

Healthwatch Rotherham is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in your local area. We listen to your needs, experiences and concerns, and speak out on your behalf to improve services for everyone.

August 2021

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COVID-19 update

The Government announcement on the 22nd February 2021 set out a roadmap for easing lockdown restrictions in England. The next step on the roadmap was “Freedom Day”, with the date being delayed until Monday 19th July.

Most legal restrictions have now been lifted. Despite this, there are still high numbers of Covid-19 cases across the country, and it is important we exercise caution still.

- You do NOT need to stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with. There are also no limits on the number of people you can meet. It is recommended to limit the close contact you have with people at a time of high prevalence.
- There is no legal requirement to wear face coverings, however the Government recommends people continue to wear them in crowded areas such as public transport.
- There are no limits on the numbers of people who can attend weddings, funerals and other life events.
- All remaining closed businesses such as nightclubs can now re-open, and all capacity limits at events have been lifted.

However, it is important to still:

- Get a Covid-19 test if you have symptoms, and do regular asymptomatic testing
- Isolate when positive or when contacted by NHS Test and Trace
- Get your Covid-19 vaccine
- Exercise caution when mixing with other people and in crowded areas

The latest figures in Rotherham show a decrease in Covid-19 cases of 27.6% from the previous week (29th July)

A huge 84.9% of adults in Rotherham have now had their first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, with 73.9% of adults having had their second dose. (29th July)

This is a fantastic achievement and we want to thank everybody involved in the vaccine rollout programme for working so hard to make these figures possible. We also want to thank the Rotherham community for their co-operation and for continuing to follow the guidance set nationally.



Case study:

We were approached by Citizens Advice who had a resident very clearly upset who had presented at their town centre offices. The office is currently closed for public access but the lady was so distraught the staff went out to see if they could help. The lady had arrived late for a dentist appointment due to public transport and the dentist was unable to see her, this had escalated and the lady who suffers mental health problems became abusive to staff and was causing a scene outside the practice which resulted in the police becoming involved, the outcome was that the dental practice have now removed her from their patient list and this was the cause of the lady presenting in a highly agitated state at Citizens Advice Office.

We spoke with the resident and with the Practice Manager at the Dentist and tried to mediate, but there were long standing issues and despite being given several second chances the resident continued to be a challenge and the Manger had decided enough was enough. Despite not having the best outcome for the resident we have now arranged a referral to the Community Dental Service where hopefully she can attend her appointments with a chaperone and finish her treatment.



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Mind, body & soul

As we see restrictions begin to ease and we all come to terms with our “new normal” Healthwatch Rotherham want to find out what is important to our residents. What changes happened during the pandemic that you would like to keep? Did you start a new hobby or revisit an old one? Did you discover things in you local area that you had not noticed previously or did you join some online sessions that you really enjoyed? Did you access any health or social care services during the pandemic? If so how did you find them—did telephone or video appointments work for better for you or would you prefer a face to face appointment? We would love to hear the answers to some of these questions so watch out for our polls and surveys on social media and as restrictions allow we also hope to “pop up” in local venues and speak to people face to face. If you would like us to come and speak to a group that you are involved with please give us a call to arrange - 01709 717130

Healthwatch... Let’s Talk.....Patient Access to GP Services: Wednesday 28th July 2021:

Our latest ‘Let’s Talk’ event was incredibly well-attended, with 31 attendees. During the session, current pressures on GP surgeries were discussed as well as the range of services offered by GP practices, with Dr Douglas from Rother Valley South PCN explaining that often, the Doctor may not be the best person to speak to in the practice for your needs. Dr Cullen from Broom Lane Medical Centre explained how the pandemic has caused an increase in stress and anxiety which contributes to us feeling ill. We were also joined by Andrea Kitchen from Broom Lane Medical Centre who discussed Primary Care Networks. Tony Cowgill (PCN Link Worker for Rother Valley South) explained the advantages of using social prescribing. Finally, Karen Shaw from The Learning Community talked about digital exclusion and the outreach work they are doing to help residents access digital services. A huge thank you to everyone who attended and spoke at this interesting and informative event.

Healthwatch...Let’s Talk...Anxiety and You. Wednesday 25th August 2021:

Join us for our next event, Anxiety and You. The session will feature professionals from mental health services for what will be an informative and important event.

Joining details:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/92624126885?pwd=MVduVk13L3d0RG5EZ1ZWNTNnUHovZz09>

Meeting ID: 926 2412 6885

Passcode: 313280



Healthwatch Rotherham is here to listen to your experiences of health and social care services in Rotherham to make sure providers get it right for everyone. If you’ve had an experience—good or bad—please get in touch

<https://healthwatchrotherham.org.uk/share-your-views>