



healthwatch
Wandsworth

2026-27 BUSINESS AND TRANSITION PLAN



Delivered by
Wandsworth Care Alliance

 89 Bickersteth Rd, London SW17 9SH

020 8516 7716 

 admin@wandcareall.org.uk

89 Bickersteth Rd, London SW17 9SH 

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The bigger picture

This year our business plan is a 'business and transition plan' to reflect the great deal of change for our sector and our organisation. Last year the Government announced that they intended to abolish Healthwatch, but as we write our plan for the year there is limited information about what will happen after March 2027.

We are confident we will continue to meet our statutory and contractual obligations, but will also be working on distinct challenges this year:

- **Reviewing our work and ensuring that what people have told us remains on the agenda** because as there will be new staff and newly formed NHS and local and national government departments. The NHS ICBs and local services are also evolving into new structures and health neighbourhoods.
- **Supporting the embedding of patient voice in new structures for patient feedback and accountability**
- **Creating capacity to transition our work and how our organisation can continue to support and improve the voice of local communities in health and care.**
- Healthwatch Wandsworth is delivered by Wandsworth Care Alliance (WCA). In previous years Healthwatch work and capacity was strengthened because Wandsworth Care Alliance's delivered the Voluntary Sector Co-ordination Service. This will change so we will need new ways to collaborate with voluntary sector organisations and our communities.

What is Healthwatch Wandsworth?

Healthwatch Wandsworth (HWW) is the independent champion for people using health and care services in Wandsworth. This is delivered by Wandsworth Care Alliance (WCA), a local charity supporting communities to influence how services are planned and delivered.

Hosted by WCA, HWW has a unique independent position because we are not part of the NHS or a Council service and WCA strengthens HWW with the skills and resources to connect with communities with lived experience. We listen to people's experiences with an understanding of how health and social care services work in theory and practice. Conversations we have with local people are confidential and the information is not used for political purposes. We champion the perspective of local people without judgment or bias.

HWW can go to a service to speak to people using 'Enter and View' powers. We also listen to what people say, in person, through online surveys or by email.

We make sure NHS and social care leaders use people's feedback to improve care. They have a legal duty to respond to our recommendations and requests for information.¹

We monitor local services and ensure local people:

- are involved in health and social care and that their needs and experiences are heard by those who can improve the quality of local services
- share with us what they think and what matters to them about their care
- can find information about local services and can access them.

We collaborate with a wide range of local voluntary and community organisations to reach individuals and communities across the borough including those who are often not heard. We also contribute to work in South West London and nationally to ensure a patient 'voice' at a wide range of discussions with health and social service leaders, commissioners and providers.

You can read more about our governance and decision-making on our [website](#) and you can read about our past work and achievements in our [Annual Reports](#).

¹ Health and Social Care Act in 2012

Our plans for the year

There are always many possibilities for our focus, but to make the most of what we can do with our limited resources, each year we set priority themes to focus on.

During this year of transition, our work will fall into three categories with projects within them. We will not be able to launch longer-term new projects, but will focus on completing and building on current and previous work to ensure what the community has told us is acknowledged and key lessons are not lost with the plan to end Healthwatch in its current form.

Our decision-making framework to ensure that our small team get the best outcomes with the finite resources we have available. We will consider options to take on additional paid work under this criteria.

Topic 1: Reviewing our work and ensuring that what people have told us remains on the agenda

Background:

Over the past 13 years we have spoken to the community about a wide range of health and care issues. We've reviewed many of them and want to raise our findings to the top of the agenda this year so that what matters to the community is not forgotten and is acted upon. The following is a select list of projects that we have reported on in the past. We will draw on other works as opportunities arise and will arrange for the insights to be accessible long term.

What we will do:

- **Perinatal mental health** – host an event for people who can make a difference across health and care to review changes that have happened since our previous recommendations and to look for further routes for progress.
- **Hospital Discharge** – host an event to review changes that have happened since our previous recommendations and look at what further change is needed.
- **Autism Pathway for Children** – We will continue to attend the Children's Board and speak to organisations to see what improvements have been made and what needs to change. We will ask parents if changes have made a difference to them.
- **Access to GPs** – We will continue to follow up on our recommendations for improved access to GPs by speaking to practices and new health neighbourhood teams.

- **Mental Health Inpatient Wards** – Following our Enter and View to Holybourne Hospital last year, we plan to visit Lavendar and Jupiter acute mental health wards at Springfield Hospital to learn more about the patient experience.

Topic 2: Supporting the embedding of patient voice in new structures for patient feedback and accountability

Background:

The Government has announced that it will abolish Healthwatch and move responsibilities and accountabilities for patient experience to NHS ICBs and local authorities. Organisations who run health and care services are likely to need to change how they listen to patients too. Although it is unclear how things will be done in future, we want to make sure that in Wandsworth these organisations are prepared to listen to patients and to help ensure there are strong accountability mechanisms in place. We will do this through a few projects that could strengthen how organisations listen to patients and Wandsworth residents.

What we will do:

- **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** – Last year we spoke to many local people about their knowledge and experience of PALS at St George’s Hospital. This year we will work with St George’s Hospital staff and other organisations to put forward recommendations on how PALS can be improved for both users and staff.
- **Co-production** – We have been working with Wandsworth Council to produce a Co-Production Charter about how they work alongside people who use their services. We are now working on a toolkit to support staff in organisations with their Co-production activities. This year we will meet with staff within the Council and other organisations, including new Health Neighbourhoods, to encourage more co-production and improve how co-production is done.
- **Working with health neighbourhoods** – the government is re-organising health and care services into local areas called Neighbourhoods. This is intended to improve co-ordination and collaboration between services to keep people well, particularly those who have complex health and care needs and who often use multiple services.

We will look to make sure that:

- Patient insight already collected is used to evolve services (such as our GP access work, work on virtual wards, community services, insight gathered by community groups as part of the Neighbourhood Fund and more)
- Neighbourhoods have mechanisms to listen to patients to shape and improve their work.
- Neighbourhoods have support to make sure that they are listening to and working alongside patients e.g. through the principles on the co-production charter.

- New insight could be gathered and we could support others who are gathering insight on key areas such as discharge from hospital, emergency services and more.

Topic 3. Gathering fresh community insights

Background:

Whatever the future of Healthwatch itself, Wandsworth Care Alliance will seek support and resources to sustain its wide-ranging work with patients and communities to promote health and wellbeing. We have secured some funds to begin projects we would like to continue with additional funding.

Projects as part of WCA's wider work on health programmes and health inequalities:

- **Experiences of refugee and asylum-seeking women accessing care, including a focus on language:** in 2025-6 we hosted two workshops to hear from local people about their experiences. We have funding to be able to run a further workshop and then an event to launch a Zine that captures what is important to people in our community. We are working with public health and other organisations to incorporate findings into their strategies and action plans.
- **How trauma impacts Black men's experience of prostate cancer** – in 2025-6 we ran a workshop to explore experiences of local people. Using feedback from them we hope to secure more funding to work with local people to bring improvements in care and the outcomes for Black men needing support for prostate cancer.
- **Cervical Cancer Screening** – we have been hearing from the South Asian community about barriers to take up and promoting screening. A toolkit is being produced to improve screening and we hope to work with communities to promote this and monitor improvements over the next year or beyond.
- **Working with communities to gather insights** – we work to co-ordinate and distribute funds to support community organisations to run activities and gather insights on experience of health and care at the same time. We will continue to work with funders to bring these funds to local organisations and to bring insights back to health and care leaders. This year this includes work on MMRV vaccinations and a migrant health fund.

Same listening, same community focus, same home, new name.

At the time of writing no details have been announced on the timing of Healthwatch closure, about future systems, or transitional arrangements. However, it is clear that preparing for the transition will itself be an essential strand of work. One element will be to ensure effective handover arrangements to whoever takes over existing responsibilities from Healthwatch.

Transitioning WCA Community Voice and Insights:

As a successful and experienced Healthwatch host, our intention is to prepare for new opportunities, continuing the Healthwatch mission as an independent organisation. Our work this year will include finding funding and new collaborations – to contribute to future work with patients and communities in Wandsworth, building on our knowledge, skills and experience.

For those interested to fund us we have a webpage with a funder toolkit and a [donation page](#).

Promotion and Communications Plan

Background

Our communications strategy ensures we reach people in the borough, gather their experiences and that we can help them find health and care services through articles on our website, electronic and printed newsletters and our presence on social media.

This year we will need to focus on communicating what we are doing and what will happen during our transition period. We will also need to make sure that the ending of the Healthwatch brand does not leave people unsure where to go for support or that our organisation is still here to continue Healthwatch style work.

Our plan for communications

This year we are including in our plans:

Continuing our 2 electronic newsletters per quarter, with two printed versions per year to reach people who are not digitally connected to us.

Creating advice and information articles to signpost to services in Wandsworth relating to our priority themes.

Communicating changes across the health and care system, and changes to how we are working as an organisation too.

Communicating new projects, new project ideas and calls for funding.

Resources

To deliver our programme, we rely on three main resources:

- Financial – Financing our work has been largely through Government Funding. Therefore, we will need additional project funding to ensure sustainability of our work and the influence of communities we work with into the future.
- Staff – The HWW contract provides resource for 2.6 full time equivalent staff. However, WCA resources, staff and their skills can contribute to supporting HWW work further. The resources may change over the year as our funding mix changes.
- Volunteers – We currently have 26 volunteers, who provide a vital contribution to achieving our levels of activity, undertaking a wide range of roles ranging from sharing intelligence from local boards and meetings or speaking to patients to helping write our reports. We will be working with our volunteers in new ways as our work transitions.

How our work will make a difference

We use insight from local people to influence improvements in health and social care. While change often takes time and is shaped by many partners, our evidence helps decision-makers understand lived experience and act on what matters most to residents.

We build trusted relationships with local health and care leaders to champion people's views and ensure community insight informs decisions.

Our impact includes:

Stronger community insight:

We gather evidence that deepens understanding of local needs, challenges assumptions and highlights where services are not working as intended. For example, our work on GP access and patient experience highlighted barriers to timely appointments and communication, helping commissioners and practices better understand patient concerns and areas for improvement.

Amplifying lesser-heard voices:

We ensure people who are often under-represented are heard. Our previous work has included work about D/deaf residents' experiences of accessing GP services, where feedback on the lack of British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation was amplified to system leaders, raising awareness of access and equality issues.

Empowering people with information:

We help residents understand their options, access services and raise concerns. Our information, advice and signposting work supports people to navigate health and social care, including guidance on how to make a complaint or escalate concerns about services received.

Service improvement and commitment to change:

Our evidence contributes to commitments by decision-makers to review policies, guidance and service delivery. Insights from our engagement activities have informed discussions about access, communication and equality, prompting further investigation and monitoring by providers and commissioners.

Better engagement and involvement:

We support meaningful engagement so services are shaped with, not just for, local people. We bring community voices into strategic forums such as Health and Wellbeing Board and system-level discussions, helping ensure the need to hear perspectives of those with lived experience is not overlooked.

These impacts are not always easy to measure and are rarely achieved by one organisation alone, but they are vital. We share updates on the impact of our work through our website, newsletter and annual report.

Our Key Performance Indicators:

Alongside our broad statutory responsibilities and obligations, our contract with the London Borough of Wandsworth includes Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to assess our performance.

Our KPIs for 2026-27 are:

- Number of unique people viewing our webpages
- Number of members/newsletter subscribers
- Number of people involved and/or providing feedback
- Percentage of people responding 'yes' to having gained something from interacting with HWW
- Percentage of stakeholders responding that they have done something differently after interacting with HWW

We also provide reports on:

- Our impact tracker.
- Demographics of our volunteers and people involved in our work.
- Our stakeholder survey.
- Reach of our communications.

Thank you

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to working with more local people and organisations in the coming year. If you would like to share your stories and experiences with us or you would like to collaborate with us, we would be very keen to hear from you.

Contact us

Healthwatch Wandsworth
Wandsworth Care Alliance
Tooting Works, 3rd Floor
89 Bickersteth Road Tooting, SW17 9SH
Phone: 020 8516 7767
Email: information@healthwatchwandsworth.co.uk
Website: www.healthwatchwandsworth.co.uk

Healthwatch Wandsworth is delivered by Wandsworth Care Alliance as part of wider work and resource to improve health of our communities and addressing health inequalities.

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