

16 April 2020

**Covid-19:  
Positive comments and feedback received by Healthwatch**

***“Healthwatch Brighton and Hove ...  
always part of the solution”***

The current health crisis is understandably drawing public scrutiny and press attention. Local services and providers are facing unprecedented challenges and are adapting quickly to emerging issues. Healthwatch is working closely with partners across the city to ensure that your experiences and concerns are fed into emergency planning arrangements.

At this time, we wanted to share with you some of the positive comments and feedback that Healthwatch is receiving. These shine a spotlight on local services, revealing how well some of them have already adapted. They also highlight the positive impact that Healthwatch is having.

Your stories help us tell local services and leaders what additional help and information is needed. As always, Healthwatch is keen to hear about your experiences so please get in touch and share these with us, both good and less good; as well as any questions that you may have.

Please remember to check out our website where you will find regular updates, answers to frequently asked questions, updates on local health and social care services, and links to other organisations who may be able to offer support. If you need information on a particular topic please let us know [office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:office@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk)



### How local services are successfully adapting

Despite the present difficulties, Healthwatch is receiving positive stories from patients, particularly around how well virtual and other alternatives to face-to-face consultations are working.

(1) **Haematology** at the Royal County. A patient told us that instead of a face to face appointment, the haematologist rang them with the results of their blood test and subsequently sent them a follow-up appointment for September, and a form for a blood test in advance of that appointment. The patient told us that they were very happy with the service.

(2) **Counselling** sessions being held virtually through the medium of Zoom (an online meeting format). The patient advised that they experienced no delay to their treatment as a result and were happy with the service.

(3) **Neurotherapy** being carried out online. The patient described how the physiotherapist demonstrated the exercises they needed to do, in turn watching what they were doing and providing feedback. The patient told us that this initially felt a little strange, but that they quickly adapted to this new approach. They told us that this was certainly better than having no treatment at all.

(4) **Physiotherapy**. Following a hip replaced 6 weeks ago, a patient's follow-up was changed from a face to face appointment to a telephone call. The patient told us that they were happy with the result. They also received two online physiotherapy sessions where the physiotherapist demonstrated some exercises and answered their questions. The patient told us they were offered Skype (an online call service) and other online options for these consultations. They reported that there were plenty of exercises that they could access and complete remotely.

(5) **Renal outpatients**. Two patients told us that they were very happy with the telephone updates they received: the nurse specialist advised them that only complex clients were being invited to physically attend the clinic at present.

(6) **Hospital discharge.** Our new Healthwatch Wellbeing project (see below) is providing support to those who have recently been discharged from hospital to ensure they are receiving the support and follow-up care they need. One patient told us that they were hugely impressed with the amount of contact they had received from various sources. They told us they felt cared for and that their needs were being met.

### Healthwatch: comments and feedback received on our activities

Healthwatch is working with colleagues in the Council, NHS services and Clinical Commissioning Group to gather and deliver accurate, up-to-date information to our residents.

- ✓ Last week, we started publishing a [public-facing guide](#) to health and social care services. This responds to issues which have been raised directly with Healthwatch or identified by us. This information is helping people understand how they can continue to access vital services. Healthwatch is regularly updating this guide.
- ✓ We are routinely collating patient feedback and passing our questions onto the newly formed 'Community Connector' team, which sees staff from the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group working closely together. The team has been established to investigate and respond to queries and escalate these where needed.
- ✓ Our [website](#) contains up-to-date [information](#) and answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on Covid-19 and other topics. We have provided links to information which is available in a range of formats including easy-read, British Sign Language and translated materials so that everyone can access vital information. A fully accessible version of the Healthwatch Covid-19 information page has also been created <https://covid.reciteme.com/healthwatchbrightonandhove/>
- ✓ Our social media channels (Twitter and Facebook) are delivering daily updates to the public.
- ✓ We are issuing regular mailshots to our 1,400 strong mailing list, sharing information, advice and press releases on important issues.
- ✓ We have established a system for our volunteers and staff to phone vulnerable people after their discharge from the Royal Sussex County Hospital. This new project is helping to ensure that people are receiving the advice and care they need.



In response to our work, we have received positive feedback from the public and lead officials acknowledging our impact:

*Healthwatch Covid-19 update  
(13/2/20)*

*“Thank you for posting this and helping to communicate the factual position which will help to further provide community assurance.”*

*Senior Manager  
Brighton & Hove City Council*

*Healthwatch Covid-19  
update (13/2/20)*

*“Hi,  
I will include this advice in upcoming articles, many thanks for sending it over.*

*Kind regards,”  
Newspaper reporter*

*Healthwatch social media post  
(6/3/20)*

*“Thanks for the update. Will adhere to recommendations and watch this site for further instructions / developments. Have shared the information.”*

*Member of the public*

*Healthwatch guide to health and social care  
(7/4/20)*

*“Hi, Thank you for this very helpful document.*

*Best wishes”  
Member of the public*

*Healthwatch guide to health and social care (7/4/20)*

*“Dear Healthwatch B&H  
I just want to express my grateful thanks for the information on local services document you have prepared and distributed which I received through email yesterday. This is very helpful and answers various questions I had.*

*Much appreciated.  
With good wishes and do keep well.”  
Member of the public*



**For further help and to share issues, concerns questions, or comments contact:**

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