



Rotherham

Annual Report 2018-19



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Message from our Chair

Welcome to the Healthwatch Rotherham Annual Report - thank you for taking the time to read it! Healthwatch Rotherham is a statutory organisation that finds out what matters to you about local health and social care services and helps to make sure that your views shape the services that you need.

You'll see that we've continued to engage and support local people to share their experience of using local services and we have worked with the organisations that commission and purchase AND provide such services to make sure that feedback from local residents is heard and acted upon. You'll find real stories in the report which reflect the diversity of the concerns and issues that people bring to us. The most common services which people contact us about are primary care (GP) services, hospital services and social care. We know that our local services are under pressure, as a result of reduced budgets and increasing demand. Aspects of both child and adult

health in Rotherham are less good than the England average and many older adults experience long-term health conditions (see the information below). Physical and mental wellbeing are important throughout our lives, and whilst many of the issues brought to us concern services which are experienced when people become unwell, we also work with partners to make sure that preventive services are available to Rotherham residents to help keep people well for longer.



« Physical and mental wellbeing are important throughout our lives »

The Board and staff team have spent some time looking at our work programme and priorities for the 2019/20 financial year, including work around mental health and wellbeing and adult social care.

We have a lot of our contacts through social media, as well as through our website and face to face at community events and groups. We have a small team of staff, and they work really hard to make sure that everyone who contacts us gets the support they need. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the team for

the respectful and responsive service that they provide to local people. I would also like to thank the Board members for their continued support over the past year.

To find out more about the health of local people see the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Director of Public Health Annual Report on the Rotherham MBC website.



Joanna Saunders
Healthwatch Rotherham Chair

Changes you want to see

Last year we heard from over 25,000 people who told us about their experience of a number of different areas of health and social care. Here are some examples of the changes that you want to see.



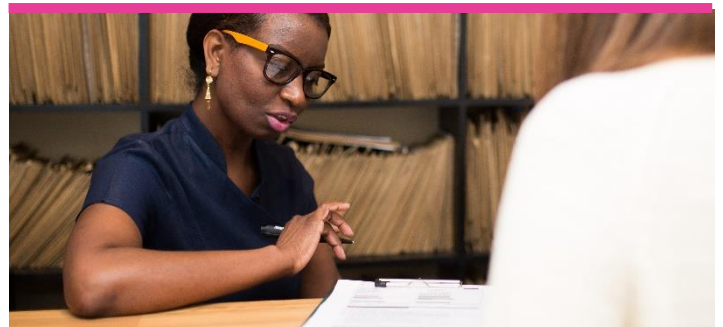
+ Make it easier to see a doctor or nurse quickly



+ Healthcare professionals should have a positive attitude and be empathetic



+ Staff should take the time to speak to people about what to expect next



+ Services should provide information so that people can make informed decisions about their care

About us

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

As Chair of Healthwatch England, it's my role to make sure your Healthwatch gets effective support and that national decisions are informed by what people are saying all over England.

If you were one of the 400,000 people who shared their experiences with us last year, I want to say a personal thank you. Without your views, Healthwatch wouldn't be able to make a difference to health and social care services, both in your area and at a national level. One example of this is how we shared 85,000 views with the NHS, to highlight what matters most, and help shape its plans for the next decade.

If you're part of an organisation that's worked with, supported or responded to Healthwatch Rotherham, thank you too. You've helped to make an even bigger difference.

None of this could have been possible without our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work in the community every day to understand what is working and what could be better when it comes to people's health and care.

If you've shared your views with us then please keep doing what you're doing. If you haven't, then this is your chance to step forward and help us make care better for your community. We all have a stake in our NHS and social care services: we can all really make a difference in this way.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Robert Francis'.

Sir Robert Francis QC
Healthwatch England Chair

Our vision is simple

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works - helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



Our purpose

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



People are at the heart of everything we do

We play an important role bringing communities and services together. Everything we do is shaped by what people tell us. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- + Visiting services to see how they work
- + Running surveys and focus groups
- + Going out in the community and working with other organisations

Our main job is to raise people's concerns with health and care decision-makers so that they can improve support in Rotherham. The evidence we gather also helps us recommend how policy and practice can change for the better.





**Highlights from
our year**

Highlights from

our year



Sourcing equipment for a blind resident.



Collecting views and opinions



Community Engagement



NHS Rotherham CCG AGM



NHS Long Term Plan with Deaf Futures



Speaking with residents in Thurcroft

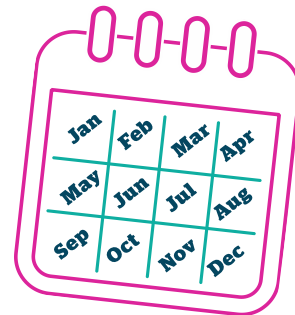


Spending money

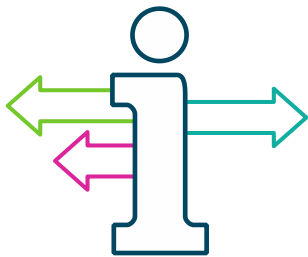
OUR WORK IN 2018/19



Over 300 people shared their health and social care story with us.



We have 15 volunteers helping to carry out our work.
In total, they gave us 241 hours.



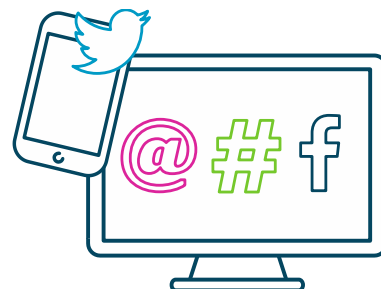
Over 35,000 people accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support.



We attended 42 community events to understand people's experiences of care.



We attended 195 meetings to make health and care better in our community.



24800 people engage with us through our social media.

Changes made in your community

Find out how sharing your views with your local Healthwatch has led to positive changes to health and social care services in Rotherham. We show that when people speak up about what's important, and services listen, care is improved for all.

It may be a small change that makes it easier for lots of people, or it could be a change that only affects one or two residents, you are all treated as individuals in our person centered approach.

“My operation being delayed was impacting on my mental health”

We were contacted by a resident who was awaiting a hysterectomy operation. She was currently on sick leave from work due to her worsening symptoms and despite having had a pre-op assessment over 4 months earlier she still had no date for the surgery to take place and had made several calls to the hospital.

The resident's mental health was now being affected as well as her physical health and the delay was causing concern to her employers who were pushing for a date when she would be able to return to work.

Family life was under stress as mum was unable to take part in activities. The finances were becoming stretched with company sick pay about to run out, leaving the family no option but to think about applying for benefits.

After contacting Healthwatch Rotherham we raised the matter with the Patient Experience Team, who advised that the hospital were looking at putting on more lists to bring the waiting list down but it was dependent on theatre time and staff availability.

It was now 30 weeks from the original referral and 22 weeks from her first consultation, but as she was just about to put in a formal complaint she received a telephone call with a date for her operation.



“I had been signposted to Healthwatch by a relative after almost 6 months of waiting for my surgery. I was feeling like no one was prepared to listen or help. The staff there couldn't do enough to help from day one of speaking to them and within a few weeks I had my surgery date through. They act as an advocate for you through what can be a very stressful time. I can't recommend them highly enough. Thanks to the help of all the team, I am now on my road to recovery.”

Making it easier for people to get the support they need

As a result of our work with the deaf community in Rotherham, NHS Rotherham CCG have taken steps to ensure that interpreters are more accessible for appointments with GP Surgeries.

By law, NHS and adult social care organisations must communicate in a way that people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss can understand.

We looked at local GP practices to see whether people's communication needs were being met, as we had received several concerns from the deaf community that they were having to cancel appointments as the interpreter was unavailable and the

practices relied on family and carers to help communicate with patients. Following our intervention, we were able to work with Rotherham CCG and provide a list of local approved BSL interpreters to all GP practices which they can use if they are unsuccessful with the NHS England preferred provider. This means:

- + Patients are not disadvantaged by waiting unnecessarily longer because an interpreter is required.
- + Increased staff awareness of the importance of booking an interpreter.
- + A personalised approach - not all deaf people use the same sign language!

"We would just like to say a big thank you for all the help and support we receive from Steve Mace. He ensures we get the correct information we need, in a private environment with our interpreters's help."

We also worked with Yorkshire Ambulance Service to provide members of the deaf community with information on the "Message in a bottle scheme"





Communication is the key, especially during difficult times

It's easier to accept the death of my wife, now I know there is nothing that could have been done differently by the health care services or her family.

When a loved one passes away, it is a very traumatic time for the ones left behind and we can often fill our days with “what ifs”.

Sometimes these unanswered questions can start to affect our own mental health and can cause problems for families coming to terms with the loss.

Healthwatch Rotherham were approached by a gentleman who had lost his wife a few months previously, but still had lots of questions that he felt needed to be answered before he was able to move on with his life.

We worked with the gentleman to put together a list of questions and arranged a meeting with relevant professionals at the hospital.

At the meeting the gentleman was able to raise his concerns and questions with clinicians and was able to gain answers in a language which he could understand, using words and terms that he was familiar with.

In the future, the hospital have agreed to try wherever possible to ensure that families understand any diagnosis made by them, and that they also get the opportunity to have questions answered.

“Thanks to Healthwatch, I now know that what happened to my wife was unavoidable, and our family can now move on.”



Have your say

Share your ideas and experiences and help services hear what works, what doesn't, and what you want from care in the future.

w: www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk

t: 01709 717130

e: info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk

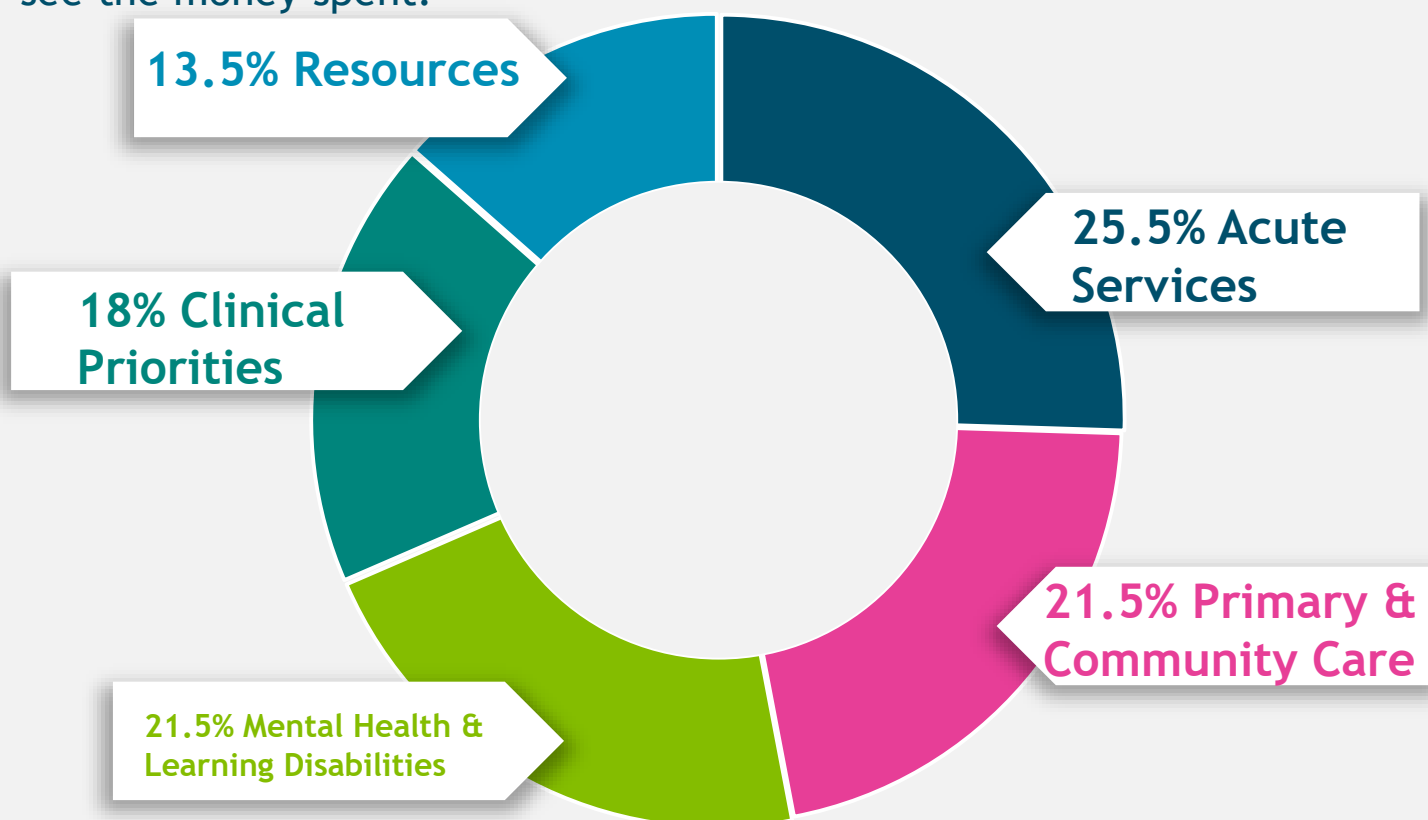


**Helping you find
the answers**

NHS Long Term Plan Focus Groups

As part of our engagement work on the NHS Long Term Plan we talked to a variety of people and asked them which services would they spend the money on if they were in charge. Each resident was given £20 billion and were free to give all the money to one particular service or divide between as many as they liked.

We talked to people at the Be Cancer Safe Event at New York Stadium and also held focus groups with Rotherham Military Community Veterans Centre and Deaf Futures. Below is how our Military Veterans would like to see the money spent.



How we provide people with advice and information

Finding the right care or support can be worrying and stressful. There a number of organisations that can provide help, but people don't know where to look. Last year we helped 185 people access the advice and information they needed.

You can come to us for advice and information in a number of ways including:

- + Our **Contact Us Form**
- + At community events
- + Promoting helpful services across our social media channels
- + Over the phone
- + Specific advice and information



Pete's story:

I was struggling with my finances after being diagnosed with cancer. Time off work, trips to the hospital were all taking their toll on me. Healthwatch Rotherham helped me find out what rights I have with my employment and what help and support I can get through speaking to Macmillan Cancer Advocacy Service.

'Thanks to their help, I am able to focus less on my financial issues and more on getting better.'

Nicola's story

Nicola contacted Healthwatch as her mum, who is in her 80s had a routine blood test done the previous day and at 9.30pm that evening she received a telephone call telling her to contact her GP urgently as her blood count was high. No reassurance was given and the lady spent the night worrying unnecessarily. We contacted the hospital and staff have now been given training on making these kind of calls and where possible encouraged, not to make them at night time.



Dorothy's story

Dorothy was having problems contacting Breathing Spaces and urgently needed to speak to someone regarding her husband's medication. We also tried unsuccessfully to contact the service.

A member of Healthwatch staff personally visited Breathing Space and took Dorothy's contact details to them.

It transpired that the service was having difficulties with their phone

line and were unable to receive incoming calls. They contacted Dorothy and resolved the situation.

Dorothy called us back to say thank you for going above and beyond!

« Thank you to the Healthwatch Team for going above and beyond. »

Kathleen's story

Kathleen contacted us as she had recently had an operation which had left her with lots of unanswered questions. She suffered with some problems that she felt were as a result of the operation, and no one was listening. We arranged a meeting at the hospital and attended with Kathleen. The outcome was that she was reassessed and had further tests. During the tests it was discovered that she needed further life saving treatment, which would have gone undiscovered if she had not raised her concerns with us.

Vera's story

We were contacted by Vera, who during a recent stay in hospital had her dentures removed by a member of staff. The dentures then went missing. As Vera is housebound, she had to have a home visit from the dentist and a new set of dentures made. With help from Healthwatch Vera was refunded the full cost of the replacement dentures and was over the moon!



‘The views and stories you share with us are helping to make care better for our local community’



“ I wanted to thank you for pulling the event together today. People were really engaged and I felt as if we did get a lot out of it. I hope you enjoyed it too and please would you pass on my thanks to the groups who attended. This is certainly something we would like to undertake again next year when we will have the site modelling to discuss, so stand by!” - *Kathryn Hyde, Engagement Lead, South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw Integrated Care System*

NHS Rotherham CCG appreciate and acknowledge the value that the work of Healthwatch Rotherham brings to our shared aims of ensuring that Rotherham people receive great quality NHS care. Healthwatch Rotherham have been tireless in both raising issues and providing insight to inform our work as commissioners. In addition, Healthwatch gives a voice to Rotherham patients and the public, especially those people that are often overlooked, and whose voice we must ensure is heard. Their enthusiasm and professionalism ensures that we work together effectively, while enabling them to continue to effectively check and challenge when necessary. We look forward to working with them for a long time to come! - *Helen Wyatt, Patient & Public Engagement Manager, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group*

Just wanted to mention, Rotherham was a finalist in the Dental Awards 2019 and was highly commended for the Smile Month work last year. It was a great piece of partnership working, thank you to everyone who contributed, including Healthwatch Rotherham - *Sue Turner, Public Health Specialist, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council*





We will always communicate in ways to suit our residents

Making sure people get the right information about their wellbeing

Healthwatch Rotherham work with residents to get the help and support which they need at the time they need it. Some of the questions we are asked are simple and straightforward and often, once the situation has been explained, it leads to a good outcome.

We have information available on our website and residents are able to leave feedback anonymously on the services which they have experience. All feedback is passed to the service provider and they have an opportunity to respond if they wish.

We have self-help packs which can be delivered to residents covering complaints procedures and Lasting Power of Attorney.

We have active social media sites and regularly promote initiatives which can help our residents stay well including

- Five Ways To Wellbeing
- Get Healthy Rotherham
- Be Cancer Safe
- Stay Well This Winter
- Choose Well this Summer

We also attend community events and speak with residents, collecting information and signposting where needed.

“The help we received from Healthwatch was invaluable when it came to my dad being discharged from hospital”



Are you looking for help?

If you have a query about a health and social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

w: www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk

t: 01709 717130

e: info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk



Our volunteers

Meet our volunteers

We caught up with a couple of our fantastic volunteers to show you how their work makes a real difference to the lives of people in our area.



Joe, Board Member

“I joined Healthwatch Rotherham as I believe that quality health and social care systems are imperative for the citizens of Rotherham and I wanted to explore these services in my local town. Through my position on the board of Healthwatch Rotherham I have gained a deeper understanding on how these care systems are organised, maintained and how they interact between each other for the benefit of the local people. Most importantly I have realised the importance of Healthwatch duties for exploring service users’ thoughts and concerns regarding health and social care and providing them with a voice for adaptive change. “

Dianah, Admin Support

“I needed volunteering experience on my CV to get a job after my studies. Healthwatch Rotherham has been so accommodating, providing me with skills that I know will be useful in the workplace. I recently completed a degree in economics and statistics and I love working on research related issues. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and I believe that Healthwatch Rotherham bridges the gap between the local community and the people making the decisions on health and social care.”



Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering get in touch.
w: www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk
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e: info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk



Our finances

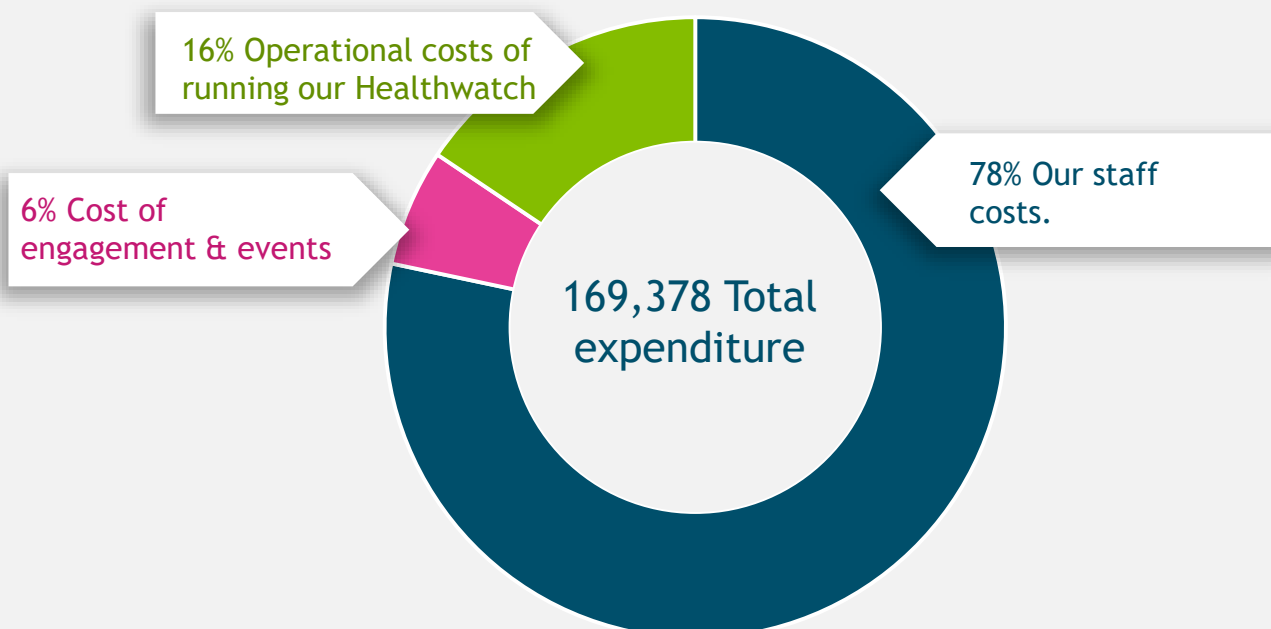
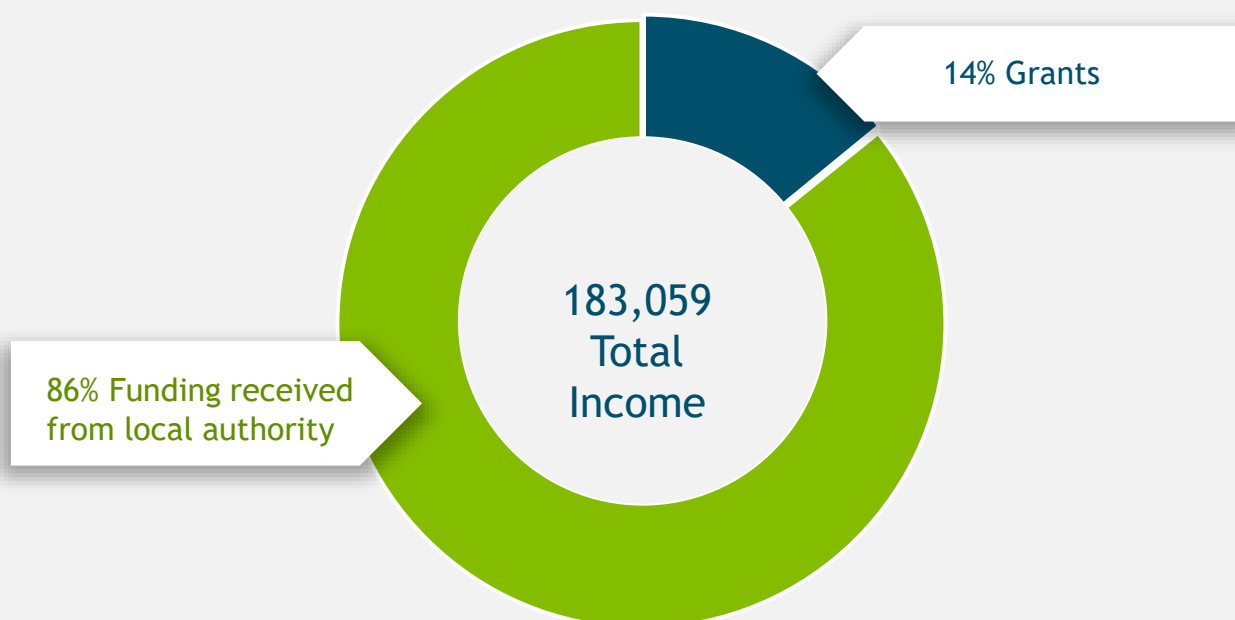


How we use our money

To help us carry out our work, we receive funding through our Local Authority. In 2018-19 we received £156,735 and in 2019-20 this will reduce to £136,735.

During 2018-19 our expenditure was £169,378.

We also received £25,700 of additional income from grant funding.





**Our plans for
next year**

OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2019/20



To continue to keep residents informed of the **NHS Long Term Plan** and ensure that their voices are heard as the plan is implemented



To work with residents and services within **Rotherham Primary Care Networks** to ensure that the services remain person centred.



Continue to work in partnership with other services to ensure that all **Children and Young People** in Rotherham are given the best support available.



Mental Health - especially work around **Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing** and **Men's Mental Health** - looking at ways to get Rotherham men talking.



Collecting views and opinions on **Adult Social Care Services**, speaking to service users and their families



Making sure Services work together better, working for the good of all who live, work and socialise in the town.

Message from our CEO

Well “Another year over and what have we done?”

We have faced yet another difficult and challenging year - coping with a further budget cut and the prospect of more to come.

In November/December 2018 we faced the prospect of a proposed £66k (40%) cut to our contract, which is held by RMBC. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the many individuals and diverse organisations across the borough who protested and wrote letters of support for us and our work and then, through the budget consultation process, managed to get the budget cut reduced to £20k which is still a significant 13% on top of 30% cuts over the previous 3 years. Thanks also go to Gavin and Julie at Healthwatch England who provided help and support including making RMBC aware that they were in danger of making the contract undeliverable with such a low level of funding. The contract from April 2020 will be going out to tender later this year so who knows what the future holds?

Please do take the time to read through our report to see examples and evidence of the great work undertaken by our staff, trustees and volunteers.

Finally, and on a personal note, I am planning to retire at the end of March 2020 after 5 years in my role so this is my last annual report. I would like to pay particular tribute to our fantastic staff team, board of trustees and the many volunteers who have accompanied Healthwatch Rotherham over

the last 7 years. I would also like to thank colleagues on the Health and Wellbeing Board and other strategic bodies in the borough, especially our colleagues at Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group. It has been a privilege and a pleasure - most of the time!

Cheers



Tony Clabby

Healthwatch Rotherham CEO



Thank you

Thank you to everyone who has helped us put people at the heart of health and social care, including:

- + Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us
- + All of our amazing staff and volunteers
- + The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work
- + Our key partners within Rotherham who share our vision
- + NHS Rotherham CCG
- + Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- + The Rotherham Foundation Trust
- + Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust
- + South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw Integrated Care System



Tony



Lesley



Anne



Steve



Mike

From the Healthwatch Team - as drawn by one of our young talented residents - Codylily Parkin

Contact us

Address and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract as of 31/03/2019.

Healthwatch Rotherham
Thornbank House
38 Moorgate Road
Rotherham
S60 2AG

- + 01709 717130
- + info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk
- + Twitter @HWRotherham
- + www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.

Company Number 08476891



healthwatch
Rotherham

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