volunteers:

- Helped people have their say in a way that is easiest for them; whether that is through remote methods such as telephone calls or online, or through face-to-face engagement.
- Supported us in analysing patient feedback and creating presentations and reports on key findings to share with service providers.
- Created digital content for our website, social media, and newsletter.
- Assisted us to carry out our Enter & View programme by visiting local GP services and Charing Cross Hospital.
- Continued to help us to provide information and signposting services.







### **Matt, Volunteer Data Analyst**

"I have been volunteering for Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham as a Data Analyst since July 2021. During my time here, my main contributions have included compiling the Annual GP Patient Experience report, creating the Annual Imperial College report, as well as contributing to the data analysis and report writing sections of the new Training Guide for YVHSC Volunteers and Interns.

I found it really interesting to read about what aspects of their GP treatment and care that patients valued and appreciated, as well as their concerns. My analysis explored in depth the issues and barriers patients experienced with regards to appointment availability, getting through on the phone and waiting times. This was a particularly topical project to get involved in, given the recent strains of the pandemic nationally on access to healthcare.

On the analytical side, I really enjoyed working with such a large data set, being creative in producing the graphs and charts and developing my report writing skills. I feel I have made an impact as the analysis and resulting recommendations will hopefully help increase awareness of the issues amongst Commissioners/Practice managers and local governing bodies, thereby influencing their decision making. Ultimately, I hope this will be beneficial in improving patient access to GP healthcare. A PowerPoint version of my analysis was shared with the Practice Managers at their recent Forum and published on the local Healthwatch website.

I have also been involved in producing a detailed training guide regarding data analysis and report writing to help other Volunteers and Interns. This will be made available on our YVHSC volunteer and intern hub and shared with our local Hammersmith and Fulham student placements. In this way, I hope to upskill our volunteers sharing the knowledge and skills I have acquired with other Healthwatch members.

On a personal level, I have very much enjoyed the opportunity to learn new things and take on fresh challenges, as this has really improved my confidence and personal development. It has been really nice to get to know the staff, fellow volunteers and interns in the office. This has also improved my communication and relationship building skills.

Finally, I feel volunteering in the Hammersmith and Fulham area has also given me a sense of community. This has been very rewarding, especially as I feel that the work that the team at YVHSC are doing is making a real difference in helping improve health and social outcomes in our local community."





**Elena**

“I became a volunteer with Healthwatch after graduating. I wished to expand my work experience while also having a positive impact on the community, and volunteering with Healthwatch was the perfect opportunity. I did not only learn a lot and had fun with the caring and knowledge team, but also became more aware of the issues faced by healthcare services.”



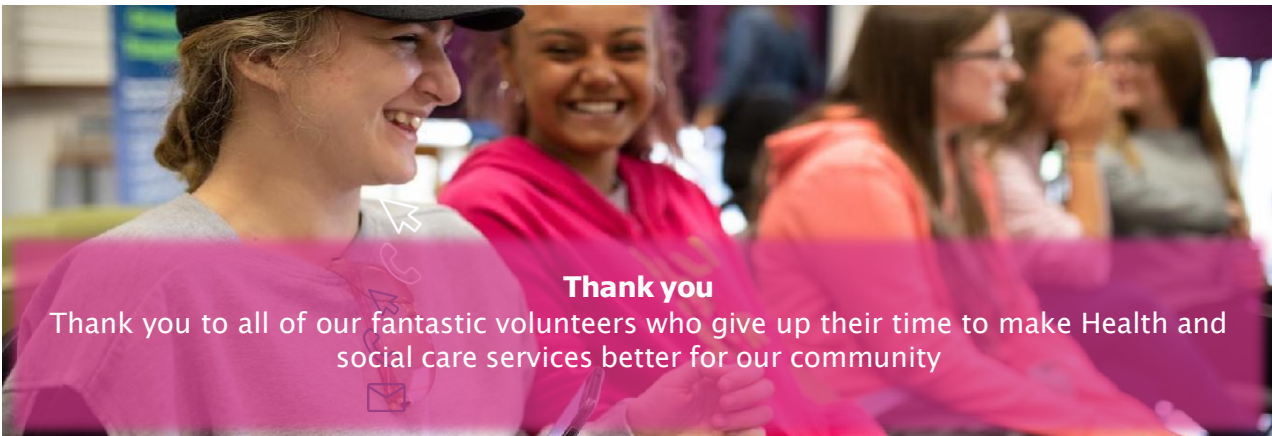
**Rebecca**

“Working closely with local service users and listening to their personal experiences is such a privilege. Being able to signpost accessible services and provide helpful information to support patient's is very rewarding because you feel you have made even the smallest difference to that person's well-being.”



**Sirina**

“I volunteered because I wanted to see from the patients point a view how their experiences are at hospitals and GP's face to face other than reading review about it as sometimes not all reviews are true. The difference I feel like I have made to the community is working closely with Healthwatch to help the NHS staff improve on how they run their hospitals and GP's.”



**Thank you**

Thank you to all of our fantastic volunteers who give up their time to make Health and social care services better for our community



**Monika**

“My name is Monika, I work as a Support Officer with people with mental health problems. Alongside this, I volunteer for Healthwatch to earn more experience in research, meet new people and learn new things. I feel that by working with Healthwatch I can understand more of the issues that the patients from the community are facing by using the services such as GP, Pharmacy, Dentists, Hospitals etc. Additionally, I learned about how the services are good, and how people are satisfied with the services. I feel that I can allow people to be heard so they can make difference and give compliments. I feel that by getting the information from the patients and working on the report I am helping towards the improvement of the service.”



**Holly**

“As a volunteer at Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham, I have really enjoyed being able to develop my understanding about the different issues people can face in the community and contribute to research and projects that aim to make a positive difference. This opportunity has allowed me to broaden my skills and provided me with valuable experience that will be useful for me in my future work.”



**Do you feel inspired?**

We are always on the lookout for new volunteers, so please get in touch today.



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



0203 886 0386



[info@healthwatchhf.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchhf.co.uk)

## Patient Representation

We attended **116** key strategic and operational meetings where we represented the voices of Hammersmith and Fulham residents, encouraged public involvement and shared our intelligence.

Meetings Attended
Health and Wellbeing board
Health, Inclusion and Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee
Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment
H&F Local Borough Committee (Primary Care)
H&F Borough Based Partnership
H&F ICP Operational delivery group
H&F ICP Mental Health Campaign
Hammersmith & Fulham Mental Health Stakeholder Group
Co-Production Partnership Board
West London Trust Carers council
H&F Dementia Action Alliance
West London Trust Service User and Carer Experience Sub Committee
Digital inclusion strategy
H&F Safeguarding Adults Board
NWL Immunisation & Vaccination Board
R&A/Practice Manager Forum



## Comments from Partners

Healthwatch have worked very closely with the public health team in the council, and were a key stakeholder in the suicide prevention needs assessment and strategy, taking the lead on compiling a directory of mental health services, which was an important gap identified by the work.

Healthwatch have also been an instrumental partner in the health and wellbeing strategy working group, and will be sharing the work they are doing with the mental health trust so that this key group of patients' voices are reflected in any planning.

Dr Nicola Lang, Public Health

Your contributions and involvement with the Trust and this work have been greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you on your future visits.

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Healthwatch have worked in co-production with the Youth Council, to carry out research and resulting recommendations into young people's access to mental health services in H&F in the aftermath of the pandemic. The findings and recommendations have been shared widely with service deliverers, commissioners and strategic leads and actions are now being co-produced with young people. This has been an interesting, fun, meaningful and impactful co-production and Healthwatch's support was highly valued by the young people and Youth Voice Coordinator. Healthwatch are as passionate about young people's voices and co-production as the Youth Council so it has been a really affective partnership and enjoyable experience.

Brenda Whinnett, Youth Voice Coordinator

We have worked closely this past year inviting the H&F Healthwatch team to attend our regular forums, which have been of great use to the attendees.

Keep up the good work.

H&F GP Federation

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham have been part of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment steering group for Hammersmith and Fulham. At the steering group the team have not only provided invaluable guidance on how to best engage with the public on their use of pharmacies but have contributed significantly to that engagement.

Ashlee Mulimba, Healthy Dialogues

# Finance and future priorities

To help us carry out our work we receive funding from our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Income	
Funding received from local authority	£122,000
Additional funding	£0,00
Total income	£122,000

Income	
Staff costs	£95,000
Operational costs	£21,000
Support and administration	£6,000
Total expenditure	£122,000

## Top three priorities for 2022–23

1. Community and Inpatient Mental Health services
2. Discharge into Social care from Hospital.
3. LA Carers needs assessment improvement.

## Next steps

The pandemic has exacerbated the public requirement for mental health support. Now more than ever residents need to know about the different voluntary, community and statutory support available to them. Health and social care partners need to consider how residents are able to access treatment in an empathic environment without judgement and stigma.

The pandemic has put increasing pressures on our Primary care systems. We need to ensure these services are being best utilised while they work through long waiting lists. This includes looking into digital consultations, preventable delays and lack of communication between Medical, Transport and Social care services.

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham will continue to work with the local authority, local carers’ charity and Healthcare commissioners and recommend changes with the data gathered from our Carers Project. We hope this co-production will create a louder voice for carers in the borough and steer where the most impactful changes should take place. From this we will build and implement an action plan for the local carers strategy.



## Statutory statements

### About us

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham, 141–143 King St, London, W6 9JG

### Company holding local Healthwatch Contract

Your Voice Health and Social Care, 45 St. Mary's Road, Ealing, London W5 5RG

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham uses the Healthwatch Trademark when undertaking our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

### The way we work

Involvement of volunteers and lay people in our governance and decision-making. Our Healthwatch board consists of 6 members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction and guidance around our work programme. Our committee ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community. Through 2021/22 the committee met 10 times and made decisions on matters such as strategies to maximise impact and reach of our carers' report as well as the need to work in partnership with Hammersmith and Fulham Age UK and the community sector to engage with digitally excluded residents. We ensure wider public involvement in deciding our work priorities. Our priorities are informed by a combination of local intelligence, system priorities and issues or gaps which are identified through the Patient Experience Programme, research projects and advocacy/signposting services.

### Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham is represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board by Nadia Taylor, Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham Committee Chair. During 2021/22 our representative has effectively carried out this role by highlighting the importance of support for digitally excluded residents and GP access as well as lack of support for carers. She continues to ensure that the experiences of residents remain a priority in the discussions and decision-making processes.

### Responses to recommendations and requests

We completed 4 Enter and Views at Charing Cross Hospital Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. Response from Charing Cross "Your feedback is really helpful and we welcome your ideas and suggestions for improvement which we will now take forward."

We completed 6 Enter and Views at GPs in North Hammersmith and Fulham PCN. Response from several GPs "Your feedback is really helpful. Thank you for compiling this report. We appreciate your time and thank you for your input."

There were no issues or recommendations escalated by our Healthwatch to Healthwatch England Committee and so no resulting special reviews or investigations.



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