

Healthwatch Reading Key Activities Update October 2024

Activity	Key Update	What happens next?
GP Access Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report will be published as soon as we get the required response from the service provider • Key points for Reading to be aware of: • Respondents aged range from 18 to over 80 • Reading's key concerns were echoed across the BW area: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long waits for appointments (1 in 3 highlighted what they felt were unreasonably long waits) 2. difficulty attending appointments 3. lack of consistency in seeing the same GP (1 in 3 could not see the GP of their choice) 4. low understanding and confidence in the Care Navigator process (including concerns around privacy, trust, and the efficiency of the system) 5. mixed experience with the NHS app (almost 1 out 2 do not have the app at all, some who do have not used it since the first year or two of the pandemic) and alternative routes 6. communication concerns (specifically for those with disabilities when accessing services). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GP Access report will be promoted across the next 3 months and Healthwatch Reading will be in contact with our ICB and providers to discuss what changes are practical and achievable
Talking Together: NHS Billing Errors Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billing errors came up through this West Berkshire story: NHS bill error leaves patient 'dehumanised' • Following the publication of the story, Reading people brought their errors to our attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following agreement with RBFT on their commitments, Healthwatch

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We felt that a conversation needed to be had with RBFT and they agreed • Healthwatch Reading hosted an event at ACRE on Oxford Road on August 1st attended by RBFT CEO Steve McManus and some of his key leadership team colleagues • Commitments were made by RBFT to make changes, review and refine the billing errors process, and eliminate instances of children being written to with demands for payment. • Healthwatch Reading wrote to RBFT after the event on August 13th with a commitment due from RBFT in response and will be following up on changes across the next 12 months, and communicating them to the communities in Reading who have been affected. 	<p>Reading will be publishing an impact statement outlining the work completed and the changes in the process agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will follow up on this through consultation with RBFT and with the public across the next year to ensure commitments are being met
<p>Thinking Together: Interpreters Services Event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthwatch Reading, through our engagement, regularly hears that translation services are not working, and that people are not confident to access services because they do not feel understood or accommodated • Healthwatch Reading brought services, voluntary sector organisations, and community groups together at Reading Uni on September 12th to discuss the need for translation services, the impact that no access has, and the work happening to make services available, timely and appropriate • Healthwatch Reading are writing to key stakeholders and service providers to summarise the event and drive an agreement for what needs to happen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthwatch Reading is writing to everyone who took part in the event to summarise the keys issues and what is in place or will be done to address these concerns • We will be sharing an impact statement on key areas and impacts later this year – we are aware

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthwatch Reading will revisit this throughout this year and the next to continue the conversation 	<p>change will be slow but we will be monitoring it taking place and ensuring the conversation in Reading continues</p>
<p>What is next for Healthwatch Reading?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are also reviewing our Workplan (Healthwatch Reading Workplan) at the halfway-stage of the financial year to reflect progress in our projects We will be updating on the Women's Hub project in Berkshire West (due to have launched October 1st) and the impact for Reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplan review in late Oct/early Nov Women's Hub update in early November