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Board Recruitment Information

October 2020

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Welcome to Healthwatch Northumberland

Thank you for expressing an interest in the role of Healthwatch Northumberland Board member.

Healthwatch Northumberland is the independent champion for health and social care across the county. Its role is to give a voice to people who use services, encourage and influence positive change to services and help meet the health and social care needs of the population.

Healthwatch was introduced under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to help ensure that patients and the public are at the heart of health and social care services. Healthwatch Northumberland is part of a network of 152 local Healthwatch, supported at the national level by Healthwatch England.

Healthwatch is working to ensure that people’s health and social care needs are heard, understood and met. Achieving this will mean that:

* local people shape health and social care delivery
* local people influence the services they receive personally
* local people hold services to account

We are committed to working in partnership with key decision makers, providers and commissioners of health and social care services. We are independent and are not part of the NHS or Northumberland County Council nor are we affiliated with any of the health and social care providers or any political party.

Healthwatch Northumberland wants to appoint new Board members who will play an important role in setting and overseeing the county-wide strategy. Board positions are available for independent volunteer applicants.

This information pack is designed to provide prospective Board members with all the information they need, including details on how to apply.

If you have any questions or would like further information please contact us by calling: 07590 880016 or email:[derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)

Functions of Healthwatch Northumberland

People want health and social care support that works – helping them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face. We have the power to ensure that people’s voices are heard by the government and those running services. As well as seeking the public’s views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

Our purpose is to find out what matters to the people of Northumberland and to help make sure their views shape the support needed. People’s views come first – especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference we can.

Healthwatch Northumberland is delivered by Adapt (NE) and engages with the residents, patients, families and carers of Northumberland to understand their views and use these to influence local services.

We are based in Hexham and, normally, the staff and volunteer team travels throughout the county to meet with and listen to the people of Northumberland. At the moment we are working from home and have stopped face to face meetings. People can contact us by phone, letter, email, website or through regular themed meetings on Zoom. We know this will not suit everyone and we are introducing different ways for people to get in touch.

We work with a range of key organisations in the county and beyond, sharing the views of the people of Northumberland and working to ensure they are central to all decisions made about health and social care.

These organisations include Northumberland County Council, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group, North East Ambulance Service, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust and the Care Quality Commission as well as care homes and other organisations such as private companies and charities.

Click [here](https://healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk/our-strategic-plan-for-2020-2022/) to read our Strategic Plan 2020/2022. It sets out what we want to achieve. At the heart of it are our vision and mission.

**Our Vision**

“The health and social care needs of the people of Northumberland are heard, understood and met by those responsible for commissioning and delivering services”.

**Our Mission**

To ensure that the people of Northumberland are at the heart of all decisions made about their health and social care.

**Engagement**

Healthwatch Northumberland’s primary function is to engage with communities and individuals across the county, gathering evidence on people’s experiences and views of services, which will then be used to inform and shape services.



Healthwatch Northumberland Structure

# Adapt (North East)

Adapt (North East) has been commissioned by Northumberland County Council (“the commissioner”) to provide the Local Healthwatch function for Northumberland. Adapt is a community-based organisation that works to improve the quality of life for those with sensory, physical or learning disabilities, mental health problems, and people who are disadvantaged by living in a rural

location. The Director of Adapt (North East) is Liz Prudhoe.

Adapt is accountable to the commissioner to develop and deliver an effective and efficient Healthwatch. All legal liability including employment responsibilities sit with the Adapt Board. **Healthwatch Northumberland Board members have no personal liability for Healthwatch Northumberland and are not trustees or directors**. A separate agreement sets out the respective responsibilities and working protocols between the Adapt Board and the Healthwatch Northumberland Board.

# Healthwatch Northumberland Delivery Team

Healthwatch Northumberland’s day to day work is delivered by a team of six people (4.6 FTE) based in Hexham and led by Project Coordinator Derry Nugent. You can find out more about the team on our website.

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# Healthwatch Northumberland Board

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board’s role is to provide strategic direction for and oversight of Healthwatch Northumberland’s work. So, the board:

* Sets and monitors a Strategic Plan
* Ensures Healthwatch Northumberland is meeting its aims and operates in an inclusive and equitable way using an annual Operational Plan incorporating Engagement, Communications and Marketing, Volunteering, Strategic Influence.
* Is represented on and receives and responds to reports from Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board.
* Receives and responds to reports Healthwatch England and other relevant strategic bodies.
* Stays informed regarding strategic developments in health and social care at both a county and a national level.
* Works constructively to improve health and social care services in Northumberland.

More details about the role and function of the Healthwatch Board are covered in the Terms of Reference.



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| Healthwatch Board Membership |

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board tries to reflect communities and organisations across Northumberland. At present there are 10 members

The role of the HWN Board is primarily to set and oversee the delivery of the agreed strategy and to ensure high level engagement with external partners, as well as staying informed about strategic developments in health and social care.

The Board comprises members which are classed as Independent, Nominated and Co-opted.

**Independent Members** join the Board after an open recruitment process, and they have a key role in helping to gather and promote the views, knowledge and experience of health and social care users within Northumberland. They play an important part in Healthwatch Northumberland’s engagement network because of their contacts with individuals and groups within their local communities.

**Mike Allport** lives in the north of the county and brings to the board a wealth of knowledge and understanding about young people and an awareness of the issues affecting very rural communities.

**Hayley Brown** lives and works in central Northumberland and has considerable insight in matters related to the health and wellbeing of young people and in charitable work.

**Sue Taylor** lives in the north west of the county and has significant awareness of mental health and visual impairment matters as well as appreciating rurality issues and how HW organisations function.

**David Thompson**, Chair, lives in the west of the county and has a wide background in health, education, and leisure.

**Margaret Young**, Deputy Chair, lives in the south east of the county and has had a lifetime of working experience in a range of health and care environments as well as a prominent role in her Patient Participation Group.

**Nominated Partners** represent community/voluntary organisations and bring information, support and advice relating to the aims and objectives of Healthwatch Northumberland.

**Debra Blakey** represents Carers Northumberland which supports those who spend time looking after people with physical/mental illness, disability, frailty and substance misuse.

**Catherine Lee**. Represents the Patient Advice and Liaison Service, the NHS service which provides confidential information, advice and support to patients, their families and carers who have any individuals concerns or queries about NHS services.

**Anne Lyall/Liz Ions** represent Northumberland Community Voluntary Action which provides information, advice, training, and support to volunteers and to local voluntary and community groups.

**Liz Prudhoe** represents ADAPT (North East) which improves the quality of life for those with sensory/physical/learning disabilities, with mental health problems and with rural accessibility issues.

Co-opted Members may from time to time be invited to join the board to provide specific skills or expertise for particular projects or activities. Currently, there are no co-opted members on the board.

**Individual thematic areas**

In addition to the personal skills and qualities listed in the person specification, it is important for the Healthwatch Northumberland Board to contain expertise in a range of areas relating to health and social care. We are seeking Board members who have experience and knowledge in one or more of the following individual thematic areas;

* + Mental health – children and young people in particular
  + Social care services
  + Long term conditions
  + Equality & diversity
  + Children & young people

# Role of the Healthwatch Chair

The current Chair is David Thompson.

The Healthwatch Northumberland Board Chair has two key responsibilities:

* To lead the Board in setting and overseeing Healthwatch Northumberland strategy, including chairing all Board meetings.
* To attend high-level external strategic meetings (such as the Health and Wellbeing Board) and to relay the relevant information to the delivery team.

Considering the significant time commitment related to this position (3 days per month), the role of Board Chair is remunerated. This is the only Board role that carries remuneration.

The Chair is appointed through an open selection process. This is the responsibility of the Adapt Board, in conjunction with the commissioner, Northumberland County Council. The Chair is appointed for a period of three years and may be reappointed a maximum of once (i.e. six consecutive years in total). Existing Board members may put themselves forward for appointment as Chair, as may members of the public.

The Chair is accountable to the Adapt Board and reports to Adapt Board meetings quarterly as a minimum and attends by exception when required.

**Board member role and responsibilities**

The key responsibility of Healthwatch Northumberland Board members is to prepare for and attend 4 Board meetings per year plus a review day.

Meetings take place during the working day, and last approximately 2.5 hours. Healthwatch meetings are held ‘in public’. Before the pandemic this was at different locations across the county but for the moment we meet on Zoom.

Board positions of Healthwatch Northumberland are voluntary and unpaid. However, reasonable expenses are reimbursed.

Here is a summary of Board member responsibilities:

* Attend at least 75% of Board meetings each year
* Prepare in advance of meetings by reading reports, Board papers and other relevant documents
* Participate in appropriate task groups as and when required.
* Represent Healthwatch Northumberland at occasional external meetings and events
* Promote, enhance and uphold the reputation of Healthwatch Northumberland and its work
* Work with the Chair and other Board members to established codes of governance
* Uphold and promote with others the Healthwatch Northumberland Code of Conduct
* Ensure the activities of Healthwatch Northumberland reflect all communities within Northumberland
* Be positive in their approach when representing Healthwatch Board
* Undertake induction and relevant training and development days as identified by Healthwatch Board or Adapt (North East).

Application Process

All board members will be lay persons and volunteers as defined by Regulation 34 (Healthwatch Regulations explained, LGA and Department of Health, 2012). Board members will normally be required to live in Northumberland.

To apply to become a Healthwatch Northumberland Board member please complete the application form addressing the person specification and individual thematic areas.

Send your application to Derry Nugent at [derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)

All applications must be received by **9am on 16 October 2020.**

For applicants for whom a written application may not be appropriate, an interview-only assessment may be carried out. Please contact Derry Nugent at [derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)

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# Person Specification

* Awareness of current health and social care policy and issues.
* Ability to develop and maintain constructive working relationships with people from a wide range of back grounds and experiences.
* High-level communication skills with the ability to engage in different ways with different groups and individuals.
* Ability to exercise balanced judgement when presented with complex problems, considering all implications.
* Experience of setting and monitoring organisational strategic and operational delivery.
* Relevant experience of working in a collective decision-making group, board or committee.
* Commitment to working towards securing and supporting improvements in health and social care services for service users, carers and the public.
* Ability to treat people with respect, engage in constructive non-adversarial debate and to articulate balanced, objective views.

# Selection process

Board members will be selected to provide a wide range of knowledge and experience, detailed in the role and person specification. Applications will be shortlisted based on these criteria.

David Thompson, Liz Prudhoe, and Derry Nugent will comprise a panel to consider applications and undertake interviews for selected applicants.

Invitations to interview will be emailed to shortlisted candidates.

We are using the Zoom video conferencing application for all meetings and interviews. If you are not familiar with Zoom, we can provide introductory information and a short support session. Please contact Derry Nugent to arrange.

At this time, we anticipate the **interviews will be held week commencing 26 October 2020.**

Subject to final selection, new members would be expected to attend an induction session in November (on Zoom) and to attend the Board meeting on 15 December 2020

# Feedback

All interviewed candidates will receive feedback promptly after the interview process is complete.

# Exclusions

Healthwatch Northumberland will not be able to consider your application if you are disqualified from appointment for any of the following reasons:

* You have an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty;
* You are an un-discharged bankrupt;
* You have been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Court or the Charity Commission for misconduct or mismanagement; and
* You are under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
* You have entered into a composition or arrangement with their creditors which includes an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA), and is currently on the Insolvency Service Register.

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# Alternative formats

# If you require a copy of this pack in an alternative format, please call: 03332 408468 or email: [derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk](mailto:derryn@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk)