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# Covid-19 First Wave Survey & Post First Wave findings in West Berkshire

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**Report being considered by:** Health and Wellbeing Board  
**On:** 20 May 2021  
**Report Author:** Healthwatch West Berkshire  
**Item for:** Discussion

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## 1. Purpose of the Report

This report from Healthwatch West Berkshire highlights patient and public feedback in relation to systems response to the Covid-19 pandemic and makes recommendations for how this response could be improved.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

Healthwatch West Berkshire recommends that the Health and Wellbeing Board: notes the findings of the report and implements its recommendations to improve current and future responses to national pandemics.

## 3. How the Health and Wellbeing Board can help

We would ask the Board to ensure responses are required from the relevant agency identified and to endorse and action the report's recommendations.

<b>Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Executive for final determination?</b>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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## 4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 A survey was carried out jointly by Healthwatch Reading, Healthwatch West Berkshire and Healthwatch Wokingham between June 2020 and August 2020.
- 4.2 Healthwatch West Berkshire (HWWB) added a number of additional questions to make the most of the opportunity to engage with our residents. HWWB has also had an ear to the ground throughout the pandemic.
- 4.3 This report covers the additional questions included by HWWB, as well as other information gleaned since the survey closed. It provides the views of 301 respondents and those in touch subsequently with HWWB.

## 5. Supporting Information

The report highlighted a number of areas where HWWB considers that improvements are needed to respond to issues highlighted in the survey, including:

- Maintaining Covid-19 volunteering energy and broadening the community response hub membership;

- Targeting support for both public and front-line staff, including the EDC (Ethnically Diverse Communities), based on need and risk;
- Improved timely integrated communications
- Tangible positive action to show that carers are truly valued and will be looked after;
- Mental health support is faster, more universally offered and less reliant on a 'medicalised' only pathway;
- Phlebotomy services be radically transformed;
- NHS dental services undergo a total national root and branch re-design;
- Identifying the vulnerable and mitigating embedded inequalities;
- Staff wellbeing in all Health and Care settings to be risked assessed after lockdown 2021 measures are eased;
- Testing needs to be patient centred not system centred;
- Appropriate Patient Access to Care, avoiding digital exclusion;
- Barriers to accessing appointments and fear of infection;
- Amend the Health & Social Care estates accessed by the public, to be fit for purpose during any future pandemic or similar crisis.

## 6. Options for Consideration

The Health and Wellbeing Board can choose to implement Healthwatch West Berkshire's recommendations in full or in part, or it can choose to continue with current service provision. Healthwatch West Berkshire's preferred option is to implement the recommendations in full as per the proposal below.

## 7. Proposal(s)

Healthwatch West Berkshire proposes that the Health and Wellbeing Board asks the relevant agencies to provide initial responses to each of the issues and recommendations raised in the report, and to set up a Covid learnings task and finish group to determine appropriate actions.

## 8. Conclusion(s)

- 8.1 The Healthwatch survey has highlighted a number of issues faced by West Berkshire residents and highlights potential areas where the health system's response could be improved in response to the current Covid-19 pandemic and also future pandemics.

## 9. Consultation and Engagement

- 9.1 Due to the timing of the surveys and subsequent analysis and reporting of the results, it has not been possible to consult the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group prior to coming to Health and Wellbeing Board.

9.2 The report is informed by 301 survey responses from West Berkshire residents and by other feedback received by Healthwatch West Berkshire from March 2020 to February 2021. The report has been ratified by Healthwatch West Berkshire's Independent Board for consideration. Healthwatch has also spoken with many voluntary sector organisations, including carer and community groups.

## 10. Appendices

Appendix A - Covid-19 First Wave Survey & Post First Wave findings in West Berkshire

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### Background Papers:

“People’s experiences of health and social care services during the first Covid-19 lockdown- Healthwatch Reading, Healthwatch West Berkshire, Healthwatch Wokingham” <https://www.healthwatchwestberks.org.uk/2021/03/peoples-experiences-of-health-and-social-care-services-during-the-first-covid-19-lockdown/>

NHS 2020 Staff Survey re Recc 9

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2021/03/11/2020-national-nhs-staff-survey/>

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### Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2019/20 Supported:

- Give every child the best start in life
- Primary Care Networks

### Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim(s):

- Give every child the best start in life
- Support mental health and wellbeing throughout life
- Reduce premature mortality by helping people lead healthier lives
- Build a thriving and sustainable environment in which communities can flourish
- Help older people maintain a healthy, independent life for as long as possible

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim by improving access to and quality of services, improving early diagnosis, reducing early mortality, and reducing health inequalities

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