

# Healthwatch Birmingham Impact Report

Clinical Commissioning Group complaints system: the importance of Clinical Commissioning Groups using complainant feedback to improve the quality of their complaints systems.

As a result of a Healthwatch Birmingham investigation, NHS commissioners are routinely hearing more feedback about their complaints systems.

NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Birmingham and Solihull CCG are now using complainants' feedback about the complaint team's service to improve their systems and processes.

## What we heard:

Healthwatch Birmingham spoke to six people who were not satisfied with their experience of making a complaint, about a service, to a Birmingham CCG. At that time, CCG complaints teams did not have systems in place to routinely hear people's feedback about the team's service.

## What we did:

One of Healthwatch Birmingham's functions is to encourage providers and commissioners to use patient and public insights, experience and involvement to improve their services.

We met with the two CCG's complaints managers and VoiceAbility to discuss the level of patient and public involvement (PPI) in the design and delivery of the Birmingham CCG's complaints services. The complaints managers shared the barriers to CCGs routinely hearing complainant's feedback, as well as the benefits of hearing such feedback. These barriers and benefits are described in our initial report, which resulted in several improvements in the way Birmingham CCGs hear feedback from people who have been through the complaints system.

## Impact for patients

and their families:  
Both CCGs agreed to start hearing feedback from people who have used the CCG's complaints system.

### NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG complaints team now:

Have established clearer communication channels with VoiceAbility; they have monthly contact to ensure they are working together to improve their service.

Are actively promoting their complaints service (Time2Talk) by encouraging their General Practices to display flyers and posters in their reception areas.

Routinely conduct 'mystery shopper' exercises to monitor call quality and identify any training needs.

Have an updated database - so that this feedback can be recorded and used.

Send a letter at the end of the complaint process, which encourages complainants to give feedback about their service, alongside a feedback questionnaire and prepaid envelope.

### NHS Birmingham and Solihull CCG complaints team now:

Have a new process for gathering feedback from complainants. Their full statement is overleaf.

### Share your experiences of Adult Social Care services in Birmingham:

Visit our Feedback Centre:  
[www.healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk)  
Email us:  
[info@healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk)  
Call us:  
0800 652 5278

Download Healthwatch Birmingham's initial full report here:

<https://healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk/about-us/reports/>


Twitter: @HWBrum

Facebook: [Healthwatch Birmingham](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchBirmingham)




**Response from NHS Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)**

'The CCG would like to thank Healthwatch Birmingham for this report. The CCG welcomes the findings and recommendations, whilst acknowledging the reports methodology and small sample size. The report has influenced a number of improvements to the complaints process for patients, including a new process for gathering feedback from complainants, with a view to shaping and improving the service for the future. This will help the CCG to fully benefit from patient's experiences and insight, and help us to commission the best healthcare for local people. We look forward to updating Healthwatch Birmingham on the new feedback process, and also to working closely on other relevant and topical issues affecting local people, in the future.'



Healthwatch Birmingham welcomes people to continue to share their experiences with us of making a complaint to a Birmingham CCG.



We also encourage people to share their experiences of services, or of a Birmingham CCG complaints system, directly with the relevant CCG.

We would like to thank the VoiceAbility Partners and Advocates, and the Birmingham CCGs for their participation in, and support of, this investigation.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium providing that you cite this report in full. Suggested citation format: Healthwatch Birmingham (2018). Impact Report. Patient involvement and complaints systems. Available at: <https://healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk/about-us/reports/>