

The background image shows three people sitting on a bench in a bright, modern setting, likely a public space or a waiting area. A man in a white shirt is on the left, a woman in a dark jacket is in the middle, and a man in a dark jacket is on the right, looking towards the camera. The Healthwatch logo is in the top right corner. A dark teal banner at the bottom contains the title and subtitle. There are decorative teal and pink lines on the left side of the banner.

healthwatch

Healthwatch Hartlepool

Annual Report 2017/18



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Message from our Chairman



I can't really believe that it's a whole year since I wrote the introduction to last year's report. Although when I consider just how much we have all achieved in that time it's surprising it's only a year.

The people haven't altered, Board members remain in place providing the continuity we need. Jan Weedall, one of our board members, had a brief sabbatical to deal with a project for North Yorkshire Local Authority but we are delighted and very grateful to welcome her back. We've missed you Jan. Also all the Members of the Executive are still working so hard to accomplish all the work they do. Margaret Wrenn and Ruby Marshall are still providing the vital link between our Healthwatch Executive and the Board so we are assured the right hand knows what the left hand is doing.

If we are the right and left hands then the head must be Christopher our Manager and his team. Christopher has, as usual, been working so hard for Healthwatch in so many areas. He has brought in work from various sources and the financial benefits of this go to swell the offer from Healthwatch and consequently allow us to do more work and, of course keep Healthwatch's profile as high as possible.

Stephen our Development Officer has been his usual hardworking self and Tony Leighton our Patient & Public Engagement Officer has been so good in giving us more of his time to cope with the huge hole made when Carol Slattery our Support Officer was ill. We are so pleased she is feeling much better now and has returned to full time work.

I feel that the most important achievement this year is our change of funding status. We are now a Grant Aided organisation and Christopher and I met with Jill Harrison from Hartlepool Borough Council and put our case forward for a three-year Grant with the option of another two additional years. This was subsequently ratified by the Borough Council. Healthwatch is, therefore, financially secure for the next five years. I hope you will agree this is so very important.

I realise the relevant details of our work will be set out in the body of this report but I would like to congratulate our lead member for mental health Zoe Sherry on the enormous amount of work she has undertaken, which has received such wide recognition.

Jane Tilly - Chairman

Message from our Manager



We have been incredibly successful in delivering our statutory activities and key priorities

This is my second report for Healthwatch Hartlepool as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. I feel, thanks to the staff, Directors, Executive members and volunteers we have been incredibly successful in delivering our statutory activities and key priorities because of their rich mix of talent, expertise and contribution. It is very true that our volunteers are the cornerstone to our success.

As the independent consumer champion for patients and users of health & social care services in Hartlepool we have a dedicated board of directors responsible for the strategic work of the organisation who have continued to support and respect the experienced Executive committee. This model enables us to feed information collated through our communication & engagement plan to form our strategic vision. This Governance Framework has allowed Healthwatch to continue to influence the delivery of services within the borough. This has ranged from our work with York University and Hartlepool Borough Council in respect of Children & Young People to

our 'Enter & View' activity at North Tees Hospital, local GP Practices and some of our local Care Homes. We continue to lead the town's Mental Health Forum as well as our collaborative piece of work with the Borough Council to shape and mould their new Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Further information relating to our vast range of work in Healthwatch can be viewed via our website www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk

The purpose of this year's work programme was to set out the activities, priorities and outcomes articulated from engaging with the community. Our activities were delivered in compliance with our service specification, governance framework and by holding meetings of associated task & finish groups and public meetings. I believe we have certainly built upon the progress made in previous years.

Healthwatch Hartlepool is for adults, children and young people who live in or access health and/or social care services in the Borough of Hartlepool. Healthwatch Hartlepool aims to be accessible to all sections of the community. Our work has been complemented by the use of our website, Facebook page and through our monthly newsletter, and lastly, this, our fifth Annual Report.

Christopher Akers-Belcher - Healthwatch Manager

Highlights from our year

7,116

This year we've reached 7,116 people on social media



Our **30** volunteers help us with everything from Mental Health to 'Dying' well



We've visited

32

local services



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from

Deaf Patient Experience
to **GP Access**



Hello

Hi

We've spoken to

42

people on the Great North Care Record Debate



We've given

1272 people information and advice



Who we are

Healthwatch Hartlepool exists to make health & social care better for everyone. We believe the best way to achieve this is by designing local services around their needs and experiences. You need services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people. Our sole focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and to speak out on their behalf.

We are uniquely placed as part of a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

“As well as championing your views locally, we also share your views with Healthwatch England, which is part of the Care Quality Commission (CQC).”

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of people at the heart of what they do.

We believe that asking people more about their experiences can identify issues that, if addressed, will make services better.

Our vision is to have health and care that works for you

“Healthwatch Hartlepool has been established in a way that is inclusive and enables involvement from all areas of the local community. We wish to involve those who are seldom heard.”

Healthwatch Hartlepool is the umbrella organisation which brings together existing and new consultation groups, networks, organisations and individuals in Hartlepool to enable them to have a voice in improving health and social care services.

Healthwatch Hartlepool does this by working in a collaborative and inclusive way across Hartlepool taking account of the rich diversity of the people of Hartlepool and their needs.

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 case. Our mission is to achieve this.

Who we are

Our strategic priorities

Established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the requirements set out in the legislation mean Healthwatch Hartlepool will be expected to:

- Obtain the views of the wider community about their needs for and experience of local health and social care services and make those views known to those involved in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social care services.
- Promote and support the involvement of a diverse range of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services through membership of local residents and service users.
- Make reports and recommendations about how those services could or should be improved.
- Provide information to the public about accessing health and social care services together with choice in relation to aspects of those services.
- Represent the views of the whole community, patients and service users on the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group (locality) Board.

- Make the views and experiences of the broad range of people and communities known to Healthwatch England helping it to carry out its role as national champion.
- Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to carry out special reviews or investigations into areas of concern (or, if the circumstances justify it, go direct to the CQC with recommendations, if for example urgent action were required by the CQC).

Overall people's views come first - especially those who find it hardest to be heard. We will champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



Your views on health and care

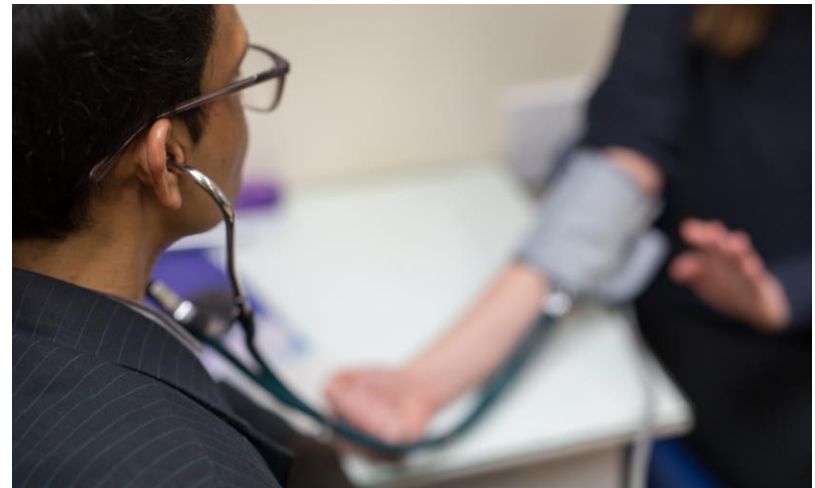


Listening to people's views

During 2017/18 engagement has been at the heart of our activity as this is crucial if we are to demonstrate how local people's needs and experiences of health and social care services have been obtained.

Patient and Public engagement will always be fundamental in ensuring our ongoing development and effectiveness as the patient and care service user voice in Hartlepool. Key elements of our engagement work have included:

- The successful planning and delivery of an event called 'Stay Warm, Stay Healthy, Stay Safe' under the banner of Life- Long Conditions. The event was important given we have an obligation to consider the wider determinants of health. The event was very well attended with over 30 delegates. The event followed our proven, effective format and included a mix of presentations from specialists in their respective fields covering Trading Standards, Cleveland Fire Brigade, West View Advice & Resource Centre and a Health Improvement Practitioner from Public Health. The event ensured delegates had ample opportunity for questions and discussion. The event was very well received and attendees included people who had previously not attended a Healthwatch Hartlepool event. Over the year we also held a similar event focusing on Dementia. This event was held in partnership with Hartlepool Borough Council and we had over 70 attendees. This followed on from our previous year's work in establishing Hartlepool as a Dementia Friendly town. One of our most informative events was attended by over 40 delegates and was part of the Great North Care Record Debate. This event was organised exclusively by Healthwatch Hartlepool as part of the collaborative work being undertaken by 'CONNECTED Health Cities' and Teesside University. Healthwatch Hartlepool subsequently provided a report as part of their regional consultation. Every Healthwatch in the North East participated in this research.
- In addition, Healthwatch Hartlepool, has continued to promote the Urgent Care Service at Hartlepool Hospital, which commenced 1st April 2017. Healthwatch Hartlepool was instrumental in the commissioning of a new contract that brought together 3 separate contracts - Minor Injuries, Walk-in and the Out of Hours service. This contract is now delivered effectively by Hartlepool & Stockton Health (HASH) the G.P. Federation, the North-East Ambulance Service and North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. In the year since the contract commenced Healthwatch Hartlepool did not receive one complaint or concern about the service.
- As well as our monthly Healthwatch Executive meetings, an open meeting is also held each month. These meetings are chaired alternately by our lead members for Primary Health & Social Care, Acute Care & Older People (Elders). The meetings are regularly attended by up to 38 people and includes input by guest speakers as well as updates on the associated work programme. We believe this approach gives us the ideal forum for debate. Positive member involvement comes from older people and those with a keen interest in hospital services.



- Healthwatch staff and volunteers have actively engaged with more than 32 organisations and over 2000 copies of the Healthwatch Hartlepool Participation leaflet have been distributed. We aim to reach out to residents and people volunteering and/or working in Hartlepool. Our database covers members who live both in and out of the borough. Additionally, Healthwatch Hartlepool has produced a specific leaflet to promote our work around Mental Health & signpost residents to key service providers in this area.
- Healthwatch Hartlepool hold weekly outreach sessions at libraries and community centres across Hartlepool, providing an opportunity for residents to have their say on Health & Social care matters. Following the demographic profiling of our membership we have continued to focus this type of engagement in the North & Central part of the town.
- Healthwatch Hartlepool have an effective monthly drop-in service for members of the public who require a confidential, face to face meeting with a member of the Independent Complaints Advocacy service (I.C.A). Hartlepool has been deemed a site of good practice regionally by I.C.A. with our successful clinics for the public.
- A monthly newsletter, called Healthwatch News, is produced and distributed to over 500 individuals and organisations across the town. This is complemented by producing a monthly, topical media article, which is published in the local media on behalf of the Executive Chair.
- Our office phone line is staffed Monday to Thursday. 9.00am to 5.00pm. During the 2015/16 period the office received over 1200 calls and a wide range of information has been provided regarding health and social care issues.
- Healthwatch staff continually update information on the our official web site (www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk) and monitor a highly active Healthwatch Hartlepool Facebook page.



Enter & View

This year Healthwatch Hartlepool undertook a programme of visits covering the University Hospital of Hartlepool's Holdforth Unit, Wards 27 & 28 of the University Hospital of North Tees and 2 care homes in Hartlepool. Please see: www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk for our published reports.

Healthwatch Hartlepool has incorporated the views of the service user and provider in all reports regarding key items within our work programme including Community Rehabilitation, Nutrition, Hydration, Staff Attitude, Memory Loss and Dignity.

The visit to Hartlepool Hospital's Holdforth Unit concluded that the care could only be described as 'Outstanding'. The Matron sets an impeccable high standard for herself and expects all staff to work to an equally high standard. She was very much seen as a leader of her nurses and hardworking, caring staff were observed in the whole unit. The only recommendation was the unit should consider alternating or revising the menu choices for patients.



In respect of both wards 27 & 28 of North Tees Hospital the relevant Healthwatch 'Enter and View' teams were happy with the standards of care. The patient lengths of stay varied greatly, the patient discharges were being managed with most patients having an awareness of their discharge status or the reason why it had not been arranged. The rationale for the visits related to nutrition, hydration and staff attitudes. It was subsequently concluded that the perceived staff 'rudeness' was cultural and the staff did not intend to offend.

Healthwatch Hartlepool also looked at 2 care homes in the town. The two homes were Queen's Meadow and Charlotte Grange. The aim of the visits was to observe the quality of life and standard of care afforded the residents. Our key considerations focused on environment, safety, care, responsiveness and effectiveness. Staff engaged with our teams at the beginning and end of each visit where we relayed our observations, which were later articulated in our published reports available on our website.

“North East NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy has a strong robust relationship with Healthwatch Hartlepool. Through regular interaction and sharing of anonymised NHS complaints data within the Hartlepool area we have been able to inform Healthwatch Hartlepool of the concerns and issues of our Clients using local Health and Social Care services. We have agreed a joint approach and it is refreshing that through these discussions at our regular Outreach visits we have been about to look at the evolution of Community Hubs in Hartlepool and identify where we are able to support. In the last year we have seen an increase in referrals through Healthwatch Hartlepool and with the support of the Team been able to access presentations to both the Health and Well Being Board and separately Audit and Governance Committees within Hartlepool Council. We are looking forward to continuing this valued relationship during the next year”

Independent Complaints Advocacy



Helping you find the answers



How we have helped the community access the care they need

Healthwatch Hartlepool is an efficient organisation. We work with stake holders to co-ordinate and link our community engagement activities where appropriate to help avoid duplication of effort, time and resources.

A key priority is to ensure we are accessible. We have achieved this by:

- + Using plain English in any documents we publish
- + Using the right methods of engagement for the right audiences
- + Actively promoting materials in a range of formats, for example on tape, in Braille or in large print
- + Using venues that are easy to get to and held at times and place that are appropriate to the participants.

Learning Disability

Our lead member for Learning Disability, Judy Gray, has been a volunteer with Healthwatch Hartlepool & formerly Hartlepool Local Involvement Network for 7 years. Within the role Judy is an active member of a sub-group that is ran by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which has action plans focusing on Annual Health Checks, flu-vaccinations, cancer screening services, health advocacy and GP training. Part of the Advocacy programme is supported by specially trained Learning Disability Nurses (trained by Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Trust (TEWV) and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTH). Its purpose is to make GP's aware of further training with regards to annual health checks and screening services and making reasonable adjustments for people with learning disabilities to attend these. Our member keeps abreast

of all council committee meetings and pass on relevant information at these meetings. Over the last year Judy has collated and monitored data in respect of the latest Learning Disability Statistics:

Number of people with learning disabilities attending annual health checks:

2016/2017: 53%

2017/2018: 61%

Flu Vaccination uptake:

2016/2017: 42%

2017/2018: 49%

Cervical Screening uptake:

2016/2017: 27%

2017/2018: 34%

Breast screening:

2016/2017: 40%

2017/2018: 46%

Bowel Screening:

2016/2017: 55%

2017/2018: 59%



"Whilst these statistics appear encouraging we still need more GP's on board to make a vast improvement. I continue in my quest to support those in our community with learning disabilities in every way I can."

Judy Gray – Learning Disability Executive

Mental Health

This year has been a very busy & successful year in respect of Mental Health. Our work has covered a variety of projects, events and reports ensuring Healthwatch continues to be actively involved with local Mental Health Services.

This year has been a busy year in respect of Mental Health, partly due to the recent changes in Legislation. We have covered many projects, events and training sessions. Our mental health lead member is also chair of the Hartlepool Mental Health Forum which is a group of people with an interest in anything to do with mental health. This is attended by professionals, non-professionals, Healthwatch members and the general public. The Forum meets quarterly at Hartlepool's new Centre for Independent Living. Our main event organised through the forum was for the second year 'Strictly Mental Health', which was once again a huge success. This event is to celebrate World Mental Health day. It is a full day of music, dance and free refreshments. The event is supported courtesy of local businesses, the lottery funded Waverly Allotments scheme, as well as Hartlepool Borough Council and Tees Esk & Wear Valley Mental Health Trust TEVW. Approximately 20 organisations from the mental health arena attended and more than 230 people attended too. It is anticipated we shall hold our 3rd event of the same 10th October 2018.

Our Mental Health Executive member is also a Public Governor for the Mental Health Trust. This year being very busy with the concerns around Roseberry Park Hospital in Middlesbrough and the need to move patients to different hospitals to be able to manage their needs while the Trust resolves the problems in respect of the physical building. This had implications on Sandwell Park in Hartlepool due to patient displacement. Of paramount concern has been to ensure that the patients care needs are the main priority at all times.

Safeguarding

Healthwatch has two representatives on the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) One officer and one member, this member is also our Mental Health representative for Healthwatch. This last year there has been many changes to the Safeguarding Legislation and we

have attended meetings and training sessions and ensured that Healthwatch members were advised / trained in the areas relevant to their work streams, especially in respect of 'Enter & View'. As part of the TSAB, Healthwatch Hartlepool was required to complete a Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). This clarified and checked the standards worked to and we were able to ensure that all relevant documentation met the required standards for our organisation. Hartlepool was the only Healthwatch to complete the QAF in the Teeswide area.

"I must put on record my sincere thanks for the support and assistance provided by Neil Harrison from Hartlepool Borough Council. The Mental Health Forum simply could not operate without such valuable support and his hard work."

Zoe Sherry - Mental Health Lead

Children & Young People

Healthwatch Hartlepool regularly attend the Council's Children's Services Policy committee meetings. Healthwatch expressed concerns regarding the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This view was shared by Councillors, Officers and Head Teachers. It was felt that a 9 to 12 week waiting time for a first appointment was simply not acceptable.

In order to support children, a Healthwatch member together with Councillors and Head Teacher representatives discussed the problem with a consultant paediatrician and a principle CAMHS officer. Subsequently we were notified that a new senior manager had recently been appointed and would be based in Hartlepool. Following on from this whole work stream Healthwatch Hartlepool were informed that in terms of outcomes:

- A target of 28 days was now in place for an access appointment for all young people referred into the service. The service was now currently performing at a 17 day wait time for first appointments - with an average wait time of 14 days.
- In terms of the waiting time for treatment, this can vary dependent on the intervention required. Currently 82% of young people are being seen within 9 weeks (125 out of 152) with everyone seen within 11 weeks.
- The service was developing 'Group' work interventions, which had a strong evidence base and would provide a greater capacity.
- Delays were mainly around the acuity of patients, the volume of referrals and there had been a staff psychology vacancy. This vacancy has now been filled.
- The performance targets were 95% to be seen at a first appointment within 4 weeks of referral.

“The meetings have all been very well attended and proved to be informative and interactive. They have provoked some very lively discussions”

Ruby Marshall - Children & Young People Lead

Engaging Young People on Health and Social Care

Healthwatch Hartlepool developed a proposal of work based on the model presented by Dudley Youth Health Research group at the Healthwatch England Conference, June 2016. Engaging with young people around their experiences of health and social care has always been a challenge for us as a Healthwatch and also the Local Authority. We needed to address this shortfall in our work to better understand young peoples experiences and expectations for the ongoing development of Health & Social Care services.

Our 2017/2018 work programme had an identified priority to champion the voice of children and young people with decision makers in health and social care. Building on the cornerstones of youth work: empowering young people to understand and act on the personal, social and political issues which affect lives, the lives of

others and the communities of which they are a part. Healthwatch and youth services came together with the aim of listening to young people's views about their health and wellbeing experiences, and to enable young people to have an influential say.

Woven within our proposal was the training of young people to research the health and social care issues for young people. Our work involved a 2 day residential with young people that gave the young people a chance to get to know each other better, be more relaxed together, discuss the health and wellbeing issues that mattered to them and learn how to conduct sound research. Our work with the young people focused on:

- Exploring their understanding of health and social care
- Considering health inequalities
- Thinking about what good services for young people should look and feel like
- Looking at what we think we already know about children and young people and health and social care
- Designing our research project
- Learning how to gather views and make sense of information we have gathered
- Thinking about how we will get people to listen to what we have found

We targeted a group of over 20 young people drawn from a range of existing groups including Young Inspectors, the Children in Care Council and our town's Youth Council. We invited a range of speakers to come along and speak to the young people but ensured we incorporated a range of activities to keep the young people engaged. We approached a wide range of speakers covering many topics:

- Why does research matter? - Martin Todd, Changing Futures NE

- Why research matters to Healthwatch? - Stephen Thomas, Healthwatch Hartlepool
- Understanding the changes in health and social care and what these might mean for young people - Councillor Alan Clark, Chair of Childrens Services Committee, Hartlepool Borough Council
- Health Inequalities in Hartlepool - Director of Public Health Hartlepool
- What we think we already know about young people and their experience of health and social care - The Youth Council
- Understanding Research Methods - University of York
- Designing the Research Project - University of York
- Making sense of what people have told us - University of York

By the end of residential we aimed to have:

- A group of confident young people
- A group of trained young people enthusiastic and ready to start collecting data
- An agreed project with outcomes
- A group of young people who might think about the possibility of university as being part of their future

Our work involved working collaboratively with the University of York and Hartlepool Borough Council. The university & Council ultimately had willing research subjects and were able to engage with traditionally hard to reach young people. The outcomes from our work have now shaped the work of Hartlepool Borough Council in their review of services provided to Children & Young People. The work was also presented to Hartlepool's Health & Wellbeing Board to influence their refresh of Hartlepool's Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

Primary Health

The last year had seen a noticeable increase in the frequency with which patients were contacting Healthwatch Hartlepool to raise concerns about the difficulties they were experiencing when trying to book an appointment to see a G.P. at their local surgeries. The most common problems reported were around appointment booking systems and the difficulties gaining access to practice via the telephone.

We were aware that this problem was not unique to Hartlepool as we had researched similar concerns from the Kings Fund and Healthwatch England. Consequently we launched a consultation process across the whole of Hartlepool which focussed primarily on the patient experience of GP appointment processes across all practices. The survey was initially conducted via our website but through January and February on 2018 we also conducted visits to individual surgeries.

During these visits patients were given the opportunity to complete our questionnaire whilst waiting or they were provided with a return envelope that they could take home. We received 151 responses. Only 5 of the 14 practices responded positively to our letter requesting that our Patient & Public Engagement Officer visit their premises to speak with patients directly. 60% of all patients engaging with Healthwatch deemed their experience when making appointments to be good. 29% deemed their experience to be poor. Our published report does articulate significant variations between practices. 61% of respondents also stated that they were able to secure same day appointments either always or mostly.

Healthwatch Hartlepool made a number of recommendations to the Hartlepool practices:

- All practices should regularly review their appointment systems with a view to ensuring that current practices are fit for purpose and patients are able to access appointments in a timely manner.
- Those practices at which patient feedback indicates significant levels of dissatisfaction with current systems for booking appointments should undertake immediate reviews of their current processes, which include rigorous and thorough analysis of patient experience.
- The potential for more use of on-line booking services should be further explored as part of an overall practice appointments strategy, which should embrace a variety of booking methods.
- All practices should do more to raise awareness amongst patients of the availability of on-line booking options and that appointments can be booked via the 111 Emergency service.
- Current performance in the areas of appointment procedures and process should be a key consideration in assessing the suitability of a practice to take over surgeries and increase their patient base.
- All practices should ensure their premises are fully accessible to all, including those with physical and/or Learning Disability and parents with children in pushchairs/prams.

Older People

This year has been an interesting one for the older people of Hartlepool. Healthwatch has been involved in up to the minute training at The Bridge Dementia Advice & Support Service for Dementia awareness. We have seen new care homes opened and have resumed our programme to do visits to several care homes in this financial year and will continue to do so in 18/19. We had a successful visit to the Holdforth Unit in Hartlepool which is a Community Rehabilitation Unit. After their discharge, patients may be introduced to the Domiciliary Care system provided by Hartlepool Borough Council. New providers of Domiciliary Care have been appointed and efficiencies have been made to provide a better package for Home Care in Hartlepool.

We had an informed visit to our bi-monthly meetings to update attendees in respect of Palliative Care in the area and we were involved with a number of carers focus groups. Hartlepool Borough Council came and explained their intention to identify older people with the 'Red Call Button' assistance and categorise them to identify if their conditions had deteriorated and update their information. We look forward to promoting services and helping the older people of Hartlepool in the year ahead. Throughout the year our bi-monthly meetings have hosted many guest speakers to improve our knowledge and assist us with our work programme.

“Investing time and energy as a representative of the Healthwatch Executive committee for Primary Care, it is important the collective voices of users of health services and members of the public are strengthened to influence and challenge how services are provided locally. Working alongside GP’s, nurses and other service providers we hope that we have actively represented these views to make the care provided better.”

Lynn Allison - Primary Care lead

“We have held several events, which take place to promote our pathway and presence in Hartlepool and excellent office staff who support us on a daily basis.”

Carol Sherwood - Elders Representative

Making a difference together



Audit & Governance Committee

“On behalf of the Audit and Governance Committee, I would once again like to thank Hartlepool Healthwatch, and its members, for their attendance at our Committee meetings over the past year. Healthwatch continues to be an essential source of local views, comments and concerns, all of which are essential for the Committee to fulfil its statutory responsibility to scrutinise, and challenge, proposals for variations / changes to health services accessed by residents of Hartlepool.

Healthwatch has continued to share information on a regular basis and, in 2017/18, helped shape the Committees annual work programme, resulting in an investigation into the provision of maternity services in Hartlepool. In addition to this, Healthwatch representatives have participated in the Committees work to:

- Monitor the implementation of service changes in Hartlepool, including assisted reproduction services, GP services (following the review of alternative provider medical services (APMS) and urgent care services;
- Scrutinise Tees Valley / Regional issues, including the provision of respite care services and the provision of TEWV services from Roseberry Park proposals for the transformation of respite care services; and
- Influence the development and review of statutory plans and strategies (i.e. Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-2025) and the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (2018).

The views and opinions of Healthwatch continued to be of significant value to the Committee and we look forward to working together over the coming year.”

Councillor Brenda Loynes - Chair of the Audit and Governance



Learning Disability Partnership

“It has been another productive year for Healthwatch Hartlepool championing the rights of adults with a Disability.

Healthwatch members continue to support the Learning Disability Partnership Board and have been instrumental in supporting the delivery of several key events including a Learning Disability Dying Matters event, several North East Talking Travel events and supporting local people to improve their eye Health with See-Ability.

Healthwatch Hartlepool continue to help shape local health and social care and continue to support the uptake of Annual health checks, encourage the uptake of Flu vaccinations and have helped raise the profile of the importance of Cancer screening through its work with health action sub group.”

Neil Harrison - Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services



Public Health

“Healthwatch has continued to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board, further building upon the strong working relationships it has created with all those involved. It has demonstrated its great commitment and passion for the improvement of health and social care services throughout Hartlepool, with its continuing completion of ‘enter and view’ inspections of Wards within North Tees Hospital and investigation of issues of local concern.

Individual pieces of work undertaken by Healthwatch this year, including exploration of the experiences of deaf patients in accessing local GP and hospital services and the Young Futures Project, have been welcomed by the Board.

The Young Futures Project had a particular impact on the work of the Board, with the findings of the project in identifying mental health as a key priority for Hartlepool's young people, reflected in the identification of mental health as a key 'deep dive' area within the refreshed Hartlepool's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies (2018-2015). This being only one of many ways Healthwatch input in to the development of the strategy.

The Health and Wellbeing Board thanks Healthwatch for its input and support over the last 12 months and looks forward to working together to deliver the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2018 and beyond.”

Dr Peter Brambleby DCH FRCP(Edin) FFPH
Interim Director of Public Health

Additionally, Healthwatch Hartlepool continues to provide information to the Care Quality Commission in respect of their work when requested, should we hold relevant information to inform their inspections. We also make referrals direct to the Care Quality Commission should we be deeply concerned regarding the quality of care provided in the Borough.

Generally, Healthwatch Hartlepool has a very good working relationship with the Clinical Commissioning Group albeit we have been notified on occasion there are resource issues, which resulted in a failure to produce a written 'Working Together' protocol. Healthwatch volunteers do remain compromised by the CCG's Community Ambassador initiative and subsequently feel it downgrades their statutory role in favour of an in-house consultation model, which is perceived publicly as less meaningful and robust.



it starts with
YOU



“Over the coming year we are planning to complete a piece of work to engage patients accessing pharmacy services. This follows on from our 2017/18 similar piece of work examining the patient experience accessing G.P. appointments.”

It Starts With You

We want to communicate with all pharmacies across our Borough and further demonstrate how our role in Hartlepool operates in shaping the future delivery of Health & Social Care Services. It is imperative that residents can understand what impact Healthwatch can have in making their experience of accessing services better.

We have a proven track record of success and the following case study is a clear example of how people’s experiences of health and care services have improved in the past year due to the activity of Healthwatch Hartlepool.

Case study - Deaf Patient Experience

Background

Over several years Healthwatch Hartlepool and the Hartlepool Deaf Centre received regular reports from members of the Deaf community in Hartlepool regarding their experiences when using local GP and hospital services. The feedback indicated that their experiences of accessing these services have on occasions been problematic. Consequently, this occasionally resulted in Deaf patients not receiving the same level of access to local health services as the wider community.

The Equality Act (2010) demonstrates a commitment to eliminate discrimination, reduce social exclusion and make services more accessible for all. The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) had already

introduced the concept of “reasonable adjustment”, which requires service providers to take “reasonable” steps to ensure groups such as deaf patients have proper unimpeded access to all health services. Healthwatch Hartlepool and Hartlepool Deaf Centre both agreed that it was good practice to include service users with disabilities in the process of designing accessible services. For Deaf service users such adjustments are absolutely vital in ensuring appropriate and accessible communication and support processes. There is also a real need to respect and understand the specific cultural and linguistic identity of Deaf patients.

Consequently, it was agreed that Healthwatch Hartlepool and Hartlepool Deaf Centre would undertake a joint investigation of Deaf patient experience of accessing and using local GP and hospital services. This proved to be a very successful partnership, bringing together the statutory role and authority of Healthwatch Hartlepool and the insight and awareness of Hartlepool Deaf Centre. The project also had regard to Accessible Information Standard. This requires the NHS to provide information in a way that patients can understand, including providing a British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreter where needed. The Standard also requires health service providers to ensure that they have appropriate systems in place to ensure patients can contact them easily.

Our report focused predominantly on the experiences of people who have been deaf from birth or childhood and who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first or preferred language. For most Deaf people English is their second language, and understanding complicated messages in English can be a problem. While some Deaf people may be able to lip read when necessary, it is estimated that lip readers only understand 30% of a conversation, so lip reading should not be relied upon as a satisfactory means of communication in a health care setting. A BSL interpreter should be provided to avoid misdiagnosis, wrong prescriptions and misunderstood instructions.

The investigation focused on the experience of Deaf patients who had recently used GP services in Hartlepool and also hospital services provided at North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals. We also produced summaries of personal stories which were relayed to us over the course of the investigation. Input was received directly from Deaf patients who attended a consultation event, which was hosted by Hartlepool Deaf Centre and also during regular Art and Crafts sessions. During the sessions a short survey was completed and some surveys were also returned by post. This was done with the assistance of a BSL interpreter and surveys were worded in BSL English (using grammar and word order a Deaf person would use when using BSL).

Visits to both North Tees and Hartlepool hospitals also took place and structured discussions were undertaken with the Managers of the wards and service areas covering:

- Lung Health/Respiratory
- Outpatient Department
- Outpatient and Inpatient Bookings
- Cardiology Day Unit
- Emergency Assessment Unit (EAU)
- Children's Ward (Ward 15)
- Rheumatology Day Unit


- Discharge Lounge
- Maternity Wards (Wards 18/19)
- Medicine/Respiratory (Ward 24)
- Women's Health Unit (Ward 30)
- Endoscopy Clinic
- Holdforth Unit (Ward 3)
- Elective Care (Ward 4)
- Single Point of Access Team (SPA Team)

Findings

Overall, the feedback received from both GP Practices and North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals was positive and indicated that both primary and acute care providers are endeavouring to ensure that the care needs of Deaf patients are being met. However, patient feedback indicated that communication flows with Deaf patients in both settings are on occasions still problematic, and this can result in less timely provision of care and increased stress and anxiety for the patient.

Effective communication and information flows between GPs and hospitals and community care settings were vital in order to ensure Interpreters had been booked and any other arrangements needed to ensure appropriate and inclusive care of Deaf patients were in place. Inconsistencies in booking processes and communication methods with Deaf patients appeared to exist among the GP Practices in Hartlepool.

Discussions with patients also clearly illustrated that Deaf patients' experiences of care were occasionally being adversely effected due to inadequate communication processes. This could impact upon the patient's understanding of their diagnosis, medication, discharge arrangements and ability to be fully included and involved in all aspects of ongoing care and treatment.



Overall the TrakCare system seemed to be working reasonably well, but instances were still occurring when North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals were not being made aware that a patient is Deaf and that an interpreter was required by GPs via the Choose and Book form or referral letter. This resulted in the cancellation of appointments and unnecessary stress and anxiety for the Deaf patient. The system also did not appear to have an icon or other feature to highlight Deafness. It was understood that the electronic sharing of patient information between GPs and hospitals is in the process of being implemented and is welcomed, as it should greatly improve Deaf patient experience.

Staff training opportunities in both primary and acute settings could at best be described as limited, despite a real willingness and desire on the part of many staff to improve their skills and awareness of the care needs of Deaf patients. Overall, there appeared to be a low level of awareness of deafness, its impact upon communication and the preferred methods of communication among Deaf people.

Resources such as sensory loss boxes were not routinely available on hospital wards or in GP surgeries. Some hospital wards had developed their own materials for use in that location but ideally a corporate resource should have been produced at minimal cost. Booking of Interpreters at North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals generally worked well, but there was some confusion about how Interpreters for Endoscopy appointments are booked. Deaf patients were not routinely informed that an Interpreter had been booked when they received appointment letters. This caused anxiety and distress for the patients in the run up to their hospital visit. Feedback received regarding the input and performance of ELS Interpreters was consistently positive throughout our visits to North Tees Hospital and Hartlepool Hospital.



Outcomes

Our final report and recommendations were presented at the Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board and shared widely with stakeholders. Subsequently, the following actions have been taken by partner organisations:

- Deaf Awareness Training -, North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Hospital Trust agreed to Hartlepool Deaf Centre Coordinator delivering 4 half-day Deaf Awareness Training Sessions to nurses and other hospital staff at North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals. Topics covered included - Issues faced by Deaf patients when accessing hospital services & how to prevent them, Communication Tips, Basic BSL, Hospital Signs (for general use on wards) & the BSL Interpreter Booking Procedure.
- Further Sensory Loss Training - North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Trust agreed to provide further training following requests from Deaf Awareness Training attendees. Hartlepool Deaf Centre liaised with other organisations who may of be interested in providing such training, including Hartlepool Blind Welfare Association and In Good Hands, a charity that raises awareness of age-related dual sensory impairment (deaf blindness)
- Sensory Loss Champions - Members of staff attending the training became sensory loss champions who could then share information and raise awareness of the needs of patients with sensory loss.
- Sensory Loss Boxes were provided on each ward, containing resources from the sensory loss training, to be developed to ensure information is widely available to staff as and when needed.
- Deaf Awareness Training - North Tees & Hartlepool CCG - agreed to the Hartlepool Deaf Centre Co-ordinator delivering Deaf Awareness Training to GP Practice Managers in Hartlepool/Teesside area and holding a Deaf Awareness Stall at a GP/Practice Nurse Time Out meeting.

Our plans for next year



What next?

The purpose of our future work programme is to set out the activities, priorities and outcomes expected from Healthwatch Hartlepool in 2018/19 and beyond. This will be delivered in accordance with our Governance Framework, meetings of associated task & finish groups, public meetings and service specification and will build upon progress made during 2017/18.

Acute Care

Following several further referrals into Healthwatch Hartlepool, we shall again review the Hospital Discharge Procedures and associated patient experience. In collaboration with the Council's Audit & Governance committee we shall also investigate the provision and accessibility of mental health services across the Borough. We shall also continue to monitor the feedback we receive from patients accessing services at the Hartlepool site of the North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, we shall monitor mortality rates if there has been any improvement into access to transport in line with the Equality Act.

Mental Health

We shall continue to drive the work of the Hartlepool Mental Health Forum in closely monitoring the work & continued outcomes of the Crisis Care Concordat to ensure patient care and experience is maintained and improved. We shall host promotional events across the borough to seek evidence of patient experience & promote Healthwatch. 2018 shall also see both Tees, Esk & Wear Valley Mental Health Trust and Hartlepool Borough Council again supporting the forum for World Mental Health Day 10th October 2018 due to the success of our events in 2016 & 2017.

Primary Health

Again review the implementation of our key recommendations to GP's regarding our previously published 'Voice for You' report in respect of Health Checks for the cohort of population with a Learning Disability. Undertake a discrete piece of work in respect of Pharmacies and 'Emergency' Dentistry. Consult with the wider public in respect of the Podiatry Service to examine the implementation of the new contract and impact on 'waiting' times.

Social Care

Look at the experiences of residents in Care/Nursing homes across Hartlepool in line with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) standards and Hartlepool Borough Council's. Undertake a range of new Enter & View visits in line with the opening of the new care homes within the Borough of Hartlepool providing nursing care.

Life-Long Conditions

Organise and host 3 seminars focusing on member led lifelong condition priorities. Commencing with an event covering 'Diabetes', 'Men's Health' & 'Skin Conditions'. Organise key investigations into the Health & Social Care support provided to Veterans and Offenders.

Patient and Public Engagement

Continue to develop and deliver a comprehensive schedule of activity, which will focus on engaging with the seldom heard and hard to reach groups.

We shall undertake some further demographic profiling to engage with local communities previously not targeted. We shall monitor the distribution of our leaflets and associated response to recruitment of volunteers. We shall continue to offer a service where we collate patient stories, which articulate patient experience as evidence for future work plans.

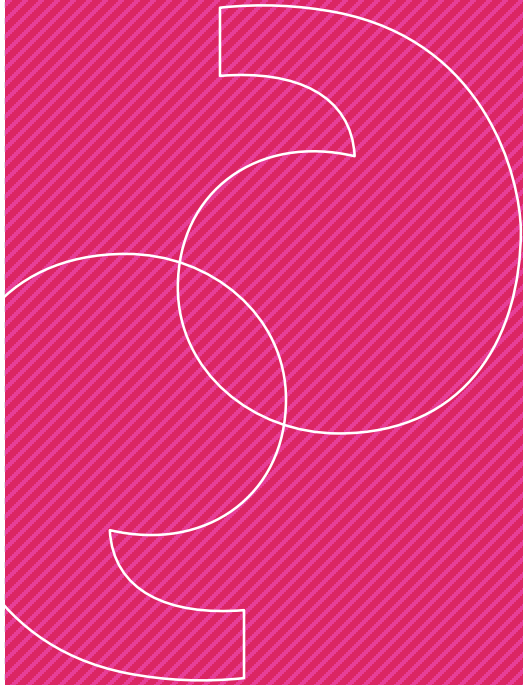


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Our top priorities for next year

1. Examine the provision of Pharmacy Services across Hartlepool
2. Ensure Mental Health receives the same priority as physical health
3. Promote key services for those residents living with life-long conditions
4. Review the podiatry commissioned service
5. Work with Hartlepool's Health & Wellbeing Board in delivering their strategy in respect of substance misuse

Our people



Decision making

Healthwatch Hartlepool is the independent consumer champion for patients and users of health & social care services in Hartlepool. To oversee the Charitable Incorporated Organisation of Healthwatch Hartlepool we have a board of directors and to support our work we have an Executive committee, which enables us to feed information collated through our communication & engagement plan to form the strategic vision.

This ultimately leads to adherence of our aims and objectives underpinned by our key drivers relating to 'Community Voice & Influence', 'Making a Difference Locally', 'Relationships' and 'Informing People'. This covers the full spectrum of Health & Social Care services within the borough. Further information relating to the work of Healthwatch can be viewed via: www.healthwatchhartlepool.co.uk

How we involve the public and volunteers

“Healthwatch Hartlepool has been established in a way that is inclusive and enables involvement from all areas of the local community. We wish to involve those who are seldom heard.”

There is no formal 'membership' of Healthwatch Hartlepool as it exists as an open network that can be accessed by:

- a) Individuals - anyone living in, or receiving health and social care services in the Borough of Hartlepool
- b) Groups - any voluntary/community group or business organisation which operates in the Borough of Hartlepool



Healthwatch Hartlepool maintains a database of people who have expressed an interest in being involved in developing and supporting Healthwatch Hartlepool.

We aim to make use of existing consultation groups, networks and organisations in Hartlepool to enable them to have a voice in improving health and social care services. When necessary we establish new consultation groups, networks and organisations in Hartlepool to enable them to have a voice in improving health and social care services.

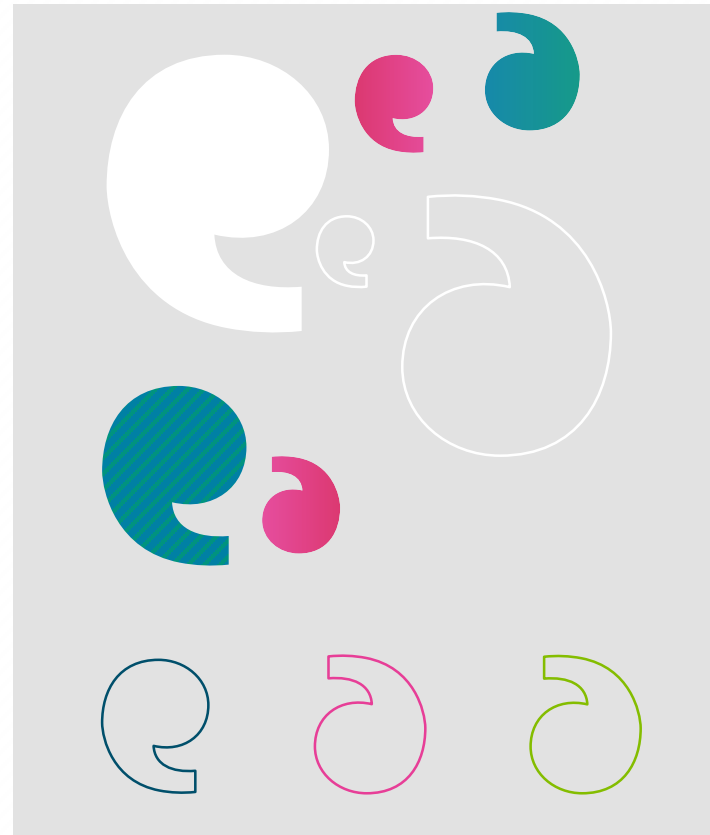
The function of the Healthwatch Executive is to manage the work programme and steer the work of the organisation. The Executive must represent the wider community whilst supporting and enabling groups and individuals to carry out the work of Healthwatch through:

- Organising consultation to develop the Healthwatch Hartlepool Plan and their work through existing and 'Task & Finish' groups
- Ensuring key local stakeholders are represented and their views considered
- Allocating resources for the work of Healthwatch
- Communicating with the wider community
- Planning & agreeing work and allocating appropriate resources to support that work
- Supporting groups to undertake work and take up issues as necessary
- Supporting groups to produce credible reports, which commissioners and providers can use to improve services
- Approving reports produced by groups on behalf of Healthwatch

Executive members work as volunteers to carry out work, attend Executive meetings and other meetings as and when required.

Membership of the Healthwatch Executive is by appointment at our AGM & members must play an active role in the work of the organisation.

Representation at the Annual General Meeting is open to all residents of Hartlepool, who wish to be involved and representatives from any Voluntary & Community Sector, stakeholder and business groups. The AGM also promotes the work of Healthwatch Hartlepool and welcomes new participants each and every year.



Our finances



Income	
Carried forward from 16/17	£28,683
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£129,056
Total income	£157,739
Expenditure	
Operational costs	£23,399
Staffing costs	£89,215
Office costs	£11,763
Total expenditure	£124,377
Balance brought forward	£33,362

The 2017/18 final balance includes Healthwatch liabilities in respect of notional redundancy costs.



The views and stories you share with us are helping to make care better for our local community





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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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