Together

we're making health and social care better

Annual Report 2022–23



Contents

Message from our Chair and CEO	3
About us	4
Highlights from our year	5
Listening to your experiences	8
Hearing from all communities	12
Advice and information	15
Volunteering	18
Finances and future priorities	20
Statutory statements	21

"Healthwatch Redbridge has proven itself a hugely valuable force for patient and resident empowerment since its inception and with the development of the Redbridge Place based Partnership in 2022, it has shown an ever-greater ability and capacity to advocate as part of this partnership."

Gladys Xavier, Redbridge Public Health Director

"The team at Redbridge are fair, challenging, and helpful in identifying areas for improvement."

Victoria Miles-Gale, Head of Patient Experience and Engagement, Complaints & PALS – Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Trust (BHRUT)

Message from our Chair and CEO

From working with seldom heard communities, to successfully tendering for our contract: this year has certainly been challenging but rewarding.

Our highlights include:

- Hearing we had been <u>awarded</u> the contract to provide the local Healthwatch (HW) service for three years, with an option to extend for a further two years.
- Successfully securing additional contracts and commissions to support the work of our organisation with a particular focus on health inequalities.
- Working closely with our local Healthwatch (LHW) colleagues from across north east London (NEL) by leading on projects engaging with disabled people, maternity service users, and care homes.
- Ensuring the voices of seldom heard groups is loud and strong in Redbridge.



Lorraine Silver Healthwatch Redbridge Chair



Cathy Turland Chief Executive Officer

66

"We are absolutely delighted to have been successful in securing this contract having spent the last ten years providing the best service we can...

...We are looking forward to building on what we have already achieved so far; working with local people on the health and care issues which matter most to them."

Lorraine Silver, Healthwatch Redbridge Chair

About us

Healthwatch Redbridge is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



Our vision

People should be at the heart to shaping the future of local health and social care services.





Our mission

To empower local people to understand and get involved in improving health and social care services.



Our values are:

- **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 on behalf of local people.
- **Partnering** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector serving as the public's independent advocate.

Highlights from our year

Reaching out



522 people

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

107 people

came to us for clear advice and information about topics such as mental health and the cost-of-living crisis.

Making a difference to care

We published

7 reports

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



Our most popular report was

Hearing the voice of the service user

which looked at developing recommendations to enable our Safeguarding Adults Board could engage effectively with people who had been part of a safeguarding review.

Health and care that works for you



We're lucky to have

19

outstanding volunteers who gave up **a total of 182 days** to make care better for our community.

We're funded by our local authority. In 2022-23 we received

£116,400

which is the same as the previous year.

We currently employ

4 staff

who help us carry out our work (part-time and full-time).

How we've made a difference this year



Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

6

We developed and grew our <u>Community Network</u> which now stands at 32 organisations. Three organisations used our Community Cash Fund (small grants funding) to complete a range of projects.



We led the North East London (NEL) review of the GP Directed Enhanced Service, supporting Care Homes to ensure residents could reduce their hospital admissions by accessing additional targeted support from local GPs.



Together with our HW colleagues from NE London, we surveyed people from minority ethnic communities about maternity services. The recommendations have formed part of the Equity and Equality action plan.



We have been able to fund local community organisations to train staff and volunteers to become Mental Health First Aiders across Redbridge.



We continued our work with Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) to implement the recommendations from our 'Hearing the Voice of the Service User' project.



We supported the HWE national <u>#YourCareYourWay</u> campaign which focussed on gathering responses from people with communication support needs about the barriers they faced when accessing services.



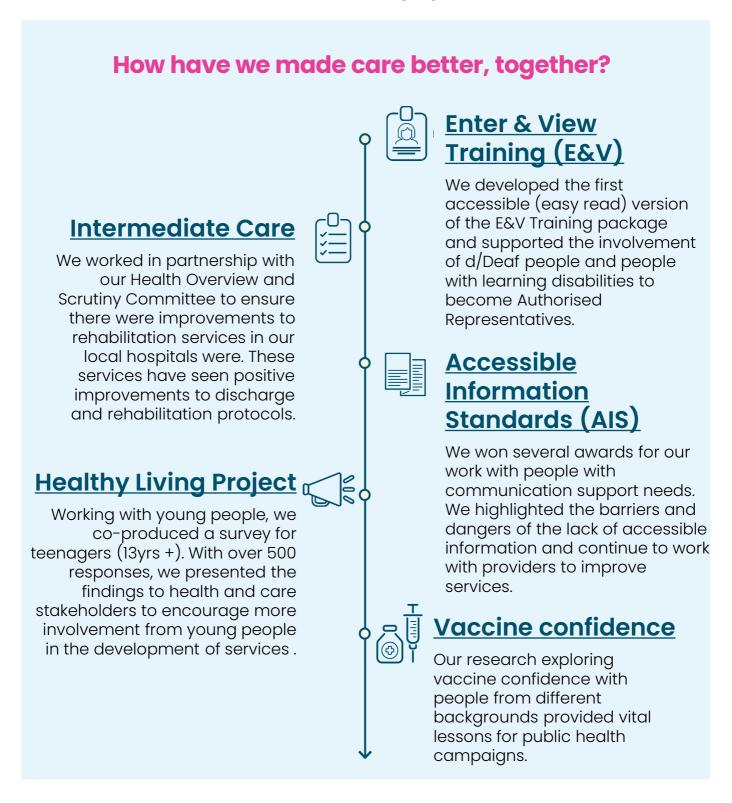
We supported the COVID-19 booster programme with <u>a series of focus</u> <u>groups for Pakistani and</u> <u>Bangladeshi communities;</u> responding to concerns and ensuring better local support and guidance was published.



We worked closely with organisations supporting asylum seekers to ensure their health and care needs were being supported appropriately within local temporary accommodation.

healthwatch 10 years of improving care

This year marks a special milestone for Healthwatch. Over the last ten years, people have shared their experiences, good and bad, to help improve health and social care. Our work has seen us become experts within the field of accessible information. Here are a few of our highlights:



7



Listening to your experiences

Services can't 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. This allows us to understand the full picture, and feed this back to services and help them improve.

Making Safeguarding Personal: Hearing the voice of the service user

In April 2022, Healthwatch Redbridge produced and presented a<u>report</u> to the Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) which described the effects of a safeguarding review on service users. The report made recommendations to ensure the voice of the service user was heard and acted upon in future safeguarding reviews.

The report was created using in-depth interviews with individual service users and their families, and community organisations who had been part of a safeguarding recent review.

The review was shared with the individuals and organisations who contributed. We also joined the RSAB Task and Finish Group to take the work forward.

Our recommendations:

- · Clear and timely acknowledgement of referrals
- An initial explanation of safeguarding in simple language
- Outcomes should be explained to the service user in simple language
- Timely communication with third-party referrers about outcomes
- Clear, non-technical explanations (before, during , and after a safeguarding review has taken place)
- Compassionate, respectful engagement addressing service user or carer's circumstances and vulnerabilities

What difference will this make?

These recommendations will ensure service users and carers will be better supported through potentially traumatic events. Clear information and support will provide a more effective and positive response for individuals.

Some of the service users interviewed are also supporting the development of social worker safeguarding training which could include direct user experience.

We are also working with one service user to explore the possibility of being involved directly in social worker training.

"Healthwatch's report has been central to informing a board priority for Making Safeguarding Personal in response to the findings"

Eileen Mills Independent Chair Redbridge Safeguarding Adults Board

9

Identifying ethnicity barriers in accessing maternity services

Healthwatch Redbridge led a joint project to identify inequalities in maternity access for different communities.

Different voluntary and community organisations (Maternity Mates, Faith Groups, and Maternity Voices Partnerships) across NE London were involved.

Locally we worked with Healthwatch Waltham Forest to carry out 20 face-to-face interviews on the post-natal ward at Whipps Cross hospital. Three individual interviews were conducted through the Black Woman's Kindness Initiative of Redbridge.

We completed an in-depth case study of pregnancy loss which has been specifically raised as an area of concern by NHS NEL following complaints in this area.

Response

- Across the eight boroughs, over 957 surveys were completed by people using maternity services. A further 76 advocates or health service staff completed a separate survey
- Additionally, 87 qualitative interviews (face-to-face or telephone) were carried out, and 5 focus groups with the Somali and Turkish-speaking communities have been collated and analysed.
- One organisation completed **13** interviews with service users in situations of domestic violence, trafficking and female genital mutilation (FGM).

What difference will this make?

The report was submitted to the Local Maternity and Neonatal Systems Board with all recommendations being accepted and forming part of their Equity and Equality Strategy which was submitted to NHS England at the end of September.

Further interviews were conducted with pregnant people using pre- and post-natal services. <u>'Maternity Choices'</u> week (6-12 February), supported the further completion of over 400 surveys across NEL.

The quality of this work was recently recognised when we were recruited to independently host a Maternity & Neonatal Independent Senior Advocate role as part of a pilot scheme being trialed across England, funded through NHSE.

"You were able to reach communities we never would have been able to reach on our own... the engagement was genuine, sensitive and considered...

... you collectively engaged with over 1,500 maternity stakeholders across the two projects and providing analysis far beyond what we were expecting."

Sarah Coulthard, Senior Communication and Campaigns Manager NHS North East London

Three ways we have made a difference for the community

Throughout our work we gather information about health inequalities by speaking to people whose experiences aren't often heard.

Promoting positive mental health: reducing the stigma



With the undoubted impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Healthwatch Redbridge has been highlighting the importance of supporting mental health initiatives across the borough and reduce stigma.

We were able to secure funding to provide opportunities for staff and volunteers from local voluntary and community organisations to access free mental health first aid training.

To date, 16 new <u>Mental Health First Aiders</u> have qualified across the borough. Further training is being scheduled and offered to health and social care organisations.



'Better Me, Better Life Campaign'

Through our Community Cash Fund (small grants) initiative, we provided funding to the <u>Black Women's Kindness Initiative</u> (BWKI).

The project focused on encouraging women from Africa, the Caribbean, and the diaspora to seek the appropriate healthcare, community care, and social engagement to support their wellbeing.

A culturally appropriate event saw over 100 women attend and hear from health and care organisations.

The event has already seen BWKI secure additional funding to create more effective opportunities for further engagement and health initiatives.



Experienced Voices

Another successful recipient of our small grants funding saw <u>One</u> <u>Place East (OPE), a local disabled people's user led organisation,</u> undertake a second review of the accessibility of health and social care hubs for people with learning disabilities.

The accessible report is yet to be published as we are hoping to create a video podcast to interview with two of the reviewers, and potentially discuss a meeting with the providers to talk through the recommendations.



Hearing from all communities

Over the past year we have worked hard to make sure we hear from everyone within our local area. We consider it important to reach out to the communities we hear from less frequently, to gather their feedback and make sure their voice is heard and services meet their needs.

This year we have reached different communities by:

- Worked with people from Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities to understand how they were supported through the COVID-19 pandemic
- Engaged with users of maternity services from minority ethnic communities to understand their experiences
- Highlighted the needs of asylum seekers in temporary accommodation
- Asked people about their concerns over the cost-of-living crisis

Supporting Asylum Seekers in Redbridge

A charity supporting asylum seekers living in temporary accommodation raised concerns regarding the level of health and care support being offered to vulnerable families.

We raised the issues with our local authority, safeguarding leads and public health. We also alerted Healthwatch England who are working with the London System Oversight Group, London Migration Strategic Partnership and NHS England.

Working with Care4Calais and RAMFEL, we submitted a report with recommendations for consideration.

Our recommendations:

- Appropriate complaints and safeguarding processes need to be established locally and available and accessible to all individuals and involved organisations.
- Accommodation should be regularly inspected for quality and safety. Additional visits should be undertaken when concerns are raised.
- The support and advocacy provision for asylum seekers should be clearly recognised and available. It is essential that no asylum seeker is left without appropriate support.
- Dietary requirements must cater for all individuals and should be assessed for nutritional quality.
- The educational support needs for individual children should be addressed and provided for.

What difference will this make?

We have influenced the establishment of a series of stakeholder meetings, with direct input from the Home Office, commissioned providers, local authority leads, and the charities supporting asylum seekers locally. These meetings have already seen some improvements to service provision.

We have supported several signposting concerns and raised them with NHS services. Case studies from these encounters will be reported to stakeholders when completed.

Concerns with safeguarding procedures are currently under review, as are environmental health concerns that have been raised but have not been fully dealt with appropriately.

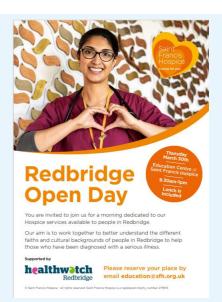
By actively raising these concerns, we have already seen one hotel withdrawn from the scheme.

Increasing hospice support to ethnic minority communities

<u>St Francis Hospice (SFH) are seeking to increase hospice</u> <u>usage by minority ethnic communities across Redbridge</u>.

SFH invited faith and community leaders to an open day at the hospice to hear about the way the hospice is addressing access to culturally appropriate services.

The hospice was acutely aware that their services were currently used by people from mainly white ethnicities, and they wanted to ensure people from all communities were made aware that they will be able to find the right support.





"The patient stories told by the Imam were good, needs replicating in all boroughs."

SFH event attendee

" I have a better understanding of end-of-life care available" **SFH event attendee**

The experience of people with Post-Covid-19 syndrome





A joint report by Healthwatch Redbridge, Havering and Barking & Dagenham, in collaboration with the NELFT Long Covid linic at King George Hospital, and NEL CCG



"It's been devastating. I'm a completely different person, and have physically aged significantly...

...Waiting a year for any support was too long."

Local resident

Understanding the impact of Long Covid within communities

Nationally, it is estimated that over 100,000 people have Covid symptoms lasting more than three months.

We led a project to understand the impact of Long Covid from a patient perspective.

Working with King George Hospital Long Covid Clinic, and Public Health Redbridge, we completed a survey with our LHW colleagues, held in-depth 1:1 interviews with patients and GPs. The survey had 169 responses with 250 free text comments.

Findings showed that 79% of respondents identified their symptoms as life-changing (themes: debilitating tiredness, loss of ability, income, and cognitive impairment).

We were able to reduce the complexity of the referral form used by GPs for Post-Covid-19 syndrome. We also saw an increase in diagnosis from 32% to 44% of respondents. And, through online promotion, the Clinic saw a 6% increase in awareness of the service.

We shared our survey templates with HW's in Newham and Hackney who are conducting their own surveys.

The final report was published in December.



Advice and information

If you feel lost and don't know where to turn, Healthwatch is here for you. <u>In times of worry or</u> <u>stress, we can provide free confidential support and</u> <u>information to help you understand your options and</u> <u>get the help you need.</u>

Over the last year we have noticed that our information and signposting enquiries have become increasingly complex. Many of the people who contacted us do so after having approached many other organisations. They are facing multiple issues and are highly distressed.

We have also noticed there is a lack of advocacy support available to be able to signpost them onto.

"It sometimes feels like the answer is no to everything....
...to have someone take responsibility and actually sort something out is really very special."
.Family member, Redbridge

Signposting support: making a a difference

This year we provided signposting and information support to 107 local residents.



Key Trends: Identified Issues

When reviewing enquiries as a whole, we identified specific themes.

The top issues involved concerns about waiting lists and times, booking processes, support services, communication, and staff attitude.

Topics

The top identified topics included:

- Access to dentists
- Mental Health support
- Older People's health
- Deaf access support







Services

GP services were the most frequently mentioned, accounting for 55% of issues.

Other services cited included Hospital Departments, Dentists, Social Care, and Mental Health.

Our signposting trends are analysed quarterly and posted on our website (<u>click here</u>). If you need signposting or further information about services, contact Healthwatch Redbridge:



020 8553 1236



info@healthwatchredbridge.co.uk

Helping people navigate complex systems

A carer contacted us and told us we were her last resort. She had her own additional mobility needs, mental health support needs, and housing adaptation requirements.

She was also living with and supporting close relatives with their own mental health needs that were frequently resulting in volatile outbursts. Living under the same roof was becoming untenable.

One immediate problem was the refusal to issue an accessible parking badge (Blue Badge), despite there being a legitimate requirement for one of the individuals.

We were able to secure blue badge provision which resulted in an immediate reduction in pressure on the family unit.

Our role also involved chasing up services to enlist support around benefits advocacy, support with housing adaptations, mental health provision for all family members, and an immediate safeguarding referral.

66

"Healthwatch are the only people who really took notice and got the job done. I am so appreciative."

Redbridge resident

Improving access to Information, Advice, and Guidance across Redbridge

Healthwatch Redbridge have seen an increase in signposting complexities across the borough. We have also encountered difficulties finding additional support for individuals.

The difficulty and lack of advocacy support has left people with very little safety net support. This has also had a dramatic impact on staff.

We contacted local Information, Advice and Advocacy services and other community and voluntary organisations across Redbridge to understand their concerns. All agreed their workloads had steadily increased with a lack of investment being a key feature.

We brought our concerns to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and Redbridge Place based Partnership Board, who are currently identifying whether additional funding can be provided to support further services.

This information was shared with HWE through our London Network meeting and has been identified as a future national priority within the HWE action plan for the coming year.



"I just wanted to thank you for getting my mother's online appointment portal set up with her local GP surgery...

...thank you so very much!"

.Family member, Redbridge



Volunteering

We're supported by a <u>team of amazing</u> <u>volunteers</u> who are at the heart of what we do. We are delighted that many of our volunteers have remained with us during the uncertain times of Covid. We thank them for their ongoing commitment and flexibility in embracing new ways of gathering patient experience feedback.

This year our volunteers:

- Developed their engagement skills by stepping in to help us complete more telephone and online surveys.
- Completed telephone interviews with all care home managers in Redbridge to review the availability of GP support
- Visited maternity units to speak with people about their experiences of ante-natal services
- Visited local A&E departments to speak with patients about their experiences of the London Ambulance Service
- Collected experiences and supported our communities to share
 their views

Miranda Peers: HWR Volunteer Coordinator

Our volunteers bring a wealth of knowledge through their professional and lived experience which enriches the work we do. Having a cohort of reliable volunteers enables us to feel confident that we will be able to undertake and achieve the number and range of projects that we do and enable us to complete them in a professional and timely manner.





"Getting back to normal"

"It was really nice to get back to some normality...

... Meeting people face-to-face and hearing of their experiences is what Healthwatch is all about."

Healthwatch Redbridge Volunteer

"Feeling privileged"

"It was good to be back to personal questioning...an interesting exercise (London Ambulance Service project)...

... It was wonderful to have contact with this part of our community and the joy that young babies bring. It was a privilege to be part of this work (Maternity services)."

Healthwatch Redbridge Volunteer





Do you feel inspired?

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

www.healthwatchredbridge.co.uk

- - info@healthwatchredbridge.co.uk

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.

Our income and expenditure

Income		Expenditure	
Annual grant from local authority	£116,400	Staffing costs	£97,660
Additional income	£172,368	Non-staffing costs	£34,080
		Office costs	£32,218
Total income	£288,768	Total expenditure	£163,958

Note: This report does not include audited accounts for the year as these will be presented at our next AGM.

Additional income is broken down by:.

- £2,408 funding from Healthwatch England for work on a project
- £1,000 funding from a local Healthwatch to support their E&V training
- £3,190 funding from NHS England support an engagement project
- £5,000 funding from London Ambulance Service to an engagement survey
- £105,000 funding from NHS NEL to support various maternity projects
- **£54,970 funding** from Redbridge Place Based Partnership for Health Inequalities projects

Next steps

Services are currently facing unprecedented challenges and tackling the backlog needs to be a key priority for the NHS to ensure everyone gets the care they need.

Over the next year we will continue our work to tackling health inequalities that exist and work to reduce the barriers you face when accessing care, regardless of whether that is because of where you live, your income or your background.

Top three priorities for 2023-24

- 1. Piloting the Maternity and Neonatal Independent Senior Advocacy role for NHS NEL across the Integrated Care System (ICS)
- 2. Continuing to tackle health inequalities within seldom heard communities
- 3. Increase our range of in-house training provision.



Statutory statements

Healthwatch Redbridge, 103 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 4PU

Healthwatch Redbridge 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 seven members who work on a voluntary basis to provide direction, oversight and scrutiny to our activities. Our Board ensures that decisions about priority areas of work reflect the concerns and interests of our diverse local community.

Throughout 2022/23 the Board met twelve times and made decisions on matters such as the development of our work programme, the creation of a small grants fund, and confirmation of additional externally commissioned work.

Methods and systems used across the year to obtain people's experiences

We use a wide range of approaches to ensure that as many people as possible can provide us with insight about their experience of using services.

During 2022/23 we have been available by phone, email, provided a webform on our website and through social media, as well as attending outreach events and meetings of community groups and forums.

We have also continued to develop our Community Network that has been important in raising issues or concerns that have led to projects being established to provide more insight. The reestablishment of more outreach session will help us to obtain more insight.

Responses to recommendations

When requested, all providers contacted have responded to requests for information or recommendations. We raised two concerns with Healthwatch England and have asked them to review the national picture to improve access to local advocacy and information provision, and concerns over the quality of support for asylum seekers in temporary accommodation..

Taking people's experiences to decision makers

We ensure that people who can make decisions about services hear about the insight and experiences that have been shared with us.

In our local authority area for example we take information to the Redbridge Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Place Based Partnership Board, and our Health and Wellbeing Board. We also work closely with our NHS Trusts, patient engagement panels, and community & voluntary organisations.

We also take insight and experiences to decision makers in our ICS, NHS NEL. Working closely with our local Healthwatch colleagues in the eight boroughs covered by the ICS through a Community Insight System group. Our data is shared with Healthwatch England to help address health and care issues at a national level.

Enter and view

This year, we did not use our Enter and View powers to visit local health and social care services.

Initially, for the first part of the year, there was a reluctance from people to engage in face-to-face activities due to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the latter part of the year, we were able to arrange visits to several health and social care services as concerns relaxed. We did not require, or feel the need to use, our E&V powers for these activities.

Healthwatch representatives

Healthwatch Redbridge is represented on the Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Board by Cathy Turland, Chief Executive Officer. During 2022/23 our representative has effectively carried out this role by addressing concerns raised by organisations supporting asylum seekers, access to dentistry provision, access to face-to-face GP appointments, championing better mental health support, and raising awareness of maternal provision for people from minority ethnic communities.

Healthwatch Redbridge is also represented on both the NHS NEL ICS Partnership Board and the NHS NEL Integrated Care Board by Cathy.

Healthwatch Redbridge is also represented on the Redbridge Health Overview Scrutiny by Lorraine Silver, Healthwatch Redbridge Chair.

2022–2023 Outcomes

Healthwatch Redbridge also carried out the following additional activities and supported the following changes to services.

Project / activity	Changes made to services
Supporting Accessible Information Standard (AIS) compliance across health and social care services.	 We have joined Healthwatch England in supporting the review of the AIS standard this year, actively engaging people with communication support needs to voice their thoughts. We created and held 'Lunch and Learn' sessions for London Borough of Redbridge, Barts Health and BHRUT. We have joined the AIS working group supporting the changes across all systems. We supported Deaf BSL Users to present their lived experience to the Integrated Care Board, which is supporting the review of AIS across the whole health and care system.

2022–2023 Outcomes (continued)

Project / activity	Changes made to services
<u>Redeveloping Whipps Cross</u> <u>Hospital</u>	• We continue to monitor and respond to the proposed redevelopment of Whipps Cross Hospital.
London Ambulance Service (LAS) patient engagement strategy review	 We spoke with patients who had used ambulance services in the last few years. These findings have been shared with LAS and will form the development of their five- year strategy.
<u>GP Directed Enhanced Service</u> <u>review</u>	 We led the review of a GP support service developed with the aim of reducing hospital admissions for care home residents. All care homes managers were contacted across Redbridge with a 62% response rate. Feedback was combined across the eight boroughs in North East London Recommendations have been used to develop and improve the service. Healthwatch Redbridge is supporting the development of training and information to support the service.
<u>Rough Sleeper outreach events</u>	 Working with the Redbridge Place based Partnership, we are attending outreach sessions at The Welcome Centre, supporting services for homeless people and rough sleepers. We have been able to provide immediate signposting support to mental health, social care, and health services. The sessions have also included access to diabetes support, podiatry (footcare), free haircutting service, mental health support, dentistry, addiction advice, with new services being added each time. Due to the success of the sessions, they have increased from annually to quarterly. Attendances have also doubled.
Post Covid staff survey	 From the initial feedback to our Long Covid project, we are currently completing a survey amongst health and social care staff who have been affected by long covid. We are interested in understanding how the condition (also known as Post Covid Syndrome) has affected their roles.



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Redbridge would like to express their gratitude to the support and involvement we have received from local people and communities in Redbridge.

Their contributions have enabled us to provide direct (or lived) experience when creating our reports, which leads to service improvements within health and social care services.

Their contributions enable us to provide direct (or lived) experience when creating our reports, which leads to service improvements within health and social care services.

healthwatch Redbridge

Healthwatch Redbridge 103 Cranbrook Road Ilford IG1 4PU

www.healthwatchredbridge.co.uk t: 020 8553 1236 e: info@healthwatchredbridge.co.uk

€ @H<u>WRedbridge</u>

Facebook.com/HealthwatchRedbridge