

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 28 October**

## **HEALTHWATCH BRIGHTON AND HOVE SHORTLISTED FOR TWO PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARDS**

- **Local health champion is shortlisted for two awards in major national awards scheme**
  - **Shortlisting recognises our staff team and volunteers for their work supporting people who were discharged from our local hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic and helping to improve the discharge process for people nearing the end of their lives.**
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Healthwatch Brighton and Hove has been shortlisted for two prestigious national awards which celebrate our volunteer team and recognise our work supporting people during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Healthwatch Awards 2021 are run by [Healthwatch England](#).

Our nominated projects have helped over 1700 people, helped improve discharge processes, signposted people to community support and aided our local NHS Trust's hospital discharge team and local authority during lockdown. They also demonstrate our close collaboration with other partners across the network.

This annual event celebrates the difference Healthwatch's 4,000 plus staff and volunteers across England have made over the past year. Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is one of only 30 local Healthwatch out of a total of 152 across England to be in the running for one of the awards. We are one of just a handful of Healthwatch teams to have been nominated in two separate categories.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will find out whether its award bids have been successful during Healthwatch Week, which runs from Tuesday 9 November 2021.

### **David Liley, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, said:**

"These awards are for the entire extended Healthwatch Brighton and Hove family. Over the last year, we reached out to, and supported, more people than ever before. None of this could have been done without our dedicated staffing team, and amazing and very experienced volunteers and I am extremely proud of them for all that they have helped our organisation to achieve. I would like to express my gratitude to University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust and their hospital discharge team, the Local Authority, Sussex NHS Commissioners, other voluntary groups and Sussex Healthwatch teams, all of whom have supported us, our work and the people of Brighton and Hove."

**Fran McCabe, Chair of Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, said:**

“It is a real tribute to the staff and volunteers in Healthwatch Brighton and Hove that we have been nominated by Healthwatch England, for not just one but two awards. 2020-21 has been dominated by COVID-19, and national restrictions stopped us from talking to people in person. But we have taken on new challenges redirecting our work to ensure our volunteers were safe and to continue supporting vulnerable people when they needed help more than ever. The two awards around end of life care and discharge follow up reached thousands of people and are still having positive impacts. We could not have done this work without the collaboration of our partners, thank you. Being nominated will give a much deserved boost for everyone involved.”

**Sir Robert Francis QC, Chair of Healthwatch England, said:**

"This year once again the standard of entries for the Healthwatch Week awards was extremely high. Your local Healthwatch has been shortlisted because of excellent work which has really benefited your community. I am extremely proud of the inspiring dedication shown by our staff and volunteers to making a real difference for your community, whether that be by reaching out to those whose views are not being heard, helping people find the support they need or making sure NHS and social care services act on the improvements that you want to see.”

Like their colleagues across the country, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove staff and volunteers have been supporting their local community more than ever through the coronavirus pandemic by:

- Finding out what people like about health and social care support, and what could be improved
- Helping people find the information they need about services and;
- Encouraging those in charge of NHS and social care services to make the changes that communities would like to see.

In addition, in response to the pandemic, the team at Healthwatch Brighton and Hove have also been:

- working with Healthwatch teams across Sussex to support people living in care homes and their families, raise dental and GP concerns and push for improvements to Patient Transport
- supporting NHS Sussex Commissioners respond to public enquiries by taking calls on their COVID-19 Vaccination Enquiry Service. And much more.

More information about the Healthwatch Week Awards shortlist can be found [here on the Healthwatch England website](#).

For more information about Healthwatch Brighton and Hove and how its team continue to support people throughout the pandemic, [click here](#).

**End of press release**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

For further help and advice contact:

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### About Healthwatch:

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is your local health and social care champion. Across our city we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care.

### Shortlisted projects

#### 1. Our Hospital Discharge Wellbeing Service

When lockdown put many of our projects on hold, we worked with the local council and hospital trust to task our volunteers to help support the local COVID-19 response. In April 2020, we launched the Hospital Discharge Wellbeing Service (HOPS). Our volunteers call adults recently discharged from hospital to check on their health and wellbeing and raise any hospital discharge issues directly with our local NHS Trust. They also signpost people to community, voluntary and private sector services that they may benefit from. By the end April 2021, our volunteers had contacted 1,731 people: 504 (28%) had some issue or concern related to their hospital discharge, and 139 were referred back to the Trust's Discharge Hub Team for further support. 407 (24%) people were referred on for some form of additional community support. **The service was recognised nationally by the Local Government Association and the British Red Cross (February 2021). Other Integrated Care Systems across the country are also intending to establish a similar service.**

➤ Read our [report](#)

#### 2. Our End of Life project

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove talked to 15 patients at the Royal Sussex County Hospital who were sadly at the end of their lives. We spoke to people about their discharge from hospital and many issues emerged. We were disappointed that end of life care was not a dignified and well-arranged experience for many. Our recommendations were accepted in full by our Trust with a pledge to improve the care pathway and they formally responded to our report. The Health and Wellbeing Board proposed our findings form part of the city's 'Dying Well' Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy delivery plan. They asked for it to be brought back to monitor progress in. This update included work in place to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions, fast track domiciliary care, future commissioning intentions and training of staff. Our report was presented to an End of Life Gold Standards Framework meeting and to an external research team. In response to our second report, Trust representatives contacted us to discuss end of life considerations for LGBTQ+ people and we are developing this project, which our Trust has said may help to better record the personal wishes of LGBTQ+ patients as part of the admission process and support planned discharges.

➤ Read our [2020](#) and [2021](#) reports

### **How Healthwatch Brighton and Hove can help you**

If you've recently visited your GP, or local hospital, or used any health and care services in Brighton and Hove we want to hear from you. Whether you've had a good or bad experience, we can use your feedback to improve services for everyone and we have the power to make NHS leaders and other care providers listen to what you have to say. We're completely independent and impartial and anything you say is confidential. We also offer information and advice to help you to get the support you need. Our service is free, simple to use and can make a real difference to people in Brighton and Hove and beyond.