

Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Update for the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 28th August 2014

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On July 3rd HOSC received a comprehensive report from Healthwatch Oxfordshire on the activities the organisation has undertaken to date. The new CEO, Rachel Coney, took up post on July 21st and this short report is to update HOSC on key actions and decisions taken by Healthwatch during her first month in post.

2 Governance

- 2.1 Healthwatch is grateful to Jean Nunn Price and Dermot Roaf for stepping into the Chair and Vice Chair roles on an interim basis in June of this year. The organisation is now actively seeking a new Chair and new Directors to bring its board up to full complement.
- 2.2 Plans are also being progressed to set up a wider reference group to strengthen the organisation's listening capability.

3 Project Fund

- 3.1 One of the mechanisms Healthwatch uses to enable the voices of the particular patient and service user groups to be heard is through its project fund. Small sums of money and expert advice are provided to groups to enable them to research and relay the experience of their members.
- 3.2 During the autumn, reports researched and written by the Asian Women's network and Oxford University Students will be published by Healthwatch. These will make recommendations to a variety of commissioners and providers, who are currently being given the opportunity to review drafts ahead of publication.
- 3.3 Grants have recently been awarded to Restore to undertake research into best practice in service user participation in mental health services and to the Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance to identify gaps and weaknesses in patient experience of neurological services.
- 3.4 Local health and social care organisations have responded well to these reports, and Healthwatch is now developing its internal mechanisms for tracking the commitments made by others to deliver change as a result of our project fund work, in order that those organisations can be held appropriately to account .

4 Healthwatch initiated research

- 4.1 Healthwatch initiated a research project into patients' experience of accessing GP services in the County. The pre-publication draft of this report will be with the relevant parties for review by early September, and it will be published approximately 4 weeks later.
- 4.2 At its August meeting, the Board agreed that the following areas should form the focus of Healthwatch initiated research over the next six months:
 - 4.2.1 Patient and carer experiences of the quality of the discharge process from acute and community hospitals in Oxfordshire.
 - 4.2.2 The degree to which patients and services users experience dignity in the care they receive in the County.
 - 4.2.3 The impact of the recent changes in prison healthcare commissioning and provision on prisoners' access to healthcare in Oxfordshire.
- 4.3 Where possible, this work should be conducted by volunteers trained under Healthwatch Enter and View powers to do qualitative research in care settings.
- 4.4 The next step is to scope and develop full project proposals for each of these areas and to agree with the relevant agencies and potential partners, exactly how and when this research will be conducted.

5 Raising awareness of Healthwatch Oxfordshire

- 5.1 Healthwatch needs local people to share their stories of health and social care with us. Over the autumn we will be seeking to increase the amount of information the public bring to us, and will be developing our internal systems tracking and analysing this information.
- 5.2 We will have a particular focus on rising awareness of what we do with children and young people, in order to ensure we hear their stories, as well as those of the adults in our communities.

6 Events coming up

- 6.1 Healthwatch is working with OCVA to stage a conference for voluntary organisations from across Oxfordshire. The event will take place on October 1st and it will:
 - 6.1.1 Showcase work already undertaken by Healthwatch in partnership with the voluntary sector.

- 6.1.2 Be a practical demonstration of how we can work together, as we will be actively seeking information from voluntary organisations to inform the CQC's planned inspection of Oxfordshire GP practices.
- 6.1.3 Seek the views of voluntary organisations on our future priorities.
- 6.2 On September 10th Healthwatch and the University of Oxford Health Experiences Institute are co-hosting a debate about the national proposals to opt patients into the care.data system, which will extract data from GP practice systems. This NHS England project, originally scheduled to launch earlier this year, has been officially paused while NHS England undertake a national listening exercise. Our debate will be chaired by Dame Fiona Caldicott and will give local people the chance to explore their concerns with two members of the national care.data advisory panel and a member of the Healthwatch England national committee. A film of the debate will be submitted to NHS England to inform their future decision making on this subject.