

Healthwatch Worcestershire Annual Report 2019/2020

Healthwatch Worcestershire is the people's champion for publicly funded health and social care services. We are independent of the NHS and Worcestershire County Council. It is our job to listen to your views about services. We tell the people who run or pay for services what the public think they could do better and what needs to change. Our purpose is to make care better for people.

Listening to people who use health and care services

Over the year we had contact with more than 4,300 people across Worcestershire.

- We have been to events and meetings around the County to tell people about Healthwatch and ask what they think
- We have carried out surveys and organised groups to talk about issues.
- We invited speakers and encouraged people to have their say at our Annual Conference and our Public Board Meetings held around the County
- We have produced bulletins and kept in touch with people on our mailing list
- We have used our network of community organisations and "Experts by Experience" to help us reach more people and guide our work
- We have been on local radio, regional television and written fortnightly articles for the Worcester News.
- We have 1066 followers on Twitter @hwworcs
- Our Facebook posts have reached over 4,000 people

We have made a special effort to reach out to:

- **Carers** including through the Carers Careline Fair and the Carers Partnership
- **Young People and Children** including through engagement with students at Worcester and Kidderminster Colleges and at University of Worcester
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus (LGBT+) community** including through Worcestershire Pride, Out2gether and visiting youth groups across the County
- **Older people** including through the Retirement Roadshows, Older People's Showcase and attending older people's groups and forums
- **People from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities** including through Worcestershire Muslim Women's Association, Worcester Afro Caribbean Association, Syrian Refugee women and the Gypsy, Roma Traveller Community
- **People who are in prison** - HMP Hewell
- **People with a learning disability** by attending events and working with SpeakEasy N.O.W.
- **Women who have experienced domestic violence** through West Midlands Women's Aid

During 2019/20 we have gathered over 2,200 experiences from patients, service users and carers.

Did You Know?

This year we have improved our links with the LGBT+ community, engaging with over 100 adults and 120 young people. We really enjoyed having a stall at Worcestershire Pride!

Our Reports and Recommendations in 2019/2020

We have used the information people have told us to decide which areas of health and care to find out more about. We have produced Reports and Recommendations on:

- [Being Healthy - Children and Young People's Survey Report](#)
- [Fracture Clinics at the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust](#)
- [Finding Out About Adult Social Care Services from the Worcestershire County Council Website - Report of Mystery Shopping Exercise](#)
- [LGBT+ - Experience of Health and Social Care Services](#)
- [NHS Long Term Plan - Engagement Summary for Worcestershire](#)
- [Prisoner Experience of Health Care Services at HMP Hewell](#)
- [Screening and Immunisation Survey Report](#)
- [Care in the Corridor at the Worcestershire Royal Hospital - Follow Up Report](#)

We have sent in your views about 3 local and national consultations that you have told us are important.

Our Reports have been sent to the organisations who run the services; the Clinical Commissioning Groups (who are responsible for planning and paying for health services), Worcestershire County Council and NHS England. The people who lead these told us what they will do in response to the recommendations that we made. We then follow up to make sure this has happened.

They are also sent to the Care Quality Commission (CQC), who inspect health and care services and to Healthwatch England. All of our Reports and the responses that we have had to them can be found on our website

www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk

Mystery shopping about adult social care services *

Our mystery shoppers found it wasn't always easy to find answers to questions relating to social care on the Worcestershire County Council website. We detailed our findings and made recommendations for improvement.

Richard Keble, Assistant Director, WCC People Directorate said:

“Thank you for your most comprehensive report ... the Council is undertaking a comprehensive review of its digital offer, including the offer to people seeking advice and guidance about health and wellbeing or wanting information about adult social care”

Fracture Clinics

We spoke with over 370 patients attending Fracture Clinics. The Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust has produced a detailed Action Plan in response to our recommendations. The Plan will result in improvements to patient information, communication, and the clinic environment.

Simon Trickett, Accountable Officer, Herefordshire & Worcestershire's CCGs said:

“Thank you for Healthwatch Worcestershire’s work in delivering this invaluable report”

HMP Hewell*

We spoke with prisoners at HMP Hewell about health services. In response to our Draft Report the CQC have sought reassurance from HMP Hewell that treatment for patients with cancer is being prioritised.

LGBT+ *

LGBT+ people in Worcestershire told us they have experienced barriers and inequalities when accessing local health services. They highlighted the need for a greater level of awareness and understanding of LGBT+ issues and increased access to information and support, in particular for young people.

Nicola Longworth-Cook of Out2gether said:

“It certainly counters all those who question why we might still need more awareness, education, support and events like Pride for the LGBT+ community.”

Screening and Immunisation

Feedback we gathered about the need for increased awareness of screening and immunisation programmes, and the potential barriers people experience, will be used to encourage take up of Cancer screening and to highlight the issues to commissioners.

*NOTE: Due to the Corona Virus pandemic we are still awaiting a full response to our Reports on: Mystery Shopping about Adult Social Care, LGBT+ and HMP Hewell. The responses will be made available on our website.

Making sure people are involved in planning and reviewing services

We have been checking that people are involved in how services could be changed for the future such as:

- Contributing to the redesign of the Mental Health Strategy and Dementia Strategy
- Attending local engagement events including those on Cancer Services, Tackling Loneliness, ReSPECT (end of life planning) and Community Hospitals Transformation
- Promoting ten local health or care surveys issued by the NHS or County Council and relevant national surveys,

encouraging people to take part through our Bulletins and social media

- Reaching over 500 people to hear their views about the implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan, these views have helped shape the delivery of the Plan locally

Our Chair, Peter Pinfield, sits on Worcestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board as the patient and service user voice

Improving the quality of health and care services

You have told us that 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 with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Worcestershire's Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England
- Attending and providing information to the County Council's committees which look at health services and social care services for adults and children and young people. For example, this year we have contributed to Scrutiny of the ongoing pressures on Acute Hospital services and to a Report into Quality Assurance of Care Homes in Worcestershire
- Telling the Care Quality Commission (CQC) about your experience of services so they can consider this before their inspections

- Commenting on the Quality Accounts of health providers and contributing to NHS England 360° quality assurance process of Worcestershire's CCGs
- Our volunteers look at condition of buildings and other non-medical aspects of care in NHS services

Did you know – CQC and Autism

We presented our work on Autism to a CQC regional meeting for GP practice Inspectors. We then produced a fact sheet based on what people with Autism told us about going to the Doctors, adjustments practices could make and examples of good practice in Worcestershire, for Inspectors to use and share with other regions.

Andy Brand, CQC Inspection Manager said:

'It's really helpful to get that additional perspective and awareness and will prompt the inspection teams to probe that little bit deeper when they're speaking with practices.'

Healthwatch – the 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 them to help build the national picture.

We have engaged with Healthwatch England by:

- Attending the West Midlands (WM) Network meetings for local Healthwatch
- Representing the WM Network as a member of the West Midlands Cancer Alliance, which is reviewing the clinical pathways for all cancer services

- Escalating 4 issues to HWE where these required response at a national level
- Participating in an independent study into the local operation and impact of Healthwatch in England

Signposting people to advice and information

During the year 205 people contacted us for information about local health and social care services, for help in finding their way around these services or to tell us their experience. People can contact us by telephone, email, through our website or by post. 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, including in Easy Read and large print format.

A user of HWW Signposting service said:

“Thank you so much for your very detailed and informative reply”

Healthwatch Volunteers

A big thank you to our Healthwatch Volunteers. They have supported our project work, helped us to spread the word about Healthwatch and given their time to improve health and care services. Some attended our awareness raising events about the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and the LGBT+ community in Worcestershire.

Finances

In 2019/20 Worcestershire County Council paid us £274,550 under contract to deliver local Healthwatch services. The main areas of expenditure have been:

staff costs: £212,964

Establishment Costs including Depreciation: £52,223

Engagement and Volunteering Costs: £10,632

Covid-19

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic HWW, like all organisations, has had to change the way we work. We have curtailed our face to face engagement and project work for the time being. We are supporting local Councils and our NHS colleagues by gathering and speedily passing on feedback about people's experiences of the changes that have been made to health and care services because of Covid-19. We have also supported the County Council in their co-ordination of the community response to Covid-19.

John Hobbs, Worcestershire County Council's Executive lead for response to Covid-19 said:

"I would like to thank you for getting involved. I think that your engagement helped define what we were doing" -

For more information on Covid-19 see our website and follow us on social media

Get in touch – Your voice matters!

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