

Communications Report

September 2021 to August 2022

Purpose

1. This report is an overview of communications activities undertaken during the last 12 months to support the promotion of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Healthwatch Peterborough.

Data included is from the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022, unless otherwise stated.

Key activities and issues

2. Continued to support key Healthwatch activities and project work, including the publication of reports, the promotion of events and the development of campaign activities to engage local people.
3. Implemented the Healthwatch brand refresh from January 2022.
4. Supported the introduction of equality data monitoring across all of engagement activities to help us understand who we are engaging with and how people's personal characteristics may impact on their experience of services.
5. Reduced capacity has been a significant issue since April 2022 due to difficulties recruiting to the vacant Communications Officer role which has impacted on the ability to develop promotional activities.

Action required by the Board

6. The Board is asked to:
 - Note the report.

Author

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28 September 2022

Communications and engagement

7. We are mid-way through the delivery of the 2020-25 communications and engagement strategy – this is due a refresh in line with the overall strategy review. Key objectives have been around raising awareness of Healthwatch, increasing the number of experiences people share with us, and promoting our information and signposting service.
8. We've provided ongoing support to core and project work activities, developing and distributing digital and hardcopy campaign materials as needed.
9. We have implemented the Healthwatch brand refresh, including updating promotional materials such as banners and flyers for the engagement team and developing new hardcopy materials and promotional merchandise.
10. We have also supported the roll out of equality data monitoring across all of engagement activities to help us understand who we are engaging with and how people's personal characteristics may impact on their experience of services. As part of this, we developed training resources to help the volunteers understand and explain why we are asking these questions to members of the public.
11. We've worked to enhance our digital offer to local people so that more people share their experience via our website or access information and advice resources there.

Campaigns and promotional highlights

12. **Publication of five reports** – including the annual report, the Life in a care home report and the recent Health Champion project report on the future of urgent and emergency care at Addenbrooke's Hospital.
13. **National campaign work** – supported Healthwatch England's elective care waiting times survey in September and the Your Care Your Say accessible information campaign in the New Year, by developing blogs and news articles, sharing content on social media and in newsletters and press releases to the local media.

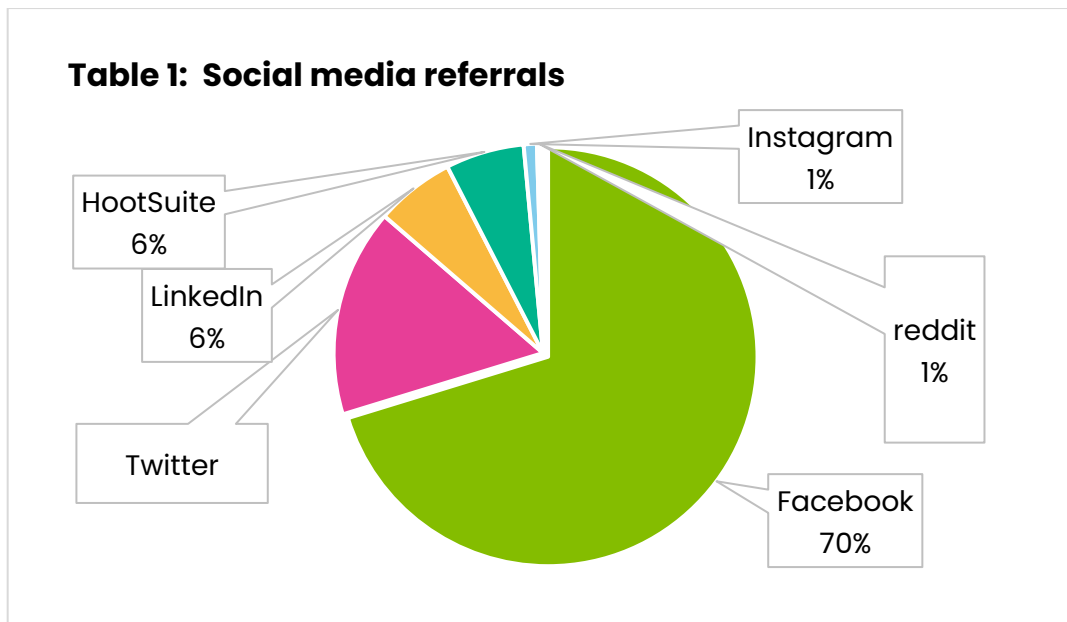
14. **Information and advice service** – we've worked with the information team to maintain and develop our online advice articles; this includes one new advice article and re-writes of 13 articles (often more than once as regulations or services changed). These remain our most popular content, with more than 34,000 page views.

As a result, there have been almost 7,000 referrals to information resources on other organisations' websites i.e., people have gone on to read these additional pages. This includes over 4,000 referrals to NHS websites including 1,071 to NHS 111, over 1,900 referrals to information about Covid-19 vaccinations or regulations and more than 1,200 referrals to information about dentistry services, including help finding an NHS dentist and how to pay for care.

15. **Website enquiries and feedback** – in the last financial year, 41% of the experiences people shared with us came via our websites.
16. **Project support** – developed a successful campaign to recruit 12 Health Champion volunteers as part of a discrete project. Supported the Project Manager and volunteers with communications resources and training as well as supporting project reporting activities and promotion.
17. **Events** – ongoing promotion of regular Health and Care Forums through a range of online and hardcopy routes – adding 80 people to attendee list. Attendance at Health and Care Forum meetings increased by 20% in the last financial year. Promoted July's successful Championing Access event to a diverse audience, attended by more than 100 people.
18. **Recruitment** – undertaken a number of successful staff and Board recruitment campaigns, including the recruitment of three new Non-Executive Directors and three new staff team members.
19. **Adult Social Care Partnership Boards** – in early 2022 we ran a short campaign to raise awareness of the Adult Social Care Partnership Boards and recruit new Independent Members. We developed blogs, hardcopy materials, a BSL video and social media content as well as articles in other publications, resulting in 7 new member enquiries.

Digital engagement

20. Our two Healthwatch websites are the 'digital front door' to our service and continue to perform well in comparison to benchmark data from other local Healthwatch sites, with more than 62,000 user sessions across both sites in this period. The majority of website visitors, 72% for Healthwatch Peterborough and 52% on Healthwatch Cambridgeshire, find us through using a search engine, which demonstrates the positive impact of the content-led strategy to develop these resources.
21. Social media is a significant element of our digital engagement strategy, and we use a variety of platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube to target different stakeholder groups. Our reach (the number of people who see a post) runs into many thousands, for example 120,483 on Facebook last year.
22. We've worked to develop our engagement on Instagram and LinkedIn more this year, increasing reach on both platforms and achieving an engagement rate of over 8% on each one. The engagement rate for a post counts the percentage of engagements (clicks, likes, shares, and comments) on the post out of the number of people who viewed it.
23. We aim to generate referrals to our website through social media content, and in this period more than 6,000 people have visited one of our websites via social media, with 70% coming via Facebook (see table 1 below).



24. We have continued to provide a twice monthly e-news to more than 1,100 local stakeholders, segmented to each local Healthwatch area, with the focus on the information needs of patients and service users. Average open rates are 35%, but have increased significantly in the last three months, with recent rates between 38-56%.

Media and other promotional activities

25. We have continued to build on positive relationships with traditional local media organisations (radio and newspapers), with more than 69 articles in the press / radio reporting on our work or including comment from us. Capacity has significantly affected our ability to develop this area in the last six months, leading to a reduction in coverage since April 2022.
26. We have historically had gaps in consistent newspaper coverage in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and this is an area that needs greater investment in time to achieve better results.
27. We also work closely with stakeholders such as voluntary and community organisations, NHS, local authority, and community newsletters to promote Healthwatch services and engage people in our work. This includes recruitment advertising. In this period, we had

more than 60 articles in other stakeholders' publications. This is likely to be a significant undercount.

Working with partners

28. We regularly attend meetings with NHS and local authority communications colleagues to receive updates on current communications issues, share insights and support the development of communications activities, for example sharing feedback on the ICS website and the Shared Care Record campaign.