



Healthwatch Wiltshire
Draft Annual Report 2013/14



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Introduction



The aim of Healthwatch Wiltshire is to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their area.



Healthwatch is the new consumer champion for both health and social care. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 set out that a Healthwatch should be established in each local area by April 2013. There is also a national body called Healthwatch England which provides leadership and support to the network of 151 local Healthwatch organisations around the country.

In Wiltshire a completely new organisation was created called Healthwatch Wiltshire. Healthwatch Wiltshire is a social enterprise (a community interest company limited by guarantee) and is responsible for the statutory activities of a local Healthwatch organisation.

These activities are set out in law:

- Promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision, and scrutiny of local health and social care services.
- Enable local people to monitor the quality of local health and social care services and whether and how they could and ought to be improved.
- Obtain the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local health and social care services and importantly to make these views known.



‘It’s so useful to talk to other people about the issues. It helps to clarify what you think, and sometimes, change your point of view’

Someone who came to a Dementia event

- Make reports and recommendations about how local health and social care services could or ought to be improved.
- Provide advice, information and signposting about access to local health and social care services so choices can be made by local people.
- Make recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to conduct special reviews or investigations.

This is the first Annual Report of Healthwatch Wiltshire and it will tell you what has been achieved during its first year.





A word from the Chair



As we come to the end of the first year of Healthwatch Wiltshire it is time to reflect on the challenges we faced and our achievements....

It has been an exceptional time of change, not just for us but also for many of those organisations we work with to meet our goals. All new organisations take time to form themselves so that they can deliver their work programme. It has also taken time to work with other organisations to develop a culture where the public is a full partner in our activities. I am confident that we have all laid the necessary foundations and next year there will be real achievements delivered with pace.

We are grateful for the welcome we received from the Wiltshire Involvement Network which was our predecessor organisation. We have taken on-board its legacy and incorporated it into our work programme. The Chair and members of the Wiltshire Involvement Network offered us active support when we needed it - to them we give our thanks.

The local voluntary sector could have seen Healthwatch as an unnecessary duplication.

Instead it has seen it as an opportunity to collaborate and share our information and knowledge to tell the Wiltshire Story in the most effective and accurate way. We thank the voluntary sector for its support and recognise the increased quality that our relationship with it will give to our work.

Next year will see further change. It is clear that we must all take an active part in delivering the changes that are needed to achieve the best quality of service with the available resources. The progress Healthwatch Wiltshire has made in engaging with these changes, on the public's behalf, is also a testament to the openness with which Wiltshire Council and the NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group have greeted our active involvement.

My final thank you is to the Directors, staff, and volunteers of Healthwatch Wiltshire. It has been a demanding year and people have given unstintingly of their time and skill to achieve the progress we have made. The information you are now about to read in our Annual Report is a credit to them all.

I invite you to read on and if you are interested in what we do then please join us in making a difference. Whether you have an hour a month and communicate by email, or have a day a month and want to meet others and enter a debate, we have a role for you. Please contact us!



A word from the Chief Executive



It is an important and exciting time to be part of Healthwatch Wiltshire.....

When I joined Healthwatch Wiltshire in early 2014, it didn't take me long to realise that not only had a great deal been achieved by volunteer Directors and the very small staff team of two in the space of a few months but also that we have a big and important job to do in the future.

When I spoke to my family and friends about Healthwatch and my new role I often had to explain what the organisation is set up to do. In plain words I said that we are all about listening to and using the voice of local people to improve and make the best of health and social care services. You will start to see the impact of our work having spent a large part of our first year setting up the organisation and raising awareness so people know what we are.

This annual report tells you about our first year. Our second year is the one which will give evidence of the value we bring to the table when we are talking on your behalf to the people who plan and deliver health and social care services in Wiltshire. But without your voice we can't do the job we've been set up to do - so talk to us, tell us what you think, tell us about your experiences of health and social care services.



Our Activities



Healthwatch Wiltshire was established as a new independent organisation in April 2013 to provide the role of consumer champion for health and social care.

It has been a very busy year with much time and energy invested in setting up the organisation and then delivering against an ambitious work plan. The organisational set up included appointing volunteer Directors and paid staff, finding an office, and arranging all the things which were needed for Healthwatch Wiltshire to operate.



'I spent 20 years caring for my mum so I reckon I know a bit about what it feels like to use health and social care services'

A Healthwatch Wiltshire Volunteer

Healthwatch Wiltshire supporting the Care Quality Commission in its inspection of the Royal United Hospital



Did you know that more than half of people who use services at the Royal United Hospital (RUH) in Bath are from Wiltshire? The RUH was chosen to be part of the pilot group to trial the new Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection regime. This presented the hospital with a very significant task in preparing for the inspection. Initially CQC did not seem to understand fully the challenges for a hospital serving such a large rural area. After Healthwatch Wiltshire's intervention it was agreed that 'listening sessions', an opportunity for the public to share their views of the services, would also be held in Wiltshire.

The inspection was carried out over a number of days with a large numbers of people representing interested groups including clinicians and 'patients by experience'. Healthwatch Wiltshire was invited to attend a Quality Summit where the inspection results were presented and stakeholders were invited to offer their support in delivering the improvements required. Generally it was agreed that the experience of the new inspection process had been positive, whilst recognising it also presented a number of learning points.

The CQC will carry out inspections using the new system from April 2014. Healthwatch Wiltshire will ensure that the voices of local people who have used the services which are being inspected are heard.



The impact of Army Basing

The military presence is one of the defining characteristics of Wiltshire, with over 30,000 military personnel and their dependants estimated to be living in the county. This presence is set to grow as between now and 2018 the Government plans to relocate approximately 4,000 service personnel and 3,000 dependants from Germany into the Bulford, Tidworth and Larkhill areas on the edge of Salisbury Plain. This will involve building over a thousand new homes at various locations in these areas. There will clearly be an impact on the delivery of healthcare in the area and Healthwatch Wiltshire has been monitoring the progress of planning for this relocation of service personnel to ensure that arrangements to meet the increase in the numbers using health and social care services in the area will be properly put in place.

The three principal areas which Healthwatch Wiltshire is particularly keen to see addressed are:

- provision of GP and Dental services in the community.
- maternity facilities at the Salisbury District Hospital Foundation Trust (the hospital serving the relocation areas).
- Ambulance Trust services.

To this end, Healthwatch Wiltshire has attended a number of meetings at which the Ministry of Defence has shared its plans and the implications have been discussed.

We are now awaiting the outcome of the public consultation process into the actual location of the new housing for families which will to a certain extent dictate where the impact on local healthcare services will be the greatest.

We will also follow Salisbury District Hospital Foundation Trust's plans to meet the anticipated increase in the demand for maternity services and continue to discuss with the Ambulance Trust how it plans to meet any increased demand on its services.



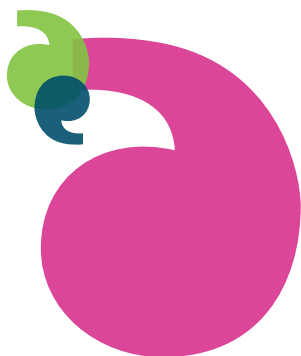


‘What would get you talking about health and social care issues?’
‘If I thought it would really help to make a difference’

A question answered by a Wiltshire citizen

Information and signposting

Healthwatch Wiltshire has a role to play in providing local people with an information and signposting service so they can make choices about health and social care services. Local people have told us that they struggle to find the information they need and don't always want to rely on the internet. This is an important issue and a challenging one too given that Wiltshire is a largely rural county. Healthwatch Wiltshire will be working with other organisations over 2014 to work out a better solution for health and social care information and signposting.





Our Activities - Engaging people



Engaging with local people is a key part of Healthwatch Wiltshire's work.

But what does that mean exactly?

It means working with local people in their communities to find out about their experience and views of health and care services. During the last year Healthwatch Wiltshire, along with its volunteers, has done this in a range of different ways:

- Area Boards
- Community events on the Community Area Joint Strategic Assessments
- Local voluntary sector
- Children and young people's project



Area Boards

There are eighteen Area Boards in Wiltshire and they were set up in 2009 to take responsibility for their community area. Each community area generally includes a market town and its surrounding villages. Healthwatch Wiltshire decided that it would be a good way to start raising awareness about the organisation and its role if it went to the Area Board meetings to introduce itself. During the last year Healthwatch Wiltshire has established contact with all of the Area Boards and talked to local people at their meetings. Health and social care issues are a regular topic for discussion at the Area Board meetings. Through engagement at these important meetings Healthwatch Wiltshire has been able to identify specific issues that are of concern to local communities such as:

- difficulty in making appointments with GP surgeries
- problems with transport, particularly when tests or treatment require travel over significant distances in a rural county
- delays in discharging elderly patients from hospital
- confusion about organisational changes within the National Health Service

- social isolation facing older people

Healthwatch Wiltshire contributed to Wiltshire Council's review of Area Boards and proposed that in future health and social care should be included as a major item for discussion at least twice a year, and that GPs should be encouraged to attend and to play a more active role. It is Healthwatch Wiltshire's view that the Area Boards offer a good opportunity for health professionals to communicate, consult and engage with local people about issues that are of interest and concern.





‘I found it really hard to find the information I needed especially as I was under a lot of stress at the time’

Someone who attended a meeting on their Community Area Joint Strategic Assessment

Community Area Joint Strategic Assessments

Healthwatch Wiltshire was invited to take part in discussions about health and wellbeing in each community area through special meetings which were held to look at the Community Area Joint Strategic Assessments. These important meetings helped to identify the key priorities in the area of health and social care. As you would expect, they are different for each community area. However, there were some common themes:

- the need to improve the provision of information and advice, bearing in mind those who do not have internet access
- support for unpaid carers
- increase in the number of people living with dementia and the challenge this will present to services and communities
- issues to do with access to mental health services
- improving the way services work together (for example between primary care, social services, and hospitals)

- the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles, and to tackle ‘health inequalities’, to prevent poor health in the future

The issues and common themes which Healthwatch Wiltshire gathered through its engagement with Area Boards and the Community Area Joint Strategic Assessment events are important. Healthwatch Wiltshire will be taking up a number of these in its work plan in 2014/15





Working with the local voluntary sector

Healthwatch Wiltshire needs to work effectively with local voluntary sector organisations that have an interest and commitment to achieving health and social care outcomes. In September 2013 Healthwatch Wiltshire invited a wide range of voluntary sector groups to a special event. The aim of the event was to provide an update on the development of Healthwatch with an opportunity to work with partners on our key challenges as an organisation. This helped us to decide how we could work collectively across Wiltshire to build and share a coherent picture of health and social care services from the perspective of the user.

After considering all the information and feedback from the discussions tables the following common themes emerged:

- Healthwatch Wiltshire has an important leadership role
- there needs to be clear information about Healthwatch Wiltshire and what it does
- Healthwatch Wiltshire needs to work with local groups to collect information and patient and service user 'stories'

- Healthwatch Wiltshire must not duplicate what local voluntary sector groups do
- Healthwatch Wiltshire should play a role in sharing its knowledge and expertise with local groups
- Healthwatch Wiltshire must be independent, credible and hold the trust of Wiltshire people

Following this event Healthwatch Wiltshire has sought to develop collaborative ways of working with voluntary sector groups. There is more which needs to be done in this area and this will feature as a key area of the 2014/15 work plan.





‘They should listen to me because I know how I feel’

A 10 year old Wiltshire child

Children and young people’s project

Healthwatch Wiltshire is not just about the experiences and voices of adults but also children and young people. This is an important area of Healthwatch Wiltshire’s work. Following some initial work and discussion with children and young people, we took the decision to commission a special engagement programme.

During 2014/15 we will be listening to what children and young people think about health and social care services and working with them to understand what the key issues are for them. This information will help to direct the future work plan for Healthwatch Wiltshire in respect to children and young people.





Our Activities - The role of volunteers and lay people

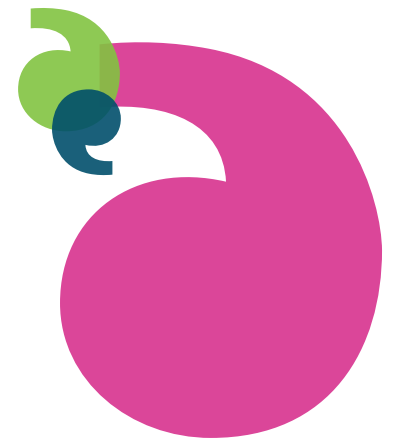


Volunteers are vital to the success of Healthwatch Wiltshire

- They help us to reach out and engage with people across what is a large rural county made up of diverse communities
- They help the organisation to represent effectively local views because they tell us what people are saying in their areas
- They help us to make decisions about our activities

The Healthwatch Wiltshire Board is made up of volunteer Directors who have a variety of backgrounds and bring to the work of the organisation their significant experience. The Directors invested considerable time in setting the direction and work plan for the first year of Healthwatch Wiltshire.

One of the first priorities for early in 2014 was to put in place our volunteering programme. We attracted, recruited and trained over 45 local people as Healthwatch Volunteers. Some of our volunteers have a professional background in health and social care services but most do not and instead are 'lay people'.



All of our volunteers have an important role to play by talking with and listening to local people about their experience and views of health and social care issues in a variety of settings. This helps us to identify any issues and also to build the 'Wiltshire Story'. Many of our volunteers have been asked to take on specialist roles. These are some examples of the contribution Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers have made:

- To provide a lay perspective on a review panel on complaints at the Royal United Hospital in Bath
- Volunteers are members of the NHS England Citizens' Assembly which is part of the South West Clinical Senate. The Assembly debates issues of strategic importance and looks at areas of concern to patients and the public
- A number of volunteers participate in PLACE visits at local hospitals. PLACE stands for 'Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment' and is a way of inspecting the quality of the environment within which patients are treated
- Volunteers with an interest in Dementia talked to people in their local communities on the draft Wiltshire strategy to find out what they think about services

- An Enter and View working group includes a majority of volunteers (see below for more information)
- Others have attended their local Area Board meetings to listen to what people in their communities are expressing about health and social care services

Healthwatch Wiltshire will develop its volunteer programme further in 2014/15. This will include involving our volunteers and other lay people in helping to direct our topic-specific work





Our Activities - Our statutory power to Enter and View

Local Healthwatch organisations have legal powers to go into health or social care services to check the quality of those services, particularly focusing on listening to service users, patients and unpaid carers to find out about their experience

This is called the power to 'Enter and View' and extends to care homes, GP and dental practices, and hospitals. During 2013/14 Healthwatch Wiltshire was not in a position to exercise this power. However start Enter and View visits from September 2014. A group has been set up, chaired by a Healthwatch Wiltshire Director and including some of our volunteers, to put everything in place so we can start our programme of visits.

Healthwatch Wiltshire regards its 'Enter and View' power as an important way, but not the only way, it can check the quality of services. We also use the following methods to monitor the quality of services:

- Monitoring the inspection reports from the Care Quality Commission on a weekly basis
- Participation in 'patient led assessments of the care environment' (PLACE) at hospitals
- Monitoring of the non-emergency transport service on an ongoing basis including Healthwatch Wiltshire Directors meeting with the provider of the service
- Monitoring quality of the Ambulance service including Healthwatch Wiltshire Directors meeting with the provider
- Effectively using our place on the Wiltshire Health Select Committee (by a Healthwatch Wiltshire Director)
- Participation in the NHS England Quality Surveillance Group by the Chair of Healthwatch Wiltshire
- Regular dialogue with the Clinical Commissioning Group Governance Lead to raise any concerns about services and learn about the improvement actions being taken.



Our Activities - Responses from the system



Healthwatch Wiltshire has powers to:

- Recommend to the Care Quality Commission that it carries out a review or investigation
- Call on providers of services to provide information on request and to report on any failures to give that information

These are called 'responses from the system' and Healthwatch Wiltshire will report on them in future Annual Reports. During 2013/14, Healthwatch Wiltshire did not make any recommendations to the Care Quality Commission about carrying out investigations.

However, during the same period Healthwatch Wiltshire made several requests for information from commissioners and providers and the information was provided. Here are some examples of requests we have made for information:

- Provision of Parkinson Nurses for Wiltshire
- Access to primary care services
- Access to dental services
- Performance information about the non-emergency transport service



Our Activities - Advocacy



‘My advocate spoke for me when I lacked the confidence to do so.... Helped me feel more independent and speak up for myself’

A SWAN Advocacy service user

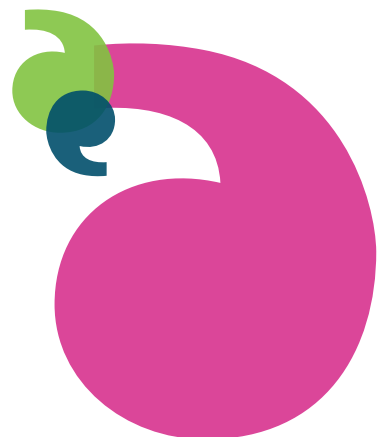
Healthwatch Wiltshire has a responsibility to ensure people have access to advocacy services

Healthwatch Wiltshire is contacted by people who have had a poor experience of health and social care services. In these cases we advise about how to make a complaint and, where you feel you may struggle to do so on your own, ‘signpost’ to SWAN Advocacy which is a local charity providing an independent advocacy service for NHS complaints.

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is a statutory service - a right for all NHS users. You can complain/appeal about your own treatment, or, with their permission, you can complain on behalf of relatives, friends or loved ones, and you can complain if they cannot give their permission, because they are too young, too ill or are deceased.

SWAN’s specially trained advocates provide a free, confidential and independent service and help service users to make a complaint or appeal to the appropriate NHS organisation.

Although Healthwatch Wiltshire does not take up individual complaints we are nonetheless interested to hear about people’s experiences and they help us to spot whether there is a trend with many people sharing the same or similar experiences. We also work with SWAN Advocacy to spot any trends. This helps to build our evidence base so that when we speak to commissioners and providers of services we can make a strong case on behalf of local people.





Our Activities - Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Wiltshire has taken up its place on the Health and Wellbeing Board

Like Healthwatch Wiltshire, the Health and Wellbeing Board was one year old at the end of March 2013. The Board is where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and to reduce health inequalities. Healthwatch Wiltshire has a place on the Board. We have taken up the opportunity to contribute to and influence the decision making process and ensure that the voice of the patient, service user and wider public is heard. We have:

- Challenged the authors of plans to write in plain English, making sure they are understandable, not too long, and accessible to the public
- Called for a commitment that consultation and engagement is carried out with the public on any plans for the future including the action (or operational) plans which follow. This engagement must provide information so people understand what is changing and the impact on individuals and local communities

- Requested active monitoring on large pieces of work so that progress can be checked and we can be sure that what was agreed is delivered.

The year saw some very significant decisions and pieces of work pass through the Board:

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Draft Dementia Strategy
- NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group's five year plan
- Better Care Plan
- The proposals to re-commission a range of children's services

Healthwatch Wiltshire will communicate with the wider public on the big issues which come to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The dates of the meetings are published on the Council website and they are held in public. You are very welcome to attend and listen to and be informed by the debate.

Healthwatch Wiltshire also has a place on the Wiltshire Council Health Select Committee. This committee is dedicated to scrutinising local NHS and social care policy, planning, and the impact and performance of services. We use our place to promote the voice of the patient, service user, and carer.



Financial information



Healthwatch Wiltshire CIC is social enterprise

In 2013/14 Healthwatch Wiltshire received all of its funding from the Government through Wiltshire Council.

The total core funding was £205,000.

How was this spent?

£68,211	Employee salaries and Director costs
£22,000	Children and young people's project
£15,694	Organisation set up costs including rent

£105,905	

Healthwatch Wiltshire did not spend 48% of its core funding during 2013/14 financial year because we needed to work through a set-up plan to recruit staff and expand in a careful and realistic way. Wiltshire Council has agreed Healthwatch Wiltshire can retain this funding to be spent in 2014/15 and 2015/16 to allow us to continue to build our capacity to deliver against our statutory activities.



Contact information

**Healthwatch Wiltshire
CIC is a community
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limited by guarantee**

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