

Healthwatch Herefordshire (HWH) - Report to Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) - July 2015

A. Healthwatch Herefordshire and its Working Relationship with the Wye Valley NHS Trust (WVT) in Herefordshire - How we engage with the WVT:-

- i) Healthwatch Herefordshire 'Enter & View' Visits to Ross Community Hospital & Leominster Community Hospital and Wye Valley NHS Trust - Frome Ward - Reports available. The programme includes visits later in the year to Bromyard Community Hospital and The Wye Valley Trust Hospital - Wye Ward.
- ii) Attend WVT Patient Experience Walkabouts with WVT Non-Executive Directors
- iii) Attend WVT Stakeholder Reference Group
- iv) Attend WVT board meetings
- v) Member of Midwifery Led Unit Project Group
- vi) Healthwatch Chair meets Chair of Wye Valley NHS Trust and Chief Executive.
- vii) Healthwatch 'Enter and View' Reports are sent to The Care Quality Commission (CQC) and HWH is involved in providing feedback on issue of 'special measures.'
- viii) Healthwatch Board Leads include - Alan Lloyd, Sheila Marsh and Sheila Archer for WVT.
- ix) Healthwatch Herefordshire will be providing input into the new WVT Patient Handbook
- x) Healthwatch Herefordshire has operational meetings with the Patient Liaison Service (PALS) and Wye Valley NHS Trust Staff who Lead on Quality and Safety Issues.
- xi) Evaluation of the new Stroke Pathway, specifically the experiences of stroke survivors of those discharged early by the discharge team.
- xii) The WVT Communications Officer attends the Engagement Gateway - see C3 below.

B. Themes raised by the public/patients recently Healthwatch regarding WVT:-

- Receiving timely responses and resolutions from PALS and Complaints systems. The importance of a clear communication line between the Patient and the Consultant in relation to issues of future treatment/referral.
- 'Number 1 Ledbury Road' - The issues raised by families of service users of poor and confusing communication, and the lack of engagement in consulting with them about the proposed changes to the service currently provided at Number 1 Ledbury Road, has caused considerable upset and distress.

C. Other Key Issues from Healthwatch Herefordshire to report to HOSC in July 2015:-

1. The need to ensure that there is a full implementation plan for high quality school nursing provision in Herefordshire, as part of a programme of health promotion in Schools and Colleges. It is also important that there is provision of services for Child Adolescent and Mental Health in Herefordshire which meets the needs of the young people in Herefordshire.
2. Quality and continuation of care received in the home, as well as the issue of the transfer of the Independent Living Funding to the Herefordshire Council, and its implications for current service users, both issues will need to be monitored for the impact on those who are most vulnerable in our County.
3. We also see the need for a 'Joined-up Complaints System' to simplify how patients and the public can complain about poor services across both Health and Social Care Services. Work might be able to be progressed via the 'Engagement Gateway' which consists of members of the communication teams across health and social care who meet with others including Healthwatch to discuss key messages/issues. Healthwatch is leading on this work at present.

D. Longer Term Issues from Healthwatch Herefordshire which will need to be considered 2015-2016 include:-

* The importance of ensuring that there is an efficient and effective Urgent Care Service provided in Herefordshire, which meets the needs and has the support of the local population within the County. This includes an 08.00hrs to 20.00hrs - 7 day a week GP Service, a Walk-In GP Centre in Hereford (Currently next to the Asda Store) and Minor Injury Units (MIU) in all of the Market Towns.

* The Commissioning of the new Mental Health Service for Herefordshire affords an opportunity to revisit the former contract and 'refresh' it, so that the service provided will be the best for the people of Herefordshire. This will include addressing capacity issues and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, as well as providing the necessary support for the Armed Services Covenant.

* To monitor the impact of the recent announcement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer about budgets for government departments being potentially reduced. Adult Social Care is a particular problem, with reductions in funded services against a background of ever increasing need for services from an ageing population. The impact of the Care Act is something which will need to be monitored closely by the Council, to ensure that the various parts/sections of the Act are being implemented and that funds are in place to cover the associated costs.

* It is vital that public and patients have full access to a District General Hospital (Wye Valley NHS Trust) in Hereford, that is 'fit for purpose' and is able to provide safe and high quality services, and that there is the necessary funding to provide for the level of need of the population.