

Report to: Staffordshire Health & Wellbeing Board

To be held on: 06/09/18

Report Title:	Healthwatch Staffordshire				
Report prepared by:	Simon Fogell, Executive Director				
Board Sponsor:	Margaret Matthews – Chair Healthwatch Staffordshire Advisory Board				
Report Type:	System Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prevention	<input type="checkbox"/>	Statutory Duties <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations / action required:					
1. To note the report					
2. To continue to work with Healthwatch Staffordshire and create stronger working links					

Brief Report Summary

Healthwatch Staffordshire is the independent local champion for health and social care in Staffordshire. The statutory role is to make sure that local decision makers and providers put the views and experiences of local people at the heart of their work and respond to their concerns.

Healthwatch Staffordshire published their Annual Report 2017/18 on 30th June 2018 and submitted it to Healthwatch England and NHS England on the same day, as per legislative requirements (attached). They encourage you to read the attached Annual Report for further detailed accounts of their activities in 2017/18.

The Annual Report contains much more on the different issues we have been involved in and how we have used the public voice to champion people's concerns and issues.

Main Body of the Report

1. Healthwatch Staffordshire exists to make health and care services in the County work for people who use them. 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.
2. Healthwatch Staffordshire acts as an independent voice of local people, championing quality health and social care. We endeavour to ensure that the needs and preferences of service users are central to how services are planned and delivered across Staffordshire. Through effective engagement to gain service user feedback, we can raise awareness of key issues affecting our local health and social care services and recommend improvements.
3. Healthwatch Staffordshire is delivered by Engaging Communities Staffordshire. Engaging Communities is a community interest company that brings public engagement, consultation and consumer advice services together in a central organisation to create evidence and insight to help improve local health and social care services.

4. Our engagement activities enable us to:
 - a. Raise awareness of Healthwatch and the services we offer
 - b. Promote the benefits for individuals and communities of geography, interest and identity
 - c. Offer opportunities for real involvement
 - d. Gather feedback to influence health and social care service design and delivery.
5. We have an annual calendar and schedule of events and activities including Healthwatch promotional stands at events, community days and in public spaces including libraries, supermarkets, leisure centres, fetes and county, borough and district shows, presentations to community and support groups, consultation events, local drop-in and survey sessions.

Impact

Homeless Access to Healthcare

6. As members of a task and finish group with Stoke and North Staffs CCG we supported them to conduct an engagement exercise with homeless people to gain an understanding of their health needs, identify any barriers that they face in accessing community services, and design or develop services that are better able to meet the needs of this cohort.
7. Working closely with our partners enabled us to add additional information to the overall report and considerations by including feedback from a service provider perspective, and an ongoing case study that highlighted a significant gap in District Nursing provision for homeless people at the risk of poor health outcomes and cyclical admissions to hospital for the same issue.
8. We have recently had confirmation from the CCG that they will now be commissioning a district nursing service that will work directly with homeless people. We will continue to engage with homeless people once the new service is operational to monitor its effectiveness and whether health outcomes for homeless people are improved.

Older People

9. Healthwatch was contacted by a number of service users and Domiciliary Care Providers concerned about the changes to the contracts for Domiciliary Care as a result of a retendering exercise by the County Council's Adults Health and Care department. Some service users were confused about how the changes would affect them and distressed by the thought that they would have to change care agency.
10. As a result of feedback, we escalated concerns to the county council who agreed that these would be taken seriously and addressed. Subsequently a mobilisation plan was put in place to secure the smooth and safe transition of the service with as little disruption as possible to service users.

Enter and View

11. As a local Healthwatch we have statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to 'Enter and View' publicly funded health and social care premises to see and hear how people experience the services. This gives us the opportunity to collect the opinions and experiences of people using these services, their carers or relatives.
12. We do this by;
 - a. Talking to residents/patients, their relatives and carers, and staff who are providing the care
 - b. Observing the nature and quality of the service
 - c. Developing insights and making recommendations to improve care
13. In 2017-18 we have carried out 39 Enter and View visits to residential Care and Nursing Homes, 3 Visits to our local hospitals and 1 visit to a Day services provider. These visits were carried out by 9 of our Authorised Representatives who made 72 recommendations. Of this number, 9 visits were return visits to see if the recommendations we had made had been implemented. We have noted that 34 of our recommendations have been acted upon, either as an immediate reaction to our visit and report, or over a period of time that we have noted on our follow up visits.
14. All of our Enter and View reports are shared with the CQC, County Council Quality Team, and Healthwatch England.

Hospital Discharge Report

15. Following a study by Healthwatch Volunteers looking at experiences of using hospital discharge lounges at our 3 acute hospital sites, Healthwatch found a number of common themes for patients which were around;
 - a. Delays in obtaining take home medication
 - b. Delays in transport
 - c. Poor signposting
 - d. No clear criteria as to which patients were suitable for discharge via this route.
16. The report also highlighted areas for praise, particularly around the commitment of staff to make the experience as comfortable as possible. The report concluded with a number of recommendations for improvement to the service and these were responded to positively by the hospitals concerned.
17. "We would like to thank Healthwatch for this most recent study, which looked at the experience of our patients when discharged from hospital via the discharge lounge. An improvement plan was written as a result with a specific focus on improving patient awareness and comfort" Trish Rowson (Director of Quality and Safety . University Hospital North Midlands).
18. The annual report contains much more information and details of how we work with the local communities and the difference we make in our work.

Forward work plan

19. The Healthwatch Advisory Board have produced an outline plan of work areas that they wish to focus on over the coming year.
20. A sample of them include:
 - a. Enter and View – develop a robust programme of visits
 - b. Signposting – developing a robust work programme
 - c. Making greater use of digital communication to inform the local population
 - d. Grow and develop our volunteers
 - e. Review our own statutory functions to ensure we meet them
21. Continuing our work supporting the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership to;
 - a. Simplify the urgent and emergency care offer
 - b. Define and realise a new and positive vision for health and care services in Stafford and the surrounding area that is fit for the 21st century
 - c. Review community hospitals in the South of the county (Sir Robert Peel Community Hospital in Tamworth and Samuel Johnson Community Hospital in Lichfield).
22. We look forward to continuing to work with the Health and Wellbeing Board to improve the health and well-being of the population of Staffordshire. We will from time to time suggest items to be include in the work streams of both the Health and Wellbeing Board and that of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee and look to create closer working arrangements with both groups to health and social care outcomes of Staffordshire People.

Appendices:	Healthwatch Staffordshire Annual Report 2017 / 2018
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