

healthwatch

Sunderland



Healthwatch Sunderland

Annual Report 2016/17



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Message from our Chair

Once again I have the pleasure of introducing our annual report which gives a flavour of the range of work that Healthwatch Sunderland has undertaken for the benefit of residents in the city.



This year has been about consolidating Healthwatch as an organisation and responding to the changes in the Health and Social Care landscape.

During the year we have recruited a new engagement team. They complete the staff team who, along with our invaluable and growing pool of volunteers, have worked tirelessly throughout the year to ensure that the voices of the general public and particularly those who use Health and

Social Care Services, are heard by those who commission and deliver services. Their work, particularly with GP patient participation groups throughout the city, the Enter and View visits they have carried out, the surveys they have conducted and the regular information stalls that engage with the local community, have given residents regular opportunities to share their experiences and concerns. They have also worked hard to ensure that these initiatives have targeted the views of hard to reach groups who so often get forgotten by commissioners and providers when they are planning and delivering services. This report illustrates some of the work the team has undertaken. However, it is difficult to capture everything so please contact the team or drop into the office if you would like further information.

During the year we have seen that Health and Social Care services are beginning to change as a result of the financial pressures facing the National Health Service and the Local Authority and the increased demands being made on its services. New ways are being explored in Sunderland to keep people, particularly those with multiple health problems, out of hospital. We have also seen the beginning of a new relationship between Sunderland Royal Hospital and South Shields Hospital. Health Services are being reviewed and may well result in some significant changes as to where services are delivered. All of these changes, with more to come, are likely to have huge implications for the way local

people receive their healthcare. I am pleased to say that Healthwatch Sunderland has 'a seat at the table' where all these issues are being discussed. We are working closely with colleagues in Healthwatch South Tyneside to ensure that patient views are strongly represented in discussions. Our role is to ensure that people's views are heard in these discussions and any new services reflect the needs and concerns people tell us about.

Finally, I will be stepping down from my role as chair. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to chair Healthwatch and help the organisation to become a central force in promoting the interests of the patients, public and carers in the development and delivery of health and social care services in the city. In the challenging times ahead I leave the board, staff team and volunteers in a strong position and well placed to continue to ensure that the voices of the public are at the forefront of all Health and Social Care discussions and plans.

I would like to record my gratitude to the volunteers, staff, board members and stakeholders who have all contributed a great deal during 2016/17 to ensure Healthwatch Sunderland continues to achieve its mission, values and aims.

Kevin Morris

Chair

“ All of these changes, with more to come, are likely to have huge implications for the way local people receive their healthcare.”





Highlights from our year

This year we've reached over 9300 people on social media



Our volunteers help us with everything from information stands to Enter & View visits



We've visited over 100 local services



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from social isolation to communication



800 of you provided feedback on services



We've met hundreds of local people at our community events



We have 1155 followers on Twitter



We have 101 likes on Facebook



We have carried out 6 Enter and Views



We have signposted more than 80 People to local services to meet their needs



We hold regular stalls at Sunderland Royal Hospital and health centres across the city



We have held 11 board meetings



Who we are

We know that you want services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care services with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

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

Our vision

Healthwatch Sunderland's vision is to empower people and communities to improve health and social care services together. Our aim is:

1. To give local people and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality.
2. To provide or signpost people to information to help them make choices about health and social care services.

3. To encourage and support people and groups to share their views about services; listen to people's needs and experiences of services.
4. To enable people who use NHS services to access support when making a complaint.

Our priorities

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)

All GP practices have PPGs involving patients in making decisions about services, evaluating their success, and offering views on GP services from the patients' perspective. During the year our team supported the PPGs throughout Sunderland, creating a Best Practice Reference Guide and providing a voice to younger people who may want to become involved in their local PPG.



Mental Health

In July 2016 we held a consultation to find out what local people would like us to consider for our work plan. Over 200 people took part and as a result, we produced a 'Report on Mental Health Services' providing recommendations to statutory and community organisations based on what you told us.

Enter and View

We undertook six Enter and View visits this year across five Extra Care Facilities and also Sunderland Eye Infirmary. Our fully trained volunteers helped us to identify and highlight areas which you let us know were important to you, helping us share best practice across social care providers, and discuss areas for improvement with commissioning teams.

Celebration of success

An important aspect of our role as consumer champion is to share and celebrate positive comments and stories. During the year we introduced 'Star Awards', presenting staff and services with a certificate in recognition of excellent public feedback.

We've listened to your feedback and have identified priority areas for next year - see 'Our plans for next year' later in this report, and sign up to our newsletter to find out more.

Our Healthwatch Team (from left to right): Wendy, Gemma, Anna, Margaret, Clare



We can
help you...

*Your views on
health and care*

Listening to local people's views

During the year we received over 800 pieces of feedback on services in Sunderland, through surveys and via the telephone. We have used this feedback to talk to commissioning teams, and also to promote services where appropriate.

- + We shared the voice of young people with leaders in primary care services to encourage young people's representation on patient participation groups
- + We worked with Sunderland Clinical Commissioning teams to support the public when GP services were impacted through closure, merger or finding new service providers
- + Our 'Report on Mental Health Services' highlights public views on aspects of the current NHS provided mental health services in Sunderland.

What we've learnt from visiting services

Healthwatch Sunderland received and identified positive feedback from a number of service users of Sunderland Eye Infirmary through our on-line and paper 'General Health Survey' and engagement with service users.

91% of all comments gathered were positive. As a result of this we decided to carry out an Enter & View visit to discover why patients felt it was such a good service.

Our findings from the Enter & View process showed that 92% of people we spoke to, responded to say that the staff were the best part of the service, citing that the

doctors, nurses and reception staff were friendly, know your name if you're a long term patient, take the time out to help and support you, and are very professional in their manner.


Other comments included the speed at which patients were seen in Accident and Emergency which was quick and efficient, it was an upbeat hospital and a person centred approach was adopted.

This feedback helps to show the dedication and hard work of all the staff at the hospital and how they have helped to make the service they provide one that continually receives praise from patients. This is a great example of good practice at work and one that those involved should be proud of.



Staff members from Sunderland Eye Infirmary

“The staff I saw were amazing, they were so patient, kind & thoughtful”



*Helping
you find the
answers*

How we have helped the community access the care they need

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 who want 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.

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 change GP practice
- + Advice about how to access general community services

- + Requesting contact details for advocacy services in Sunderland
- + Contact information requests for Social Care Services.



“I am overjoyed with the service I have received from Healthwatch Sunderland, I couldn’t thank you enough” (telephone caller)

Case study:

We received a call in October 2016 from a gentleman who had been advised to contact us from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

He had a complaint regarding a GP practice; he had spoken to a GP in relation to the possibility of being diagnosed with ‘white finger’, and the GP advised he could not diagnose this condition and the patient would have to seek help elsewhere.

Our Research and Information Advisor researched the condition on the NHS Choices and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) websites that included:

NHS Choices - Raynaud's phenomenon can usually be diagnosed after an examination of your symptoms and some blood tests.

Health and Safety Executive - Who can help? - Your Company Doctor or your GP.

Our worker then contacted the gentleman's GP and explained her findings. In addition, we contacted NHS England and Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group.

We maintained communication between all parties involved, and helped the gentleman contact the Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA) to escalate his complaint.

NHS England agreed that the gentleman would need to be referred to a Rheumatologist, and a referral was made.

Our Research and Information Officer spoke to the gentleman to ensure he was happy with the outcome. He said "I have seen a Rheumatologist and I have been treated for white finger. I am overjoyed with the service I have received from Healthwatch Sunderland and can't thank you enough".

Case study:

We received a phone call in May 2016 from a lady who was very concerned about her husband. Following a consultation at Sunderland Royal Hospital he was advised he would need to see a specialist at the Royal London Hospital.

She informed us that her husband was suffering from blackouts, therefore making it unsafe to travel unaccompanied and she would need to both travel and attend his appointment with him.

When she initially spoke to the consultant at Sunderland Royal Hospital, she was advised that all costs would be covered including travel and accommodation. However, this was not the case and she was later told she would have to pay the costs herself. She was very worried as her

husband needed this treatment however the costs were too excessive.

The Healthwatch Sunderland Research and Information Advisor contacted Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who advised this lady would need to discuss her situation with the department's business manager to help her make arrangements to travel with her husband. Our worker then contacted Sunderland Carers' Centre and explained to them the situation this lady was in.

The Carers Centre contacted the lady to offer her emotional support and help her with obtaining funding for their travel to the appointment in London.

We contacted the lady to update her with what help was available, and she was delighted with the time and effort Healthwatch Sunderland had given her.



Healthwatch Sunderland's Research and Information Advisor



Influence local
health and social care services
in Sunderland

www.healthwatchsunderland.org.uk



healthwatch

*Making a
difference
together*

CONFERENCES



How your experiences are helping influence change

During the year we visited the services you use and listened to your experiences to help us provide valuable feedback to the teams who commission health and social care services:

- + We carried out research in five Extra Care facilities to gain an understanding of how social activities are supported in Sunderland Extra Cares Schemes and how management within these schemes communicate change to residents. Our findings and recommendations were published on our website and shared with the local authority commissioners and the Extra Care Scheme providers
- + Following a visit to Sunderland Eye Infirmary to present staff with a 'Healthwatch Star for Excellent Services' we decided to carry out an additional 'Enter and View' visit to ask patients of the hospital and also staff to tell us what they felt made it such a good service. We shared your feedback with the City Hospitals leadership team as an example of good practice
- + We visited your Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) and shared your good practice ideas with others to help them develop their own groups. We recognised that many PPGs had very few younger patient members - yet they are significant users of health services and part of our future - we worked with local college students to bridge the gap and encourage young people and PPGs to work together
- + During our work on your Mental Health Report, a clear theme from your feedback was that both the general

public and some healthcare professionals weren't aware that those experiencing symptoms of common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression do not need to see their GP, but can self-refer to local organisations for support. We designed a poster and distributed it to local GP surgeries, dentists, pharmacies and community venues. We received lots of feedback from health professionals thanking us for raising awareness.

Younger patient members are significant users of health services and part of our future - we worked with local college students to encourage young people and PPGs to work together.

Working with other organisations

We collaborate with service providers, commissioners, regulators and other local system partners to bring about change. Here are a few examples of who we've worked with this year:

- + We work closely with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), ensuring the sharing of information to help them with their inspection programme
- + We use the information provided by CQC Inspection Reports to help inform our work plan
- + We are the voice of the public in statutory organisation groups such as information sharing meetings with the local authority and CQC, and communications and engagement groups for the Sunderland and South Tyneside

hospital alliance, to ensure the public voice is considered and heard

- + We share your information (anonymised) with Healthwatch England to help inform the patient experience on a national level.

How we've worked with our community

Our engagement team are regularly out and about in your community groups, sharing the work of Healthwatch and gathering your feedback to help shape future health and social care services:

- + We used feedback from over 160 people to inform our report on Mental Health Services, attending many user groups including Sunderland Mind, Washington Mind, Headlight Sunderland, Autism in Mind, Sunderland Carers Centre, The Essence Service, Mental Health Matters, Sunderland Recovery College, The Parker Trust, Centre Point, and Washington Support Group for Men
- + Healthwatch Sunderland are a member of Sunderland Health and Wellbeing Board and our Chair ensures that the voice of the public is taken into account when decisions are made regarding health and social care provision in the five Sunderland localities
- + Our volunteers are a vital part of our team, and have helped us to carry out our activities, supporting Enter and View activity, and helping us gather feedback via our many stalls across the city's five localities.

“Thanks for coming along to our group and hearing our feedback. You're welcome back anytime”

Billy, Washington Support Group for Men

“Thanks for coming along to our meeting. Will you come to our next meeting - we need your support?”

Rachael Bannister-Young, Cancer Patient & Carer Group

“Your visit has been very interesting and we look forward to seeing you again soon”

Helen McAdam, Sunderland Carers Centre - Washington Carers Group



Washington Carers Group



*It starts
with you*



It Starts With You

In July 2016 Healthwatch Sunderland held a consultation to find out what health and social care priorities local people would like us to consider for our future work plan. Over 200 people took part and voted for 'mental health provision in Sunderland' as the number one priority.

The subject of access to NHS mental health services across the city was highlighted and a piece of work to identify the main issues began in autumn 2016.

Feedback from service users, carers and professionals was analysed half way through the survey process. This helped us to identify that there is a general lack of awareness that primary care mental health services can be accessed through a self-referral pathway.

As Healthwatch we took on the task to disseminate information to the local community: for common mental health problems there is no need to make an initial appointment with a GP and services can be accessed in a more timely way by the self-referral route. We did this by developing a simple poster which aimed to highlight some of the symptoms of common mental health issues people may be experiencing, and give information where the services are that can provide the necessary support.

Our Engagement Team then 'hit the road' visiting all GP practices, dentists, pharmacies and community venues across the city distributing the poster to help spread the word!

Here are some of the comments they received on our way:

"This is brilliant. I was unaware that self-referral is an option. Thank you!"
(Pharmacist)

"I wish I had known about this when I first became ill. I could have accessed therapy sooner." (Service User)

"I didn't know you could self-refer, which is excellent and would have helped our situation so much." (Carer)



To access your copy of the poster go to:
www.healthwatchesunderland.com

This all started with you!

Without the feedback from local people who completed our Access to Mental Health survey, we would not have developed this poster.

We hope that it helps the people of Sunderland to access services quicker to aid their recovery and helps them to stay well and make the most of themselves.

*Our plans
for next
year*



What next?

It all starts with a conversation and this coming year our Engagement Team and volunteers will continue to be out in the community, finding out what matters to the people of Sunderland in the worlds of health and social care. We will be hosting information stands and going along to community groups and activities to ensure that the voices of some of the most seldom heard voices are heard, listened to and acted upon. Groups such as:

Black and Minority, Ethnic (BME) groups

Disability groups

Drug and alcohol services

Homeless

People with sensory impairment

Service men and women, including veterans

Young mothers

Young people and young carers

If you know of a group of people who would like to tell us their personal experiences of health and social care services, please let us know. We would love to meet them!

2017 / 2018 Priorities

To set our priorities, we used the feedback we have received whilst out and about at various information stands, groups and meetings, from patients, carers, and the public.

Our board have agreed our work plan for 2017 / 2018 will include:

1. Equipment services
2. Good practice tackling the shortage of GP appointments
3. Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP)
4. Reasonable adjustments

We'll keep you up to date with progress on our website.





Our people

Decision making

Healthwatch Sunderland Board use your feedback to help prioritise items on our workplan. Our engagement team visit local community groups seeking feedback, and this is collated together with national trends and other feedback sites such as NHS Choices to help us get a clear picture of what matters to you.

We keep you up to date with work plan items in our monthly newsletter, and regularly publish our reports on our website.

How we involve the public and volunteers

Members of the public and our valuable volunteers play a key role in the work of Healthwatch Sunderland:

- + Our Board is run by volunteers: Kevin Morris (Chair), David Tate, Neil Evans, Liz Highmore, Janet King, Andrew Carton and Alan Patchett. Many thanks also to the Board members who

have left us this year: Helen Clay, and Annabel Dawson.

- + We would also like to thank all of our volunteers who dedicate their time and energy for free and continue to be vital to our valuable work: Pauline Scott, Tom Canning, Janet King, Nancy Cowie, Linda Davison, Kathy Haq, Gill Charman, Grace Weir, Stephen Bonallie, Jemma Wilkinson-Rush, Aine McCarthy, Bernadette Murray, June Adamson, Trish Sullivan, Nadia Begum and those who have moved on to pastures new: Gwen Young, Pat Walker, Jackaline Connolly, Kath Mullen and Rabia Tilt.

We have received 800 pieces of specific feedback via surveys from the public and continue to use this information to determine our workplan.

“I love the fact I am giving something back to my local community and really enjoy working alongside the Healthwatch team.” Linda, Healthwatch Sunderland Volunteer Champion



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Sunderland

Our finances

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Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	157,000
Expenditure	
Operational costs	31,022
Staffing costs	130,214
Office costs	25,896
Total expenditure	187,132



Contact us

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Get in touch

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Twitter: @HWSunderland

We will be making this annual report publicly available on 30 June 2017 by publishing it on our website and sharing it with 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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