

Speak Out Newsletter

April 6th 2020 Edition



Healthwatch Solihull is the independent voice for health and social care services in the borough. We want to hear your experiences about GPs, hospitals, pharmacies, mental health services, care homes and any other NHS services.

By gathering the feedback that we receive from you, we can look for common trends in what people are saying about local services.

We can then take this feedback to the people who commission, run and regulate these services and promote what is working well and help improve things that need improving.

What we are doing locally during the Coronavirus pandemic

Healthwatch Solihull has also been committed to listening to your experiences and helping to improve local healthcare services.

Even during the Coronavirus pandemic, we remain passionate and dedicated to listening to and informing the residents of Solihull about local health and social care.

We are currently reaching out to local people via our social media and online platforms, to find out how well you feel you are being supported during this difficult time. We are still available via our freephone number and have also introduced a texting service.

Regular information is posted on our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages, as well as website, to keep you up to date on the latest facts about the Coronavirus. We also publish information on how you can access a variety of wellbeing support.

Tel: 0800 470 1518

Email: enquiries@healthwatchsolihull.org.uk

Web: www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk



New texting service! Get in touch on 07732 683 449



Breaking down social isolation at an isolating time for many

Healthwatch Solihull are supporting our partners over at Age UK Solihull by reaching out to local people by becoming telephone befrienders.

Did you know two fifths of older people say that the television is their only friend?

As a befriender you could provide regular company for a lonely older person living in Solihull.

Thousands of local older people are extremely lonely, going for weeks, even months, without speaking to another person. One of the ways you can help is by volunteering to befriend an older person.

What do befrienders do?

Befrienders will visit a lonely older person once a week for an hour (or more) preferably during the day.

You will be matched with an older person, who you will regularly visit or speak to over the telephone as a telephone befriender. Your friendly conversation and companionship will make a genuine difference to our clients lives, help them to feel happier, positive and more connected.

“Working as an Age UK Solihull volunteer has been an incredibly **rewarding and life changing experience**. I’ve been given the opportunity to **give something back** and it’s **humbling** to know that I make such a difference to someone’s life.”

Suki

Volunteer Befriender

Is it for me?

The ideal befriender would be a good listener, with a friendly, open manner and the ability to put people at ease. Patience and an understanding of the challenges faced by older people is also important. They would empower older people to improve their wellbeing through social interaction.

For more information contact us on 0800 470 1518 or email catherine.gulati@ageuksolihull.org.uk



Weekly Surveys

One way that Healthwatch Solihull are reaching out to people at this time is through social media and it's via this platform that are sending out a number of short, weekly surveys.

Each survey that we post will be tailored to a specific subject, such as mental health services, GPs, hospitals, etc.

This is so we can capture a variety of feedback from your experiences and find out how well specific services are supporting Solihull residents at this time.

If you would like to take part in filling out one of these short surveys, you can do so by going on to our Facebook page.



My GP has always been very good and has supported me and my husband well during the Coronavirus outbreak.

~Chester Road Surgery

Share your good experiences

We at Healthwatch Solihull work hard to ensure that concerns regarding local NHS services are raised with correct people and situations are dealt with promptly.

However, we are also keen to hear people's good experiences too. This helps us to see what is working well within the health and social care sector and helps us to promote good practice within other organisations.

If you have experienced particularly good service, maybe a professional has gone that extra mile or a healthcare worker has helped you feel supported during a time of crisis, then we want to hear from you.