

Annual report 2020-21



Our new annual report (published this week) highlights how we worked throughout the pandemic to understand people's health and care needs, and how we used this insight to guide NHS and social care services to develop and improve how they cared for people during COVID-19.

Last year (April 2020-March 2021), 2,387 residents shared feedback with us about the county's health and care services or sought information and advice on how to access the care and support they needed. [Read more](#) about our work, the issues people raised with us, and our recommendations for how services could improve.

Patient and carer feedback will inform changes to Somerset's District Nursing Service

We published a new report this month presenting patient and carer feedback on Somerset's District Nursing Service (DNS). We found that the service is highly valued, with 93.6% of people rating it as 'very good'. We also found that while most people would welcome the introduction of weekend and evening visits, many are more cautious about the introduction of digital consultations. People are also keen to see appointment time slots and improvements to continuity of care. Our findings and recommendations will be used to influence how the DNS is developed to meet the growing demand in Somerset for quality care at home.



Read the report: *The District Nursing Service: People's experiences of using the service in Somerset.*

We're recruiting Healthwatch Somerset Board members

We're looking for new volunteer board members to help us make sure that Somerset's NHS leaders and other health and social care decision makers listen to public feedback and use it to improve standards of care. Working with other board members, and with training and support, you will guide and monitor our strategy, our work programme, and our organisation. You will also represent us and the voice of local people at strategic meetings with our local health and care partners.



Whatever your knowledge, experience, and skills, if you live in Somerset and are passionate about helping local communities shape their health and social care services, we'd love to hear from you. **Find out more** about this vacancy on our website.

Somerset's Special Educational Needs and Disability Survey

To help shape and improve SEND services in Somerset, Somerset County Council, NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group and Somerset Parent Carer Forum have launched a survey. They are gathering feedback from children and young people who receive support from Education, Health and Social Care; their carers and parents; and the practitioners who support them. The online survey, which is anonymous and confidential, is open until midnight, Friday 9 July. If you need help with the survey or you would prefer to complete a paper copy, contact the Somerset Parent Carer Forum, by phone: 01458 259384, text: 07543 680365 or email: getinvolved@somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk.



Complete the [parent and carer survey](#)

Complete the [child and young person survey](#)

Complete the [practitioner/staff survey](#)

New NHS system for GP data sharing

Patient data held in GP medical records is used by the NHS to support health and care planning and research in England. NHS Digital has developed a new way to collect patient data. The government has announced that the new system which was due to start in July will be delayed until 1 September, due to concerns from doctors' organisations about privacy and lack of public awareness. [Find out more](#) about the government's plans for data sharing and how to opt out if you do not want your data to be shared.



Share our news

If you know someone who would be interested in keeping up to date with our news, please share this bulletin and the [sign-up link](#).

Speak up and help make health and social care better
for you and your community

Healthwatch Somerset 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. We serve the geographical area of Somerset County Council, which includes the districts of Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Somerset West and Taunton.



The **Healthwatch Somerset** service is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 2 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.



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