

Healthwatch Sunderland

Annual Report 2015/16



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Message from our Chair



It is with pleasure that I introduce the third annual report that maps the work and ongoing development of Healthwatch Sunderland.

It has been an incredibly busy year in what is a rapidly changing and challenging Health and Social Care environment in Sunderland. Healthwatch staff and our invaluable volunteers have worked tirelessly throughout the year, representing the voices and experiences of patients, carers and the wider public in Sunderland.

Particular attention has been given to hearing from those groups and communities who are seldom heard. It is essential that the experiences from these seldom heard groups are captured and presented to health and social care providers for consideration when they are designing and delivering services. Healthwatch has also

used our Enter and View powers to examine the meaningful activities offered by care homes in the city. Recommendations from this have been forwarded to each of the care homes and the Local Authority with a number of recommended action points.

Hearing about patient and public experiences is essential for guiding all of our work and to this end staff carry out regular public sessions that engage with the local community in order to give consumers a voice. They have also worked hard to ensure these initiatives have targeted the views of hard to reach groups who so often get overlooked by commissioners and providers when they are planning services.

We have made significant progress pursuing our mission to ensure that consumers and communities challenge and influence how Health and Social Care services are commissioned and delivered. With your continued help we will strive to achieve the positive outcome the public of Sunderland deserve.

Finally, I would like to place on record an enormous thank you to the staff team, our volunteers, fellow board members, our growing membership and the general public for their time and energy.

I hope you enjoy the report and that it gives a flavour of the work Healthwatch has done on your behalf during the year.

Kevin Morris

Healthwatch Chair

The year at a glance

This year we've reached over 1500 people on social media



Our volunteers help us with everything from Information Stalls to Enter and View



We hold regular stalls in Sunderland Royal, Sunderland library and the Winter Gardens to listen to your views



We've visited over 100 local services and community groups



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from Refugee and Asylum Seekers to Social Activities in Care Homes



We've met hundreds of local people at community events



We have held 8 board meetings



We have 1021 followers on Twitter



We have 71 likes on Facebook



We carried out 15 Enter and Views



We have signposted 75 people.



We engaged with over 400 young people



Who we are

We exist to make health and social care services work for the people who use them.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people. Our sole focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and to speak out on their behalf.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work.

We believe that asking people about their experiences can identify issues that, if addressed, will make services better.

Our vision

Our vision is to empower people and communities to improve health and social care services together. Achieving this vision through partnership working will mean that:

- People shape health and social care delivery
- People influence the services they receive personally
- People hold services to account

Our priorities

Voice

Improving current health and social care delivery by amplifying people's voices. We hear people's worries and concerns and help local decision maker's act upon them to improve local services.

Influence

Major local decisions about the future configuration, integration and delivery of health and social care services must meet people's needs fully and be shaped by the people who will use them.

Inform

Providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made. Members of the public are only likely to share their experience with us if they receive a good quality of advice, information and signposting services and believe that we will seek to address any concerns they raise with us.

Effective

Ensuring we are an effective and efficient organisation. We must deliver an effective service for the public and provide maximum public benefit in return for the investment made in our activities



Our Healthwatch Team (from left to right): Jemma Wilkinson-Rush; Kelly Wilson; Gemma Wilkinson-Rush; Joe Hogan; Margaret Curtis; plus Clare Render who supported the team throughout the year, and will be rejoining us shortly.

Listening to people who use health and care services



Gathering experiences and understanding people's needs

We have listened to local people's experiences of health and care services, including diverse groups and communities in Sunderland, including:

- Young people
- Refugee and Asylum Seekers
- Parent carers
- LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, and Transgender) community
- Older people in care homes
- People with learning disabilities and autism

Healthwatch Sunderland in collaboration with Groundwork North East, Sunderland Young Inspectors and Hendon Young People's Project reached over 400 young people, gathering their experiences of healthcare services

What we've learnt from visiting services

In the summer of 2015 we undertook Enter and View activity in 15 care homes to understand the range and quality of meaningful activity undertaken in those homes.

As a result of the Enter and View activity we produced a report which we presented to the Local Authority highlighting good practice.

See our work in focus (page 21) for full details.



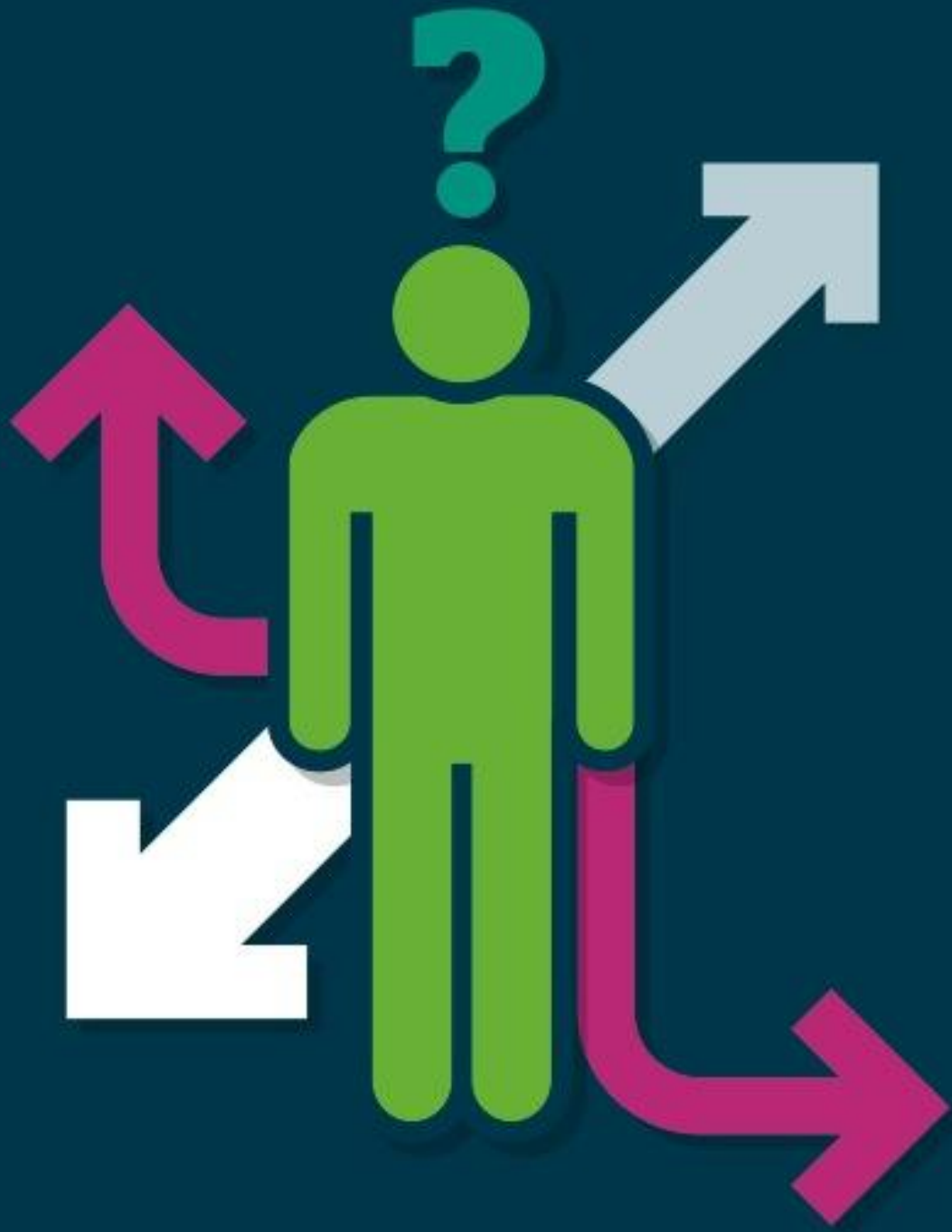
We have dedicated and fully trained authorised representatives who can undertake Enter & View activity on behalf of the residents of the 5 Sunderland localities.

“As a volunteer I have enjoyed being part of Enter and View. Healthwatch has always involved me and other volunteers in the whole process of Enter and View.”
Rabia Tilt, Volunteer

Thank you to Pat Walker, Rabia Tilt, Gwen Young, Gill Charman, Hannah Cowie, Jackaline Connolly, Kath Mullen, and Kathy Haq who have supported Healthwatch Enter and View activity over the last 12 months

15 Care Homes had an Enter and View during 2015

Giving people advice and information



Helping people get what they need from local health and care services

Healthwatch works with communities across Sunderland to gather experiences of services - both good and bad - and uses this information to influence service design and delivery.

Healthwatch Sunderland offers a dedicated Information and Signposting service for people wanting more information about their local health and social care services which can be contacted on:

Freephone 0800 023 8840.

The service:

- Is free, confidential, impartial and independent
- Provides information on local health and social care services (including NHS services, community services and care homes)
- Signposts people, when needed, to the most appropriate complaints process
- Signposts people to professional advocacy services when they require support to make a complaint about a health care service



“Fantastic service, thank you for your help and understanding, I really feel I just needed someone to talk to about my concerns”

Member of the public

During the year, the information and Signposting Service received over 100 calls. The enquiries received were varied in nature, here are some examples:

- How to make a complaint about a GP, Hospital or Social Care Service
- Guidance on how to leave a GP surgery
- Advice about how to access general community services
- Requesting contact details for advocacy services in Sunderland
- Contact information requests for Social Care Services

Healthwatch Sunderland and the Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA) held a ‘Drop in service’ on the first Tuesday of every month. Here service users had the opportunity to speak with a member of the Healthwatch Sunderland and ICA team about their experiences accessing health and social care services.



Case study: Signposting and drop in service

In December 2015 a service user contacted Healthwatch Sunderland requesting information on how to make a complaint against their GP surgery as they felt their concerns had not been addressed.

Our Research & Information officer provided information on how to make a complaint and advised them of an advocacy service that could help and support them.

The service user was happy with the information provided but felt as though they would like to speak to our team face to face.

A meeting was arranged, and we suggested the service user may benefit from speaking to 'MIND', a local

independent charity that provides confidential, high quality services for individuals, carers and families experiencing emotional or mental health problems.

We contacted the service user a week later who told us they had taken our advice and thanked Healthwatch Sunderland for their help and support.

Case study: Providing Information

A member of the public contacted us regarding a service their relative had attended. They wanted information on how to be transferred to a different medical practice as the one they had attended was not accessible.

Healthwatch Sunderland contacted other services to find a suitably accessible alternative. Our advisor then suggested the service user contact their GP to get a referral.

Our team uses information such as this in our meetings with the local authority and Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the statutory health body responsible for the planning and buying of local NHS care and services to meet the needs of the local community.

We log all concerns raised with us and use this information at a strategic level through our attendance at Health and Wellbeing Boards, Local Authority Scrutiny sessions, and CCG Commissioning Boards to help us influence and shape services to meet the needs of people in Sunderland.

How we have made a difference



Our reports and recommendations

During the year we have used reports and recommendations to suggest how people's health and care services might be improved:

- No Voice Unheard, No Right Ignored (Green paper consultation for people with a learning disability and / or autism)

Our report fed into the national green paper consultation, and ensured the voice of the people of Sunderland was heard on a national scale. There was a positive response from the Public Health Analysis Team at Sunderland City Council who reviewed our recommendations which directly impacted the Local Authority Annual Autism Self-Assessment Report, and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which has the power to influence services across Sunderland

- Sunderland Young People and their experience of healthcare services

In collaboration with Groundwork North East, Sunderland Young Inspectors and Hendon Young People's Project we gathered the views of over 400 young people from Sunderland, of which the majority was very positive.

- Refugee engagement

A positive working relationship was established with a number of organisations that provide support to refugees and asylum seekers. We held two workshops with refugees / asylum seekers and invited staff from organisations that could help with the issues raised. This culminated in staff from the Live Life Well project holding

regular signposting engagement with people accessing the drop-in at St Marys Church on Bridge Street, Sunderland.

- The provision of meaningful activities in fifteen Sunderland care homes

See page 17 for how this work supported a change in service specification.

Full details of all our reports can be found on our website www.healthwatchsunderland.com.

Working with other organisations

We work collaboratively with service providers, commissioners, regulators and other local system partners to bring about change.

In particular:

- We have supported CQC with their inspections, and passed on your views where appropriate on individual services.
- Your feedback helps inform, complement and support local CQC monitoring, inspection and regulatory activity.
- Local evidence and insight has been shared with Healthwatch England and used in a national reporting

Involving local people in our work

We supported Sunderland CCG at a public event to ensure patients at all GP practices were involved in the development of Patient Participation Groups.

We were successful in securing the contract to work with GP Practices over the next 12 months to create and develop

vibrant and proactive PPGs, and will continue to work with all residents of the Sunderland localities to enhance this service.

Patient Participation Group development workshop



Healthwatch Sunderland have a team of ten Volunteers who each bring a wealth of experience and skills. This year eight of our volunteers supported us in Enter and View visits to fifteen care homes in Sunderland. We also had volunteers who were involved in the Refugee health event, Ideas Fund panel, Parent Carers Council, PLACE Inspections and the Patient Participation Group workshop. We have volunteers who regularly support us at community events including our regular information stands at Sunderland Royal Hospital, City Library and the Museum and Winter Gardens.

We offer regular training opportunities to all of our volunteers, some of these have included; Dementia Awareness training,

Enter and View training and PLACE training.

Volunteers have provided 300 hours of their support to Healthwatch Sunderland in the past year.

Our volunteers are ; Rabia Tilt, Gwen Young, Pat Walker, Janet King, Gill Charman, Kathy Haq, Kath Mullen, Hannah Cowie, Jackaline Connolly, Liz Highmore.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our volunteers for helping to make Healthwatch Sunderland a success.



“The best care homes are those that value each resident as an individual and by taking time to learn about their medical conditions, their past, families, friends, interests, likes, dislikes and fears, staff can try to make this phase of life as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible.”

Pat Walker, HWS Volunteer.

Our work in focus



Our work in focus: Enter and View

Meaningful activity in Care Homes

Between July and September 2015, we carried out fifteen Enter and View visits to residential care homes in Coalfields, Washington, and Sunderland North, East and West, to look specifically at the range and quality of meaningful activities available to residents.

The purpose of the Enter and View visits was to identify best practice in adult social care homes with a view to sharing this with all providers to encourage an overall raising of standards.

Meaningful activity includes physical, social and leisure activities that are tailored to the person's needs and preferences. Activities can range from daily living activity such as dressing, eating and washing, to leisure activities such as reading, gardening, arts and crafts, conversation and singing. It can be structured or spontaneous, for groups or for individuals, and may involve family, friends and carers, or the wider community. Activity may provide emotional, creative, intellectual and spiritual stimulation.

“My mother used to do activities but with her dementia getting a lot worse she can't understand how to do a lot of things now. But the Activity Coordinators help her and they are a credit to the home for all their help

and support they give to the residents”.

Family Carer

We spoke to as many care home residents as possible about their experience of living in the home, focusing specifically on their personal involvement and decision making regarding activity planning.

With the support of our cohort of volunteers, we also spoke to family members about their perspective on the activities provided in the home, and staff were able to share their opinions too.

Our main findings included:

1. Activities Coordinators were highly committed
2. Only two of the care homes we visited did not have an Activities Coordinator
3. Some training needs were identified

Findings from the Enter and View visits have helped inform the Local Authority's Care Home service specification. In particular, that the care home provider ensures that all staff understand what is meant by meaningful activities and that they are embedded into the service on a day-to-day basis.



Our work in focus: HealthNet

Voluntary and community sector forum



In 2015 in partnership with Voluntary and Community Action Sunderland (VCAS), we supported the launch of HealthNet. HealthNet is a network of voluntary and community sector organisations providing a collective voice to those who represent the people of Sunderland. Monthly meetings provide a forum to debate, influence and shape local health and wellbeing services in order to achieve better outcomes.

The overall aim of HealthNet is to provide a forum for discussion on issues relating to Health and Social Care including;

- Sharing information
- Providing health focussed networking opportunities that are open to all
- Providing a network that offers support and guidance to each other, including new groups
- Raising awareness of inequalities in Health and Social Care
- Providing a two way flow of information relating to health and social care issues in the voluntary and community sector

- Offering an accessible opportunity to take part in discussions relating to health and social care
- Promoting and participating in public sector consultations

Membership is open to any voluntary community organisation or any resident of Sunderland with a health and social care remit or interest. Staff and representatives of statutory services will always be welcome to attend and contribute to help develop the forum and share information.

HealthNet provides a great opportunity to network and engage with other groups or individuals who are interested in health services and support groups.

We hope HealthNet will go from strength to strength in the coming year and will be a key forum for people from the voluntary and community sector to have their say.

“I attended HealthNet for the first time this year, and I found it an extremely useful engagement. I have developed numerous contacts and have been able to share information about voluntary sector organisations in our locality throughout my organisation.”

Chris Gibbs, Sunderland North Community Treatment Team

Our plans for next year



Future priorities

Enter and Views

We intend to undertake more Enter and Views this year, utilising the expertise gained by our volunteers, highlighting good practice and influencing service providers and commissioning teams.



Increase Engagement Activity

We are recruiting two new engagement team members with a view to getting out and about more in your communities and listening to what you have to say about health and social care in your area.



Patient Participation Groups

Creating vibrant and proactive forums for the patient's voice to be heard, and develop routes to enable the public to influence service design of the future with Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group.



Our people



Decision making

Accountable, open, transparent.

Our Healthwatch Board are made up of volunteers who make the decisions and decide on the strategy of Healthwatch Sunderland on your behalf.

Your Healthwatch Board are:

Kevin Morris: Chair

Helen Clay: Deputy Chair

David Tate

Neil Evans

Liz Highmore

To ensure our workplan is reflective of your views, our Research and Information Advisor collates comments taken from surveys you provide to us, as well as comments you make on websites such as NHS Choices, and uses this information to provide our Board with data around what matters to the people of Sunderland.

Your Healthwatch Sunderland Board then makes decisions about what the staff team will focus on, and what activity they will become involved in. This work can develop into reports, or Enter and View activity to help improve health and care services in Sunderland.

All Board meetings are open to the public and dates and venues are advertised on our website.

How we involve the public and volunteers



We involve the public and volunteers in:

- Quarterly meetings to keep our volunteers up to date and informed about our work, asking them for their ideas and input into our workplan
- Public sharing and listening events; our last one held in November 2015 to hear about what the public want us to work on
- Public board meetings where members of the public can attend and listen to our Board make decisions that impact the residents of the Sunderland localities

Our finances



INCOME		£
Balance brought forward 2014 / 2015		£27,222
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		£172,736
Total Income		£200,258
EXPENDITURE		
Operational costs		£50,734
Staffing costs		£142,620
Total expenditure		£193,354
Balance carried forward		£6,904

Contact us



Get in touch

Address: Unit 30, Stanfield Business Centre, Addison Street, Sunderland, SR2 8SZ

Phone number: 0191 514 7145 or Freephone: 0800 023 8840

Email: healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net

Website: www.healthwatchsunderland.com

Address of Registered Office of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract with the local authority:

Pioneering Care Partnership, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 4SF

Address of contractors:

Groundwork North East, Grosvener House, 29 Market Place, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL14 7NP.

Volunteer and Community Action Sunderland (VCAS), 8 Frederick Street, Sunderland, SR1 1NA

We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2016 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, and our local authority.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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