

Healthwatch Herefordshire (HWH) - Report from Paul Deneen, Chair of Healthwatch Herefordshire to the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) - January 2016.

Issues raised by Healthwatch Herefordshire (HWH) regarding Health and Social Care which will need to be considered 2016-2017 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 announcement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer last November about budgets for government departments and the Herefordshire Council being 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 which is able to provide safe and high quality services, and that there is the necessary national funding to provide for the level of need of the population

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.

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.

We also see the need for a 'Joined-up Complaints System' to simplify how patients and the public can complain about poor services or make compliments 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 & engagement leads across health and social care who meet with others including Healthwatch to discuss key messages/issues. Healthwatch is leading on this work at present.

In relation to Healthwatch Herefordshire and its Working Relationship with the Wye Valley NHS Trust (WVT) in Herefordshire - Our engagement and activities with the WVT are as follows:-

Healthwatch Herefordshire 'Enter & View' Visits to Wye Valley NHS Trust and to Community Hospitals with reports being sent to the Trust and to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Attend WVT Patient Experience Walkabouts with WVT Non-Executive Directors

Attend WVT Stakeholder Reference Group

Attend WVT Board meetings and Annual General Meeting.

Member of Midwifery Led Unit Project Group (Sheila Marsh)

Healthwatch Chair meets Chair of Wye Valley NHS Trust and Chief Executive.

Healthwatch Herefordshire attends the Quality Oversight and Review Group (QORG) which monitors the progress in relation to CQC Grading. HWH will be involved in the CQC Summit being held on Monday 18th January, which will consider the recent CQC Inspection and follow up/recommendations and updated grading following its Inspection visit at the end of last year.

Healthwatch Board Leads include - Sheila Archer as Lead, Allan Lloyd (Cancer), Sheila Marsh (Midwifery) and Gwyneth Gill (Children/Young People). Healthwatch Staff are involved in virtually all of the work mentioned in this section of the report.

Healthwatch Herefordshire has provided input into the new WVT Patient Handbook

Healthwatch Herefordshire has operational meetings with the Patient Liaison Service (PALS) and Wye Valley NHS Trust Staff who lead on Quality and Safety Issues.

Evaluation of the new Stroke Pathway, specifically the experiences of stroke survivors of the Early Supported Discharge Team (Allan Lloyd)

The WVT Communications Officer attends the Engagement Gateway

The **Themes** raised by the public/patients recently Healthwatch regarding WVT are as follows:-

Receiving timely responses and resolutions from PALS (Patient Liaison Service) and Complaints systems. The importance of a clear communication line between the Patient and the WVT Staff/Consultant/s 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 which has been considered at length by Herefordshire Councillors and Council Staff. The recent report from the Task and Finish Group of HOSC proved to be most helpful in relation to making recommendations to be implemented. By regularly reviewing the issue and the progress of the any future plans, will ensure that patients, service users and parents and carers will have an input into any discussions. HWH will continue to monitor the situation via its monthly meetings with parent carers at the Parent Carer Voice Forum, as part of our regular engagement, any issues arising Healthwatch can report on as part of our continued input to HOSC.