

Sarah Dugan
Chief Executive
STP Lead
Herefordshire and Worcestershire STP

15 February 2018

Dear Sarah

Ref: Local Healthwatch contribution to the STP

As the Chairs of Healthwatch Herefordshire and Healthwatch Worcestershire we are jointly writing to you about a number of issues which we thought we should bring to your attention following our respective meetings with Charles as the new STP Chair. We are sure the issues will not be new to you but as they were manifest in the STP Partnership Board meeting on 23 January we thought it would be timely to formally raise them with you. We have also recently been informed that we can publish our joint submission to the Health Select Committee's STP inquiry and want to share it with you before we do so.

Local Healthwatch role in the governance of the STP - membership of the STP Delivery Board

We appreciate our attendance at the STP Partnership Board and the opportunity to engage in the strategic discussions that take place. However, as you are aware we have long held the view that local Healthwatch would be better positioned to fulfil its role in relation to public and patient involvement if it was also a member of the Delivery Board where we understand decisions of a more operational matter relating to the STP work streams are taken. This was exemplified in the STP Communication and Engagement Update report that was considered at the Partnership Board on 23 January, in which it was reported that issues relating to STP communications and engagement had been considered at the STP Delivery Board and decisions taken in relation to them, without our contribution.

Please note we are not seeking to unpick those decisions. Whilst acknowledging that we are to meet Susan Harris on 16 February to be briefed on communication and engagement we do take the view that, somewhat ironically given the subject matter, we have not been a party to those decisions, and that our attendance at the STP Delivery Board would have prevented this situation arising.

Therefore, we would wish the Partnership Board to reconsider the proposal that we made at the time the STP governance arrangements were recently reviewed, to facilitate local Healthwatch attendance at the Delivery Board.

Local Healthwatch engagement with STP Work Programme SROs

Local Healthwatch attendance at the STP Delivery Board would also enable us to close the gap that we consider currently exists between the SROs for the delivery of the STP work programme and local Healthwatch. We would therefore appreciate it if arrangements could be made for local Healthwatch to meet with the SROs of work programmes which are of significant relevance to patients and the public, in a timely way.

Statement of Commitment to Collaborative Working and Progressing to an Accountable Care System

We appreciated the opportunity to comment on the draft statement that was considered at the Partnership Board on 23 January. The first paragraph of the statement sets out the partner organisations commitment to put local people at the heart of everything they do, and it is in that context that we would have wished to have contributed to the statement in the drafting stage.

Having now had time to consider the statement in our respective organisations we firmly suggest that the statement should explicitly set out partners organisations commitment to co-production with patients and the public in the design, delivery and transformation of services. We also seek reassurance that the commitment to place, that we all value, will not be a barrier to innovation or improving services for the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. We would therefore invite the Partnership Board to amend paragraph 2 of the Statement of Commitment to reflect this.

Co-Production Strategy

We understand the organisations that make-up the NHS in Worcestershire and Herefordshire appreciate that patients and the public do not generally recognise the boundaries between the organisations that together deliver NHS services. However, whilst those NHS organisations are required to comply with legislation and NHSE guidance in their involvement of patients and the public in the commissioning and provision of services each has its own strategy to do so which we view as unnecessarily confusing for patients and the public, particularly in circumstances where a number of those organisations are involved in delivering a clinical pathway.

In Worcestershire the review of CCG governance relating to lay membership, and the concurrent provider Trusts reviews of their co-production policies and procedures has presented the opportunity for Healthwatch Worcestershire to

propose to Worcestershire's CCGs a single 'co-production' strategy for the NHS in Worcestershire.

It follows that there could be potential to develop a single co-production strategy for the NHS across the STP footprint which should involve specialised and direct commissioning. We will therefore propose this at a future partnership Board meeting.

Local Healthwatch submission to the Health Select Committee STP inquiry

As we referred to above on 7 February 2017 the Boards of Healthwatch Herefordshire and Healthwatch Worcestershire made a joint submission to the Health Select Committee STP inquiry. We would have shared that submission with the Partnership Board but for the confidentiality clause in the terms and agreement of the submission. However, we did apply for permission to share and publish the submission which was granted last week. Therefore, please find attached a copy of our submission which we will publish on our websites in due course.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the submission with us, please do not hesitate to contact either one of us.

In conclusion, our formal approach to this issue should not be interpreted as a signal of a change in the excellent professional relationship we believe local Healthwatch and partner organisations have constructed in relation to the STP. However, we do believe that addressing the issues we have raised in this letter will contribute to delivering the significant challenges set out in our STP Plan. Many of which will depend on the effective involvement of patients and the public across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Yours sincerely



Peter Pinfield
Chair
Healthwatch Worcestershire



Ian Stead
Chair
Healthwatch Herefordshire