



# Farming Outreach

2024 - 2025

**healthwatch**  
County Durham

# Background:

- Farming communities were identified as a focus area for our Inclusion Lead.



- A 2021 'Big Farming survey' by the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute highlighted issues with access to healthcare for farming communities.

- Local engagement & research showed us that 'access' was still the biggest barrier to farmers seeking healthcare.



- We wanted to look at ways to improve access to Primary Care for farmers.

# What we did:

- We facilitated a multi agency working group to look at the issues.
- We presented the results of our initial research to local rural GP practices and PPGs.
- We supported one of the practices to organise, promote and facilitate a walk-in clinic for farmers.
- Using the success of the pilot, we encouraged and supported other rural practices to get involved.



# Impact:

- 43 farmers attended and received health checks, who would not have otherwise made an appointment. (Total no. registered 164)
- Opportunities to discuss Mental Health or Domestic Abuse have also been included for farming communities through the walk-ins.
- 2 walk-in clinics; 2 re-runs and one new GP practice scheduled; plus 1 MH-only planned.
- The NENC ICB has now included this approach in it's Inclusion Health Framework.



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