

## Lancashire's Voice Newsletter Spring/Summer 2017

### Healthwatch Lancashire's Annual Report shows how your voice makes a difference

Healthwatch Lancashire has launched its 2016/17 Annual Report with its continued vision of being the 'go-to' organisation for all members of the public in the county to talk about their experiences of health and social care.

The Annual Report reveals that Healthwatch Lancashire listened to the views of more than 3,600 people across 121 community engagement activities throughout the year, as well as reaching out to almost 254,000 people online and via social media.

Healthwatch Lancashire published 82 reports from 127 visits to health and social care services, assisted by its team of volunteers who gave nearly 1,300 hours of their time in undertaking Healthwatch-related activities.

The annual report provides highlights of the impact of Healthwatch Lancashire's work with local communities, including those who are seldom heard.

The report also details Healthwatch

Lancashire's new projects for 2017/18 which include identifying the impact of the work undertaken between 2015 - 2017, how it feels for people with learning disabilities to access and use health and social care services and what children and young people think about their health and social care services.

Sheralee Turner-Birchall, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Lancashire, said: "Our Annual Report highlights our considerable achievements in 2016/17 and the creative and engaging projects we have delivered to give members of the public the opportunity to voice their views on local services.

"I would like to say a huge thank you to all the members of the public who shared their stories with us.

"During 2016/17 Healthwatch Lancashire has observed and experienced the significant changes, challenges and developments of our county's health and social care services.



"There will be significant decisions that need to be made and we, as your local Healthwatch, firmly believe that there should be no decisions made without patient or service users' needs being put first - meaning that local people are involved in deciding how, what and where services should and ought to be delivered."

**Our Annual Report can be read and downloaded online at:**  
[healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/publications](http://healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/publications)

### Improving picture for mental health sufferers?

**Mental illness is an increasingly serious problem in Lancashire, says Mike Wedgeworth, Chair of Healthwatch Lancashire, and there is a definite link with deprivation.**

"Statistics from Public Health England show that in Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, the two most deprived areas, the proportion of people aged between 16 and 74 living with common mental health conditions is 18.8% and 21.2% respectively, compared with England's 15.6%. All other parts of Lancashire are above the national average. It seems obvious that tackling the problem of low

pay and unemployment is some part of the answer to improving mental health.

"But I think there is some good news, as figures from Public Health England also show that treatments for depression are proving successful, with over 60% of sufferers recovering through a national scheme known as IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies), though Blackpool remains well below that figure at 55.3%.

"Healthwatch Lancashire has tested whether these improvements are reflected by the people of Lancashire by

asking the public about their experience of getting the help they need with a wide range of mental health conditions.

"Healthwatch Lancashire has spoken to over 200 people and our hope is that our findings will point the way to further improvements, and will help to ensure that mental health is no longer the 'Cinderella' of the National Health Service. The full report will be published shortly and sent to those who commission and provide mental health services."

(Source of Statistics: Public Health England - Common Mental Health Disorders)

## Healthwatch Lancashire takes innovative approach to share best practice findings in care homes

Healthwatch Lancashire has shared its findings of best practice observed through its care home programme of Enter & View visits.

The findings feature in two documents: Choosing a Care Home: The 'Mum's Test' Checklist, which assists those undertaking their own 'Mum's Test' when seeking a suitable nursing or residential care home for themselves or a loved one, and; The Mum's Test: Good Practice Observations from Lancashire's Residential Care & Nursing Home Sector, which aids providers, managers or owners of residential care or nursing homes in comparing best practice.

Healthwatch Lancashire were able to provide this information as part of its innovative 360-degree evaluation of its Enter & Views in care homes programme through funding provided by the Innovation Agency, the Academic Health Science Network for the North West Coast.

The evaluation focussed on whether the Enter & View visits achieved its objectives to provide insight into the views of people residing in care homes across Lancashire, maintaining the programme's philosophy of being inclusive and providing independent, constructive

feedback that supports service improvement.

Since commencement in September 2015, Healthwatch Lancashire's Care Home Sector Enter & View programme has not only supported service improvement in care homes, but has also improved its mechanisms for sharing of intelligence with local NHS and Local Authority Adult Social Care teams in Lancashire.

In addition, Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection managers have commended the programme stating that its innovative approach adds value to their local inspections.

The programme is designed to provide the public with a service user perspective of the care home sector in Lancashire, as well as social care providers, commissioners and regulators with intelligence to help influence service improvements.

**Sheralee Turner-Birchall, Chief Executive at Healthwatch Lancashire, said:** "Healthwatch Lancashire contributes considerable value into the health and social care system by gathering patients, service users and relatives views about how services are run. This can be invaluable as sometimes seeing services from their point of view opens up real



opportunities for improvement that may not have already been considered.

"Our innovative 360 degree impact assessment has enabled us to take stock of how we are helping to make a difference for service users and, as a result, these two new 'Mum's Test' documents will provide really useful for people seeking a care home for themselves or a loved one, or organisations wishing to improve their provision of care."

**Innovation Agency Chief Executive, Dr Liz Mear, said:** "Care homes are an important part of the health system and the aim of the work we carried out with Healthwatch is two-fold; to help families find the best care for their relatives; and to drive up standards in the quality and safety of services for some of the more vulnerable people in our community."

The reports are available to read and download on our website.

## Healthwatch Lancashire speaks to service users from A&E departments across the county

Healthwatch Lancashire has published a series of 'Patient Engagement Day' reports, which capture the experiences of service users from seven A&E departments across Lancashire.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives visited each A&E department to gain feedback from patients to obtain their views about visiting their local A&E department. During the visit, Healthwatch Lancashire also observed the environments during the busy winter months.

Healthwatch Lancashire's findings, which highlight areas of concern for patients as well as things that they are happy about in their local A&E, have been sent to the relevant Hospital Trusts for their consideration and comment.

The reports includes feedback and actions from A&E providers in relation to how they will improve service users' experiences following the activity.



Our Patient Engagement Day reports can be found on our website.

## Healthwatch Lancashire to measure its impact with service providers and commissioners

**Healthwatch Lancashire has launched a project to measure the impact of its work.**

The focus of the impact project is to show the public the difference their voice has made.

Healthwatch Lancashire is working on analysing data collected over the last two years to identify trends and themes from feedback received via all sources of intelligence.

The findings gathered will be produced in a final impact report and will support Healthwatch Lancashire in planning future activities.

Healthwatch Lancashire will build on its relationships with stakeholders, commissioners, regulators and providers to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the work of Healthwatch and use the intelligence it provides to influence change.

**Sheralee Turner-Birchall, Chief Officer at Healthwatch Lancashire, said:** "Healthwatch Lancashire is here to make sure all people in our communities are listened to and this project aims to challenge those who run, plan and commission health and social care services on how they use and implement the intelligence they receive.



"The public want to know what differences will be made as a result of their feedback and that their voices are not just heard but listened to and acted on."

## Healthwatch Lancashire wins Excellence Award for work in care homes

**Healthwatch Lancashire has won a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Excellence Award for its programme of work with the East Lancashire CCG Safeguarding team for its 'Mum's Test' pilot 'Improving outcomes through the service user voice'.**

The programme of work ensured the voices of care home residents and their families were heard and also provided East Lancashire CCG access to independent and impartial feedback of care homes that they commission.

The purpose of this programme of work was to provide East Lancashire CCG with a true understanding of how service users view the care they receive and how, as commissioners, this can influence how they provide services.

A team of four Healthwatch Lancashire members of staff undertook multiple visits to care

homes across East Lancashire over a period of six months.

Where service users had indicated improvements could be made, Healthwatch, in partnership with the CCG, supported the homes in achieving these improvements. This programme saw significant improvement of service user experience being implemented, often at minimal cost, by providers listening to the voice of the people they support.

The East Lancashire CCG Excellence Award for Patient Engagement and Involvement is awarded to organisations who have successfully introduced a change in working practices to better patient engagement and involvement, resulting in improved patient experience.

The CCG Excellence Awards were first launched in 2014 and due to their success, it was agreed the Awards would become an annual event.



**Sheralee Turner-Birchall, Chief Executive at Healthwatch Lancashire, said:** "It is wonderful to gain recognition for our outstanding and creative methods of delivering programmes of work to capture the voice of the people and to be able to influence service improvement and showcase best practice."

**Jackie Hanson, chief nurse for East Lancashire CCG, stated:** "This has been a fantastic example of how services can work together with patients to genuinely impact on how we deliver care and improve quality across the sector. This work will help guide how we commission and assure services in the future."



## Healthwatch Lancashire is looking for volunteers!

Healthwatch Lancashire is looking for volunteers to help represent local people when it comes to health and social care.

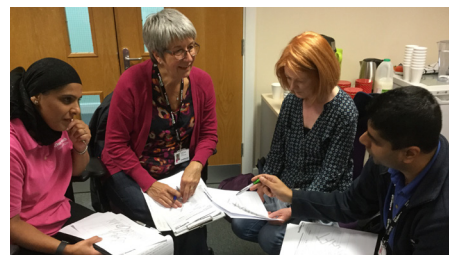
In the past 12 months, volunteers have supported Healthwatch Lancashire to listen to the experiences, views and stories of more than 5,000 people in Lancashire as it looks to expand its engagement across the county.

Healthwatch Lancashire volunteers are champions of their local communities and more are needed to listen to people's views about health and social care in Lancashire in locations such as hospitals, GP practices and community venues. Here is what volunteers said when

they were asked why they enjoy volunteering for Healthwatch Lancashire:

*"It is a professional organisation, well run, where my input is valued. I've been made to feel very welcome and a real part of the team. It is good that I can choose which activities to take part in so I can fit it around what else I am doing. Thank you to Healthwatch Lancashire."*

*"I work with a great team of both paid staff and volunteers. Everyone is very friendly and approachable. I have visited some very interesting health and social care establishments. I love meeting some of the service users, it reminds you of the importance of*



*listening to those who use services."*

Healthwatch Lancashire volunteers receive training, support and expenses for any activities they carry out.

More information about how you can volunteer can be found on our website.

## Have your say!

Affected by policy changes? Share your experience with us...

NHS clinical commissioning group organisations across Lancashire are making a number of changes to their local policies for prescribing medicines and treatments and Healthwatch Lancashire would like to hear your stories about how you have been affected along with your views and opinions.

Commissioning is about getting the best possible health outcome for the local population, by assessing local needs, deciding priorities and strategies, and then buying services on behalf of the population from providers such as hospitals, clinics, community health bodies, etc. There are six clinical commissioning groups in Lancashire, known often as CCGs. These are:

- NHS Lancashire North Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Lancashire Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Lancashire Greater Preston Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Lancashire Chorley and South Ribblesdale Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Lancashire East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Lancashire West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group



Healthwatch Lancashire gives you a powerful voice, making sure your views and experiences are heard by those who run, plan and watch over health and social care services in Lancashire.

Have your say by visiting the following link:

Please visit [healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/find-a-service](http://healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/find-a-service)

## Read our latest reports



Healthwatch Lancashire publishes reports on a range of topics and themes presenting the voice of the public when it comes to health and social care.

You can read our reports online at [www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/reports](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/reports)

## Contact the team

**Helpline:** 01524 239100  
[info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

### By Post:

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**For our communications team contact:**

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### For volunteering contact:

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### Community Groups

Healthwatch Lancashire is looking to visit groups in the community so that they can have their say on the health and social care services that they use

If you are a community group organiser, and you would like us to come a 'Care Circle' or 'pop Up' event at your local group, you can request a visit from the Healthwatch Lancashire team by calling 01524 239100 or emailing [info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

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[info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)