

“The patient voice”



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The Health & Social Care Act 2012

Established as part of the Health & Social Care Act 2012, Healthwatch was set up as the independent ‘consumer champion’ for health and social care services across England.

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Every local authority has to have a Healthwatch by law, as part of their commitment under the Act.

There are 152 local Healthwatch organisations across England and every London borough has its own.

In addition, a parent organisation Healthwatch England provides support, and has a seat on the Board of the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

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The ‘Patient Voice’ and the Regulator...

As the ‘official patient voice’, Healthwatch has a close working relationship with the CQC, and is able to provide intelligence that may help guide its work, including on inspections.

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So what does Healthwatch do?

To be an effective ‘patient voice’, Healthwatch has to find out what people think of local health and social care services. Healthwatch gathers feedback on services including:

Primary Care: GP’s, Walk-In Centres, Dentists, Pharmacists, Opticians.

Acute Care: Hospitals, Outpatients, Urgent Care Centres, Minor Injury Units.

Social Care: Care Homes, Social Workers, Sheltered Housing, Home Care.

Community: Community Health services.

Mental Health: Hospital and Community Mental Health services.

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The Patient Experience Panel (PEP)

Healthwatch Croydon has collected 1,000's of views about local services.

The PEP scrutinises this feedback, applies clinical coding, identifies serious concerns, monitors equality and diversity, and discovers leading health and social care related trends.

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Statutory Powers....

To assist its work, Healthwatch has a number of powers it can call on, including:

The right to ‘**Enter and View**’ any health or social care service announced or unannounced, to talk to service users and staff.

The ability to make recommendations, for example on service improvements, which providers have to respond to by law.

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Independence...

As a key part of the legislation, Healthwatch was set up as a truly independent organisation.

Healthwatch is not part of the NHS, or the Local Authority.

By law, it has to be apolitical and evidence-based.

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Representation...

Healthwatch has a permanent seat on the local **Health and Wellbeing Board**, where important decisions about local services are made.

Healthwatch also sits on a number of other Boards and Committees across the Borough, London and England.

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