

Policies and procedures

Media Policy

Reviewed:	May 2022
Originally approved by:	Governance Committee, 9/4/19
Updated by:	Governance Board, 10/5/22
Next review due:	May 2026



The media are an important way of communicating to the public and others. This policy aims to ensure a consistent approach to media relations and to protect the reputation of Healthwatch Havering.

It is important to have good links and communication with the media; however, it is also important to recognise that journalists can place their own interpretations on matters, and this can cause misrepresentation.

The correct media handling procedure detailed in this policy must be adhered to by all Healthwatch Directors, Staff and Volunteer Members when they act on behalf Healthwatch Havering.

Media Spokesperson

All media contact whether handling enquiries or initiating contact with the media is handled by the Company Secretary.

Press releases and media contact

The Company Secretary may, depending on the nature of the issue, liaise in the first instance with the Chair or following contact with the media whichever is appropriate. However, if it is judged that the matter is controversial or sensitive the matter is discussed with the Chair in advance of the release.

Where media matters are judged to be controversial or of a sensitive nature these will be reported to the next Governance committee.

The Company Secretary may appoint a member of staff or a volunteer member to give an interview to either radio or newspaper. This would be appropriate if the individual was willing and able to do so. This would be applicable when the individual at specialist had specific

training or personal experience. Photographs are subject to formal permissions from the individual.

In the absence of the Company Secretary

In the absence of the Company secretary, the Chairman should be contacted in the first instance.

What is Healthwatch Havering?

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care in the London Borough of Havering. Our aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally.

We are an independent organisation, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and employ our own staff and involve lay people/volunteers so that we can become the influential and effective voice of the public.

Healthwatch Havering is a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee, managed by three part-time directors, including the Chairman and the Company Secretary, supported by two part-time staff, and by volunteers, both from professional health and social care backgrounds and lay people who have an interest in health or social care issues.

Why is this important to you and your family and friends?

Following the public inquiry into the failings at Mid-Staffordshire Hospital, the Francis report reinforced the importance of the voices of patients and their relatives within the health and social care system.

Healthwatch England is the national organisation which enables the collective views of the people who use NHS and social services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch Havering is your local organisation, enabling you on behalf of yourself, your family and your friends to ensure views and concerns about the local health and social services are understood.

Your contribution is vital in helping to build a picture of where services are doing well and where they need to be improved. This will help and support the Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Services and contractors, and the Local Authority to make sure their services really are designed to meet citizens' needs.

***'You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.'***
Winston Churchill

Joining Healthwatch Havering

Local people who have time to spare are welcome to join us as volunteers. We need both people who work in health or social care services, and those who are simply interested in getting the best possible health and social care services for the people of Havering.

Our aim is to develop wide, comprehensive and inclusive involvement in Healthwatch Havering, to allow every individual and organisation of the Havering Community to have a role and a voice at a level they feel appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We are looking for:

Members

This is the key working role. For some, this role will provide an opportunity to help improve an area of health and social care where they, their families or friends have experienced problems or difficulties. Very often a life experience has encouraged people to think about giving something back to the local community or simply personal circumstances now allow individuals to have time to develop themselves. This role will enable people to extend their networks, and can help prepare for college, university or a change in the working life. There is no need for any prior experience in health or social care for this role.

The role provides the face to face contact with the community, listening, helping, signposting, providing advice. It also is part of ensuring the most isolated people within our community have a voice.

Some Members may wish to become **Specialists**, developing and using expertise in a particular area of social care or health services.

Supporters

Participation as a Supporter is open to every citizen and organisation that lives or operates within the London Borough of Havering. Supporters ensure that Healthwatch is rooted in the community and acts with a view to ensure that Healthwatch Havering represents and promotes community involvement in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social services.

Interested? Want to know more?



*Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of
Havering Healthwatch C.I.C.
A community interest company limited by guarantee
Registered in England and Wales
No. 08416383*

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Find us on Twitter at **[@HWHavering](https://twitter.com/HWHavering)**