

Healthwatch Kent and Medway Information & Signposting line social value report

By Healthwatch Kent & Healthwatch Medway



August 2023

What impact has our Information and Signposting team had between December 2021 and February 2023?

The Headlines

1167 people contacted our information and signposting service in the past year. **243 of these people** across Kent and Medway told us how they had been impacted by our information and signposting service.

Between December 2021 and February 2023, **160 people** feel they have been supported to find the correct and relevant information and advice, **147 people** feel listened to and less lonely, **17 people** have been able to access health or social care services that they need and **15 people** feel less anxious and stressed, all thanks to our support information and research team.

We have used WELLBYs, a social value tool, to estimate that these outcomes have generated between **£525,000** and **£800,000** worth of social value to the people we have identified outcomes for.

This range in value is generated through different valuations of a WELLBY. You can read more about this [here](#).



Case studies

Here are some examples of how we have helped people over the last year and what these outcomes have meant for individuals...

Securing emergency dental care

Sandra called Healthwatch after having failed to secure an emergency dental appointment, despite calling over 30 different practices. She explained that she had a suppressed immune system and was fearful an infection would develop if she didn't have the tooth removed.

Healthwatch were able to locate a dentist with emergency availability, not far from Sandra. After referring Sandra to the practice, she confirmed she was able to have the tooth removed within the week and was incredibly grateful for the assistance.

"Thanks so much again for all of your help and support. I have just called that practice and they've been able to book an urgent appointment for next week for me! I must have called 30+ dentists prior to this so thank you so much! I'm massively grateful!"



Supporting vulnerable people to access prescriptions

Erica couldn't seem to get her regular prescription for gluten-free flour mixes from her GP. Erica suffers from coeliac disease, and the delay in receiving her prescription severely limited her diet. Erica reached out to Healthwatch Kent for help.

We raised the issue with NHS Kent and Medway who, upon looking into the matter, discovered a technical issue within the prescription ordering system that was preventing people like Erica from receiving their prescriptions.

NHS Kent and Medway resolved the issue and confirmed the prescription system was now working correctly. Directions were shared to GPs across Kent to ensure all gluten-free prescriptions could be dispensed correctly.

1 in every 100 people in the UK are coeliac, which means there are around 18,500 people in the UK with coeliac disease. £277,500 worth of social care has been generated for the community from this outcome.

We have not included this estimation in our overall figures for the report.

Reducing loneliness and isolation

We heard from Rita, who requested assistance in organising a housing review. She felt her health conditions were getting progressively worse and needed support.

She explained that she had tried to access support already but kept being redirected, she felt she could not resolve the situation alone. Healthwatch raised Rita's concerns with her local council.

Following Healthwatch's discussions with the council, a full housing review was completed for Rita, which assessed her housing needs and allowed for her to receive the support she needed within her home.

During this review, Rita mentioned that she was feeling lonely and didn't have anyone to talk to. Rita was introduced to a befriending service, which gave her the opportunity to socialise again. Rita doesn't feel alone anymore.

Reducing risks in an emergency

Tina told us that she struggled to attend hospital, even in emergencies, due to anxiety caused by previous experiences. She spoke with Healthwatch Kent to discuss her troubles and to see if we could help.

Healthwatch Kent spoke to the hospital team, explaining Tina's anxieties and expressing concerns that the unresolved situation might prevent Tina from seeking medical help when she needed it. We asked the hospital team to consult Tina and support with her anxiety.

The Director of nursing at the hospital invited Tina to discuss her worries and needs. Following the meeting, Tina was issued with a personalised carers card, a solution which meant Tina would feel more comfortable about attending hospital for treatment. As a result, Tina now feels welcomed, listened to and supported by the hospital and her anxiety no longer prevents her from accessing care she needs.

Supporting hidden carers

Mary had recently returned to the UK after living overseas to care full-time for her elderly parent. Upon returning she was told that she was not entitled to carers support allowance, and this left Mary struggling to cope financially.

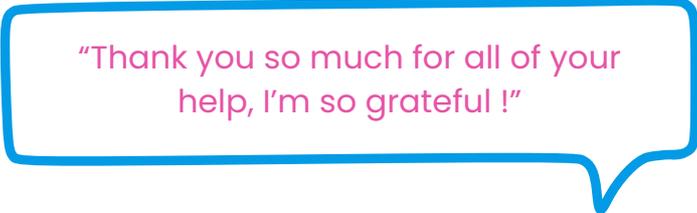
Healthwatch liaised with the Citizens Advice Bureau to establish clear guidance for Mary and others in her position. We shared this guidance with Healthwatch England to ensure it would reach other people like Mary, in need of support.

Healthwatch were able to clearly explain Marys' rights to her and provide her with guidance in applying for the allowance. Doing so allowed Mary to better focus on the needs of her parent as opposed to struggling with finances and worrying about her future.

Getting people registered with a GP

Jessica has learning difficulties and became anxious and confused when she discovered she had been removed from her GP's register. She contacted Healthwatch for assistance, wanting to understand why she had been removed from the register, and needing support in registering at a new GP practice.

We raised Jessica's case with NHS Kent and Medway, who were able to explain why she had been removed from her GPs register. This made Jessica feel less anxious. In addition, we were able to identify a new GP surgery for Jessica to register with. We guided Jessica through the process, and she is now successfully registered at a new practice.



"Thank you so much for all of your help, I'm so grateful!"

Calculating social value

Using WELLBYs

The "Wellbeing-adjusted Life Year" (WELLBY) is defined as a one-point change in life satisfaction on a Likert scale between 0 to 10, for an individual for one year and is valued between £10,000 and £16,000. These figures are based on use of Willingness To Pay (WTP) and change in income figures. You can read more about these estimates [here](#), in a government discussion paper on financial valuation of wellbeing.

We estimated that improved access to services, and increased independence provided people with a 0.1 scale improvement in life satisfaction, whilst reduced anxiety and reduced isolation provided a 0.3 scale improvement. These estimates are based on how valuable our stakeholder groups feel the outcomes are and how much of a difference they feel the outcomes have made to their lives. The retrospective monetary valuation for these impacts, is detailed below.

| Impact | Valuation approach | Monetary valuation |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Improved access to services | WELLBY 0.1 improvement | £1,000-1,600 |
| Reduced anxiety | WELLBY 0.3 improvement | £3,000-4,800 |
| Reduced isolation | WELLBY 0.3 improvement | £3,000-4,800 |
| Increased independence | WELLBY 0.1 improvement | £1,000-1,600 |

How much credit can we claim?

We have considered that for impacts of improved access to services and increased independence, there exists a 50% chance that individuals would have sought the same outcome through different avenues had we not provided the service. This considers likelihood that individuals would exhaust alternative complaint management, or support offers linked to services they need to access if they did not approach Healthwatch Kent and Medway. For impacts of reduced anxiety and reduced isolation, we have considered 10% chance individuals would have achieved the same outcome through alternative routes. Through qualitative customer satisfaction data, we can identify that when contacting our information and signposting service, people feel we are the 'only ones who listen' and that people 'would have been stressed with their situation worsening' had they not spoken to us. This data allows us to claim a higher portion of attribution to the change, evidencing our unique offer to the individual. These considerations are reflected in final calculations of total social value generated.

Further work

We are confident that our information and signposting service has delivered positive impacts to more people than we have been able evidence in this report. We are continuously working towards evidencing accurate reflections of the impact we have on our community and are working towards capturing more stories to show how we have made a difference.

If you would like to chat with us about the report you can reach us through the following routes:



Online:
www.healthwatchkent.co.uk



Online:
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By Telephone:
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By Text:
Text us on 07525 861 639. By texting 'NEED BSL', Healthwatch's British Sign Language interpreter will make contact



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