

Healthwatch
Northumberland
Annual Report 2015/16



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Message from our Chair



Cynthia Atkin

I am delighted to introduce the Healthwatch Northumberland Annual Report for 2015/16. One word as Chair I feel demonstrates the success and progress of Healthwatch Northumberland is:

RELATIONSHIPS

This will be apparent throughout this annual report on how we as the Independent Consumer Champion can improve outcomes for patients, carers and services users in the health and care system.

Healthwatch Northumberland has progressed greatly in reaching out to more residents of Northumberland and raising our profile through the various pieces of work we have undertaken. Equally working closely with our colleagues at grass roots level within the Voluntary Sector. We can proudly say that we continue to work closely with all health and care commissioners.

Primary relationships formed have benefited our progress in that we now are well anchored into the whole health and care system and seen not only as equal partners in the decision making process but as respected, credible partners who can provide evidential data on what the people of Northumberland are saying and want from their health and care services. Partnership working has been and still is our most effective way of improving and influencing health and care services for the people of Northumberland.

This year we have continued to embrace the exciting challenges involved when working in a rapidly changing environment. The NHS Trust along with all partners of the Integration Board was awarded Vanguard Status, phase one being the completion of the new hospital, and secondly to look to developing primary care services at scale. Healthwatch Northumberland is working collaboratively in progressing at each phase. Integrated working has already been embedded through the relationship between the main Health Trust and the Adult Care Services. This has certainly made a difference to have the services as one organisation.

We continue to have a strong voice at Health and Wellbeing board level with the Vice Chairs role being given to the Healthwatch Representative, working closely with the Chair. Healthwatch has presented on patients' feedback and experiences, highlighting the main themes and trends. This rich information is seen as an integral part in the reservoir of data.

Its been a busy but successful year and I look forward to the further challenges facing all of us as we continue to ensure that the voice of all service users is heard, especially at this critical time of change. I would like to thank the Board and staff team for their continued support.

I look forward to reporting on our progress in the fourth year.

Message from our Strategic Lead



Liz Prudhoe

I am pleased to say that this has been another successful yet challenging year for Healthwatch Northumberland. We have seen a tremendous increase in feedback from patients and public, resulting in us looking to 'deep dive' into the key themes and trends coming out of patient experiences. Engagement has been increased as planned with the brand profile being raised even higher.

I would like to thank the patients, public, service users, carers and the Voluntary groups for their continued support through engagement with our staff at our various locations. We continue to ensure that we understand their views to then inform the relevant commissioners and providers what people are saying about their Health and Care Services. This will then help to influence change.

We continue to support and encourage new volunteers who can then champion the work across this rural and geographically challenging county. I would like to thank all of them for their commitment to further improving outcomes for everyone.

My thanks also go to the staff team who work tirelessly to ensure they reach the communities and also to represent Healthwatch Northumberland in decision-making arenas. I would also like to thank our Board members for their continued involvement in the task groups where we look at particular issues raised by the public.

This next year is a crucial fourth year with many changes and challenges in health and care. We are pleased to be playing an integral part in discussions with Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the Local Authority, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), and Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (NTW) as we move closer to becoming a potential Accountable Care Organisation. Northumberland as a Vanguard Site is now in its second phase, this being to improve primary care and specialist services in the community - Healthwatch Northumberland will be using its local knowledge, patient experiences and recognised trends and themes to help inform decisions. We welcome this development in partnership as the respected 'critical friend'. I echo our Chairs word of 'Relationships' being fundamentally key to positive change for everyone.

The Year at a Glance

This year we reached over 40,000 people on social media.



We have spent over 100 hours gathering the views of children and young people.



Our volunteers help us with everything from gathering feedback to making animations.



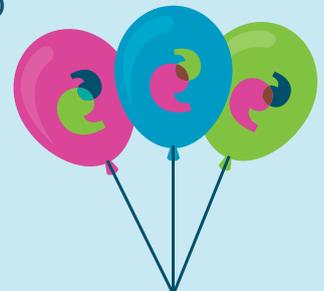
We've visited over 60 local services.



Our reports have looked at topics such as young people's views on health services and how people access services.



We've met hundreds of local people at our drop in events and information stands.



Who we are

Our Vision and Mission

We are the Northumberland consumer champion for health and care. Our vision is for a Northumberland where health and care services are all directly influenced by the diverse community they serve. We want people to receive the right care when they need it, and we want services to be accountable to the public who use them.

All of our work is informed by the following values:

Inclusive

We start with people first

We work for children, young people and adults

We cover all health and care services

We work for everyone

Influential

We set the agenda and make change happen

We are responsive

We take what we learn and translate it into action

We are innovative and creative

We know that we cannot fix things by sticking to the status quo

We work with other local Healthwatch and Healthwatch England to make an impact both locally and nationally

We work with everyone, not just those who shout the loudest

Independent

We are independent and act on behalf of all consumers

We listen to consumers and speak loudly on their behalf

We challenge those in power to design and deliver better health and care services

We like to highlight what works well but are not afraid to point out when things have gone wrong

Credible

We value knowledge

We seek out data and intelligence to challenge assumptions with facts

We celebrate and share good practice in health and care

We hold ourselves to the highest standards

Collaborative

We keep the debate positive and we get things done

We work in partnership with the public, health and care sectors, and the voluntary and community sector

We learn from people's experiences and from specialists and experts

We build on what is already known and collaborate in developing and sharing new insights

Our Strategic Objectives

Below are our strategic objectives and the measures we take to achieve them.

1. To collect evidence from the public, patients and users of services, their carers and families to inform services.

Measures: Evidence collected through development outreach work, web based activity and social media will be recorded and analysed quarterly.

2. To facilitate the involvement and engagement of the public, patients and users of services, their carers and families for the design of health and care services.

Measures: Involvement and engagement activities with communities and groups will be monitored quarterly to ensure activities are representative of all communities.

3. To deliver independent advocacy for people wishing to make a complaint regarding NHS services.

Measures: Advocacy cases will be monitored quarterly to ensure that access to the service is representative of all communities.

4. To work effectively with Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) partners.

Measures: Sharing information with VCS partners through board partners and Northumberland VCS Assembly.

5. To identify and prioritise key issues and establish work streams that contribute to the improvement of the quality of health and care services.

Measures: Work undertaken will be analysed annually identifying trends and recording outcomes which will be presented in the annual report.

6. To be an influential and critical friend to commissioners and providers of services and represent the views of Northumberland residents at the Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board.

Measures: An independent social audit will be undertaken and follow up annual surveys will be completed with key stakeholders.

7. To measure the impact of the work undertaken.

Measures: Data gathered will be analysed annually to measure impact.

8. To establish robust governance and information systems.

Measures: Strategic subgroups have been established from Healthwatch Northumberland Board members to develop future strategy and sustainability. Information systems are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Diversity and Inclusion

As Healthwatch Northumberland starts with people first, it is essential for all our work to be inclusive, accessible and meaningful to everyone. Our work covers the health and care needs of children, young people and adults and we are committed to working for everyone. There can be differences in people's experience of health and care - people's ability to access services might be affected by their ethnicity or gender. How well people are listened to might be affected by their disability or income. At the same time, access to health and care affects people's ability to work, care for others or play a part in their local communities. This is why diversity and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We ensure our staff, Board and volunteers can do their work in an environment where they are valued, involved and supported and feel safe from discrimination.

Our Priorities for 2015/2016

Using feedback from members of the public and our supporters, our top priorities for 2015/2016 were:

- Mental Health
- Access to Health Services
- Social Care
- Patient Transport/Ambulance Services
- Giving Children and Young People a Voice

Children and Young People
Patient Transport
Mental Health
Social Care **Access**

Healthwatch Northumberland staff team



Liz Prudhoe
Strategic Lead



Tricia Ashford
Project Coordinator



Judith Arundel
Development Worker/
Advocate for Blyth Valley



Chris Barker
Development Worker/
Advocate for West



Anna McClure
Development Worker/
Advocate for North and
Central



Helen Elliot
Children and Young People's
Development Worker/Advocate



Harriet Critchley
Communications Worker

Listening to people who use health and care services



Gathering experiences and understanding people's needs

Throughout 2015/2016 Healthwatch Northumberland attended 241 engagement events and worked on several projects to gather feedback about health and care services. In total we engaged with 3650 members of the public. We did this by holding information stands at leisure centres, libraries, supermarkets, auction marts and large employers across the county.



Shadowing the library bus

We also :

- Shadowed the mobile library bus to rural communities
- Attended partner organisation events
- Held quizzes at lunch clubs
- Arranged interviews on local radio stations

Healthwatch Northumberland is committed to finding out experiences from everyone. Here are some examples of how we have engaged with specific groups, some of which can be recognised as seldom heard:

Children and Young People

Our Children and Young People's Development Worker and our Communications Worker produced two animations with a group of young volunteers. One animation was about Healthwatch Northumberland and the second animation was about confidentiality, as this was an issue that was important to our young volunteers. The animations were showcased at our Annual General Meeting and were shown in schools across Northumberland. The animation about confidentiality is now part of the online resource pack used for Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for schools in Northumberland. The animations were also presented to partner organisations at the Health and Wellbeing Communications sub group, where they were well received.



Our volunteers receiving certificates at the AGM

Our Children and Young People's Development Worker delivered 16 lessons in seven schools and colleges to over 250 health and social care students aged 14-24. In one school, lessons were also delivered to Year 9 students about Healthwatch Northumberland in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons by form tutors resulting in 226 comments being received about health and social care services.

Working age population

We have identified the working age population as seldom heard as their lives tend to revolve around their work and their homes or social activity with their peers. We contacted employers around the county and held information stands at three large employers including EGGER (UK) LTD who is Northumberland's largest manufacturing employer with over 600 employees.

Farming community

The farming community within Northumberland was identified as a potential group who may not access health and care services. There are many reasons for this including: having to work long hours (making use of daylight), pressures of weather, seasonal events (lambing, harvesting etc), geographical location as well as commercial pressures. Healthwatch Northumberland held information stands at Auction Marts in the market town Hexham and the rural town Acklington where we gathered over 70 comments.

People over the age of 65

We attended several engagement events in Northumberland that aimed to engage older people. These included 'Ageing Well' themed events and conferences, which provide older people with support, information and signposting to a wide range of organisations and agencies.



Women's Ethnic Group in Blyth

Ethnic Minorities

In Northumberland 98.6 % of the population are classified as white British (2011 Census). However, we gathered feedback from a migrant mentors support group based in Berwick-Upon-Tweed and a women only ethnic group based in Blyth. We also engaged with the Traveller Education Family Liaison Officer from Northumberland County Council to make links with the traveller and gypsy community in Northumberland.

People with Learning Disabilities

We have worked with a number of groups of people with learning disabilities across the county to find out their views of health and care services. We have started work with The Central User Forum, a day centre in Blyth, to create bespoke easy read information.

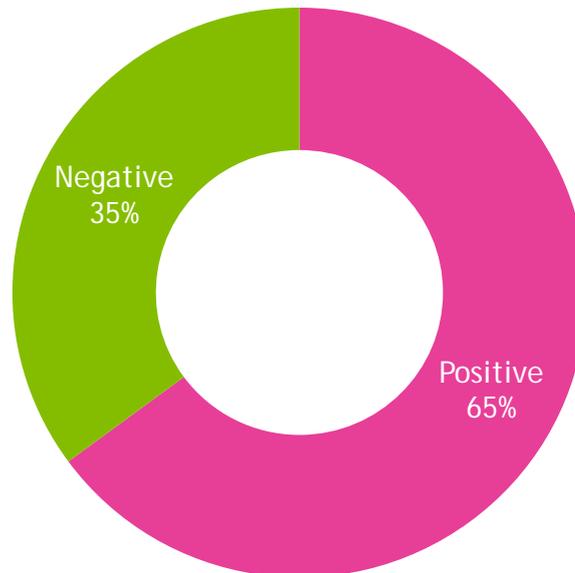


Members of Central User Forum

Comments Received 2015/2016

The comments we gather are logged onto our database and shared with commissioners and providers of services. Throughout 2015/2016 we received a total of 3447 comments. The chart below shows how many comments were positive and how many were negative.

Comments Received



The majority of people we spoke to were happy with the care they received, however we identified the following issues:

- Some people with sensory impairments, physical and learning disabilities, experience difficulty accessing some health services in the county
- Some patients have difficulty accessing GP appointments. This includes waiting times between requesting an appointment and seeing a GP, and how a GP appointment is offered, including the triage system used by GP surgeries
- Some patients have difficulty arranging Patient Transport Services to attend Hospital appointments

What we've learnt from visiting services

We have not undertaken any formal Enter and View activity as we have not identified a service that meets the criteria set out in our policy. However, through working with partners we have been involved with over 60 visits to care homes, hospitals and other services.

The purpose of these visits was to monitor and review services to identify any areas of improvement and feed this back to partners. We welcome this partnership approach that we have built up and feel that this way of working allows the most effective way to influence change.

Giving people advice and information



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

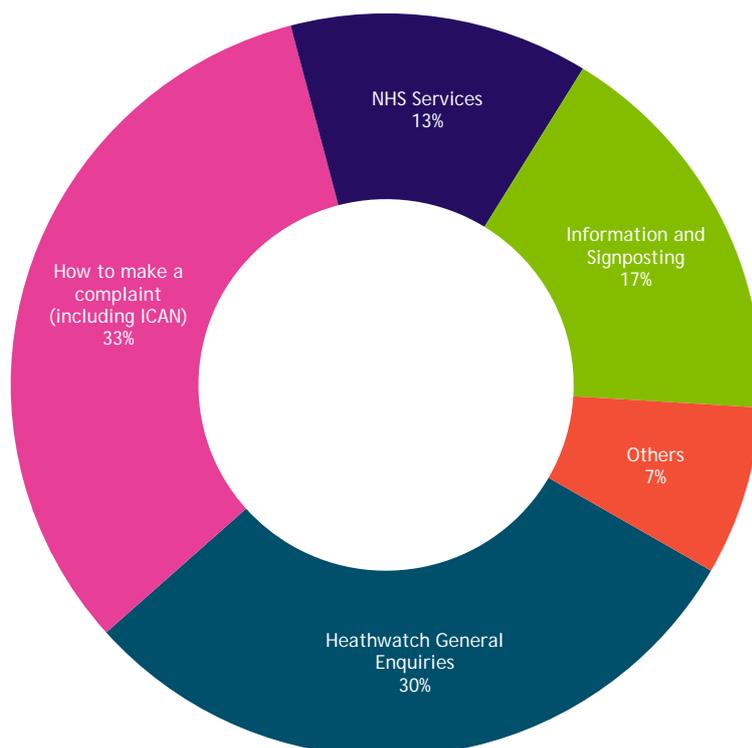
We offer a signposting service for people who:

- Are struggling to find an NHS or care service in Northumberland
- Are looking to find out more information about a service or support they need
- Have a general enquiry regarding the NHS or care service

We have an interactive website which contains a 'Your Health' page that we use to provide information about local services and to signpost people to relevant organisations and support. We also have a useful information page which includes recent reports from the Care Quality Commission about GPs, care homes and home care providers in the county. Over the past year we have had over 15,000 visits to the website. We are working with the News Team at The Central User Forum to develop bespoke easy read information for the website and we have produced information about Healthwatch Northumberland in British Sign Language. Work has also begun to develop a Children and Young People's section on the website to encourage this age group to get involved and share their experiences of using health and care services.

Throughout 2015/2016 we helped 348 people with their enquiries. The chart below shows a breakdown of the types of enquiries we received:

Enquiries 2015/2016



Others Include:

- Aids & Adaptions
- Benefits
- Carer Involvement/Support
- Healthwatch Volunteering
- Home Care
- Housing
- Residential and Care Homes
- Parking and Transport

Independent Complaints Advocacy Northumberland (ICAN)

Northumberland County Council has commissioned ICAN as part of the local Healthwatch contract since 2013.

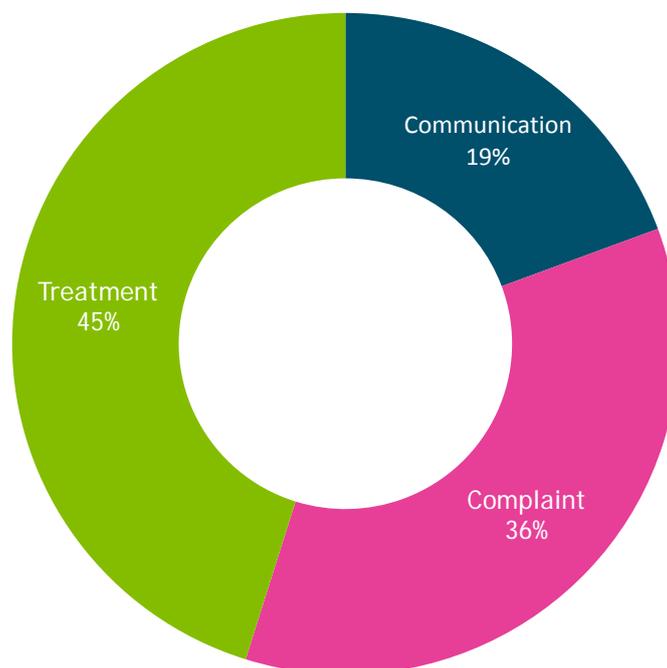
The service offers advocacy support to individuals living in Northumberland who want to make a complaint relating to their NHS treatment. They are given as much or as little support as they need to guide them through the NHS complaints process. This could include helping them write a letter or attending local resolution meetings.

Our Development Workers all trained to provide advocacy support to clients in their area.

Of the 106 enquires Healthwatch Northumberland received about 'how to make a complaint about an NHS service' 6 went on to self advocate and 62 were supported by ICAN.

The graph below shows the types of complaints our advocates have supported clients with:

Types of Complaints



Treatment includes:

- Clinical care
- Medication
- Privacy and dignity
- Waiting times

Communication includes:

- Attitude of staff
- Diagnosis
- Medical records
- Not being listened to

Complaint includes:

- Diagnosis
- Multiple grievances

How we have made a difference



Our reports and recommendations

The feedback we have gathered has been used to look at specific issues in more detail, these findings have been written up into the following reports:

Access to Healthcare Report

Healthwatch Northumberland carried out a project to assess and understand issues people with sensory impairments, physical and learning disabilities face when accessing health services.

192 people participated in the survey, including:

- 28 health service providers
- 86 people with sensory impairments, physical or learning disabilities
- A further 48 people with learning disabilities took part using an easy read survey
- 30 people took part in a focus group with the aid of a British Sign Language Interpreter

Overall, most respondents were happy with access to services and information provided, however, there were some service users and carers who were not. The main concerns emerging from the project are around access to services for people with sensory impairments.

Recommendations include:

- Health Service providers make available to the public their plans including timelines for implementing the NHS Accessible Information standard.
- Health Service providers publish their response and make available plans to implement The Equality Delivery System 2.
- Appropriate means of access to services should be provided to meet all individual needs, including communication methods, access to premises, appropriate support when receiving treatment and accessible information. Consideration to be given to the protected characteristics as detailed by the Equality Act 2010.

Report on the closure of Harbottle

On 28th August 2015 NHS England took the decision to close Harbottle Surgery in the interest of patient safety. Several patients contacted us to share how the closure has affected them. In response to this we held a drop in session at the Star Inn in Harbottle to ensure patients had an opportunity to have their say on this issue. We spoke to over 60 patients from the surgery and gathered their feedback. This feedback was collated into a report which has been shared with commissioners and providers of services.

Recommendations include:

- Patients who were registered with Harbottle Surgery require access to GP and primary care services, primarily in Harbottle, however if not at Harbottle then a transport service will need to be commissioned to support those who cannot make the journey independently. It is imperative the issue of access is addressed immediately by NHS England.

Access to GP Appointments

Healthwatch Northumberland worked on a county-wide project to better understand patients' experiences of accessing GP appointments and the systems used by GP practices. Both patients and GP practices were contacted for their feedback and other sources of information were also examined. 136 patients participated in the survey and all but one GP practice completed the survey giving us a total of 43 responses. Feedback received from patients was very mixed, even within the same GP practice. Whilst many patients are satisfied with their GP practice and accessing appointments, some issues were identified. This report is currently in draft form and will be shared in due course.

Recommendations include:

- Healthwatch Northumberland will continue to seek feedback from patients about their experiences of health and social care and share this regularly with service providers and commissioners so that they can continue to inform how services are planned and delivered across the county.

Young People's Health Services Report

Some of Healthwatch Northumberland's young volunteers have been involved in developing an online questionnaire in order to better understand how young people feel about the health services, support and information available to them in Northumberland. This questionnaire was produced in collaboration with Northumberland Youth Service through their "1001 Voices" project; this offers young people across the county a chance to have their views heard on a range of matters by signing up to receive online surveys every few months. Public Health were also involved in the process as they too were keen to hear about young people's experiences with health services in Northumberland. Our young volunteers have highlighted what they think are the most important issues and have proposed some solutions. Healthwatch Northumberland has also made some recommendations which largely mirror those of the young people involved in developing the survey.

Recommendations include:

- Local health services should be more widely promoted to young people through a range of methods (e.g. in schools, online, in youth clubs) so they are fully aware of where they are, what they offer and when and how to access them (particularly sexual health, mental health services and pharmacies).
- Given young people's concerns about confidentiality within pharmacies, young people friendly information should be clearly displayed in pharmacies stating that private spaces are available for those who wish to speak to the pharmacist in confidence. Moreover, offering a private, confidential and non-judgemental opportunity/space to discuss health concerns with a pharmacist should be an automatic response.

Mystery Shopping - Pharmacy Project

Following the recommendations from the Young People's Health Survey 11 of Healthwatch Northumberland's young volunteers participated in 'mystery shopping' activities to gain an overall snapshot of young people's experiences of pharmacies across Northumberland a total of 67 calls and 23 visits were made.

Largely, young people's experiences of staff attitudes were positive, although this was not consistent. With regards to information provision, some young people felt it was not always easy to find information and sometimes it was not young people friendly. Furthermore, due to the positioning of the information, some felt it was difficult to discreetly look for certain leaflets. Some young volunteers also identified that there was a lack of privacy at the counter.

Recommendations include:

- Pharmacy staff should be aware of services offered within their pharmacy and continue to promote "Think Pharmacy First". Equally, they should be aware of other services offered locally to assist with appropriate and accurate signposting, where necessary.
- The above could also be supported by information leaflets/posters etc displayed within the pharmacy - a balance should be achieved with regards to information positioning in that it is easy to find whilst also allowing for some privacy at the same time.

2015 Social Account

A Social Account was undertaken as part of the 360° review of our work, as our commissioner felt this would be a useful tool to evaluate our work in a wider context. Social accounting is used to report the impact an organisation has on people and the way resources are used. It shows how an organisation is performing and can be used to improve effectiveness in the future.

A Social Impact Audit was carried out by consultants Angier Griffin throughout the year on our behalf and the findings were written into a social account. The account highlights how Healthwatch Northumberland has been successful in engaging with people who use health and social care services across the county. It also found that by listening to patients and sharing this information with providers and commissioners Healthwatch Northumberland has gained recognition and the respect of stakeholders.

Recommendations include:

- Wider stakeholder consultation strategy particularly looking for feedback on values
- Widening the scope to include environmental and economic impacts

Involving local people in our work

The Northumberland CCG invited the Healthwatch Northumberland Chair to work on developing a patient and professional testing panel, the purpose being to monitor the development and implementation of the five year plan. The panel members were supported and informed to be able to contribute to all discussions, thus being credible critical friends. This has been such a success that the testing panel has now evolved into the Vanguard Co-design Testing panel, looking at developing the 'primary care at scale' phase. Healthwatch was also invited by the NHS Trust to jointly present on the success of the testing panel to the NHS Expo nationally - this was seen as a real achievement for involving local people and supporting front line staff to also have a say in how services are being developed for the future. The testing panel now moves around Northumberland to ensure all patients, service users and carers can openly be involved in the each phase of the Vanguard Programme. Healthwatch continues to support and play an integral part in the panel, as well as the Chair being a member of the strategy board. The Primary Care at Scale has harnessed the views of people wanting local services for local people.

The Northumberland CCG organises a county wide patients forum and locality patient forums. Healthwatch Northumberland is invited to present and attend all of these forums. Local people are invited to attend, and this has also raised the number of supporters and helped reach out to others who chose to be involved in patient groups. This has forged good links with patient participation groups who are also supporters of Healthwatch Northumberland and share their experiences. We value the relationship with the CCG and Patient Participation Groups as a vital part of its functions. This is working very well with close relationships established at all levels. Healthwatch Northumberland also has a place on the co commissioning group.



Our Chair presenting at the county wide forum

Our Chair is the current Vice Chair for Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board. We ensure that there are regular meetings between board members, the Strategic Lead and the Health and Wellbeing Chair ensuring that patient and public involvement is hard-wired across the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Healthwatch Northumberland Chair also Chairs the Health and Wellbeing Communication and Engagement Sub Group and has recently been appointed to chair the Young People's Strategic Participation Group. Staff members attend the groups to ensure that there is a strong synergy with Healthwatch at the 'coalface'. Our board welcome this involvement and the chair is well supported by the strategic lead in undertaking these leading roles. The relationship is strong in that the Strategic Lead can step into sharing the roles.

"Thanks to the involvement of local people it feels like Healthwatch Northumberland is making a real contribution to the improvement of local health services".

Nigel Porter
Healthwatch Northumberland Board Member

How we involve the public and volunteers

Healthwatch Northumberland has three task groups to look at specific issues in more detail. Each group is led by a Board member and involves staff, supporters, service users and carers as well as other appropriate stakeholders.

Social Care Task Group

The Social Care Task Group is made up of keen supporters with an interest in the delivery of social care across the county. Working closely with care commissioners from Northumberland County Council as well as representatives of the Care Quality Commission, the group look at themes and issues around social care, care homes and domiciliary care agencies, and challenging them when necessary.

“As chair of one of the board’s sub groups for social care, we have helped make a real difference to the quality of monitoring for contracts in our care homes across Northumberland”.

Pauline Wilson
Healthwatch Northumberland Board Member

Many of the group members have also undertaken training to take part in local authority care home inspections as ‘Independent Observers’. Their feedback to the local authority helps to inform and shape service provision at care homes across Northumberland.

Mental Health Task Group

This group have been looking closely at how Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust has implemented different working practices through the Transformation Programme. They have also monitored the progress of the Recovery College for people with mental health issues in areas around Northumberland.

Access to Healthcare Task Group

Members of this group look at themes and issues raised in feedback around access to healthcare services. They identified people with sensory impairments, physical and learning disabilities have difficulties accessing health services and made the decision to look at this issue in more detail. Healthwatch Northumberland staff team spoke to different community groups across the county to find out their views on accessing services, the findings of which are in the Access to Healthcare Report.

Healthwatch Northumberland volunteers have also been involved in many activities including: care home observations, creating animations, distributing newsletters and supporting Healthwatch Northumberland staff at events. We have a rolling engagement programme to encourage members of the public to share their experiences of health and care services as well encouraging them to become volunteers.

Working with Other Organisations

Health and Social Care Liaison Group

We work collaboratively and constructively with commissioners and service providers through our Health and Social Care Liaison Group. The purpose of the group is to provide a forum for the mutual exchange of information. This allows for an 'early warning' about problems with health and care provision, and to enable providers to give feedback on issues raised and other developments.

The following organisations are members of the group:

- Healthwatch Northumberland
- Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group
- Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- Northumberland County Council - Adult Services and Children's Services
- NHS England
- Public Health

We have also worked with the following commissioners and service providers on specific projects:

Working with Care Quality Commission (CQC)

We are included in high level information sharing meetings around social care where we are able to feed in information about local services so that any emerging issues are addressed at the earliest stage. The CQC contact us before every local inspection in the county and we receive feedback about any actions they are going to take once the inspection is complete.

We have worked in partnership with the CQC through several listening events to gather feedback to aid an inspection of Northumbria NHS Foundation Trust.



Working with CQC

Working with Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

We attended the Patient Forum in Choppington where future services and how they can be shaped to suit the local community were discussed. It was an opportunity for the CCG to listen to patients' views on health and care services in the county. The Chair of Healthwatch Northumberland is invited to present the patient's voice at all of the Patient Forum events.

In 2015 the CCG undertook a project to review the care of patients living at home with long term conditions. Healthwatch Northumberland with support from Carers Northumberland, were asked to be the delivery partner for the project, and working with GP Practices across the county who had referred patients (with their consent) to take part in the project.

Patients and their carers were asked questions about their experience of local NHS services and to offer suggestions about how services could be improved. The analysis and final project report is due to be shared with the CCG in May 2016.

"The NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group continues to greatly value its partnership with Healthwatch Northumberland. The two organisations have worked very closely throughout 2015/16 on a number of issues central to the development of health and care services. In short it has been a pleasure to work alongside them in true partnership once again.

Stephen Young

Strategic Head of Corporate Affairs

NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

We joined Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust on their core listening events to find out the public's views of their services through a roadshow that visited several places around Northumberland. We were able to work successfully to give members of the public the opportunity to give their feedback to an independent body.

"We have a trusting relationship with Healthwatch Northumberland - it is not only one of our statutory partners with which we regularly engage however also a 'critical friend' and valued stakeholder. Whilst we both maintain our independent roles in local communities, the feedback Healthwatch provides from its engagement activities across Northumberland is invaluable to help inform our quality priorities in delivering the highest standards of care."

Jennifer Coe

Head of Foundation, Community and Engagement

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Our work in focus



Our work in focus: Volunteering

Annabel, one of our young volunteers explains why she enjoys volunteering for Healthwatch Northumberland and the work she has been involved in:

I have been volunteering with Healthwatch Northumberland and part of their “Children and Young People’s Reference Group” since February 2014. As a volunteer I have had the chance to be involved with lots of different fun activities!

I think it’s really important that young people have their say when it comes to health and social care and this is a great way for our views to be listened to and taken seriously. Through the reference group, I have helped to plan and create an animation about confidentiality, developed a young people’s health survey, ‘mystery shopped’ pharmacies and acted as an independent observer for some care home inspections. I have also attended Healthwatch Northumberland Board meetings as the Young Person’s Representative’; it is good to know that other partners are interested in what we’ve done and are keen to listen to young people’s feedback and concerns.

I feel like I have gained some really valuable experience, learnt a lot and developed my skills. I better appreciate the importance of listening to others and respecting their views (even if you and I certainly feel more confident sharing my own opinions and communicating with others. I have really enjoyed meeting other young volunteers who share the same interests as me.

Outside of the reference group, I have supported Healthwatch Northumberland staff at information stands and other engagement events to raise awareness of Healthwatch Northumberland and speak to members of the public about their experiences of health and social care services.

As I am studying health and social care at college, this volunteering also links well into my course; for example, confidentiality and advocacy are important parts of the curriculum. I enjoyed working on the confidentiality animation project as it gave us an opportunity to talk openly about our concerns and learn more about what it actually is. From these conversations we then planned and created a whiteboard animation to act as a sort of ‘myth busting’ and educational tool. Other things I’ve learnt about from the staff team have also helped me with the course (e.g. the structure of the NHS, what advocacy is and how people’s feedback is shared and used to develop services).



Annabel Young
Healthwatch Northumberland Volunteer

Our plans for next year



Future priorities

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board and staff attended a development day to agree key areas of work for 2016/17. Due to the rapidly changing environment we are working in, it was also agreed that we would continue our pro-active and partnership approach with key commissioners and providers. Taking what people have told us it was agreed to continue our valuable work looking at the following:

- Mental health
- Primary care services
- Further engagement with seldom heard groups
- Engagement and liaison
- Domiciliary care
- Patient Transport

This will be achieved through specific projects informed by research and information analysis.

SeldomHeard
PrimaryCare
DomiciliaryCare
PatientTransport
Liaison **Engagement**
MentalHealth

Our people



Decision making

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board

The Board's role is to provide strategic direction and overview to our work; they also have the responsibility for making strategic level decisions in all aspects of our work. Their roles include: receiving and responding to reports from relevant strategic bodies such as NHS England and Northumberland County Council and making submissions to these bodies. The Board keep under review our overall policy and direction and help us to develop Healthwatch Northumberland further.

Each Board Member represents an organisation, an area or a group of people. Some of our Board Members have joined us as nominated representatives of partner organisations; others are individuals who have been selected to represent an area of Northumberland or a specific group of people.

Nominated representatives from partner organisations:

- Sharon Spurling (Carers Northumberland)
- Catherine Lee (Patient Advice and Liaison Service - PALS)
- Anne Lyall (Voluntary Sector)
- Danielle Cooper (Alzheimer's Society)
- Deb McGarrity (Age UK Northumberland)
- Pat Maginn (Chair - Adapt North East)

Individual Board Members

- John McIndoe (Representing Central Northumberland)
- Nigel Porter (Representing West Northumberland)
- Pauline Wilson (Representing North Northumberland)
- Fiona Wardlaw (Representing South East Northumberland)

"There's real value for Carers Northumberland having representation on the Board of Healthwatch Northumberland. The work Healthwatch Northumberland does is fair, challenging, and aims to get the best for patients, their family members and carers from health and care services across the County."

Sharon Spurling
Chief Executive
Carers Northumberland

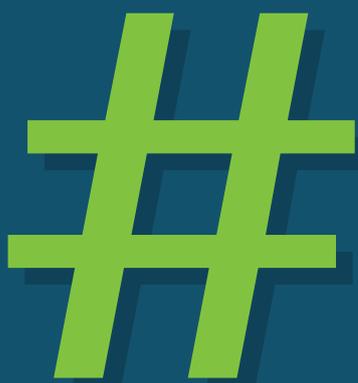
Our finances



Budget for 2015/2016

INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		314,000.00
Funding carried over from 2014/15		32,747.74
Total income		346,747.74
EXPENDITURE		
Management fee		21,980.00
Gross wages		223,073.69
Chair expenses		12,000
Volunteer expenses		8,664.00
Information, marketing, publicity		3,615.00
Meeting support, rooms, refreshments		2,068.68
Training staff/volunteers		5,265.00
Rent		26,214.50
Heat, light, insurance		5,000
Telephone		7,975.67
Computer equipment		2,785.50
Web and data collection		11,158.69
VCS partner involvement		16,734.23
Total expenditure		346,535.16
Balance brought forward		212.58

Contact us



Get in touch

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Healthwatchnorthumberland



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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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