

Putting a face to unmet need

Project brief

Find out about the project and how to apply

About the project

Healthwatch England are undertaking a project focused on the issue of unmet need in social care.

We want to publish three sets of in-depth case studies to coincide with these interventions. These case studies will show the people who are overlooked by the current social care system, and the impact that this has on their lives.

We are asking five local Healthwatch to reach out to three people and create in-depth case studies about each of them. The final output for this project will be a long-read blog featuring the case studies.

What we'd like participating local Healthwatch to do

We would like you to work closely with your local authority to identify people who have recently had a social care assessment, and conduct in-depth, one-to-one interviews with these people to submit as case studies.

The case studies must be submitted by certain dates so that Healthwatch England can use them alongside our planned interventions. More information about this can be found in the “timelines” section of this brief.

We would like you to produce:

- One case study of a carer who has recently had a carers assessment
- One case study of a working age adult (18 - 65) who has recently had a social care assessment
- One case study of an older adult (65+) who has recently had a social care assessment

Interviews can be carried out over multiple days. We want you to focus on understanding the person's journey through the social care system as a whole, and the holistic impact that this has on their lives. Given that we are asking for only three case studies, they must be detailed and high-quality.

We will form a working group of participating local Healthwatch and have regular check-ins with this working group. Healthwatch England will also produce discussion guides to support your interviews.

Who we'd like you to speak to

We want to hear from people who have been impacted by unmet social care need, which includes both individuals needing social care and carers.

It is important to note that whilst much of the conversation around social care focuses on older people, just under half of the expenditure on social care is on working-age adults. The nature of the care required by those over 65 compared those under is very different, with the former most commonly requiring physical support, while the latter is most often learning disability support.

Therefore, there are three groups we need to include in this research:

1. Carers

2. Working age adult
3. Older adult (65+)

Reaching people whose needs are going unmet is not straightforward, as, by definition, they will not feature on lists of service or support recipients. To overcome this, **we will focus on people who have recently had a social care assessment**. We will deem people who have had an assessment and not received any care or support following it as being examples of unmet need. Those who have had an assessment and been granted some care and support are also of interest, both as a comparison group and as case studies of whether people get the right care and support.

We will ask two of the participating local Healthwatch to interview people from these groups who feel that they did receive support when they underwent a social care assessment. We will ask three of the participating local Healthwatch to interview people from these groups who did not receive adequate support. This is so we can compare and contrast those whose needs were met, and those whose needs were not.

We would like you to **ensure that at least one of their case studies is from an ethnic minority background, and that all 3 are not of the same gender. We also ask that at least one case study is from a background of relative social deprivation**. This could be economic deprivation, the result of lower income or geography (e.g. rural areas), or communities who experience a poorer quality of care due to other characteristics such as ethnicity or language barriers. When writing your proposal, it may be useful to refer to the [English Indices of Deprivation](#).

If possible, given the nature of the group concerned, it would be preferable for local Healthwatch to conduct interviews in-person. However, we recognise that this may not be possible given the ongoing level of COVID-19 cases.

Participant Anonymity

We recognise that we may be discussing sensitive topics, but because one of the aims of this project is to put a face to unmet needs in social care, we ask that you interview participants who are happy to be identified.

We may also have the opportunity to use these case studies in media coverage at a later stage in the project, so we ask that participants are happy for their case studies to be used in media, and/or to take part themselves.

Interview topics

We will be producing a discussion guide to aid your interviews and offer specific questions/topics we would like you to cover. These will include the impact of participants not having their needs met on:

- physical health
- mental health
- ability to work and finances
- ability to carry out day-to-day tasks (including providing care, for carers)
- social interaction

Timelines

As mentioned previously, we would like you to submit your case studies by three checkpoints. The timeline for this work is as follows:

w/c 1 st November	Meeting with participating LHW and kick-off
November - Mid December	Identify people for case studies and first round of interviews
Friday 10 th December	Submit case study 1 to HWE
1 st January onwards	Second round of interviews
Friday 4 th February	Submit case study 2 to HWE
7 th February onwards	Final round of interviews
Friday 11 th March	Submit case study 3 to HWE

Funding on offer

To support this work, participating local Healthwatch will receive a grant in two parts:

- £2,500 to carry out the work
- £500 to fund additional support for participants, whether this is support for those with additional communication needs, advocates, or translation costs, and incentives. This will need to be ring-fenced for this purpose.
- The total funding on offer is therefore £3,000

What your proposal needs to cover

Interested local Healthwatch should submit a proposal of no more than 500 words outlining how they would fulfil the project brief locally.

Your proposal should address the following:

- How will you recruit participants from the three groups we've outlined? Due to the project timeline, we are particularly keen to hear from local Healthwatch who have existing links to networks that will help you reach target groups.
- How will you ensure that you have participants of different genders, at least one participant from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background and reach someone from a background of relative social deprivation?
- Have you got previous experience on similar projects e.g. focusing on social care, and/or running interviews and focus groups?
- What risks there might be to successful local delivery of the project, and how will you mitigate these risks?
- Are you expecting that your local Healthwatch contract will be up for tender during the course of this project?

Healthwatch England will also be using the data from the Annual Survey to inform our selection.

Reporting

Once the project has ended, we are happy for you to use the case studies you have gathered for non-public-facing influencing work, such as sharing with your partners, but we ask that you do not publish them directly.

Submitting your application

Please email your proposal to lily.groom@healthwatch.co.uk by 5 PM Friday 21 October.

For more information, email lily.groom@healthwatch.co.uk or will.howard@healthwatch.co.uk