

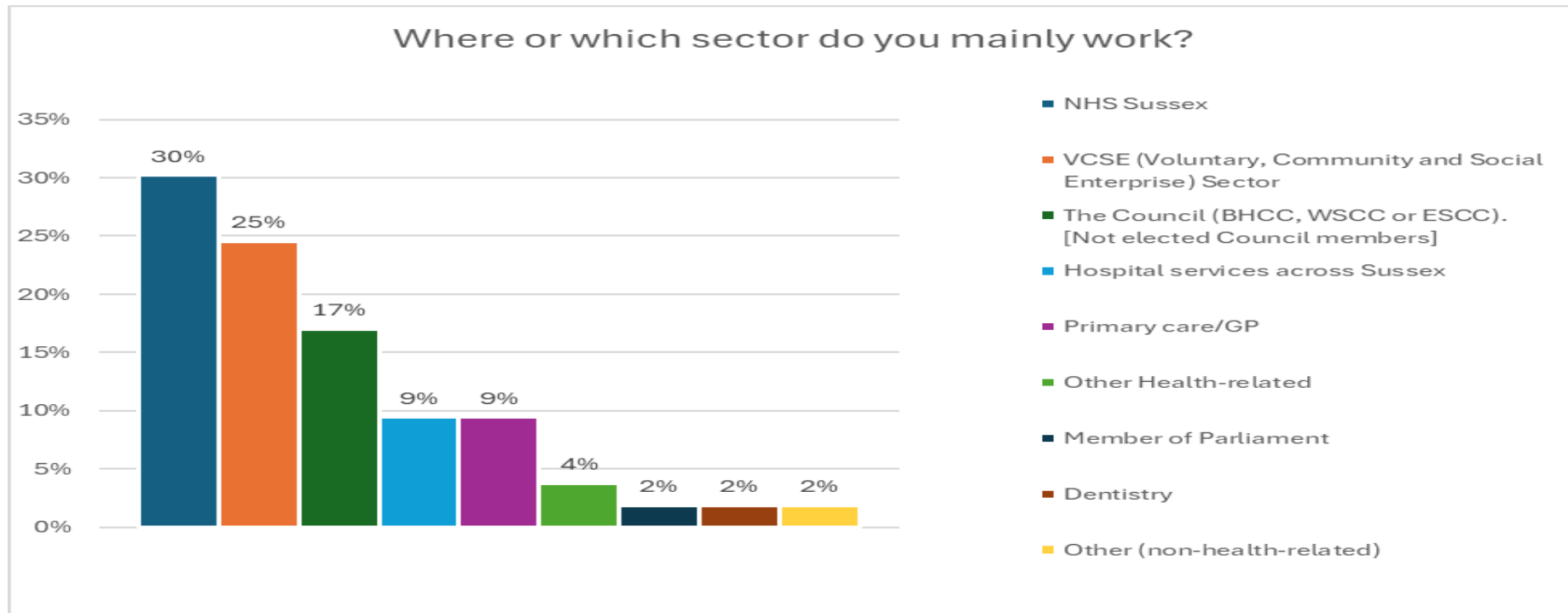
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Stakeholder survey 2024



Similar to previous years, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove (Healthwatch) conducted a survey of our stakeholders. The survey was sent out to stakeholders individually by staff members who had worked most closely with them. Questions were a mixture of quantitative and open-ended. They asked about awareness of Healthwatch's role and work; relationship between Healthwatch and the stakeholder's organisation; impact on their organisation and impact on the individual as a service user. Question 8 provided a comparison with our previous stakeholder survey.

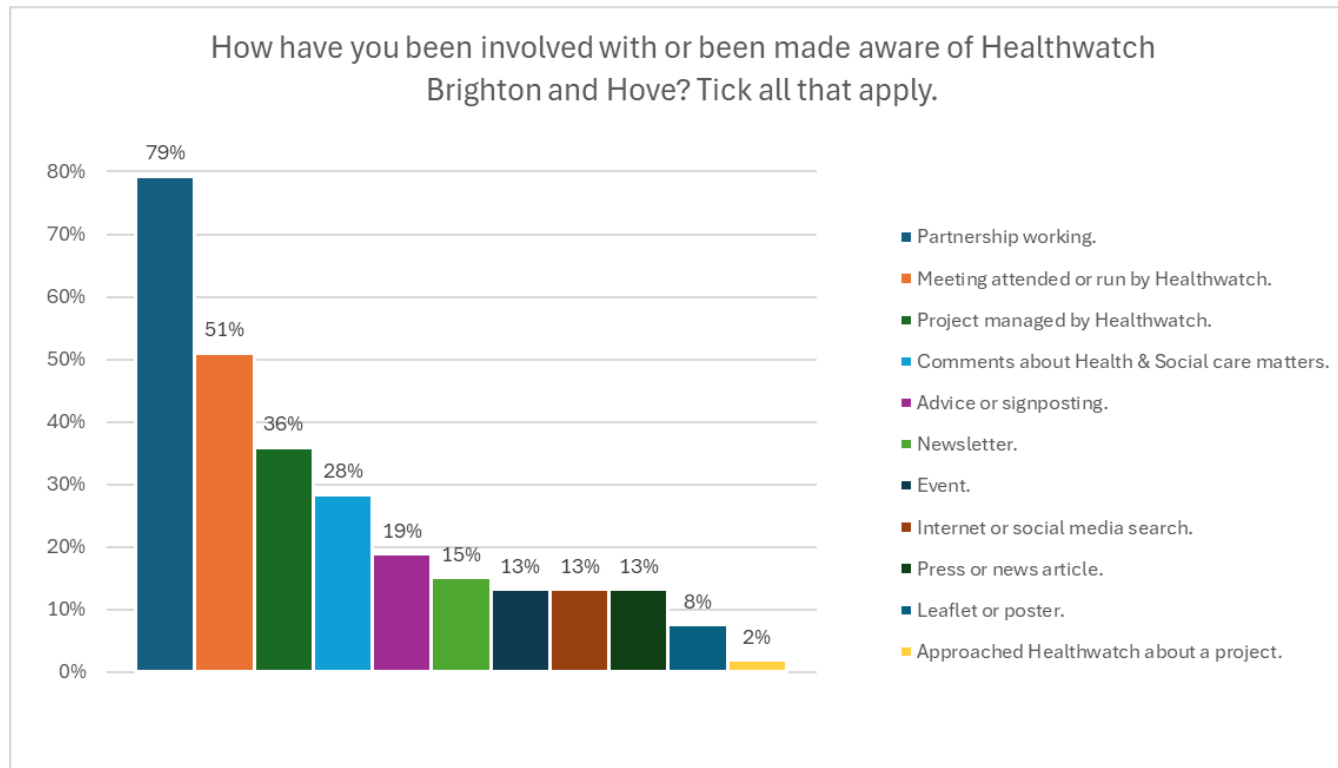
A. Participant Profile

Which sector do you work in?



We received 53 responses this year, in comparison to 47 in our last stakeholder survey. Responses were drawn from a wide variety of sectors, with the largest group of survey respondents (30%) from NHS Sussex. The next largest groups were Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations (25%) and Council employees (17%). There was one “other” organisation, who indicated they were in the “education” sector.

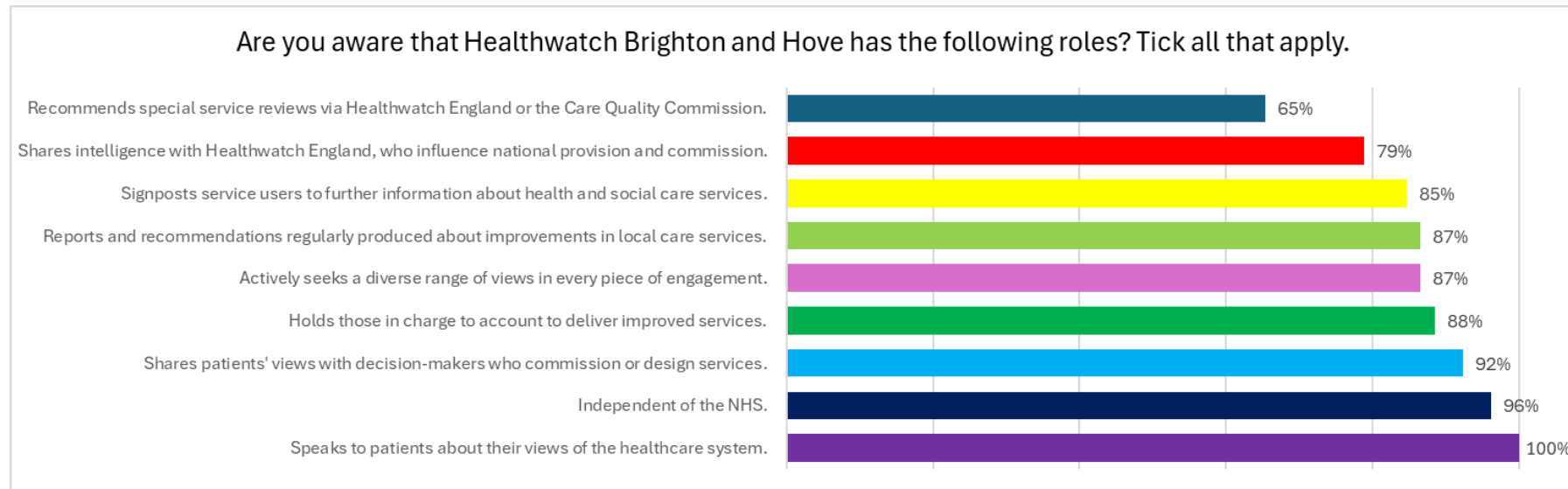
How have you been involved with, or made aware of Healthwatch?



The majority of respondents (79%) had worked in partnership with Healthwatch. However, there were many other ways that people had heard about Healthwatch and/or been involved with Healthwatch. We asked stakeholders to choose as many options as applied and therefore the chart allows for multiple responses per stakeholder. Other ways that stakeholders had been involved with us, included meetings arranged by Healthwatch, and projects managed by Healthwatch. Also, comments about health and social care that had been provided by Healthwatch, and having received advice or signposting from Healthwatch.

B. Awareness of Healthwatch

What do you know about Healthwatch?



Our stakeholders were very aware of the roles that Healthwatch carries out.

All stakeholders (100%) were aware that Healthwatch “speaks to patients about their views of the healthcare system”.

The vast majority of stakeholders were also aware of the other roles that we carry out, namely:

- Healthwatch is independent of the NHS (96%).
- Shares patients' views with decision-makers who commission or design services (92%).

- Holds those in charge to account to deliver improved services (89%).
- Actively seeks a diverse range of views in every piece of engagement (survey, project, event etc.) (87%).
- Reports and recommendations are regularly produced about how local care services could or ought to be improved (87%).
- Signposts service users to further information about health and social care services, including how to make complaints (85%).

Most stakeholders were aware that we also carried out the following roles. We might have expected there to be less stakeholders who were aware of these additional roles, as these are not usually publicised in the same way as the roles above:

- Shares intelligence with Healthwatch England, who have influence on national provision and commission of health and social care (79%).
- Recommends investigation or special review of services via Healthwatch England or directly to the Care Quality Commission (65%).

How can Healthwatch increase awareness?

Our stakeholders made suggestions of how we could raise our profile. A core recommendation was to conduct more collaborative work.

“Joining us on the strategic / or operational delivery groups across the Sussex system. It could well be that you are sitting on strategic groups that I’m not aware of. I believe Healthwatch provides us with and scrutinises us on valuable service change and transformation. That check and challenge is critical during periods of increasing workload and decreasing timeframes to complete the tasks.”

“I value the engagement with Healthwatch, would like to do more with public engagement as a driver for positive change.”

“Supporting innovative and transformative tools across both NHS, Local authorities, VCSE and other stakeholders.”

Other ideas included:

“I think it would be worthwhile commissioning some sort of omnibus survey - locally but also UK wide - to see what the Healthwatch 'brand' salience and understanding actually is. Anyone who knows what Healthwatch does can recognise its importance.”

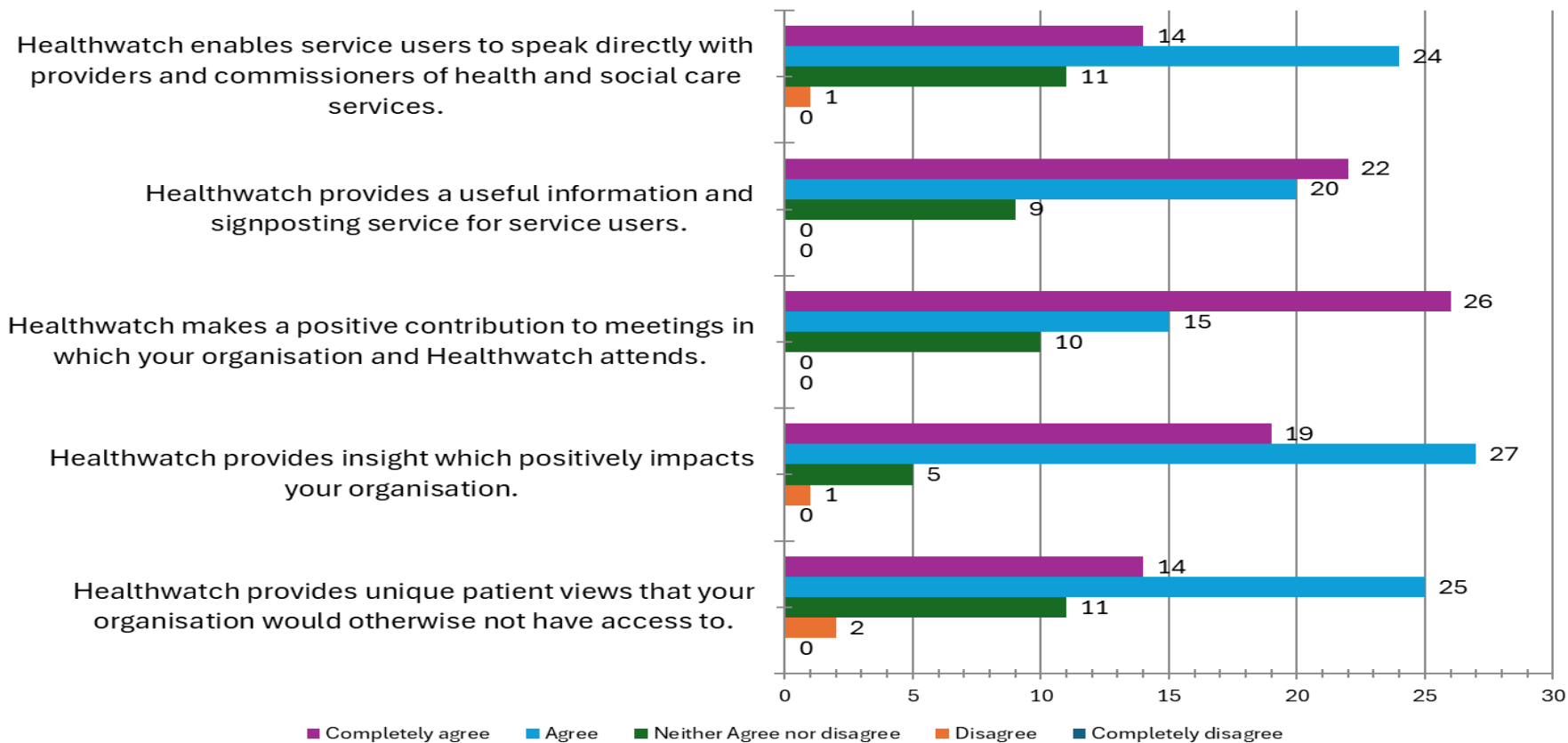
“It would be good to know more about the work Healthwatch undertakes in terms of engagement activities and how it links into commissioning arrangements.”

“They could have more presence on the research agenda.”

C. Healthwatch – our role and impact on stakeholders

Making a positive impact

Please comment on whether you agree or disagree with the following observations about Healthwatch Brighton and Hove:

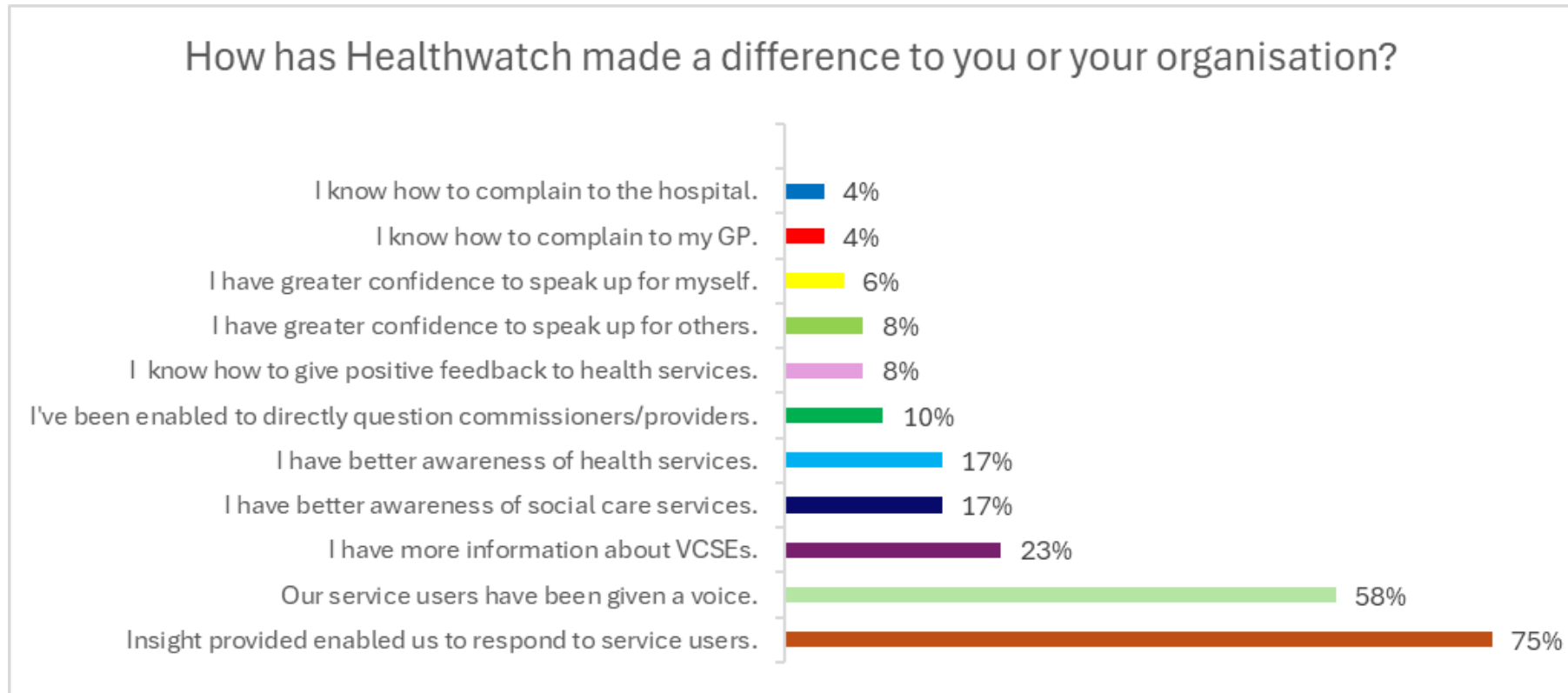


The majority of our stakeholders felt that Healthwatch made a positive impact on their organisation. Namely, the majority either “completely agreed” or “agreed” that:

- Healthwatch provides insight which positively impacts your organisation (46 stakeholders, 88%).
- Healthwatch provides a useful information and signposting service for service users (42 stakeholders, 82%).
- Healthwatch makes a positive contribution to meetings in which your organisation and Healthwatch attends (41 stakeholders, 80%).
- Healthwatch enables service users to speak directly with providers and commissioners of health and social care services (38 stakeholders, 76%).
- Healthwatch provides unique patient views that your organisation would otherwise not have access to (39 stakeholders, 76%).

Other ways Healthwatch makes a positive difference

Our stakeholders told us the ways that Healthwatch makes a difference to their organisation.



A large majority (75%) of stakeholders felt that insight provided by Healthwatch enabled them to respond to their service users. Over half (58%) said that through Healthwatch, their service users had been given a voice.

Healthwatch has also made a difference to our stakeholders as individuals. Almost one quarter (23%) felt they had more information about community support and voluntary sector organisations; 17% felt they had better awareness of health services (including how to access them) and the same percentage of stakeholders had better awareness of social care services.

Healthwatch had also made a positive difference to smaller numbers of stakeholders in these ways:

- 10% had been enabled to directly question commissioners and providers.
- 8% had learnt how to give positive feedback to health services.
- 8% had greater confidence in speaking up for others they cared for.
- 6% had greater confidence in speaking up for themselves.
- 4% had learnt how to make a complaint to their GP.
- 4% had learnt how to complain to the hospital about their care.

We also had six stakeholders that selected “other” reasons Healthwatch had made a difference to them, and these are listed below as quotes.

A key difference Healthwatch makes is through its independent role in raising the patient voice and challenging providers and commissioners:

“Healthwatch provides essential independent route for patient voice that supports constructive challenge and is a great partner for us to work with as a team focused on reducing health inequalities.”

“Healthwatch has contributed to the design and development of services by bringing the patient voice to the commissioning process.”

“Healthwatch provides a valuable role in holding statutory organisations to account and offering some objectivity to decision-making processes that are primarily otherwise led by these statutory organisations.”

“Healthwatch shares views and difficulties dental patients face and current reality on the ground from a patients’ perspective.”

Our stakeholders also shared these ways that Healthwatch had made a difference:

“Healthwatch worked in coproduction in shared areas of interest.”

“Healthwatch has provided amazing and supportive volunteering and training opportunities to students, allowing them to gain valuable relevant sector knowledge, experience and skills and enhancing future employability.”

Making more of an impact

Twelve stakeholders also provided us with some feedback to our question of what more we could do to make a difference.

Some of these stakeholders made suggestions for improvements:

“More of an introduction into what they do ahead of any co-working.”

"It would be good for Healthwatch to publicise more how they feed into commissioning arrangements and in relation to equality and diversity. I also wonder if there is potentially an opportunity to increase their role in relation to the voluntary and community sector and co-ordination."

"Help researchers from the universities and local NHS trusts connect to communities more."

"Whilst this is very specific to the sessions we hosted; I think expectations of the participants should have been managed a bit more prior to the webinars. A few of the participants used this forum as an opportunity to complain about their specific circumstance or experience with the NHS. None of the hosts were clinical or could respond to what they were asking as it would be inappropriate. Often participants went on lengthy tangents explaining what had happened to them, and whilst we want people to bring forward ideas and criticisms based on their personal experience, more focus needed to be on the task at hand on occasion. This is not to discredit the workshops overall as they were fantastic and the participants were engaged and brilliant, but there was often time wasted on storytelling which wasn't managed."

"Have more informal opportunities for discussion outside the formal governance meetings."

"It would be great to maybe do some information sharing events to Community Base tenants to help them to understand Healthwatch if they don't already."

Some stakeholders used this opportunity to compliment Healthwatch and/or to express that there was nothing more we needed or could do:

"I am not sure Healthwatch could have done any more within the resources they have."

"I found the input from the Healthwatch person we worked with fantastic, he was thoughtful, considered, and reasonable and found the time for a smile and kind word through a complex process. Thank you for your support."

"None - The service we receive from Healthwatch is excellent and they have been integral to our programme."

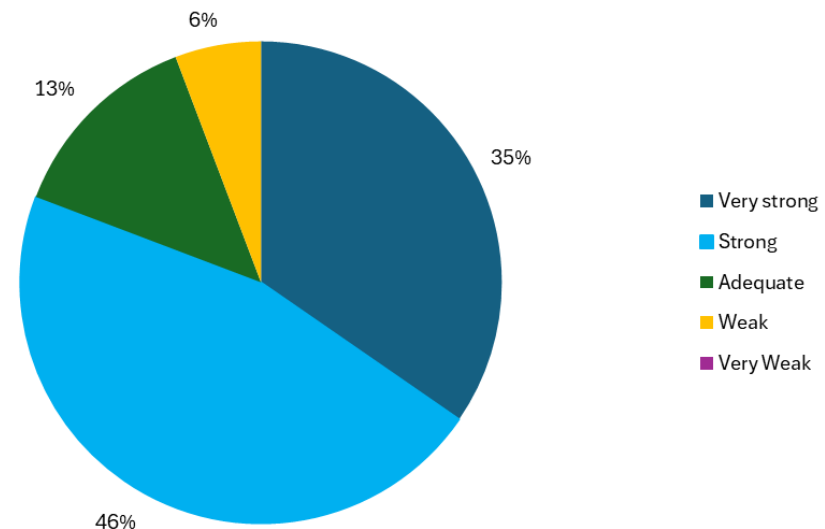
"I've recently worked with a Healthwatch staff member on the new Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service procurement. As someone whose role it is to make sure patient concerns are central to decision-making, I can honestly say that I have never seen a more meticulous, patient-centric contribution than he made. I hope we can work more closely with him and his team in the future."

"Healthwatch are a fantastic organisation to work with, for both us and our students. Please keep us updated on your roles and projects."

D. Our relationship with stakeholders

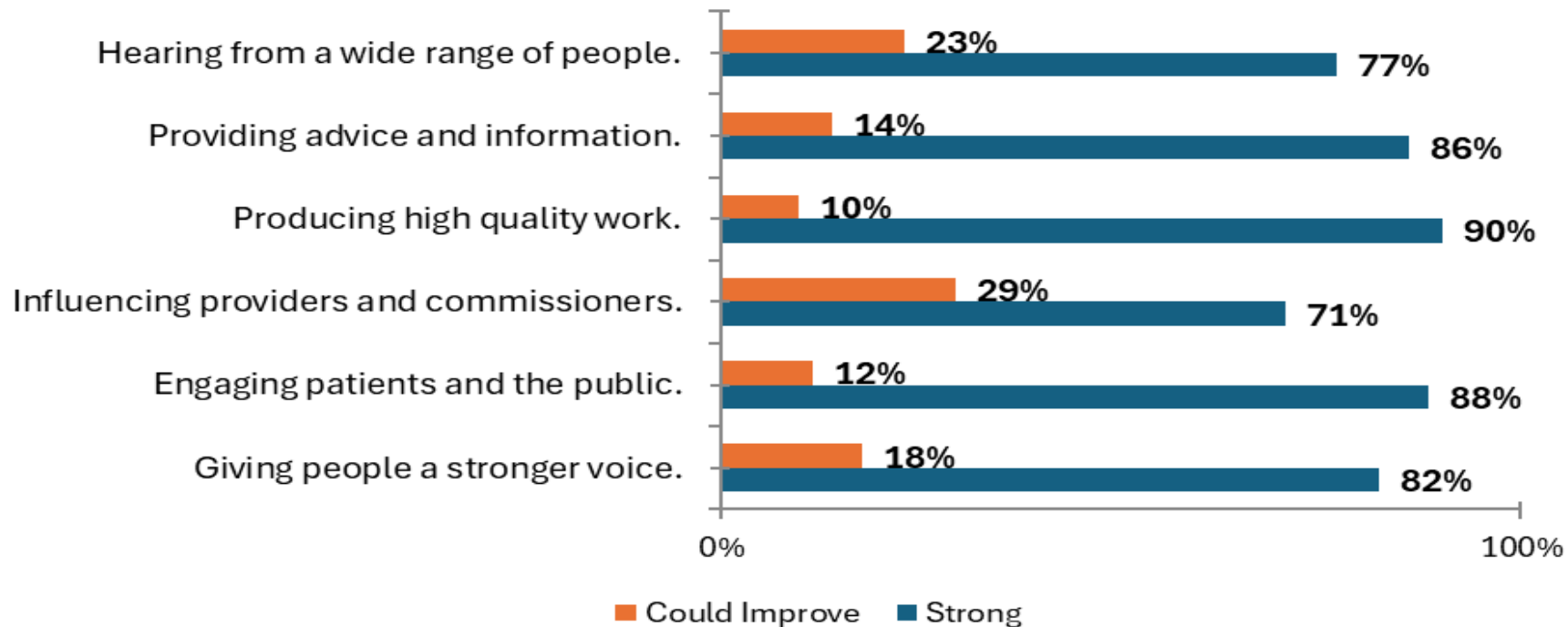
The majority of stakeholders (81%) described their relationship with Healthwatch Brighton and Hove to be either strong (46%) or very strong (35%). 13% of stakeholders felt their relationship with Healthwatch was adequate, while three stakeholders (6%) felt the relationship was weak. No stakeholders felt the relationship with Healthwatch was very weak.

How would you describe the relationship between Healthwatch and your organisation?



How are Healthwatch doing?

Please comment on whether we are doing well in the following areas or we could improve:



The majority of stakeholders felt we were doing “well” in most areas. The highest-ranking areas were as follows:

- Our ability to produce high quality work such as reports and news bulletins (90% “well”; 10% “could improve”).
- Our ability to engage with patients and the public (88% “well” vs. 12% “could improve”).

- Our ability to provide advice and information to the public (86% “well”; 14% “could improve”).
- Our ability to give people a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided (82% felt we were doing “well”; 18% felt we “could improve” how we did this).

The two areas where Healthwatch could do the most to improve upon, were as follows:

- Our ability to hear from a wide range of people in terms of age, disability, ethnicity, etc. (77% “well”; 23% “could improve”).
- Our ability to influence those who deliver and design health and care services (71% “well”; 29% “could improve”).

Has Healthwatch made changes since our previous stakeholder survey?

Our previous stakeholder survey. Have any of your recommendations led to the following improvements:				
Answer Choice		Improved	No difference	Response Total
1	More joint public meetings with third sector organisations.	14	11	25
2	Telling you more about what Healthwatch have influenced.	18	7	25
3	More social media activity.	13	12	25
4	More engagement events.	13	10	23
5	More information about Healthwatch on all GP surgery websites.	7	12	19
6	More discussions with Councillors.	5	12	17
7	More involvement with Patient Participation Groups.	10	9	19
8	More information about the Healthwatch role when visiting hospitals.	10	11	21
9	Advertising Healthwatch reports and intelligence more.	13	11	24
10	More engagement with children and young people's views.	8	10	18
11	More work engaging people in care homes.	6	12	18
			<i>answered</i>	29
			<i>skipped</i>	24

In our previous stakeholder survey, stakeholders recommended that Healthwatch do more of some activities. We listened to these comments and asked stakeholders whether they felt we had acted upon these recommendations. Just over half of the stakeholders in this year's survey responded to this question with just under half "skipping" the

question. Some of these stakeholders did not take part in the previous survey and others did not feel they were able to comment on whether we had made these improvements. Some of the additional comments that are given in the next section provide more detailed reasons for this.

The greatest areas of improvement were:

- Telling stakeholders more about what Healthwatch have influenced and what we have changed.
- More joint public meetings with third sector organisations.

Other areas where more stakeholders felt we had improved were:

- More engagement events.
- Advertising Healthwatch reports and intelligence more.
- More social media activity.
- More involvement with Patient Participation Groups.

The areas we needed to improve on the most, and where more stakeholders felt there had been no change were (ranked in order of where more stakeholders felt there was no change versus less stakeholders who felt there had been improvement):

- More discussions with Councillors.
- More work engaging people in care homes.
- More information about Healthwatch on all GP surgery websites to increase patient awareness.
- More information about the Healthwatch role when visiting hospitals and meeting NHS staff (our 'Enter and View' role).
- More engagement with children and young people's views and experiences of health and social care.

E. Additional comments

Stakeholders had some further comments to add about Healthwatch and its work. These are shown below as quotes.

Some stakeholders suggested specific areas for us to focus on:

"Targeting working age population."

"We engaged Healthwatch to do a piece of work for us on a recommendation and also in the knowledge that it was an independent organisation that would avoid bias. It seemed quite costly for us not to have got any evidence that was strong enough to influence change."

Other stakeholders suggested we could do better with raising awareness about our organisation and our work.

"My main comment relates to a previous one - I believe that Healthwatch Brighton and Hove as well as the national organisation has an extremely important role to play as an independent voice in health and social care. What I honestly do not know - is the level of its public awareness and understanding."

"I am sure Healthwatch have undertaken a range of activities since the last survey and I just wonder if this is widely publicised (through newsletters, social media, etc)."

"Would like to better understand how Healthwatch fits in with local health and care research agendas."

"It's difficult to answer as Community Base does not engage directly with Healthwatch work so my answers aren't much of a reflection! It would be great to see what awareness raising we could do here."

"I have always found Healthwatch colleagues supportive and helpful when we have worked together. I am not always sure what activities and pieces of work Healthwatch are doing outside of specific requests we might make i.e. which reports, surveys, engagement events etc."

Several stakeholders used this opportunity to show their appreciation.

"On behalf of our hospital trust, a huge thank you to the Healthwatch teams who have, through engaging support and challenge to us, have enabled the voice of patients to shape what we do and how we care for local people."

"I hope we work with you again in the near future."

"I value the input of Healthwatch on the committee I chair."

"Just to say thank you for the work you do to support us and ensure the patient voice is embedded into our programmes of work."

"I have worked closely with Healthwatch over the past year, in particular, I have continued to work with them on dental and other health issues. As ever, their expertise, experience and professionalism have been invaluable to me in my work scrutinising Ministers. I look forward to continuing to cooperate in the coming year and doing what I can to ensure their voice as an independent champion for those needing health and social care services in Brighton and Hove is properly heard."

"Thank you to all the excellent Healthwatch team!"

"Healthwatch Brighton and Hove are a great organisation to partner with. The team who works there are passionate, communicate well and are inclusive."

"Our organisation has a really strong relationship with Healthwatch, and we hugely value their assistance and support in the work we undertake."

"I have had increased engagement with Healthwatch through our partnership, which has always been positive, and I would regard them as a trusted partner that we are confident to signpost people to and utilise insights from."

"I value the engagement."

"Thank you for supporting our students at the University of Brighton!"

"The Healthwatch staff member we work with is always extremely helpful, professional and an asset to Healthwatch."

Two stakeholders provided comments that were specific to the survey.

"QUESTION 10 was very difficult to answer because in most cases I needed to answer, 'I don't know' but this wasn't an option so I answered, 'no change' which is probably not correct but I'm not aware of it."

"Perhaps some questions on the survey are n/a rather than made no difference for me."

F. Conclusion

We received feedback on our organisation and the work we do from 53 stakeholders. A large majority (79%) had worked in partnership with us and over half had attended meetings either run or attended by Healthwatch.

There was a high awareness of our organisation amongst stakeholders, with all of them (100%) being aware of the role we play in speaking to patients, and over 90% aware of our independence from the NHS and our role in gauging patient views of health and social care services. Again, a large majority were aware of our roles in holding providers and commissioners to account, reporting, and providing recommendations to improve local services and signposting.

In raising further awareness, a core recommendation was for us to increase our collaborative work with others. This concurs with our inclusion of more partnership work which we had already included in our workplan for the year ahead.

Most of our stakeholders felt that Healthwatch had made a positive impact, by providing unique views and insight. Also, by our contribution made in meetings, our signposting function, and enabling patients to engage directly with providers and commissioners. Some suggested specific ways that we could make a difference, for example publicising more how we influence commissioning decisions, supporting health and care transformative processes. While others felt we were already doing all we could do.

Most stakeholders (81%) felt their relationship with us was strong. Many felt that Healthwatch was doing well with producing high quality work, engaging well with the public, providing good advice, and influencing and challenging in order to seek improvements to the health and social care services. Some stakeholders felt we could improve on hearing from a wider range of patients. This fits well with our endeavour this year to further our engagement from lesser heard groups by collaboratively working with partners. This may also improve our ability to influence providers and commissioners with the decisions they make – another area that stakeholders felt we could improve upon.

Since our last stakeholder survey, we have maintained our strong relationship with stakeholders, our impact on service provision and commission, our ability to influence in meetings and our role in ensuring patients have the opportunity to engage directly with providers and commissioners. Many stakeholders took the opportunity to compliment the work we are doing and share their appreciation for our role. However, as with every review, there are areas we could improve upon, and it is good to see that the areas suggested by stakeholders are ones that we have already thought about and incorporated in our work plans for the coming year.

In conclusion, although the findings are generally positive, the comments provided are valuable in helping to influence our future work as follows:

- Follow-up our activities to demonstrate our impact through influencing commissioning decisions and supporting transformations in health and social care.
- Increase our collaboration with local Councillors. This is based on one of the recommendations from the previous stakeholder survey that we are actively working on.
- More work engaging people in care homes. This is also based on one of the recommendations from the previous stakeholder survey.

- Collaborate with other Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs) to engage with a wider range of people (by age, disability, ethnicity etc), especially those facing health inequalities.
- Build on opportunities to raise awareness of the role of Healthwatch, such as events run with Community Base tenants and publicising Healthwatch in GP surgery websites.

These areas mentioned above will influence the forthcoming Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Communications and Engagement Strategies and some of these have already been considered in putting together our work plan for the year ahead.

We thank our stakeholders who completed the survey and also those that provide all round feedback on our services.

G. Next Steps

Looking forward, and in response to the feedback received through the Stakeholder Survey, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will look to incorporate the following steps into our year ahead.

We will **continue to do** the following:

- Foster strong relationships with existing stakeholders, and build relationships with new stakeholders, ensuring we maintain their awareness of our work and our role.
- Provide insight and patient views, inputting into stakeholder meetings where relevant.
- Provide good advice and signposting for service users and provide opportunities for them to directly respond to health and social care providers and commissioners.
- Provide high quality and evidence-based insight through reports, and informative and relevant news bulletins.
- Engage well with the public.
- Put people's voices at the front of our work to influence and challenge providers and commissioners.

We will **aim to do more** of the following:

- Review our brand, our values and publicise these widely, increasing awareness of our role.
- Publicise our work at information sharing events, such as at Community Base.

- Create new collaborations with NHS, Local Authority including Councillors, VCSEs, researchers, and Stakeholders, ensuring anyone we collaborate with understands what we do ahead of working together so that expectations are realistic.
- Increase our presence and therefore influence with providers and commissioners, making this role transparent to the general public.
- Widen the range of service users we engage with, increasing the diversity (age, gender, ethnicity etc.) of our engagement.
- Encourage GP practices to provide signposting for Healthwatch through their websites.