

Healthwatch Worcestershire Annual Report 2016/2017

Healthwatch Worcestershire

Healthwatch Worcestershire provides an independent voice for people who use publicly funded health and social care services. We tell the people who run or pay for the services what people think needs to be changed in order to improve. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

Listening to local people who use health and care services

We know you want services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care services with us – both good and bad.

Over the year we had contact with over 3,500 people across Worcestershire.

- We have been to lots of different events and meetings around the county to tell people about Healthwatch and ask what they think including areas that are “health hotspots”.
- We invited speakers and gave people a chance to have their say at our Annual Conference and public Board Meetings held in different parts of the County.
- We have carried out surveys and organised groups to talk about issues.
- We have produced bulletins, been on local radio and national television and written fortnightly articles for the Worcester News.
- We have reached 747 followers on our Twitter account @hwworcs.

We have made a special effort to reach out to:

- **Young People and Children** by involving young volunteers in asking other children about what they think and talking with students at Kidderminster and Evesham College's.
- **Parents and carers** of children and young people with disabilities and additional support needs by attending various parent support groups.
- **Older people** through events like the Retirement Roadshows, Older Peoples showcase and by visiting supported housing schemes.
- **People with a learning disability** - by attending events and working with SpeakEasy N.O.W. Health Checkers on our Easy Read leaflets.

During 2016/17 we have gathered over 900 experiences from patients, service users and carers.

Our Reports and Recommendations in 2016/2017

This year we found out more about the services and issues that you told us were important. We have produced **Reports and Recommendations** on:

- Going to the Doctors
- Themes and Thoughts – An Overview of Meaningful Activity in 13 Care and Nursing Homes for Older People in Worcestershire
- “Tops and Pants” – Feedback from our engagement with Children and Young People
- Children & Young People - Health & Emotional Well Being Information, Advice and Support
- GP Equipment Loans
- Two short “Spotlight On” reports on
 - Support for Mental Health and Wellbeing – A Carers Perspective
 - Communication with Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities
- Sent in your views on four local and national issues

Our Reports have been sent to the organisations who run, pay for or inspect health and social care services. The people who lead these have told us what they will do in response to the recommendations that we made. We then follow up to make sure this has happened.

Examples:

Children and Young People Report – Health and Emotional Wellbeing Information, Advice and Support

“Healthwatch recommend that the hours Chat Health is available are extended...We also need to increase awareness of School Health Nurses...These recommendations will be taken forward in the development of our services in 2017 / 2018.”

Worcestershire Health and Care Trust, Annual Quality Account 2016-2017

Meaningful Activity in Care Homes

“Thank you for the report, I think this document will be very useful I have displayed it around the service and given a copy to our activity worker.” Service Manager, Pirton Grange

Parent Feedback – Clearer Information Now Available!

In response to HWW’s feedback the Worcestershire Health and Care Trust developed new leaflets about the assessment process for children with Autism Spectrum Conditions. A parent said:

“I am pleased to see that there is space for the details of a professional for you to contact regarding your child's assessment. I had no such contact and felt very frustrated at not being able to find out how my son's assessment was progressing.”

Making Sure People Are Involved In Planning and Reviewing Services

Our nine public Board Meetings gave you the opportunity to ask about hot topics in Worcestershire. Health and care leaders answered questions about:

- Your Health & Care – It’s Future (plans for how health and care services in Worcestershire and Herefordshire can work closer together - Sustainability & Transformation Plans)
- Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire – proposed changes to how hospital services will be organised across the County
- Domiciliary Care – how it is provided and how the quality of the service is checked
- Children and Young People – the County Council’s plans for improvement following the Ofsted report which rated children’s social care services as inadequate

Our Chair, Peter Pinfield, sits on **Worcestershire’s Health and Wellbeing Board** (WHWB). They set priorities and make decisions about health and care in Worcestershire. Peter acts as the patient and service user voice taking the experiences we collect and our Reports and Recommendations to the Board. He ensures patient, user and carer’s views are taken into account when the Board makes decisions.

Example

Hip & Knee Replacements

After we challenged the CCGs decision to use the Oxford hip and knee score to reduce hip and knee replacement surgery the NHS wrote to all CCGs in England highlighting the benefits of hip and knee replacements and involving patients in decisions about surgery.

Quote

“It is making a difference. HWW not afraid to challenge statutory bodies but takes a balanced approach. Keep up the good work.” Member of the public

Improving the quality of health and social care

You have told us patient safety and high quality health and social care services are really important. We check this by:

- Looking at how local health and care services are doing against national targets and standards.
- Checking how patients are kept safe, and that any concerns are dealt with—through formal meetings of Worcestershire’s Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England.
- Providing information to the County Council’s committees which look at health and social care services for adults and children & young people.
- Our volunteers look at the condition of buildings and other non-medical aspects of care in NHS services.

Example

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust

We were so concerned about the continual poor performance of cancer and A&E services provided by the Trust we wrote to the CCGs who pay the Trust to provide the services. The CCGs confirmed the health and wellbeing of patients on waiting lists was being monitored. We have continued to press the Trusts regulator, NHS Improvements, for evidence of improvements and in February and March we made 31 unannounced visits to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital and spoke to patients about their experiences of being cared for in the corridors of the A&E Department.

Signposting People to Advice and Information

During the year 136 people contacted us for information about their local health and social care services, for help in finding their way around these services or to tell us their views.

People can contact us by telephone, email, through our website, by post or personal visit. We will “signpost” people to the right information or organisation. We have produced guides on how to make a complaint about health and social care services, which are available in Easy Read format.

Example

Ms B contacted us about how to request medical records. Ms B said:

“Excellent knowledge and understanding. Was good to have someone to point me in the right direction Emailed me all the information I needed.... thank you”

Mr D contacted us about a long wait on a trolley at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. We sent him our complaints guide, which provided all the information he needed about how to complain. Mr D said:

“Extremely impressed with the speed of response and supporting documents to assist me, thank you.”

Healthwatch national voice

HWW is part of the Healthwatch network. Healthwatch England (HWE) is the national organisation and provides us with information and advice. Local Healthwatch information is used by HWE to highlight issues that affect the whole country. For example the information that we provided about the experiences of children and young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions has been included in HWE’s national report on this issue.

Healthwatch Worcestershire wins national award!

We are proud to have won HWE’s national award recognising us as the Healthwatch that has worked most effectively with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), who inspect health and care services. Our working relationship with the CQC gives us teeth to make a difference to local people. The CQC said: *“Healthwatch Worcestershire’s work is a fantastic example of the ways in which we can work together”*.

Healthwatch Worcestershire in the news!

You may have seen our Chair or Chief Operating Officer on the BBC or ITV evening news – giving your concerns a national voice.

Finances

In 2016/17 Worcestershire County Council paid us £289,000 under contract to deliver local Healthwatch services. The main areas of expenditure have been:

Staff costs: £222,652

Establishment Costs including Depreciation: £34,736

Engagement & Volunteering Costs: £11,134

Further detail can be found in our report to Companies House.

How you can get involved in Healthwatch Worcestershire

Help us to make decisions and to make a difference:

- **Join our mailing list** – join over 1,230 people in Worcestershire who have Registered for Information with us and tell us what they think.

- **Join our Reference and Engagement Group (REG)** – our network of over 107 community organisations and “Experts by Experience.” Help us to reach more people; advise and guide our work; and get involved in our Task and Finish groups on topics you care about.
- **Be a Healthwatch Ambassador** – help us spread the word about Healthwatch, give your time to improve health and care services.

Come along to one of our public Board meetings

Find out what we are doing; help us to make decisions and hear about the “hot topics” in health and care. Our decisions are available on our website.

Talk To Us – Your Voice Matters!

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