



North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network Board Report

Kerry Prescott

healthwatch

Report to:	Board
Meeting Date:	26 July 2022
Title:	North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network Report
Speaker:	Kerry Prescott
Purpose of Report:	Information

Strategic or other priority linked to this report (please tick all as appropriate):

- ☒ Strategic Aim 1 – Excel at Core Activity
- ☐ Strategic Aim 2 – Become a Regional Organisation
- ☐ Strategic Aim 3 – Explore New Complementary Services
- ☐ Strategic Aim 4 – Be a Great Place to Work
- ☐ Strategic Aim 5 – Ensure a Sound Business Model

Recommendation(s): That Board note and receive this report.

REPORT DATED: 12 July 2022

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and update on the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network.

Introduction

North Cumbria forms part of the newly constituted North East and North Cumbria

Integrated Care System (ICS). The key aims of the ICS are:

1. Improve outcomes in population health and healthcare
2. Tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience, and access
3. Enhance productivity and value for money
4. Help the NHS support broader social and economic development

Local Healthwatch will become a key engagement partner, supporting the ICS to hear the views of local people to shape improvements and inform commissioning of local services at each level of the ICS: the Integrated Care Board, Integrated Sub-Regional Place, Integrated Care Place and Neighbourhoods.

Healthwatch Cumbria is part of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Healthwatch Network included in the ICS footprint. Each of the Healthwatch has been working collaboratively for a couple of years however, in line with the formal changes to the NHS commissioning footprint, the local Healthwatch have joined to form a more formal partnership.

Local Healthwatch in the network include:

- County Durham
- Cumbria
- Darlington
- Gateshead
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Newcastle
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland
- Redcar and Cleveland
- South Tyneside
- Stockton-on-Tees
- Sunderland

Progress Update



Working Together

After meeting regularly at the Healthwatch England North East Regional Network meeting, the local Healthwatch agreed to establish a working group to develop an Operational Protocol describing how the Healthwatch in the network will work together and how they will support the ICS to address their key priorities.

The Operational Protocol evolved over the months prior to the ICS becoming statute on 1st July 2022. The protocol describes the structure of Healthwatch representation at each level of the ICS, communication methods including information sharing and reporting frequency to ensure that the network works as seamlessly as possible. The ICS has committed funding to the Healthwatch network to support the implementation of the Operational Protocol. At the time of writing, we are awaiting confirmation of the amount but it is believed to be circa £100,000.00

Integrated Care Board: Healthwatch Representation

The North East & North Cumbria ICS constitution includes provision for one participant from the North East and North Cumbria Healthwatch Network who:

- Will be invited to attend meetings of the Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Will receive advanced copies of the notice, agenda, and papers for all public board meetings
- May also be invited at the discretion of the Chair to ask questions and address the meeting
- May not vote.

In June 2022, David Thompson, Chair of Healthwatch Northumberland, was elected to this position via a voting process which included each local Healthwatch having one vote each. David will act as a key bridge between the work of the ICB and all the Healthwatch in the NE&NC. David has a breadth of experience and insight and the confidence of the Healthwatch network.

"Be assured that I shall do my utmost to ensure that the views of service users, carers and families will be presented at every appropriate opportunity. And independently!"
David Thompson, Healthwatch Northumberland Chair June 2022

Future Focus



The Network's key priorities over the next reporting period are:

- Updating the Operational Protocol to reflect funding agreed from the ICB. This includes agreeing a process for how engagement activities are agreed, project-managed, monitored, and delivered.
- Championing the role of the network as the engagement partner of the North East and North Cumbria ICS.
- To identify opportunities to work collaboratively and proactively respond to system requests.

We look forward to strengthening our relationships with the other 12 local Healthwatch in the NENC ICS and reporting on progress in future reports.



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