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August 2016

healthwatch Camden

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Welcome



Welcome to our first magazine

by Frances Hasler, Director Healthwatch Camden



Healthwatch Camden are delighted to launch our first ever magazine specifically designed to keep you informed of all our news, activities and events over the past year and what is being planned for the coming year.

Distributed twice-yearly, you will find our magazine at local amenities like libraries and community centres, or you can come straight to us for your copy.

As Director of Healthwatch Camden I spend a lot of my time

around the borough talking to the people who run local services and sharing the insights we get from them about their experience of services. I also spend time working alongside other voluntary organisations in the borough to help support strong community services in Camden.

I'm very committed to making sure that people can have as big a say in their services as they want - which can include choosing self-directed support. That is one of the reasons why I am happy to be a trustee of Personalisation Services in Camden, which is a charity set up by Age UK Camden to support people who have a personal budget.

I'm also very excited that we are part of a consortium of local organisations - led by Somers Town Community Association, that will be running the Living Centre at the Crick Institute. Look out for more news of that in our autumn magazine.

Healthwatch Camden is part of the national Healthwatch network

set up in 2013 and this April we celebrated our third birthday. We're an independent body formed to give patients, service users, carers and local people a stronger voice to influence and improve how health and social care services are provided to the people of Camden.

We give the local community information on their rights in health and social care services and tell them which services are available to them. We champion equality for local people in accessing these services, and we also have the power to influence the design and delivery of local services.

What you tell us about services is the starting point for everything we do. If you want to speak to someone about your personal experience or have feedback about a local health and social care service, you can contact us at info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk.

In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading about what we're up to.

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Out and about in the community

As part of our work we often conduct focus groups to find out what local people think of health and social care services.

For instance, we've conducted focus groups consisting of men and women of all ages from the Bangladeshi, Chinese and African Communities in their mother tongues.

We did this because lots of people in our BME communities say that their experience is the opposite of what is expected from a GP service. They complain of consistently poor access to GPs and find it difficult to get the right information, support and guidance.

To highlight this, we issued a report called: 'Access to GP services in Camden: the experience of BME communities' The report is part of a series of Healthwatch Camden linked reports on the services provided by GP practices in Camden. Go to our website to find out more at healthwatchcamden.co.uk

Sofina Razzaque,
Chadswell Healthy
Living Centre,
**"the local Bangladeshi
community have
definitely benefited
from Healthwatch
Camden projects."**

We made recommendations for

GP practices, Commissioners and the Health and Wellbeing Board, to make sure that local people's issues were listened to and addressed.

We'd like this research to help towards addressing health inequalities in the Camden borough. Everyone should be able to access the same good quality service, no matter what their background, race, age, income or sexuality. We will be following up our reports in future years, to see how our recommendations have had an impact.

If you want to let us know your experiences of health and social care services in Camden - good and bad, reach out to us via our website or email info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk

How we make a difference in the community



We want to make a difference in the local community, so we go out and talk to local people to find out their views on health and social care services.

We visit local community organisations where people hang out and chat to them. We have a presence on local committees and take part in local festivals and community events.

We try to attend most of the summer fairs in the borough. They're a good place for us to meet people whose voice is less represented. We try to get to events where we can meet children, older people and disabled people.

A committee we sit on is the Health and Wellbeing board. This gave us the opportunity to make sure that mental health

is a priority in local plans - lots of people in the community have told us that they want this to be flagged up as important. We also listened to local people at the adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee. They said that they're worried about changes to their service at The Highgate Day Centre.

So we're working with service users at The Highgate Centre on a research project using audio diaries to record their experience

Anna Wright,
Healthwatch
Camden Policy
and Insight Manager says:
"We designed the project with the services users and I really hope that the results of it are going to be useful in terms of what is learned."

of living through the service changes.

Healthwatch Camden wants to get an idea of the difference between what people who use the service say about how the changes affect them, compared to what those implementing the changes say is happening. We're gathering evidence from a diverse group of service users over an extended 30 week period.

The project will result in personal testimony being converted into robust evidence of service user experience.

We're going to publish the report in the autumn, and hope that it will help inform future service change management.

Local organisations who want to work with us, as well as individuals who want to share their personal experiences should contact us at info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk

Spotlight on our research and insight



Dr Lucia Grun, Camden GP

“For GPs, this is a report that could form the basis of helping us to work together to learn from each other and to improve quality across the board.”



Research is a big part of our work. We carry out research to get feedback on local people’s experiences of health and social care services. By law the organisations who plan, run and regulate health and social care services in Camden have to listen to what we have to say.

We can report failing services to the right places. We can influence how services work together through the Health and Wellbeing board. We also have influence with the Care Quality Commission, Camden Clinical Commissioning Group and central government.

GP services are the number one topic that gets raised by local people when they talk to us. So because we were keen to better understand what is working well or not so well at Camden’s GP practices, we issued a report called ‘GP practices in Camden: a study of variation 2015.’ It is part of a larger programme of work looking at different aspects of GP services in Camden.

Overall we’re pleased to find out that we have good quality GP services across Camden, but where we saw variation we know there must be room for improvement.

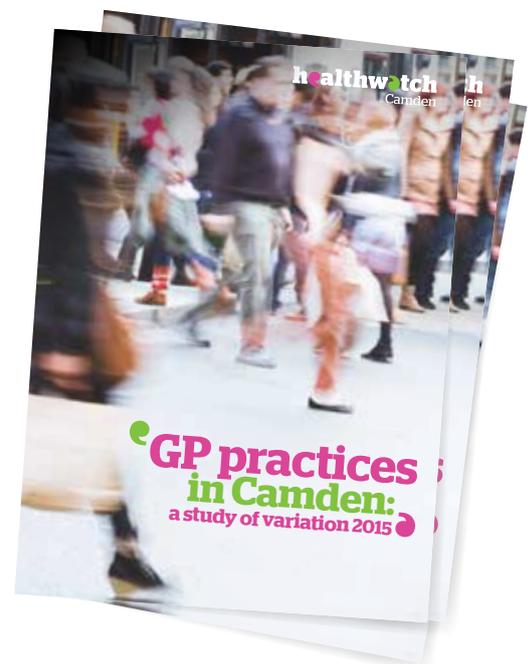
Our research findings continue to be referenced and have generated considerable interest and discussion. Patient Participation Groups and many of the local GP practices that we all use have reviewed the report and discussed its findings.

We also made recommendations to local primary care providers and commissioners. We’re going to see if these are met with a constructive response leading to improvement in services for patients who have particular needs.

Our borough is very diverse and multi-cultural. To reflect this we also published further reports specifically looking at the experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in accessing GP services, and accessing GP services for people with communication support needs (patients with learning

disabilities, patients who are visually impaired and patients who are d/Deaf).

You can view all our reports on our website: healthwatchcamden.co.uk, under ‘publications’ or alternatively contact us at info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk





Volunteers

Healthwatch Camden is always looking for volunteers. This year we particularly want to engage with young people in Camden.

We attended the 'Shout Out' conference organised by the London Borough of Camden with the support and assistance of the Youth MP, members of the Youth Council and Youth Action Group. The aim of the day was to engage young people aged 13 - 19 in discussions on issues that are important to them. We got lots of feedback on what young people want to see in health and social care services. We're keen to hear more.

Young people who've volunteered with us have gained valuable work experience. For example, one of our volunteers, 24 year old Clara Salice, assisted in an enter and view project for Healthwatch

Camden's report on food and catering at GOSH. She spoke to patients and parents to get their honest opinions on the food and service they received.

Clara said: "When I applied for medical school, my volunteering experience helped me to stand out from the other candidates. I did something different which made a difference to potentially thousands of patients. I'd encourage other young people to volunteer, but be open to any opportunity as you may learn new skills that you will love!"

We also sometimes have interns, for example, 25 year old Juliet McNelly worked on an HIV project with us, which focused on the experiences of 50+ individuals living with HIV, other long term conditions, or with age related illnesses. Juliet gained valuable research experience which put her in a good position when applying for jobs afterwards.

Juliet said:
"My favourite part of working with Healthwatch Camden was the lovely friendly team, lots of opportunities for professional development and I was able to build on my own knowledge of Camden, having grown up in the area."

You can see what Juliet has to say about her experience on our Youtube channel: [You !\[\]\(73002692dd5e7a64e60946be3158e719_img.jpg\) Healthwatchcamden](#)

We're planning to do more work with young people in the coming months, so if you're a young person who is interested in improving local health and social care services, give us a shout. Email: lindi.maqhubela@healthwatchcamden.co.uk



Our Board, Dr Connie Smith MBE, Chair of Healthwatch Camden

“Healthwatch Camden has a small and strategic board of trustees. Together we help to set the direction for our work and make sure that our local projects are delivered.”

I got involved with Healthwatch Camden because I believe that it's crucial that local people have an influence on the services that they use. Our remit is wide, we cover health and social care across Camden, and with a small team we are very busy and have to focus our work carefully.

This April was our third anniversary. We have learnt a lot and I feel proud of our achievements so far.

Our Youtube channel ([YouTube Healthwatchcamden](#)) gives an idea of what those who know or work with us think about our projects.

One very important part of our work is talking with people who rarely get their voices heard. We need everyone to be involved so we can understand the issues that affect all our different communities in Camden.

We've worked with many organisations such as SURGE, an organisation for people with learning disabilities, and local BME groups. For example, in a project

with the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee to learn the Bangladeshi community's needs in terms of health and social care services, we made sure that focus groups were conducted in mother tongue which was greatly appreciated.

Sofina Razzaque, Chadswell Healthy Living Centre, said:

When the focus group actually happened, the user members were very pleased that a Bengali speaking worker from Healthwatch Camden actually attended the focus group.

Commenting on our GP services report, Gwyn Bevan, Professor of Policy Analysis, LSE said:

It will provide the basis for GPs to improve performance.

Healthwatch Camden also has a place in local decision-making on health and care services. We have representatives on

the key Camden committees so we can take part in the planning and decision making processes for our local services. We make sure that what we have been told by local people is heard at the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Camden Clinical Commissioning Group and other relevant local bodies.

We're looking for more board members to help us: set future goals, continue our work in the local community and to help us to influence health and social care decision-makers. We welcome all people that reflect the borough's population, particularly local people from ethnic communities and men.

Please feel free to come and speak to us.

Find out more at:
[healthwatchcamden.co.uk/
meet-board](http://healthwatchcamden.co.uk/meet-board)
020 7284 6585

Working with community organisations



A big part of our remit is to work in partnership with local community organisations. These organisations are the life blood of our community. They see local people day-to-day and know the issues that concern them. By doing this we shape a better future for our health and social care services.

We know the massive role that the voluntary sector plays in health and social care, so we're not here to reinvent the wheel, we're here to work alongside local community organisations, to support their work and make a difference.

You can see some examples of what it's like to work in partnership with us on our Youtube channel: [You !\[\]\(6605b201d6f14d9b3bcb8ab5f274d107_img.jpg\) Healthwatchcamden.](#)

We've worked with local community organisations to hold focus groups on GP services and on healthy living services with people

from Camden's varied minority communities. We listen to what the local community have to say.

For example, when we heard about local people discussing concerns around the Margaret Pyke Centre possibly being relocated - it's a well-known clinic, providing contraception and other sexual health services to women in Camden, Islington and beyond - we went to see Claire Murdoch, the Chief Executive of Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Trust that runs the service. We wanted to see if we could work together to resolve the local concerns.

CNWL told us that they understand how valuable it is. They explained that the money they get to run the contraception service is not enough to meet its costs. The two big costs of running the service are staff and buildings, and they do not want to cut staff, which is why they are looking at moving the service. They provide contraceptive services from the Archway Centre and Mortimer Market as well as some community clinics. Plans are at an early stage.

We then commented on their consultation document. We said:

'You have been frank that your aim is not to look at a range of options, but to test the assumption behind your preferred option. This drives a lot of rather closed questions...

'Our experience is that when people think the answer to a consultation is pre-determined, they do not bother responding to it. That does not mean they don't care, simply that they feel powerless to affect the outcome. It may make it difficult to engage a wide group of women.'

We will keep an eye out for developments in the coming months.

We continue to listen to the local community, take up their concerns, and press for their voices and those who use our services to be listened to when developing local health and social care services. Of course, we also listen to praise and pass it on to the relevant service providers.

If you'd like to let us know your experience of a service you've used, contact us at info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk

Our Start Here... guide

We're an independent organisation, and part of our role is to give out unbiased and useful information to local people and service users on health and social care.

So last year we launched 'Start Here...' an online guide of the health and social care services available to Camden locals and those passing through. You go to the site and whether you want to find a service, find out about your choices, or get involved in services, this is your starting point. You can find it here healthwatchcamden.co.uk/starthere

The guide is divided into five sections. Depending on the service you are looking for, click one of the options given and you will be given further options to answer your query.



- 1 Advocacy and support** This section is dedicated to help you to speak out on Health and Social Care, and gives you access to legal advice and advocacy services to get the support that you need.
- 2 Checking Quality** This section enables you to review the opinions of regulators, organisations, commissioners and service users on the standards of practice in Health and Social Care services.
- 3 Finding services** This section gives you access to information about local and major national health and social care services, to help you to make the right choice for you.
- 4 Have your say** This section allows you to give feedback and influence what happens to improve and develop services with the support of organisations, charities and User Groups.
- 5 Your rights in services** This section is to help you understand what to expect from services, and gives you information, advice and guidance to raise issues and make complaints.



Once you click on one of the above options, you will then be given various choices to answer your query.

We hope that the guide is user-friendly, and useful to both local people and professionals.

We've already had good feedback on the guide, but we're keen to hear more. You can have your say on it by contacting us at info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk.

Events

Over the past years we've had stalls at community events. Examples include the West Euston Community Festival at Cumberland Market. The event is organised by West Euston Partnership and last year's theme was 'health.' We were also at the Camden Mela. This popular Mela organised by King's Cross and Brunswick Neighbourhood Association attracts over 5,000 local residents. We're often at Queen's Crescent Festival. The festival is organised by Queen's Crescent Community Association, last year's theme was 'Community, Family and Healthy Living'.

Volunteering with us at events helps you to get your voice heard, as well as giving you a chance to meet other local people. In summer 2016 we'll be attending a series of events, we do this every year so why not let us know if you are available to come along?

We know that it will be an enjoyable task and most of our volunteers have been able to get invaluable skills which make their CV's stand out from the crowd. Whatever your age, this can be a great opportunity to get out, have your say and mingle with local people.

Over the summer of 2016 we will be at many community events and festivals and look forward to meeting our local community. If you have spare time to join us, contact shelly.khan@healthwatchcamden.co.uk

You can visit us at these events:

Primrose Hill Summer Fair 2016

Primrose Hill Community Association
Saturday 11th June 2016

South End Green Golden Summer Festival

South End Green Association
Sunday 26 June 2016

Somers Town Festival of Culture

Somers Town St Pancras Arts (START)
09 July 16

Castlehaven Community Association

Saturday 16th July 2016

Camden New Town Community Festival

Sunday 17th July

Camden Mela

King's Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association
Sunday 17th July 2016

Peckwater Neighbourhood Festival

NW5 Community Play Project
Saturday 23rd July 2016

Lady Somerset Road Street Party

Sunday 11th September

West Euston Community Festival

West Euston Partnership
Saturday 17th September 2016

Sidings Community Centre - Heritage Fair 2016

Sidings Community Centre
Saturday 15th October 2016

What people say about us

Local GP, Dr Lucia Grun, on our GP Access report: **“it made us think about how we might do things differently and has potentially made a real difference to how we provide services in our practice.”**

Claire Johnston, C&I Director of Nursing and People had to say about our Involvement Audit: **“The methodology and approach and the findings are all of equal interest and it is so accessible. This is a very important report for the trust.”**

Nim Johnson, on our ‘Start here...’ Information guide: **“I think this is fantastic.... it provides a really easily accessible way for people in Camden to find out about the various services and organisations that are available to help them, whatever their area of concern.”**

Cllr Alison Kelly said: **“...We couldn’t have done the work without Shelly and without Healthwatch...”**

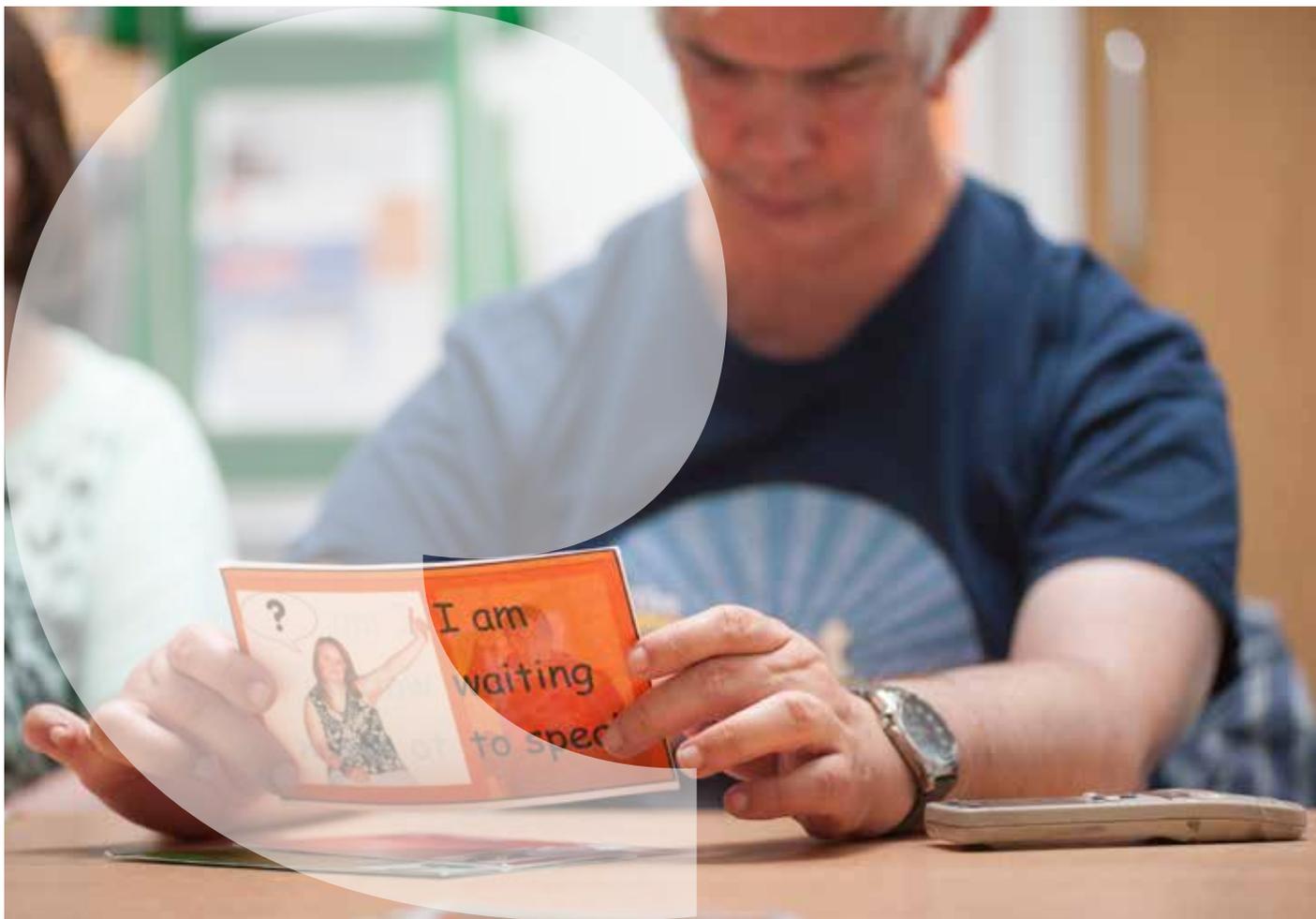
Mrs Jones, (not her real name): **“Thanks so much for all your much needed help!”**

Gordon one of our volunteers said: **“I’ve been volunteering for Healthwatch since it started three years ago. I usually volunteer at events and festivals. I really enjoy giving out information at the Healthwatch stall and meeting local people. Being a volunteer at Healthwatch Camden also means that I get to voice my experiences of health and social care services in Camden. As a local resident this is important to me. I’d definitely encourage others to volunteer!”**

Saloni Thakhar, Healthwatch Camden board member: **“As an independent organisation Healthwatch Camden is well placed to voice the concerns of local people in terms of health and social care provision. Since joining the board, I’ve met and talked to lots of people in the local community. I feel that with our Bangladeshi and mental health project we’re reaching out to the people who are often not heard. We’re working side-by-side to get the issues they feel are a priority heard by health and social care providers and commissioners.”**

Hilary Lance, Patient Advocate: **“Healthwatch Camden are also represented on the Camden Public Patient Engagement Group which is the group I sit on, and they also come at our invitation to the North Locality Alliance of PPGs, and their input has been informed, informative and very constructive.”**

Samina Dewan, Senior Advice Worker, Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association on our Bangladeshi Project: **“I think the Bangladeshi project will benefit the local community by giving them a voice so that their opinions are heard, and it will improve the services.”**



Our upcoming public Board Meetings

We hold some of our board meetings in public. Agendas for meetings in public are posted on our website - healthwatchcamden.co.uk before the meeting. We will also tell you the venue details. Usually you will need to reserve your place before attending.

Here is a list of our upcoming meetings:

19 September 2016

21 November 2016

We look forward to seeing you.

Healthwatch Camden is grant funded by the London Borough of Camden



Healthwatch Camden is a registered charity, number 1152552

Contact us

2nd Floor
293-299 Kentish Town Road
NW5 2TJ
020 7284 6586

- ✉ info@healthwatchcamden.co.uk
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