

A guide to social media

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About

With over 57 million people in the UK using social media platforms, it has quickly become **an important source of news for people**, especially younger people. Therefore, it is now more important than ever to have an active presence on channels and promote your Healthwatch, answer questions from the public and seek feedback on services.

This guide aims to help you understand:

- More about the most popular social platforms and what they are best used for;
- How to increase your engagement using social media, and
- Our recommended approach to managing your channels.

Getting the most out of each channel

An overview of main channels

Channel	Audience focus	Best for	Not ideal for
Facebook	Public	Generating discussion Survey responses Sharing content – advice and information articles	Organic reach – the platform is set up so that you need to pay to reach new audiences.
Twitter	Professionals & stakeholders	Sharing latest news / research / advice Interacting with stakeholders Highlighting involvement with professional partners Promoting outcomes and impact of your work.	Posts that need a longer life span – posts disappear very quickly so anything that needs to be around longer needs re-posting.

Instagram	Public	Image based posts – emotive images Growing relationships with partners	Posts that need specific links – although you can type out web addresses, they won't be clickable links in the post.
LinkedIn	Professionals & stakeholders	Sharing latest news / research / reports Growing relationships with external partners Promoting outcomes and impact of your work.	Generating discussion – This is not a conversation platform, but one where people like to read and learn.
YouTube	Public	Getting videos seen by a wider audience Brand recognition	Advice and information – it is full of misinformation so brands are less trusted on this site.

Other channels you may want to consider

TikTok	Public	<p>**Important to note – before using this channel it is wise to check with your local authority if they allow the use of TikTok**</p> <p>Getting videos seen by a wider audience Brand recognition</p>	<p>Advice and information – it is full of misinformation, so brands are less trusted on this site.</p> <p>Challenges around appropriateness of content – TikTok is a more light-hearted, humorous platform which is difficult to navigate when talking about serious topics</p>
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Threads	Public Possibly Professionals & stakeholders	Sharing latest news / research / advice Interacting with stakeholders Highlighting involvement with professional partners Promoting outcomes and impact of your work.	Not being launched in EU yet due to unresolved privacy issues Available only on Mobile apps Brand new app so unknown territory of how it will progress as a social media platform
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More about each platform

Facebook

Facebook is a community-based platform. 66% of the UK population are active Facebook users. If your content is relevant, Facebook is a great platform to get feedback or encourage people in your community to share their experiences. Facebook adverts and promoted posts are also a highly effective way of targeting your messages at specific audiences.

- Longer posts work well – people spend more time on this platform than on Twitter.
- Facebook puts a significant emphasis on visual content like videos and images, so try to avoid text-only posts.
- Facebook posts with images and videos get significantly better engagement than text only posts.

Post type	Average engagement rate
Video post	6.04%
Photo post	4.36%
Link post	2.78%
Text only post	1.66%

- Videos content posts boast the highest engagement rate on Facebook. It is shared by people **89 times** more than other types of social media content.
- If you use videos on Facebook, ensure you optimise them for better results. Videos in Facebook are automatically played on mute, so ensure you have captions or a text-based video. Facebook statistics show that **the first three seconds** of a video delivers about 47% of the value, and the first ten seconds delivers 74% of the value – so ensure you get your brand and message across early in the video.
- Blogs – sharing people’s experiences works as this is much more of a sharing, community platform. People respond by sharing stories of their own.
- Advice – Use the advice and information articles on your website; if people can get value out of the post, they will be more likely to engage with the content.
- Recommended only to post once or twice a day as a post has an average life span of six hours, but 75% of the impressions happen in the first two and a half hours.
- 85% of all videos on Facebook are watched silently. Making sure you optimise your videos with subtitles before posting is essential.
- Engage with your audience – use comments, reactions and private messages to help you connect with your audience. It would be best if you listened to what they say and respond appropriately.
- The tone of voice used for the copy should be friendly with simple language but still getting to your point.
- Your Facebook page should be set up as a business page, not a personal profile. It’s against Facebook’s terms of service to use a personal account to represent Healthwatch.
- Using Facebook advertising is an important and cost-effective way to increase engagement. You can use Facebook target your communications, test different messages, and then put money behind posts that are delivering the best return.
- Respond to comments. Audiences who engage with your posts want you to engage in return. Sometimes a simple comment back or a like is all that is required. It encourages audiences to continue to interact with you.

Twitter

Twitter is fast paced, with content lasting a matter of minutes before it gets lost from the news feed. People go on here for the latest news. Conversations are often from people with a high amount of interest in a specific topic.

- Posts need to be short as the platform restricts you to 280 characters. Be clear and direct.
- Opening with a statistic or question works well.
- Include hashtags, but a maximum of two or three in one post. Research relevant hashtags or look at what's trending. If you're scheduling a post in advance, then be sure to use the correct hashtags for specific days such as awareness days. Also remember there are day-specific hashtags such as #ThrowbackThursdays or #TuesdayTips
- Twitter images are of a smaller size than other channels and don't resize well. Be sure to use an image that fits the Twitter dimensions – 1024 X 512 px.
- You can post multiple times a day, as the average life span of a message is **20 minutes**.
- Are there any relevant people to tag in the message to help spread the word? You could do this for the higher reaching channels, e.g. NHS England, Alzheimer's society
- Videos are growing in popularity on Twitter. 32% of users prefer watching videos instead of reading text and go to Twitter for this purpose.

Instagram

Instagram is commonly considered a 'younger adults' platform with the average audience age being 18-34. The audience range continues to expand, and more businesses are joining. It is a visual-based platform, so people respond well to 'nice' looking images and positive content.

- Make sure the image is emotive and relatable. Images used on this platform are square – make sure you resize your images before uploading them.
- People will read longer posts here too. Positive content tends to do the best.
- Hashtags – statistics show that posts that use nine or more hashtags on an Instagram post get 2.5 times more engagement than posts using only one. However, using so many hashtags can leave a post feeling cluttered, unappealing or looking like spam. There are two options to avoid this:
 - Add your hashtags as the first comment. Have the list ready to go and then once you have made your post live, comment with the hashtags. If you use a scheduling tool like Sprout Social or Hootsuite these let you add the first comment as you schedule the post.
 - Use five full stops on new lines after your text. After the punctuation at the end of your last sentence, hit enter and then type a full stop and hit enter

again. Repeat five times to move your hashtags down out of view. For example:

“Our latest report looks at why people might have been digitally excluded from care during the pandemic. This includes lack of digital skills, disability, language barriers, affordability of technology, older age and lack of interest in using technology and going online.

Patients need to be able to choose the type of appointment that suits them best in a post-COVID world. Read our report (link in bio) for our full findings.

[#Healthwatch](#) [#DigitalExclusion](#) [#RemoteAppointments](#) [#GPAccess](#) [#AccessToCare](#) [#DigitalAppointments](#) [#DigitalHealthcare](#) [#NHS](#) [#GP](#) [#COVID](#) [#Coronavirus](#)”

- Find bloggers or other organisations, such as local voluntary organisations or partners you've worked with that might be interested in your content and tag them in your picture
- You can't add clickable links to each post. Instead, you can have one link in your bio. Within your post you can then say "**Link in bio**" to direct people to further information. You will need to change this link so that it relates to your post each time. You can also change the descriptor in your bio, should you think that this is appropriate too. Alternatively, you might want to use something like Link Tree to house your most common calls to action.
- Recommended to post a minimum of three to five times a week, and no more than one to two times a day.
 - Stories are recommended to be posted more frequently, posting a few stories a day is a great way to keep your audience engaged.
- Videos and reels are becoming more popular and generate more engagement. Reels get an average of 40% more engagement on Instagram than regular posts. Spending a little extra time creating some short videos or reels on Canva to post will help your overall engagement.
- Make use of interactive stickers to engage your audiences. Instagram has plenty of interactive story stickers you can use to drive engagement with your posts. For example, use the quiz sticker to ask your followers questions about a certain topic, including multiple-choice questions. The poll sticker and the questions sticker can also be used to ask for your followers' opinions.
- Carousel posts have the highest engagement rate of all Instagram post types. They are also great for conveying in-depth topics to your audiences, rather than overwhelming audiences with excessively long copies.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a professional networking site and is used for people to share and seek information that relates to their roles.

- As this is a professional based audience, think about what content would interest a professional. It could be the top lines from a report, an account of a patient's experience or outcome and impact stories about your work etc.
- You can include hashtags to help boost the post's reach. Add these at the end of the post, after a couple of spaces. Use a maximum of three per post.
- Longer posts work well on LinkedIn and tend to perform better than shorter snippet posts. The limit on a post is 1,300 characters. Writing enough to trigger the 'see more' link is advisable. LinkedIn knows there's something of interest in the post when viewers click it, and it will perform better in their algorithms.
- Statistics suggest that posts get better engagement than articles (LinkedIn offers functionality to write articles which can be a lot longer than a post). However, we have recently started testing articles from our own account and are having a high engagement rate. It's worth testing these with a current and relevant topic to see if your own audience respond well to them.
- Unlike other platforms, text-only posts tend to outperform posts that contain images and videos, but it is worth testing text vs pictures posts with your audiences. We find text only posts receive both a high engagement rate and click through rate.
- Keep the copy direct filled with facts and a concrete message or results. Provide value for your readers. Use headlines that are catchy, get straight to the point and end with a strong call-to-action button (such as a link to your website).
- LinkedIn algorithms don't like external links that take users away from the platform – so use these sparingly and only when needed. Alternately, try posting your link as the first comment on the post. We have had great success adding the link as the first comment and found it does boost our click through rate.
- Recommended posting once a day at most, as posts can have a life span of **24 hours**. However, engagement is most likely to start within the first few hours after posting.
- Engage with others. A great way to boost LinkedIn engagement is to like and comment under other's posts – they're more likely to do the same on yours.

YouTube

The popularity of YouTube has increased dramatically recently as people turned to videos to replace face to face events during the COVID-19 pandemic. YouTube in the UK currently has around 48 million logged-in monthly users. Remember you can also watch videos on YouTube without creating an account.

- YouTube is popular across all age ranges, unlike many other channels which drop off in the older age groups.
- YouTube is the second most visited website – only outperformed by its parent website Google.
- Engagement is just as important as with other channels. YouTube uses engagement to help determine where videos rank in its search results. However, unlike other social media site algorithms it takes the “session time” of a user into account. Your videos need to hook the user and get them to spend longer watching the video than on other social media channels.
- The length of your videos is very important. As session time is monitored on your videos, it’s important to get the percentage of the video a user watches as high as possible. It is therefore very important to grab their attention quickly and get the key message across quickly. A user spends on average 20 seconds on a webpage, so the **first ten seconds** of your video are critical.
- YouTube videos show up in 70% of Google searches – so make sure your content is optimised for online searches:
 - Titles and descriptions – Include target keywords in both your titles and descriptions
 - Mention keywords in your video – where possible mention your key words in the video as this can help YouTube better understand your video.
 - Categories – use categories to help YouTube get a better understanding of who to show your video to.
 - Tags – Add tags to your videos to give YouTube more context about your video. Use can use multiple tags for one video where needed.
 - Add closed captions where possible to make the videos as accessible as possible.
- To help increase engagement ensure you have a clear call to action at the end of each video. What do you want the viewer to do next? This might be as simple as asking them to subscribe to your channel, comment on the video, or providing them with a website link to learn more about your work.
- Customise the thumbnails for your videos. YouTube will automatically add a screenshot from your video if you don’t, which can often be blurry or someone

pulling an odd face. Creating your own thumbnail makes your video look more appealing and professional and statistics show that this can increase engagement with a video by up to 154%.

- Embed your YouTube videos on your website. This is a great opportunity to promote your video content on your website and increase views of your YouTube videos.
- Consider creating YouTube Shorts. They are between 15–60 seconds long and encourage viewers to check out your longer videos. Shorts generate over 30 billion daily views.

Other platforms to consider

TikTok

TikTok is an immersive mobile video content platform. It boasts over 19 million users in the UK and is the fastest growing social media platform. It can be a useful platform but should be approached with caution. **It has been banned on central government devices because of security concerns. It is wise to check with your local authority to their approach to this channel.**

- TikTok is largely popular with ages 16–30, although other ages consume this app too. Therefore, it is a good platform to reach a younger audience and expand your audience base.
- The length of your videos can be either **15 seconds, 60 seconds, 3 minutes, or 10 minutes.**
- Engagement rates are particularly high for this platform, usually sitting around 5–10%.
- Although TikTok is often used for humorous or light-hearted content, it does have a large education and information hungry audience. The challenge is how to convey serious topics in an appropriate way on this platform.
- If you are planning on starting a TikTok account, we would recommend creating a profile on a trial basis and testing different types of content. Topics like volunteering may come across best.
- Creative content performs best on TikTok, why not try a vlog style video such as a 'Spend the day with me' with one of the volunteers or local Healthwatch employees.
- A minimum of one to two posts a week is recommended to grow your account and to stay on the algorithm.

Threads

Threads is a new social media platform set up from Instagram. It is set up to resemble Twitter, allowing users to post text, images, or videos, as well as like, share or repost content. It is designed for public conversations. The algorithm focuses on what public conversation you want to be in – created for back-and-forth conversation.

- Posts can be 500 characters long and include links, photos, and videos up to five minutes long.
- Hashtags don't work. You can only search account names. This makes content more niche and limits discoverability.
- Allows you to use your Instagram login and import your followers across platforms.
- Threads has been branded Meta's 'Twitter killer'. It aims to be an open friendly platform, if successful it could takeover Twitter as Twitter is notorious for spreading hatred and volatile content and comments.
- As threads is based of **conversation starters** more than statements, think about posting some interactive content such as;
 - What are your experiences of health and social care? We want to hear from you.
 - People are telling us ____, has this ever happened to you?
 - Have you ever thought about volunteering?
 - What would you like improved about your GP (or dentist/pharmacy/emergency services etc)
 - What's your main concern when it comes to your healthcare?
- It's important to note that as this platform is so new, it is good to test it out but be prepared to walk away if it isn't the correct platform for Healthwatch.

Building engagement

How do you define success?

How you define success will depend on what your aims are, but we define good social media engagement as:

- Social media activity that translates into our target audience acting.
- The quality of our response to public feedback and questions.

Engagement with content

This means rather than judging success only by our reach and how many 'likes' our posts get; we are also interested in the proportion of people who then act. Did they click on a link? Did they leave a comment? Did they watch our video?

Engagement with content is a valuable measure and building engagement is an essential part of building a successful social media approach.

Every platform has its own insights tool. For Facebook it's the 'Meta business suite' for Instagram it's 'Insight's. Make use of it. It's a great way to see which posts your audiences responded the best to. You can also see who the demographic of your audiences is.

Customer service

Research has shown that 63% of customers expect companies to offer customer service via their social media channels. **90%** of social media users have used these platforms to communicate with a business.

Therefore, it is also important not to forget that an important part of engagement is the speed and quality of your response to questions, queries and comments.

More reasons why engagement is important

Social media is now an important news source for people, especially younger audiences. Therefore, it is now more important than ever to spread relevant information and engage with audiences.

Engagement on social media is also essential because:

- Increased engagement and good customer service boosts your **brand's awareness and trust**. Someone simply liking or following your page won't show up on anyone else's newsfeed. However, if they like, comment on, or share your content, this will get your content seen by new audiences. Good customer service also makes recommendations more likely. Remember if your staff comment on your posts, people can research them and discover through your website that they work for you – so be careful that they don't post glowing endorsements which if discovered they are employees might destroy your credibility.
- Engagement plays a significant role in the algorithms which affect the visibility of your content. The more people who interact with your posts, the more your content will appear in newsfeeds. If no one interacts with a post, platforms assume no one is interested in it.

Tips to boost engagement with your content

- Create content that your audience wants to engage with. Think about which audience uses each channel and what they will be interested in. Use topical issues in the media or post helpful information like your advice and information articles on your website.
- Respond to every single comment or post people leave on your page. Typical responses for local Healthwatch could be:
 - Directing people to your online feedback form to leave specific feedback about services.
 - Explanations about who Healthwatch are and their role.
 - What you do with the feedback you collect.
 - Responding to advice and information queries.
- Sharing content is a great way to boost the number of people who see your content. You can increase your reach if you encourage peer-to-peer sharing of your content. The table below shows how having people share your content on LinkedIn and Facebook is exceedingly valuable in increasing your reach.

	% of audience reached when you post from your business account	% of an individual's contacts reached when they share your content
LinkedIn	21.7%	49%
Facebook	0.47%	28%
Twitter	11.4%	11.4%
Instagram	13.9%	13%

- Set up an auto-response to people who direct message you on Facebook. This helps keeps your engagement rate high, as it triggers a response, and lets the person know when you'll be able to get back to them setting their expectations.
- Going 'live' on Facebook can get up to six times more interactions than regular videos, so it is an excellent way to boost engagement.
- Using good quality photos or videos to accompany your posts. Photos and videos are more emotive and relatable than graphics.
- Maintain an active presence – the more positive engagements you regularly have with your audience, the better. Try not to have a week off – keep it consistent.

- Using hashtags can help boost brand awareness by increasing the visibility of your posts. Remember, do not use too many, and for most channels, restrict these to the end of your posts.
- Follow local accounts to start building relationships with them across different platforms. This could be local support groups, your stakeholders, or local media.
- Use Direct Messages to encourage influential people or organisations in your area to share your content.

Branding

No matter which local Healthwatch people come across, they expect to see a consistent brand that they can trust.

How your social media looks

You should use the Healthwatch visual guidelines to ensure your social media accounts are on brand. This includes using the correct colour palette, font and photography style. We also recommend that you can use your local Healthwatch logo as your profile picture across your social media accounts to maintain consistency.

We have a range of branded templates which you can personalise on the Communications Centre. These are correctly sized for cover photos and posts, depending on what you require. You can also download hundreds of free photos from our online photo library.

We would recommend opening a Canva account if you do not already have one. On Canva you can create templates for your posts. You can lock the position of the logo and coloured curves so that you maintain consistency across your posts. This helps to make your local Healthwatch look more professional and instils trust in audiences.

How your social media sounds

Anyone posting on your accounts should be familiar with Healthwatch brand messaging and our tone of voice. Our brand messaging was created and tested with the public to ensure it resonates with them and addresses their concerns.

Remember, no matter what we're saying, it should always be evident that it's Healthwatch speaking.

Some key points to consider:

- Healthwatch is a people's brand. When writing, always try to write as you'd speak. Be conversational, keep it light and don't try to be too formal.
- Refer to yourself as '**we**' or '**our**' not as 'Healthwatch Anytown'.
- Avoid using jargon and acronyms, but instead use **plain English** that is easy to understand.
- Think about the audience you are writing for – the public or professionals. You will write differently depending on who your audience is.
- Cynicism and apathy are our enemy. So be exact and tell people how things have changed as a direct result of service user feedback. We need to ensure that people can trust us to get the job done and that we do have the sway to drive change.
- How can you uncover the emotional drivers and tell stories that capture people's hearts? Can you put people at the heart of your social media messages and let them express the importance of Healthwatch?
- Ultimately, when someone reads your post, we're looking for them to think, 'that's exactly how I feel...' , believe that we understand and share their own experiences.

Social media management

Access to your social media accounts

It is important to consider who you will give access to your social channels and how to achieve this. Each platform has different management systems.

- Facebook – Administration access to your business page is granted to individual profiles. The profile you link to must be a person's real account, not a second / work only account set up in their name according to Facebook terms and conditions. Once an admin monitors the business page, anything they post will be from the business, not their profile.
- Twitter – You can give administration access to any staff member/volunteer by giving them the account username and password to log in as Healthwatch. Once logged in as Healthwatch, this person can Tweet / Retweet as Healthwatch.
- Instagram – You can grant anyone access by giving them the username and password to log in. Once logged in as Healthwatch, they will post / comment as Healthwatch. You can switch accounts on the Instagram website and app but accounts are kept completely separate.

- LinkedIn – Admin access to your business page is linked to personal LinkedIn accounts. Once an admin monitors the business page, they post / comment as Healthwatch.

It is crucial to know, at all times, exactly who has access to your social media accounts. Remember, not all staff may need access, and it's vital to remove people's access and update your passwords when staff have left. It's also important to security store your passwords and to regularly change these passwords.

One way to can better manage access is by using a free or paid-for social media management system.

Having a social media policy

It's important to consider whether your local Healthwatch needs to have a social media policy for staff to refer to around what they should and should not do regarding social media.

A policy might include things like:

- Whether staff can use personal social media accounts whilst at work.
- Rules about posting on behalf of your organisation from personal accounts.
- Information about making political statements, breaking copyright or discriminatory remarks.
- Rules about posting from personal accounts defamatory content or content that criticises partner organisations.
- Guidance around deleting or ignoring comments and correcting or removing misleading or false content.
- Help with dealing with vulnerable adults or safeguarding issues.
- Outline any potential disciplinary actions should their posts affect your company or company's image. It would be best to caution against violating anti-harassment policies or posting something that may make collaboration with your colleagues more difficult. (For example, hate speech against a group that colleagues belong to).

If you want some guidance on creating or reviewing your social media policy, take a look at the [Charity Comms Social Media Policy Template](#).

Due to the fast-changing nature of social media, we recommend that you review your policy **every year**. You can send round to all staff, board and volunteers after each review to keep it fresh in their minds. We would also recommend that the policy is easily accessible to any staff/volunteers who wish to refresh their memory about the policy at any time throughout the year.

Vexatious, offensive and abusive comments

Not all comments you receive on social media will be supportive of Healthwatch and what we are trying to achieve. Whilst it is important to encourage comments on your social media accounts, you should also define the sorts of comments and behaviour you will deem as unacceptable across your channels. Any comments that is likely to cause distress or disruption, without any justified or proper cause can be deemed a vexatious comment. Comments you might want to take action against could include:

- Use of offensive, malicious, disrespectful or defamatory comments, including those that attack a person's character.
- Comments that incite hatred based on religion, race, gender, nationality, sexuality or any other personal characteristic.
- Comments containing spam or third-party advertisements.
- Comments containing libellous comments or those which break the law – for example comments around illegal activity or copyright.
- Requests for information that has already been provided, or to reconsider issues that have already been dealt with.
- Where complying with the request would negatively impact Healthwatch ability to provide their service to others.

We recommend that within your social media policy you have a statement confirming what you will do with these such comments. For example:

"Healthwatch will remove, without notice, offensive or abusive posts from our social media channels. This includes posts that contain swearing, libellous statements, or from malicious or vexatious commentators. Additionally, Healthwatch reserves the right to take any action we consider necessary where derogatory comments are made about Healthwatch or our members of staff or volunteers."

It should be clear within your social media policy what someone should do if they discover a comment or post they think should be removed and who within the organisation this should be escalated to.

Monitoring and posting from corporate accounts

Make some clear rules about monitoring social media accounts. Everyone needs to know whose responsibility it is and what is expected of them.

Have clear guidance on how often you expect channels to be monitored and what steps you want them to take to help boost engagement.

These might include:

- **When your channels will be monitored**

Do you have cover for Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm? Update your audiences when you're going on Christmas break or when your channels will not be monitored so they know not to expect a response.

- **What type of comments you will not accept on your page**

Negative feedback or comments are fine (and useful) but if comments include hate speech, swearing or aggressive behaviour we recommend hiding these so other people do not have to see them. This also counts for things like spam, link baiting or promoting inappropriate material.

- **Sign off process for posts and responses**

Do you need a second person to proofread the content before posting or do you need a manager's sign off? Do you have a social media response cheat sheet to help with responses to common questions?

- **Target response time**

How quickly do you intend to get back to comments within a few days of being posted? What's reasonable with the resource you have?

- **Social scheduling and monitoring**

Do you post directly onto the platform, or do you use a scheduling tool (For example, Sprout Social or Hootsuite)?

- **Planning and delivering content**

Who is responsible for planning the content across your channels?

Accessibility considerations

Hashtags

- Use hashtags in moderation
- Put multi-word hashtags in Camel Case (#CamelCase not #camelcase)
- Place hashtags at the end of posts and tweets when possible
- Place hashtag clouds in the first comment of Instagram posts instead of the caption.

Emojis

- Use in moderation
- Do not use as bullet points

- Avoid putting emojis in the middle of written content
- Stick to default yellow emojis unless a custom skin tone is necessary for context

Images

- Add alt text to all images, including GIFs
- Add alt text for all copy on images that include flattened text (quote cards etc)
- When using images with text (e.g. statements) link out from the post or tweet to a webpage where the full statement is available as readable text. Add alt text to the image
- Check colour contrast on any social media imagery that's produced using this [online contrast checker](#).

Videos

- Add closed captioning to all videos that contain dialogue and/or audio. Closed captioning (CC) and subtitling are both processes of displaying text on a video to provide interpretive information about the dialogue or other audio. Subtitles are intended for viewers who can't understand the language being spoken. Closed captions can be turned on and off.
- Provide a written or audio description of a video if it doesn't contain audio
- Add opening captioning to videos where closed captioning is not possible (Instagram stories, reels etc). Option captions are captions or subtitles that are burned into a video during post-production and always visible. They cannot be turned off by viewers.
- Make live captioning and/or an on-camera interpreter available for live videos

Example social media responses

Who we are what we do?

Healthwatch is your health and social care champion. We make sure local health and social care decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care across [\[insert area\]](#). You can find out more about us on our website [\[insert link\]](#).

Information and signposting

We strive to provide people in our local area the information and advice they need. We would be more than happy to help you access the care you need or listen to your

feedback on services. You can call us on [insert phone number] or email us at [insert email address] or visit the advice and information section on our website [insert link].

Share your views

We collect your views and experiences about using NHS and social care services and listen to the feedback you provide. We then share this anonymous feedback directly with the services, to help improve care as well as sharing the feedback with Healthwatch England, who monitor national trends. We share your feedback anonymously so that it will not affect your care. We would love to hear from you – share your feedback with us today, either by completing our online webform [insert link] or give us a call to discuss your experience on [insert phone number].

How to make a complaint?

We are sorry to hear you have had a negative experience of Healthwatch [insert area]. Please do get in touch to tell us more. You can email us at [insert email address] and we will investigate your complaint. To find out more you can view our complaints policy online at [insert website link].

NHS are already overwhelmed – why are you looking to find more problems?

NHS and social care services like feedback because it helps them understand what is working and what is not. Your view can help services know what you value about your care, spot issues and then find ways to fix things. So please do share your experience if you think services can learn from it. [insert link to webform]

How have Healthwatch made any improvement to health and care services with lasting change?

After a negative experience, it's easy to think that nothing will ever change. But if nobody hears about what you've been through – nothing can change. Thanks to the people who shared their stories with us about [insert topic], last year we were able to [insert impact you achieved].

What does demographic data have to do with my experience of care?

These questions about you are always optional, please don't answer anything that makes you feel uncomfortable. The reason we do ask these questions is to help us understand if there are any differences in peoples experience of care based on particular characteristics. Healthwatch [insert area], like all public organisations, has a legal duty to try and eliminate discrimination and advance equality.

Why do I have to consent to sharing this information?

We want your permission before we store your feedback so that we can analyse it with other similar experiences we have been told about. We also need your permission to share the information you give us anonymously with Healthwatch England, so they are aware of national problems. This will not affect your care, but it is important you understand what we do with the anonymous feedback people share with us. If you would like to know more about our privacy policy, please visit our website [\[insert link\]](#).

Are you affiliated in any way to any political party or any supporters of any political parties?

No. We are an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure local NHS leaders and decision makers listen to your feedback and improve standards of care. Every year we help hundreds of people to access information and advice and help them to share their feedback about services. If you would like to know more about us please visit our website [\[insert link\]](#).

Where can I go to get help?

Thanks for getting in touch. We can help you find advice and information and help you get the local support you need. You can contact us by calling [\[insert number\]](#), by emailing [\[insert email address\]](#) or by visiting our website [\[insert link\]](#).

How do I contact someone about my mental health?

We are sorry to hear you have been struggling. Please do get in touch with us and we will be able to offer support and advice on what services are currently open in [\[insert local area\]](#). You can call us on [\[insert phone number\]](#) or email us at [\[insert email address\]](#).

If you're in a crisis and need urgent help or don't feel like you can keep yourself safe right now, seek immediate help by visiting your nearest [Accident and Emergency \(A&E\) department](#) or by calling 999. If you need urgent support but don't want to go to A&E, you can call the Samaritans on freephone 116 123 – they're always open and are there to listen to you. Alternatively you can contact your GP surgery and ask for an [emergency appointment](#) or contact [NHS 111](#).

How are you funded?

The Department of Health and Social Care fund our work. They give money to each local authority so that they can commission an effective local Healthwatch service. We use this money from our local authority to ensure we have the resources to run a high quality service for the people of [\[insert area\]](#).