

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.

November 2020

- Tier 3—what it means
- Hospital discharge during covid-19
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South Yorkshire goes into Tier 3

As the number of Covid-19 cases continued to rise in South Yorkshire, the region was put into the Tier 3—Very High Alert level of restrictions on 24 October. This highest level of restrictions is designed to prevent the spread of the virus by limiting contact between households and closing certain public venues. The number of patients being treated for Covid-19 in Rotherham hospitals is already reaching the same level as the first wave, so please remain vigilant, wear a mask, and follow government rules on social distancing and self-isolating. Remember the message of **HANDS—FACE—SPACE**

Hospital discharge during covid-19 – what we found out

In March 2020, hospital discharge procedures changed because of Covid-19. Once patients no longer needed hospital care, they were discharged home or to a care home, with follow-up assessments and support taking place there rather than the hospital. Using results from a Healthwatch England patient survey and local case studies, we found lots of praise for hospital staff and their hard work, but also that:

- Patients needed **better communication** about what would happen to them after discharge, especially about their ongoing care needs and where to find support
- Relatives and carers needed to be **more informed and involved** in decision-making
- Patients often had **delays of over 2 hours** after being told they could go home, usually waiting for medication

Read our full report here: <https://healthwatchrotherham.org.uk/news-and-reports/>



Lisa's story

Lisa came to us as she had been advised by her midwife to make an appointment with a dentist as she was experiencing some bleeding of the gums when brushing her teeth. Lisa, who was 14 weeks pregnant, was worried that she had been unable to make an appointment with her dentist as they did not consider this to be an emergency. We raised this problem at the Oral Health Improvement Group where it was agreed to change the information given out to expectant mums by midwives. They will now direct mums to NHS information on pregnancy gingivitis and other common dental problems during pregnancy.

Stephen's story

Stephen came to us in an agitated and upset state as he had been waiting for some urgent investigations to take place into a stomach problem since March. He appreciated that because of the ongoing pandemic things had been delayed but his condition was getting worse and it was having a detrimental effect on his mental health. We spoke to the Patient Experience Team and raised the matter as a concern. Stephen has now had his investigations and received a diagnosis. He is now receiving treatment and is in a much better place mentally now he understands his symptoms and knows there is nothing sinister going off.



Meet the team!

We hope you enjoy our first newsletter and we look forward to keeping you updated on the projects we are undertaking in Rotherham. If you have any questions or comments about health and social care in Rotherham please give us a call or drop us an email - we would love to hear from you!

Lesley Cooper has been part of the Healthwatch team since 2018 and took on the current role of Service Manager in April 2020 as the contract moved over to Citizens Advice Rotherham and District. She is passionate about making sure that services hear the real stories of residents experiences of health and social care in the town.

Sonia Hussain is our Engagement Officer. Along with being a qualified counsellor, Sonia has worked for the council, NHS and in the private sector - most recently as a Health & Wellbeing Adviser to support people into employment. She will be working with local communities and organisations to improve healthcare and address health inequalities.

Sarah Gandee is our Information & Campaigns Officer. She previously worked as an academic researcher and volunteered at Citizens Advice Hammersmith & Fulham before moving to South Yorkshire. She will be gathering evidence on health and social care



We are currently running projects on the following topics and would love to hear about your experiences:

- Flu vaccine programme
- Visiting care homes during the pandemic
- Mental health & covid-19—how has it affected you?

Share you views via our website or you can contact us by phone or email

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