

**healthwatch**  
Rotherham



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Rotherham**

# About Healthwatch

**Healthwatch Rotherham is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Rotherham.**

**We make sure NHS and social care leaders and decision makers hear the voice of Rotherham residents and use the feedback that residents give us to improve standards of care.**

**Feedback** is gathered through our face to face engagement work, Let's talk events, targeted project work, Enter & View and via our dedicated website form, email address and telephone line.

**Recommendations** for change are fed back via our reports and continuous engagement with service providers.

**We also help residents find reliable and trustworthy information through our signposting service.**

# Our statutory duties

- 1. Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people** in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services.
- 2. Enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services** and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved.
- 3. Obtaining the views of local people** regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known.
- 4. Making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved.** These should be directed to commissioners and providers of care services, and people responsible for managing or scrutinising local care services and shared with Healthwatch England.
- 5. Providing advice and information** about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services.
- 6. Formulating views on the standard of provision** and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved, and to share these views with Healthwatch England.
- 7. Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to conduct special reviews** or investigations (or, where the circumstances justify doing so, making such recommendations direct to the CQC); and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
- 8. Providing Healthwatch England with intelligence** and insight to enable it to perform effectively.



## Our vision

To bring closer the day when everyone gets the care they need.



## Our mission

To make sure that people's experiences help make health and social care better.



## Our values

- **Equity:** Embracing inclusivity and compassion, establishing profound connections with the communities we serve and empowering them.
- **Collaboration:** Nurturing both internal and external relationships, fostering transparent communication, and partnering to amplify our impact. .
- **Independence:** Championing the public's agenda, serving as purposeful and critical allies to decision-makers.
- **Truth:** Operating with unyielding integrity and honesty, fearlessly advocating truth to those in power.
- **Impact:** Pursuing ambitious endeavours to effect meaningful change for individuals and communities while remaining accountable and holding others accountable.

# Healthwatch Rotherham Team

**Service Manager – Kym Gleeson**

**Engagement & Projects Officer – Holly Barlow**

**Research and Campaigns Officer – Danielle Payne**

**Information and Signposting Officer – Nicola Fells**

**The team are supported by:**

- **2 Volunteers**
- **2 Students**

# Our reach in Q4



From January - March 2026:

**334**

People have **shared their experiences** of health & social care with us, helping to raise awareness of issues and improve care.

**271**

Services we have **signposted** clients to.

**456**

People seen through **20 outreach** engagements & events

**481**

**Newsletters** delivered

**45,213**

People reached through **social media** (Facebook, Twitter & X)

# Our reports in Q4

From January – March 2026, we have published:

## 18 Targeted project reports:

- [Social Care Report](#)
- [Unpaid carers](#)
- [The state of health and social care in 2026](#)
- [Refugee and asylum seekers](#)
- [What do women want from health services?](#)

## 1 Enter & View report:

- [Archways Pharmacy](#)

## 3 You said, we did reports:

- [January](#)
- [February](#)
- [March](#)

- [NHS announces conditions for treatment at online hospital](#)
- [One in seven patients stuck in a GP referrals 'black hole'](#)
- [Supporting veterans to live well](#)
- [Rotherham College Wellbeing Event](#)
- [What Is Green Social Prescribing](#)
- [A&E Nightmare: Shelley's 26 Hour ordeal](#)
- [People struggle to access weight loss drugs on the NHS](#)

# What we've heard in Q4



## Hospital services

We have heard from **25** people about their hospital care.

### Key concerns:

- **Waiting times for appointments and procedures**
- **Communication between services**
- **Complaints**

### Positives:

- **Some people receive excellent care**
- **Gynaecology inpatient staff.**

"I was informed that 3 years of my health records are missing in this time period I had a pregnancy, a hysterectomy and most importantly 2 occasions of medical neglect that resulted in me needing life saving treatment."

"Rotherham Gynaecology Rotherham Hospital inpatient Surgery went well. Nursing care very goodwill an inpatient. Info regarding what to expect in terms of recovery when discharged non existent"

"I was told last week I needed surgery quite urgently as they had found cancer in a previous test. I am a carer and I had organised the care to be put into place to allow me to be an inpatient and recuperation. I have been told my op was cancelled due to a bed shortage."

# What we've heard in Q4



## GP services

We have heard from **25** people about their GP services.

### Key concerns:

- **Difficulties getting appointments**
- **Poor communication – results and follow up appointments**
- **Digital Accessibility**

### Positives:

- **Some excellent examples of quality care provided by specific doctors**

“ Dinnington group practice – My appointment with the GP was very good quick & pleasing”

“In GP surgery's' there needs to be 'clearer routes to getting the support needed for older adults who can be left isolated due to lack of internet/ smartphone access'. ”

“Brinsworth and whiston surgery – I don't feel listened to, my communication needs are ignored”

“ My wife has a great GP practice and her health concerns are always looked into. In my GP practice, it really depends – some of the symptoms I experience are difficult to obtain advice on and some are investigated”

# What we've heard in Q4



## Dental services

We have heard from **40** people about dental services.

### Key concerns:

- **28 people have been unable to register with an NHS dentist**
- **Accessibility for Asylum Seekers.**

### Positives:

- **0 Positive outcomes fed back to Healthwatch Rotherham during the duration of Q4**

Dentist has told a patient they have root canal issues that need specialist treatment and advised them to either pay privately for treatment or have the teeth removed. Client is not in a position to pay for private service (Asylum seeker).

"I am unable to find NHS dentist for me and my partner since our local dentist closed practice a few years ago. Neither me or my partner have been able to arrange a check up without going private and therefore over the last two years have not seen a dentist. NHS website - all local dentists only taking on private patients or patients entitled to free medical care which neither me or my partner are entitled to."

# What we've heard in Q4



## Mental health services

We have heard from **13** people about mental health services.

### Key concerns:

- **Lack of support waiting for assessment**
- **Waiting times for ADHD/Autism assessments**
- **Lack of support for family and carers**

### Positives:

- **Perinatal mental health Team**

"My experience with my son was positive . I had bad postnatal depression with my first child and I was quickly put under the perinatal mental health team in Rotherham who were brilliant and kept me well during and after my pregnancy."

"Mental health support is actually in crumbles: it is easier to access medications from the GP that from mental health services. Therapy is unobtainable if you had more than one traumatic event in your life. Adequate care for people with ASD who have mental health difficulties doesn't exist."

"Client presenting with severe alcohol misuse. A support worker contacted the Crisis Team for urgent assistance. The Crisis Team declined to speak with the support worker, stating they could only speak directly to the client. However, they were then unable to engage with the client due to him being under the influence of alcohol. This creates a significant gap in crisis response, as even us as professionally struggle to get help for our clients"



**healthwatch**  
Rotherham

**Come and speak with us today!**  
All the health information you need!

- What help can I get at my local pharmacy?
- What support is there for mental health in Rotherham?
- "I can't get through to my GP, what can I do?"
- "I've been waiting a long time for an operation/procedure..."
- Can't register at a dentist anywhere?

We can help, support and signpost with anything health/needs and social care related.

**We're here to help and to listen to your feedback**  
(It's how we support making positive changes for local people)

**Five Ways to Wellbeing**  
be happy, be positive, enjoy life  
www.rotherham.gov.uk

# Our impact Q4

healthwatch Rotherham

**talk to us**  
Share your feedback on health and social care in Rotherham.

**Volunteer with us!**  
Want to gain valuable work experience, help improve care in Rotherham or learn new skills, there is a lot of ways you can get involved and make a real difference.

**Because we all care**

For more information:  
www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk  
Call us on 01709 717130  
@hwalChrotherham.org.uk

# Enter and View: Archways Pharmacy

The [Enter & View visit to Archway Pharmacy](#) was carried out by Healthwatch Rotherham to understand patient and staff experiences, observe the environment, and identify areas for improvement. The pharmacy offers a wide range of services and is valued by many patients for its accessibility, staff professionalism, and the support provided.

## Our findings on the day:

- Most patients and staff described positive experiences, with many rating the service as helpful and respectful.
- The pharmacy environment is generally accessible, but there are concerns about cleanliness, clutter, and the visibility of important information such as complaints procedures and opening times.
- The external/rear collection area raised significant concerns about dignity, safety, and equality, particularly for patients collecting controlled medicines or using the needle exchange service.
- Communication is good for many, especially through text messages, but some patients reported inconsistent updates about prescriptions and felt they had to chase information.

## Overview of feedback given to the service:

- Awareness of how to give feedback, use interpreter services, and dispose of medication safely was mixed, with some patients unsure about available options.
- Staff reported satisfaction with their roles but highlighted the need for clearer policy awareness and more consistent access to interpreter services.
- Recommendations focus on improving accessibility, cleanliness, supervision of controlled medicines, communication, policy awareness, and equality.



# Social Care Report: RMBC

Healthwatch Rotherham held a mystery shop at RMBC Riverside House. The purpose of the mystery shopper experience is to see how easy it is for the public to access adult social care information and services. By having individuals pose as potential service users, Healthwatch can assess real-world factors like staff friendliness, response times, and the quality of communication across face-to-face, telephone, and digital channels.

## Mystery Shopper Findings:

The mystery shopping exercise, which included nine different scenarios, resulted in an average service rating of **2.7 out of 5**.

- **Face-to-Face Interactions:** Shoppers found Riverside House to be a clean, accessible, and welcoming building. However, while reception staff were friendly, they often lacked the specific knowledge needed to answer social care queries, typically only providing a phone number rather than detailed information or physical resources like leaflets.
- **Telephone Enquiries:** Results were mixed. One shopper received excellent, detailed information about equipment and assessments, while another experienced long wait times only to be signposted elsewhere with limited help.

- **Website & Digital Access:** The website was praised for its professional look and useful chatbot feature. Conversely, some users found the search results overwhelming or felt that certain pages were too text-heavy for people in stressful situations.
- **Out of Hours Support:** Response times were generally fast, but shoppers noted a lack of empathy in some email communications and felt that personal details were often requested before any helpful information was provided.

## Overview of feedback given to the service:

- The report highlights a clear need for refreshed training for frontline staff to ensure they can provide basic social care overviews and more effective signposting. Recommendations also include improving the availability of physical information (leaflets) at Riverside House and simplifying the website to make it easier for the public to navigate during a crisis.

We want to hear about **YOUR** experiences

Have you recently accessed:

- Hospital services
- GP services
- Dental services
- Optician services
- Care home services
- Social care support
- Fostering/adoption services
- Mental health services
- Pharmacy services

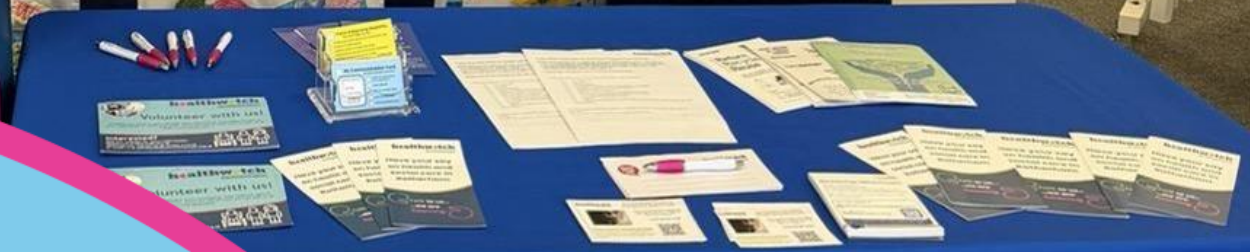
If so, we would love to hear more from you



We have the power to make NHS and social care services listen to your feedback and improve care



Tell us what you think about



# Q4 in summary

# with what

# Our reach in Q4



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**456**

People seen through **20 outreach** engagements & events

**481**

**Newsletters** delivered in total over three months

**45,213**

People reached through **social media** (Facebook, Twitter & X)

# Our impact this Quarter

We have made **18** recommendations across **1** mystery shopper experience.

Improvements adopted include:



- **Provide clearer information about the referral process, Ensure there is better cover when a social worker is on leave:** So people can still speak to someone who can help
- **Improve access to information for non-digital people:** Including clearer phone contact options
- **Improve joint working between services:** Improve coordination and communication between Continuing Healthcare, (CHC) the SY ICB and other partner services to reduce delays, prevent duplication, and ensure a more joined-up response for complex cases.



Our Community Engagement Officer has made effective use of her time by developing strong links with a broad range of community groups, enabling face-to-face engagement and improved access to information and signposting within local communities.

Some of groups include; Frith Space, Apna Haq, Pen & Purpose, the Veterans Group, and The Rainbow Project Rotherham.

# Our impact this Quarter

We have made **16** recommendations across **1** Enter & View visit and The RMBC mystery shopper. Improvements adopted include:



- **Provide clearer information about the referral process;** particularly the Single Point of Access, to ensure people and professionals understand how and where to seek support.
- **Ensuring continuity of cover when a social worker is on leave;** so individuals and professionals can still speak to an appropriate contact who is able to provide advice and assistance.
- **Improve access to information for non-digital people;** Including clearer more accessible telephone contact options.
- **Strengthening joint working between services;** particularly between Continuing Healthcare (CHC), the SY ICB, and Adult Social Care, to improve communication and coordination of care.

We continue to build on the impact of our **Waiting Well report** through a monthly Waiting Well meeting. This work is focused on developing a clear framework that promotes equity across services at The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (TRFT) and improves access to support for people while they are waiting for treatment, **informed directly by the lived experiences and voices of Rotherham residents.**

# Healthwatch Rotherham feedback

## January 2026 – March 2026

“The support you gave me was great, I feel I can move on with my life after having my voice heard about how things went wrong at the hospital. I believe they have taken my complaint seriously thanks to HealthWatch”

“Hi Danielle, I just wanted to connect via email and say thank you for all your help, kindness and compassion around the situation with my brother.”

“Thank you Nic, you explained everything better than the GP surgery ”

“Thank you, You've done everything we could. It so good to have someone who listens.”

“Nicola kept in touch with me and did everything she could to help. Without Healthwatch I wouldn't have known what to do.”



“Thank you Danielle for actually giving a crap about me and others like me, usually we get fobbed off or passed pillar to post because were homeless”

**For more information:**

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2 Upper Millgate  
S60 1PF



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**Committed  
to quality**

We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an in depth audit so that we can be certain of this.