

Healthwatch Northumberland Board
Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 9 March, 2017
At Adapt (NE), Hexham

1. Introductions and Apologies

Present:

Cynthia Atkin (Chair)
Nigel Porter (West) - part attended
Pauline Wilson (North)
John McIndoe (Central)
Carole Pitkeathley (South East)
Pat Maginn (Adapt NE)
Danielle Cooper (Alzheimer's Society)
Catherine Lee (PALS)
Sharon Spurling (Carers Northumberland)
Ann Lyall (Northumberland VCS Assembly)
Alan Curry (NCC)

In attendance:

Liz Prudhoe (Strategic Lead)
Claire Jackson (Note taker)

2. Minutes of last meeting held on Thursday 12 January 2017

Amends were made and the minutes were then agreed as a true record.

3. Matters arising

Deaths in hospitals: Stay informed and perhaps carry out a piece of work on this in the future.

GPs for care home residents: Care homes in Blyth already have an appointed GP as part of the Vanguard. This will be rolled out across the county. Current residents can opt out but new residents will be allocated a specific GP practice. Relationships between care homes and 999/111 services are important for getting the best care and advice for residents. A meeting will take place in April involving nursing and care homes, out of hours services and emergency doctors, to talk about improving the system.

4. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Confidential Section

Nigel Porter left the meeting following the confidential session.

6. Chair's Report

The Chair shared her final report and said it had been a unique experience. There have been many good wishes from health and care partners.

7. CRM Feedback Report

The CRM now provides more detailed information including the demographics of those who have left feedback and also the provider's details. The system was fully up and running from September and the amount of feedback is similar to that received in previous quarters. Information has been shared with GPs, dentists and pharmacists, plus the CCG who will find the

information useful for the Vanguard. Most people are satisfied with the care they received. One issue flagged was that NSEC can be difficult to find. Respondents can now be contacted and thanked for the feedback or signposted as necessary. Thought will be given as to how the next quarter's data will be presented e.g. cumulative or separate.

8. Summary of Annual Survey 2017

There were 348 responses to this year's survey as opposed to ten last year. 92% of respondents viewed the care they had received as either okay, good or excellent. The summary gives enough information to start looking at trends. There is a lot of free text that needs further examination. Action: to look at information from partners and also link to the CRM.

9. Strategic Action Plan and Finance

Ambulance response to care homes project: There has been a 72% response rate and once the last bit of data has been collected the project will be complete. It has come to light that NEAS often insists a member of staff accompanies a patient with dementia to hospital. This can lead to the staff member becoming stranded at the hospital. NEAS does have an award for dementia friendly service. The draft report will be available soon.

The PTS report was not completed in the summer so an independent researcher has been commissioned to finish this. It was suggested that there had been some slippage in work due to lack of staff, e.g. PTS, accessing care homes and domiciliary care, but other work has been undertaken in its place (In It Together report, annual survey and the work around proposals for Rothbury Hospital). The commissioner has no concerns at this stage.

Finance: There is a potential underspend for this year; the new board may have some say on how this is spent. There is an underspend in staff training as most training undertaken this year has been free of charge.

10. Response to Rothbury Hospital - consultation

Healthwatch Northumberland has been asked to reach older people to give them a voice in the consultation. All groups in the area have been contacted and a meeting took place with the U3A in early March. Lots of people in Rothbury are only interested in saving the beds at this stage and don't want to discuss other options. Many at the meeting hadn't heard of Healthwatch Northumberland so it was at least a promotional opportunity. A questionnaire was handed out at the meeting and also put online. Residents reported that they thought the CCG survey was biased but were advised by Healthwatch to complete it and have their say.

Rothbury residents are being sent to Alnwick for physiotherapy as the waiting list is longer in Rothbury, meaning that the data will say more physiotherapy isn't needed in Rothbury.

11. Social Care Task Group

The group asked to bring to the attention of NCC the discrepancies between the NCC bandings and CQC ratings of care homes published online. This has been an issue for a while and it has been raised. The NCC website has been updated but the discrepancies are still a concern. One rating is an inspection of quality and one is around price. Care homes rated as 'good' wouldn't be re-inspected for two to three years, in which time there could have been a change of management. Also a care home achieving an improved rating may not see that reflected online for up to a year. People need to be encouraged to read the report and visit the care home when

making a decision. The level of care may be really good but paperwork or admin might not be as good. A checklist would be useful in helping people to choose a care home.

11. Mental Health Task Group

At the last meeting Keith McHenry from NTW had reported that the single point of access system will be up and running on 1st May 2017. All mental health patients will be logged under one system and then triaged.

The Recovery College is working well in the south east of the county with 200 people on the books. It was trialed in Hexham but there is now no money or staff for this. The CCG will not fund the recovery college although it is funded by CCGs in other areas of the north east.

Talking Matters: They had inherited a backlog of referrals from NTW but have just about caught up. Waiting times are coming down and there are successful drop in sessions across the county.

12. Board partner organisations' update

Alzheimer's Society: All services provided by the society are funded by the society. The befriending service and dementia advisor service both had a lot of referrals particularly in the Morpeth and Blyth areas. An increasing number of people are seeing an advisor and are wanting long term and in depth support, which has an effect on capacity. They are looking to further fund and improve the service.

Carers Northumberland: There has been a change in service delivery. There has been a staff restructure leading to both redundancies and new posts. No services have been lost in the restructure but services are being delivered differently with more key support workers, more volunteers and groups increasingly supporting themselves. Resources are being freed up for significant one to one support for those in crisis. The information and advice service has been expanded and is receiving 100 calls per week. More events are being held, around carer's rights, benefits, power of attorney etc. A new training co-ordinator is also in place.

PALS: Work is happening with the deaf community as there were concerns about barriers. The interpreting service has been retendered and they are now using the same service as Newcastle. There have been some staff changes and new starters and recruitment is still ongoing. Disabled Go have surveyed all hospital sites in Newcastle and produced information about accessibility throughout the buildings, including shiny floors, mirrors etc. which can be challenging for those with dementia.

VCS Assembly: There has been work with NCC to help settle Syrian refugees in the county. Local faith groups had been involved as well. More families will be re-homed in Blyth in April. A health and wellbeing event is to take place in Alnwick, focusing on an asset based approach to health. The assembly is also meeting to talk about current challenges and to review the plan for the next year.

13. Board member updates and feedback

John - Central: There had been talk of training up care managers to give them assessments but at the last carers meeting he was told it wasn't happening. Carers Northumberland has said there can be a blockage and updates will be fed back to the board.

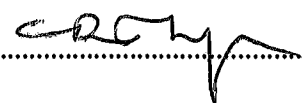
Pauline - North: There was a north locality meeting last week with a mental health services presentation. Pauline had explained the changes to the Healthwatch Northumberland board structure and there was some concern around that. She is disappointed that the new structure won't have locality representatives who are totally independent and the board should re-examine this. Pauline explained that she would not be standing again as a board member, partly because there is no role for her and partly because she still isn't confident about the governance arrangements between Adapt and Healthwatch Northumberland. The commissioners are looking at the relationship agreement and hope to allay some fears.

Carole - South East: Two Vanguard Co-Design Forums and two Blyth Valley Locality Forums had taken place. From the Vanguard meeting one action for Healthwatch was to look out for the newsletter being prepared by the CCG and consider whether any further action was required by Healthwatch in terms of dissemination or further explanation. Healthwatch staff had also attended the Vanguard meetings and so had captured other relevant actions and points of interest. At the Locality Forums topics of interest to current Healthwatch work were the proposals for Rothbury Hospital and GP representation on the ACO. At one of the meetings Dr Blair had raised the issue of representation and suggested that the localities may wish to partner together or create a federation type arrangement to ensure representation at the ACO - they could determine who would represent them at a later date. After discussion Blyth had decided this was not an option at this time. There had also been discussion around the Syrian refugees. Brockwell GP practice said it would take them, but questions had been raised about whether the families should see the GP most local to them to help integration in the community. The question was asked of how Healthwatch Northumberland could be involved and add value.

14. Any other business

Liz thanked the board members and gave out gifts to those standing down. Alan thanked the board on behalf of NCC. He said that there was another 12 month contract in place for Adapt to deliver Healthwatch Northumberland and there would be a quick decision on re-tendering beyond that.

Date and time of next meeting: TBA

Signed as a true record: 

Date: May 30, 2017