

Name of the project	Barriers to Cancer Screening
Aim of the project	To find out why people in County Durham choose to participate in cancer screening and the barriers for people who don't. To share the findings with health professionals and service providers to improve the current uptake.
Who was involved	The public and Healthwatch in County Durham feeding back to- County Durham CCGs, NHS England, Public Health County Durham, Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust, Cancer Awareness, Macmillan Cancer, Breast Imaging services, Primary Care nursing staff.
Project approach	Throughout 2017 Healthwatch carried out a number of individual conversations and surveys, gathering the views of the public in the county about the uptake of health screening programmes and any barriers that might exist. The screening programmes investigated were breast cancer screening, bowel cancer self-test screening and cervical screening. Over 2000 responses were collected including some from targeted work with harder to reach groups.
The impact of having people involved in this project	<p>There were some commonalities in the responses Healthwatch received and these were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was confusion about when patients should expect to be called for screening • Invitation letters need to be clear and simple to understand • Patients receiving treatment for other forms of cancer sometimes had a belief they did not need to undertake screening as they were already being treated or checked. • The attitude and approach of medical staff is really important to keep people engaged in the programme • Screening programmes need to ensure they have appropriate processes to support people with disabilities • Appointment systems need to be simple and there should be the ability to book on-line • Anxiety and fear were common reasons that stopped people from attending <p>The individual reports and combined findings were shared with health professionals throughout the county at well attended event held in August 2018 giving service providers and health professionals the opportunity to consider services in light of the finding, to look for ways in which the uptake could be improved. Actions and commitments that were made are available on our website http://www.healthwatchcountydurham.co.uk/news/research-cancer-screening-making-impact</p>

For further information
about this project

For further information please follow the link

[Healthwatch County Durham- evidence based reports](#)

