

Dear Colleagues

I am writing from Healthwatch South Tyneside to share a summary of vital improvements secured for local NHS and social care services by ourselves as well as the network of 153 local Healthwatch.

In the last year, we are proud to have achieved the following as detailed in our [annual report](#):

- 1,425 people shared their experiences of health and social care services with us
- 151 people came to us for advice and information via email, telephone and face-to-face
- We reached 19,515 Facebook accounts
- 13,931 people visited our website
- We published 14 reports about the improvements people would like to see
- More than 50 young people completed our survey on mental health
- We visited eight specialist care homes to find out what residents and their relatives thought about their care

But we couldn't have done any of this without you. We'd like to thank everyone who has supported our work, including patients, relatives, staff and service commissioners.

As required by law, each local Healthwatch publishes an annual report each June. These reports:

- Outline the public feedback they have collected as independent patient and public voice bodies through outreach, surveys and Enter and View visits
- Set out how many people they have provided with information about how to find services, their rights and new models of care.
- Describe how they used public evidence and partnership working with local providers and commissioners, to influence improvements to services for communities within their upper-tier local authority footprints.

Alongside the impact we have achieved locally, we are also pleased to share with you a [nationally compiled report](#) to give you an at-a-glance guide to the collective impact and full breadth of the work of the Healthwatch network.

We hope this fresh evidence about the public's experiences and priorities for change will aid you as you prepare for the Government re-set under the new Prime Minister and new ministerial team in the Department of Health and Social Care.

You can also [read a selection of examples](#) about the impact of Healthwatch nationally in using collated local Healthwatch evidence and further national research to secure improvements. This includes action on poor NHS admin, medical record errors, late hospital letters sent by post and dissatisfaction with the NHS complaints process.

We hope you find this information useful and please get in touch should you wish to meet to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'John Lowther'.

John Lowther
Chair
Healthwatch South Tyneside