

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.

## December 2021

- COVID-19 update
- Client stories
- Healthwatch... Lets' Talk



### COVID-19 update:

In September 2021, the Government announced their Covid-19 Autumn and Winter plan. The full document can be accessed on the GOV UK website. The Government will aim to sustain the progress made in the Covid-19 pandemic and prepare the country for future challenges, whilst ensuring the NHS does not come under unsustainable pressure.

People aged 40-49 can now get a booster of either a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine 6 months after their second dose. All young people aged 16 and 17 can now get their second vaccine dose from 12 weeks after their first one. All young people aged 12-15 can now get their first vaccine dose.

This booster dose will help extend the protection you gained from your first 2 doses and give you longer term protection. The booster is being offered at least 6 months after your last dose.

The booster will help to reduce the risk of you needing admission to hospital due to COVID-19 infection this winter.

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, including your booster if eligible
- Exercise caution when mixing with other people and in crowded areas

The latest figures in Rotherham show a decrease of 8.9% in Covid-19 cases on the previous week. (17th November–23rd November 2021)

84% of people aged 12 and over in Rotherham have now had their first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, with 76.9% having had their second dose. (21st November). Vaccine data now includes 12-15 year olds so the percentages are lower than they were previously. We currently do not have exact data for third dose/booster totals in Rotherham, but the national figure is 15,639,477 at of 23rd November 2021.



## Dentistry:

We are still experiencing a high number of enquiries regarding dentistry and the difficulties in accessing a Dentist. This is a nationwide issue and is not just related to Rotherham.

The NHS have a really useful tool called 'Find a Dentist'. You can type in your local area or postcode and it lists all the dentists available in your area, highlighting ones that are accepting new patients at this time.

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>

This should allow people to find a dentist easier and limit the amount of time spent ringing dentists to be turned away.

If after contacting several dental surgeries you still cannot find a dentist accepting NHS patients, call NHS England's Customer Contact Centre on **0300 311 2233**.

This is the official advice listed on the NHS website. It is hoped that the problems surrounding Dentistry will be resolved as soon as possible.

## Healthwatch Let's Talk.....COPD/TB Awareness—Wednesday 24th November

2021:

Our event this month focused on COPD and TB Awareness.

The session looked at an overview of COPD and TB, with guest speaker Tracey Turton, a TB specialist nurse from The Rotherham Foundation Trust, providing a detailed look into TB, symptoms and treatment.

We then had a talk from Nurse consultant Jacqui Pollington from Breathing Space, who discussed what COPD services were available at Breathing Space, and provided us with a short video to watch highlighting these.

This was then followed by Barbara Smith from Breathing Space, a Specialist Respiratory Occupational Therapist. Barbara explained her role, what treatments she may offer to patients and how patients may be contacted to undergo treatment.

Nicole Ingram from Get Healthy Rotherham then discussed how smoking can impact your health and lead to conditions such as COPD and TB. Nicole also explained the support services they offer and how to get in touch.

Finally, Kara Smith from Citizens Advice Rotherham discussed the health impacts from cold homes, and how you can avoid condensation, damp and mould in the home.

All information including slides, contact details and referral information can be found on the event write-up on our website.

A huge thank you to all speakers and to everyone who attended this informative and detailed session.



## Healthwatch Let's Talk...Dental Access and Health Inequalities - Wednesday 26th January 2022

Our next 'Let's Talk' event will be surrounding dental access and health inequalities in accessing dentistry. The session will be discussing current dental issues and the difficulties people are facing when trying to access a dentist. We will be joined by guest speakers who can answer any questions or issues you have on these topics. We look forward to seeing you there.

### Joining details:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81094409684?pwd=V3VSbEdXQmpnNTh2VlY3UnVMV05ldz09>

Meeting ID: 810 9440 9684

Passcode: 182736



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>