



Healthwatch Hartlepool
Annual Report **2013/14**



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Margaret Wrenn

Chair of Healthwatch Hartlepool

I am pleased to introduce the first Annual Report of Healthwatch Hartlepool.



During the year from April 2013 to March 2014 significant progress has been made in establishing our organisation as an effective local champion of the rights of users of health and care services in Hartlepool.

At a strategic level we have established key relationships with the Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board, Stockton and Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group, North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Trust, Tees Esk Wear Valley Mental Health Trust and a host of other key service providers. Our relationship with these organisations will continue to develop in the role of “critical friend” with the interests and voice of the patient and service user always at the very heart of everything we do.

Our first year has also seen the delivery of some excellent project work which has focused around issues identified by people in Hartlepool as being important to them. This has included an examination of the difficulties faced by patients and visitors in accessing North Tees Hospital which is located 15 miles away in Stockton using public transport, the effectiveness of the delivery of adult domiciliary care services in the town and the experiences of hard to reach groups in accessing and using key health services. As with all of our work our Healthwatch volunteers have played a major role in the successful delivery of this work and I firmly believe that maintaining our strong member base during the transition of LINKs to Healthwatch has been one of our major achievements.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff of Healthwatch Hartlepool and fellow members of the Executive Group for their support, hard work and commitment over the past year and the countless individuals and groups who have engaged with us and helped to make 2013/14 such a positive year for us.

Whilst we have achieved much in our first year, we are still at the start of our journey and if you have an interest in health and social care issues in Hartlepool you are very welcome to join us.





Local Healthwatch has an important role to play in ensuring that the views, opinions and concerns of patients and service users are considered and acted upon when important decisions are made about the commissioning and delivery of local health and care services

Ruby Marshall – Deputy of Chair Healthwatch

Healthwatch Hartlepool is the new independent consumer champion for patients and users of health & social care services in Hartlepool

We were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which aims to strengthen the collective voice of patients, the public and users of care services. 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.
- Escalate issues and concerns regarding health and social care services in Hartlepool directly to Healthwatch England and through them the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Under powers contained within the legislation carry out Enter and View visits to premises at which health and social care services are provided (with the exception of those premises which provide social care services to children)

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 and strives to be accessible to all sections of the community.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to Chair the Executive group meetings and to work with the staff team. Their knowledge and understanding of health and care issues in our town is outstanding and their drive and determination has been instrumental in taking our work programme forward

Margaret Wrenn – Chair of Healthwatch Hartlepool

Local Healthwatch organisations up and down the country were set up by means of competitive tendering process conducted by the Local Authority in the area in which they operate. In the case of Healthwatch Hartlepool this process was undertaken by Hartlepool Borough Council and the contract was subsequently awarded to Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency (HVDA).

HVDA works closely with community and voluntary organisations in Hartlepool and their knowledge and experience of the third sector and of engaging and working with volunteers in the town has been very useful.

A separate complaints advocacy service has been commissioned by local authorities in the North East and this function is delivered by Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA).

Healthwatch Hartlepool has benefited greatly from the strong base we inherited from Hartlepool LINK which included a pool of experienced, committed and active volunteers. This has enabled us to “hit the ground running” in 2013/14 and to quickly develop and deliver a comprehensive programme of work.

Our constitution, which was adopted at our inaugural AGM in March 2013 sets out our purpose and objectives and the governance arrangements under which we currently operate. Our AGM in 2013 elected a 16 person Executive with responsibility for the management of the day to day work programme and oversight of longer term objectives.

In 2013/14 the Executive Group consisted of the following members:

Margaret Wrenn
Chair of Healthwatch Hartlepool
Ruby Marshall
Deputy Chair of Healthwatch Hartlepool

Maureen Lockwood
Social Care Lead
Margaret Metcalf
Primary Health Lead
Judy Gray
Disability Lead
Margaret Goulding
Acute Services Lead
Zoe Sherry
Mental Health Lead
Jean Hatch
Elders Lead
Karen Gibson
Children and Young People Lead
Carol Sherwood
Lifelong Conditions Lead
Elizabeth Carroll
Healthwatch Member
Elizabeth Fletcher
Healthwatch Member
Jacqui Gettings
Healthwatch Member
Iain Caldwell
Healthwatch Member
Michael Slimings
Healthwatch Member
Keith Bayley
HVDA Representative

The Healthwatch Hartlepool team consists of:
Christopher Akers-Belcher
Healthwatch Manager
Stephen Thomas
Healthwatch Development Officer
Tony Leighton
Patient and Public Engagement Officer
Carol Slattery
Administrative Officer
Kris Middleton
IT Support and Web Admin

Case Study 1 Patient and Visitor Journey Experience between Hartlepool and North Tees Hospital



In recent years there has been an ongoing reconfiguration of acute services from Hartlepool Hospital to North Tees Hospital which is located in Stockton on Tees, approximately fifteen miles from Hartlepool. Concerns were raised with Healthwatch

Hartlepool by day patients and visitors who had to travel to North Tees Hospital using public transport.

An initial planning meeting was held at which members of Healthwatch Hartlepool and Healthwatch County Durham met with representatives of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust. As a result of the meeting it was agreed that Healthwatch members would undertake a series of journeys using public transport options and the hospital shuttle bus.

Subsequently, between the 17th and 23rd of August Healthwatch Hartlepool Volunteers made more than 20 journeys from Hartlepool to North Tees, starting at different times of day and from different parts of the town. The earliest “patient journey” set out at 5.30am with the latest arriving home at 11pm.

We identified a number of issues and themes -

- Using public transport, the return journey between Hartlepool and North Tees can take between three and four hours dependant on the time of day the journey takes place and the start/finish location.
- It is not possible to access North Tees Hospital from Hartlepool by public transport without making at least one change on route.

- Patients with physical disabilities, sensory loss, limited mobility or learning disabilities can find the journey particularly hazardous.
- The hospital shuttle bus offered a free and speedy alternative to public transport but had an infrequent schedule and did not stop to pick up passengers between the two hospitals. The shuttle bus was not accessible to wheelchair users and those with limited mobility.

Our report was published in September 2013 and made eight recommendations for action. Since then the following changes have been made -

- Additional and more accessible shuttle buses have been introduced, together with a “volunteer driver” scheme which can be booked to take patients to and from North Tees Hospital from their home.
- Consideration has been given to ensuring that Hartlepool based patients are not given early morning appointments for elective procedures.
- Changes have been made to the location of the bus stop at North Tees hospital to make access easier for patients/visitors with sensory loss and mobility disabilities.

Healthwatch Hartlepool Executive Group member Margaret Metcalf said -

“The visits made by Healthwatch members highlighted the real difficulties patients and visitors who rely on public transport experience when travelling to North Tees Hospital from Hartlepool”.

The report was shared with the North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Trust, The Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board and the Stockton and Hartlepool CCG and can be found in full on our web site.

Case Study 2 Provision of Adult Domiciliary Care Services in Hartlepool

When Healthwatch started in April 2013 it was decided that an early work stream priority should be an examination of adult domiciliary care service provision in Hartlepool. This was the result of a number of issues raised by service users and their families which reflected some concerns being expressed nationally around domiciliary care provision.

The project involved the distribution of around 500 questionnaires to domiciliary care service users in Hartlepool of which 158 were completed and returned. This was then followed up through structured meetings with the two commissioned care provider organisations as well as the “In house” service provider team and senior officers from the Hartlepool Borough Council commissioning and monitoring teams.

During the course of our investigation a number of issues and themes were identified -

- On occasions care service users reported that they were not receiving their full allocation of care time because of “travel time pressures”.
- Some care service users reported that when regular care workers were unavailable because of sickness, leave etc there were occasions when care was provided by an unacceptably high number of care workers with whom they were unfamiliar.
- Communication and information flows between those receiving care, their families and care provider organisation could, on occasions be slow and problematic

Overall, a favourable impression was gained of the quality of domiciliary care service delivery in Hartlepool. On the whole those who



returned the service user questionnaire responded positively about the care they received and the manner in which their services were delivered.

Our report was published in January 2014 and made six key recommendations. Since then the following actions have been taken -

- Steps have been made to concentrate care workers in specific areas to improve continuity of care and cut down on travel time.
- Attention is being given to ensuring consistency of care as far as possible and work is continuing on the development of a guideline standard which will take account of the number of calls a care service user receives each day.
- One of the care provider organisations has recruited additional supervisors which has improved consistency of service delivery and communication with those receiving care services.

Healthwatch Hartlepool Executive Group Member Maureen Lockwood said -

“The Domiciliary Care work stream found much that is good and also some areas in which service delivery can be improved. We are very pleased to see that our findings are being taken seriously and that some changes have been made”.

The report was shared with The Adult Services Policy Group and Audit and Governance Committee of Hartlepool Borough Council and a full copy can be found on our web site.

Case Study 3 Listening to the Seldom Heard



In the autumn of 2013 the NHS Stockton and Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group launched the “Big Conversation” as part of the national NHS Call to Action. This process involved the CCG along

with other partner organisations meeting with patients and the public in order for them to have genuine say in how the NHS of the future will look. However, it was recognised that specific actions were needed in order to engage with “seldom heard” and consequently Healthwatch Hartlepool undertook to engage with a range of community and voluntary sector organisations who represent and engage with such groups.

During the process we consulted -

- Hartlepool Diabetes Support Group
- Voice For You (Learning Disability)
- Hartlepool Asylum Seekers Support Group
- Wharton Annexe Young Peoples Group
- Stranton Seniors Group
- Breathe With Ease (COPD Support Group)
- Millennium Surgery Patient Panel
- Harbour Women’s Refuge
- Hartlepool Deaf Awareness Support Group
- Richard Court Extra Care Housing Residents Group
- Laurel Gardens Extra Care housing Residents Group
- Belle Vue Community Association
- R2B LGBT Support Group
- L-Birds LGBT Support
- Hart Gables Transgender Support Group
- Hartlepool 50+ Forum
- Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Group

Focus discussion groups were held with members of each organisation and 118 questionnaires were completed.

Our report was published in March 2014 and concluded that -

- There were common concerns raised around communication and access to services.
- Transport was considered to be a problem when there was a need to access services outside of the Borough.
- The migration of services from Hartlepool to North Tees and other locations was viewed as a major area of concern.
- Significant levels of concern were recorded with regard to particular types of service including Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, Frail Elderly (including End of Life) and Urgent and Emergency Care.
- There is a need for the CCG and health and care provider to focus on enhancing communication and engagement with the hard to reach.

The report was shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board of Hartlepool Borough Council who accepted the need to further develop engagement and communication with hard to reach and seldom heard communities. A full copy of the report can be found on our web site.

Healthwatch Executive Group Member Judy Gray said -

“The report illustrates the difficulties often experienced by seldom heard communities when they need to access health and care services. This has been an important piece of work and hopefully the issues that have been identified will be taken seriously and addressed”

The report was shared with The Hartlepool and Stockton CCG and Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board and a full copy can be found on our web site.

Further Areas of Achievement in 2013/14

- Healthwatch Hartlepool volunteers have undertaken a major investigation into the delivery of substitute prescribing services for opiate dependent patients through pharmacies in Hartlepool. This included visiting fourteen local pharmacy outlets in order to speak to Pharmacy Managers and service users. The investigation culminated in a very positive and well received report which was presented to the Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board and forwarded to the Stockton and Hartlepool CCG and Tees Valley Local Professional Network of Pharmacists.
- Healthwatch Hartlepool volunteers have been instrumental in the formation and successful operation of the Hartlepool Mental Health Forum. The group brings together mental health professionals, service users and community and voluntary sector partners and is playing a key role in shaping future provision of mental health services in Hartlepool.
- Healthwatch Hartlepool volunteers have played an important part in supporting the development of Voice for You, a learning disability peer advocacy group. In particular they have assisted with the advancement of the Quality Health Checker initiative and have worked with group members in planning and undertaking seven visits to local G.P surgeries. The visits have looked at service delivery and access issues from the point of view of patients with a learning disability. Two training sessions have also been provided for Voice for You Quality Health Checkers which have assisted in developing skills and understanding of the role.
- Development and delivery of a comprehensive Work Plan based on analysis of patient, public and volunteer feedback. This complements and takes account of key elements of strategic priorities contained within the local JSNA and other strategic documents which impact on the health and wellbeing of people in Hartlepool.
- The production of “A Guide to Healthwatch Hartlepool” and the “Directory of Health and Care Services in Hartlepool”.
- The Development of compacts and working agreements with key partner organisations and input into the Quality Accounts of North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Trust, North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) and Tees Esk and Wear Valley Mental Health Trust (TEWV).
- Input into consultation events and meetings in relation to the National Clinical Advisory Groups review and associated recommendations regarding critical care services.
- Visits to 20 local care homes by accredited Enter and View representatives of Healthwatch Hartlepool in order to gain feedback from residents and family members as part of a consultative exercise which fed into the Hartlepool Borough Council Quality Assessment Framework programme.
- Input into key strategic health and care policy development through involvement in the Hartlepool Health and Wellbeing Board, Stockton and Hartlepool Clinical Commissioning Group and North Tees and Hartlepool Hospital Trust Quality Standard Steering Group.
- Played a key role in the development of the Hartlepool Local Account of Adult Social Care Services, as a result of which an additional section covering occupational therapy was added.

“The level of engagement in Hartlepool in respect of Healthwatch; who really do appear to be championing the cause of people with a learning disability, is impressive.”

Taken from Hartlepool Learning Disability Joint Health & Social Care Self-Assessment

Engagement with patients and the public is what Healthwatch Hartlepool is all about

During 2013/14 engagement has been at the heart of our activity and will always be fundamental in assuring 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 two events under the banner of Lifelong Conditions. The first focused on Arthritis and the second on Respiratory Conditions. Both were well attended (65 at the Arthritis event and 57 at the Respiratory Conditions event). Both sessions followed a similar format, and included a mix of presentations from specialists in their respective fields and opportunities for questions and discussion. The sessions were very well received and both audiences contained people who had previously not attended a Healthwatch Hartlepool event.
- As well as the monthly Executive Group meeting an open meeting is held each month. The meeting is regularly attended by up to 35 people and includes an input by a guest speaker and updates on work stream and other activities.
- Healthwatch staff and volunteers have actively engaged with more than 50 organisations and over 4,000 copies of the Healthwatch Hartlepool Participation leaflet have been handed out.
- Healthwatch Hartlepool has assisted 23 people with complaints by

documenting their experience on a “storyboard” which is then forwarded to the appropriate organisation for action. Information is also provided regarding the advocacy support service which can be accessed through the Independent Complaints Advocacy service (ICA)

- Volunteers and members of staff have attended a wide variety of health and care related events in order to promote the work and activities of Healthwatch Hartlepool.
- A monthly newsletter is produced jointly with the Hartlepool 50+ Forum which it is now distributed to over 800 individuals and organisations across the town.
- Our office phone line is staffed Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 5.00pm and from 9.00am to 3.00pm on Friday. During the 2013/14 period the office received over 1400 calls and a wide range of information has been provided regarding health and social service issues.
- Work is ongoing around the development of the Healthwatch Hartlepool web site and this will be a key priority for 2014/15. A Facebook page has also been launched.

“Healthwatch works well with the older people of Hartlepool and makes their views known to services, commissioners and healthcare providers”.

Phyl Rafferty (50+ Development Officer)

“It was really great to see Healthwatch Hartlepool engaging with young people at Wharton Annexe. They were delighted that Healthwatch had taken the time to consult with them and had listened to their views about health and care issues”

Sacha Beding (Manager of Wharton Annexe)

“I received a brilliant service from Healthwatch Hartlepool. They listened to me, supported me and took my issue seriously.”

Joanne Morton-Lake (Hartlepool Resident)

Volunteers are central to the work of Healthwatch Hartlepool



Healthwatch Hartlepool has a contact list of 254 individuals of which between 35 and 40 regularly attend meetings and events and take an active part in the delivery of the our work plan. Our core of active volunteers can be involved in a number of ways -

- Through membership of the Healthwatch Hartlepool Executive group which has responsibility for the delivery of the annual work programme. The membership of the Executive is decided by means of election at the annual General Meeting.
- By attending monthly Healthwatch Hartlepool update meetings and other events such as those organised as part of the Long Term Conditions Engagement Programme.
- By becoming involved in the work of the task and finish groups which carry out specific project based work linked to the delivery of the annual work plan.
- By becoming a Healthwatch Hartlepool Enter and View representative.

Enter and View Representatives

Healthwatch Hartlepool has a group of 16 members who have completed a mandatory training programme which broadly follows Healthwatch England guidance and includes -

- An Introduction to Enter and View
- Adult Safeguarding
- Deprivation of Liberty Standards (DOLs)
- Equality and Diversity
- Report Writing
- Dementia Awareness

Enter and View representatives are also required to undertake a DBS check and once this has been returned are then interviewed by the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Executive Group and

a member of the staff team.

In July 2013 a Healthwatch Hartlepool volunteer and member of the staff team attended a "Train the Trainer" event hosted by Healthwatch England in Leeds.

All Healthwatch Hartlepool representatives have now attended in-house training events based around this session. Subsequently there was a pause in formal Enter and View activity until the full programme was delivered. Consequently only two formal Enter and View visits were conducted in 2013/14 although Enter and View representatives were involved in the programme of visits to care homes and pharmacy outlets which are discussed in other sections of this report.

Volunteer Training and Development

Healthwatch Hartlepool strives to provide appropriate training and development opportunities wherever possible. Volunteers all now have the opportunity to have a training needs discussion with the Healthwatch Development Officer and all development opportunities and training events are open to any member of Healthwatch Hartlepool to attend.

In addition to the courses listed above training has also been provided around -

- Autism Awareness
- Children's Safeguarding Procedures
- Disability Awareness.

"We have developed a training programme which will ensure that Entry and View volunteers have the right skills, knowledge and understanding in order to carry out this important role"

Zoe Sherry - Healthwatch Executive Member

Healthwatch Hartlepool will face a number of key strategic and operational challenges in 2014/15. These include -



- The recruitment of appropriately skilled and suitable individuals to form the Strategic Board of Healthwatch Hartlepool.
- Continue to recruit new volunteers to Healthwatch Hartlepool and in particular aim to broaden our member profile amongst children and young people and working age adults.
- Continue to explore different methods of engaging regularly with seldom heard groups and ensuring that their issues and needs are represented.
- Continue to develop our relationship and involvement with Care Quality Commission Inspection teams and explore opportunities for greater engagement.
- Develop a programme of Enter and View activity which is driven by feedback gained through patient and public engagement and which also links into key work plan objectives.
- Continue to develop and provide a robust and meaningful programme of member training and development opportunities.



“The coming year will not be without its challenges but in our first year we made real progress and now have a solid base on which to build. We have delivered some excellent outcomes and have established ourselves as a strong and representative patient voice in Hartlepool”

Margaret Wrenn - Chair of Healthwatch Hartlepool

The Annual Report will be widely disseminated via our website, our membership and key stakeholders and will be available in special formats on request. Copies will be made specifically to:

- Healthwatch England
- The Care Quality Commission
- NHS England
- All Clinical Commissioning Groups which fall within our local authority area
- The Audit and Governance Committee of Hartlepool Borough Council
- Hartlepool Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Board

Below is a summary of income and Expenditure for Healthwatch Hartlepool for 2013/14. Local Healthwatch funding is in two parts. The first part is calculated from the ongoing baseline funding that supported Healthwatch's' predecessor organisations - Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). This comes from the Department for Communities and Local Government via the Business Rates Retention Scheme to each Local Authority. The second is additional funding for the new signposting service and other additional duties Healthwatch has to fulfil and comes from the Department of Health.

Each Local Authority has to commission a Local Healthwatch and ensure it operates effectively and is value for money but the two grants for local Healthwatch organisations are not ring-fenced. Decisions about funding for local Healthwatch are made by each local authority. As a consequence, the level of funding for each local Healthwatch varies considerably between the 152 Local Healthwatch in England. Hartlepool Borough Council provided a contract of £109,751 to fund Healthwatch Hartlepool, along with a grant of £16,000 in 2013/14.

Overall Income	£125,751
Overall Expenditure Using Report Headings	
Staff Costs	£80,655
Volunteers	£5,078
Premises/Office costs	£25,602
Management and Infrastructure Charges	£9,674
Total Overall Expenditure	£121,009
Carry forward to 2014/15	£4,742

On 1 April 2013, Healthwatch Hartlepool entered into a licensing agreement with Healthwatch England to use its trademark and branding toolkit on all Healthwatch Hartlepool material, including those related to its statutory duties, activities and powers.





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