

1 Healthwatch England Healthwatch Network Awards 2018

Healthwatch Oxfordshire has won an award at the Healthwatch England national conference.

Celebrated every year, the Healthwatch Network Awards highlight the ways in which local Healthwatch organisations across the country have helped make people's views of health and social care services heard.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire was nominated for an award in the category 'Championing diversity and inclusion, Understanding the needs of a community that is seldom heard'. It won the 'Highly Commended'.

The nomination was for the video 'Patient Voices...Our Story', which Healthwatch Oxfordshire and local filmmaker Nicola Josse made with the Patient Participation Group of Luther Street Surgery, Oxford, and Oxford Health. This GP practice service the city's homeless population and the film highlighted how the patients themselves were getting involved to shape how services are run. Oli, Chair of the Luther Street PPG along with Rosalind Pearce, Executive Director of Healthwatch Oxfordshire presented the video at a workshop. The video was very well received and discussed widely at the workshop.

The film was made with a grant from NHS England's Celebrating Participation in Healthcare scheme.

Jane Mordue, Chair of Healthwatch England, said at the Awards Ceremony: "Last year, more than 341,000 people shared their views about where things could be improved in health and social care with the Healthwatch network.

"The Healthwatch Network Awards are a fantastic opportunity to celebrate this work, highlighting the difference local Healthwatch have made by using this wealth of intelligence to help decision makers target their efforts to make things better.

"This year we received some outstanding entries from the network with over 150 submissions. We were impressed by the quality and incredible range of work on show and they all highlight the real impact we can have when people's experiences are placed at the heart of the services they receive."

To watch the video view online at https://youtu.be/3ZLJ_G-3QMw or visit our web site www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

2 Reports published

Since we last reported to Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2018, Healthwatch Oxfordshire has published our annual report 2017/18 which can be found by following this link <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-reports/annual->

[reports/](#) . A summarised version is available here: <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-reports/healthwatch-oxfordshire-reports/> together with a review of our activity between April and end June 2018. We have published two reports on Enter & Views of care homes in the county. The following sections give more detail on our research and listening activities in Wantage, and around access to dentists in care homes and to NHS dentists in the county.

2.1 Dentistry

Healthwatch Oxfordshire has published two reports about access to NHS dentistry:

- a. 'Treatment only when needed: Dental services in Care Homes' was published in August 2018. The report details our findings of a survey carried out of all the care homes in Oxfordshire. One in five care homes responded and the main findings are that nearly half people living in the care homes did not access dentistry at all; there are significant gaps in provision; and that some care homes struggle to obtain dental services for their residents.
- b. 'Filling the Gaps - Access to NHS dentistry' was published in September. This research was prompted by what we heard in Bicester in October 2017. We decided to look more deeply into the issue and ask ourselves further questions:
 - What is the public's experience of using dentistry services?
 - Is access to NHS dentistry a problem in other areas of Oxfordshire?
 - What is working well?
 - Are there barriers to people accessing NHS dentists?
 - Are there areas for improvement that the dental surgeries and / or commissioners could address?

To find out the answers to these questions, between October 2017 and May 2018 we launched a county-wide project focusing on NHS dentistry. The main findings of the research fell into two categories - access to NHS dentists, and information about dentistry.

Both reports can be found here <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-reports/healthwatch-oxfordshire-reports/>

Healthwatch Oxfordshire invited key stakeholders to a workshop on 17th September to discuss our findings and begin to identify how they can be addressed. The main outcome was agreement by the attendees to work together to develop an assessment tool for use by care homes to identify and put in place dental needs of individual residents.

It is worth noting that NHS England commissioners for dental services did not attend the workshop but have expressed interest in working in the future with Healthwatch Oxfordshire and other stakeholders.

2.2 Wantage

The report on our focussed activity in Wantage in May this year has now been published together with the responses from Oxfordshire County Council and jointly from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-reports/healthwatch-oxfordshire-reports/> The report highlighted What we heard in five themes and made four recommendations. The themes were:

1. There is concern about insufficient provision at the Wantage Health Centre on Mably Way;
2. There is concern about the new houses being built without the additional resources;
3. Public transport has been reduced and no longer meets some residents' needs;
4. Residents would like to see the Community Hospital be reopened;
5. GP's don't always refer to CAMHS quickly enough and the waiting lists are long when they do.

Recommendations

1. Improved communication between Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the people of Wantage about the expansion of the Health Centre - what is the reality of the situation?
 - a. Healthwatch has asked Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group for the latest on the proposed developments and the response given on 3rd September 2018 was:
2. Open dialogue between Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and the community about the closure of the Community Hospital.
3. Increased mental health awareness training for GPs.
4. When planning local health, social care services, and additional housing, authorities should consider the travel and transport needs of the local community including access to public transport and supporting local community transport schemes.

3 Health Overview Scrutiny Committee

3.1 Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MSK/Healthshare Task and Finish Group

Healthwatch Oxfordshire reported to the Task & Finish Group, presenting a report that collated patient stories and information gathered from patients from our Feedback Centre and telephone calls. The stories we heard were so disturbing that we decided to publish our report without further delay.

In total we have heard from more than 50 patients, all often describing a dire patient experience, summarised as follows:

- confusing and poor communication between Healthshare and the patient;
- often long and complicated patient experience through from GP referrals, Healthshare, to GP referral, to Healthshare, to hospital, back to Healthshare, referrals...and so it goes on;
- people not being able to contact Healthshare by telephone despite frequent, and often over a long period of time, making calls; emails not being answered;
- patients not knowing where to go to make a complaint;
- long waiting times for appointments.

The report outlined our key concerns and recommendations as follows:

1. Constant problems with accessing Healthshare telephone number
 - a. Increase capacity at Healthshare to answer calls within agreed time
 - b. Do not let people hang on waiting for reply then cut them off!
 - c. Offer a call back system
2. Patients not receiving written confirmation of appointment time and location
 - a. Automated letter sent within 24 hours of when appointment made with contact number and email for cancellation / further information
 - b. Use mobile telephone text for confirmation and reminder
3. Patients are being asked to travel substantial distances to appointments
 - a. Review of locations of service considering where people live who are being referred
 - b. First choice appointment offered at closest location - ask the patient as they will know travel / public transport needs
4. Information about Healthshare not given to patients on referral - confusion arises about whether this is an NHS service or not and how to contact them prior to receiving 'welcome' letter
 - a. General Healthshare leaflet given to all patients referred by GP to include contact number, email, commitment to contact within set time
5. The Healthshare complaints procedure, including how to complain, should be accessible on the web site and in paper form. Patients who file a complaint should then be responded to stating whether Healthshare are treating this as a formal complaint.
 - a. Healthshare must be required to report to OCCG on complaints received.
 - b. Healthshare should place the Healthwatch Oxfordshire widget on their web site, thus giving patients a route to an independent voice.
6. 'How are we doing?' is **not** part of a complaints procedure.
 - a. Healthshare should be required to report to OCCG analysis of 'How are we doing?' not just on the patient survey.
7. Patient satisfaction survey does not ask any questions about the referral process or administration.

- a. Healthshare Patient satisfaction survey must include questions about the referral process, and communication between Healthshare and patient.

Prior to publication the report was sent to Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Committee and Healthshare Ltd for comment and response. All the recommendations were accepted or already being acted upon. Three recommendations are to be implemented by 19th October. These are:

- Formal complaints procedure and information to be clearly available on the Healthshare website
- Healthshare to include in its monitoring information what they have heard from their 'Tell us how we are doing' form
- The inclusion of questions about the referral process to be included in the Patient Satisfaction survey questionnaire.

Our report and the responses from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthshare Ltd can be found here <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/our-reports/>

The promised improvements in the telephone service, and communications between the service and patients will be monitored closely by Healthwatch Oxfordshire.

4 Healthwatch Oxfordshire activities

4.1 Community Support Services and voluntary sector day centres review

One of Healthwatch Oxfordshire's main projects to date this year is a review of people's experiences of going through the service changes to community support services - day centre support - across the county. In October 2017 major changes were made to access and operational aspects of day centre provision, including eligibility, transport and a single service for elderly and people with learning disability.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire staff are visiting the eight County Council Community Support Service centres and six voluntary sector day centres talking to service users and staff to understand their experiences through this change. We have surveyed 800 people who used day centres prior to the changes in 2017. This project has taken over nine months to design - working with the County Council and Age UK Oxon - and is now in full flow.

A final report will be published in time to present to Joint Oxfordshire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) in February 2019.

4.2 Abingdon pop-up shop

For the first time ever Healthwatch Oxfordshire opened a pop-up shop in a local town. Over four days at the end of August we located two members of staff and a volunteer in Abingdon town centre. Promoting Healthwatch Oxfordshire and encouraging members of the public to come and tell us their experiences of health and social care services. We contacted more than 100 people and learned some good lessons from this approach that will be applied when the team is next out and about in the community.

4.3 Patient Participation Group (PPG) support

July to end of September, we have supported 10 locality forum meetings and three events. With staff changes in mid-September the whole team at Healthwatch has continued to support the forum.

4.4 Project fund - voluntary

All five approved projects being led by community-based organisations are progressing well. Veronica Berry, the Healthwatch Oxfordshire Project lead is giving support, advice, and keeps regular contact to ensure that the projects are completed on time. The first two reports will be available from the end of October, with all reports planned to be published by the end of November.

4.5 Enter & View¹

Enter & View reports on Beech Court Nursing Home and Ramping Cat Care Home are published on our website and available [here](#).

4.6. Hospital Signage

After a lengthy campaign by Healthwatch, improved signage has been installed at the JR, providing designated parking spaces for hospital transport vehicles, and better public information about the services available from the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

5 External meetings attended since July 2018

The following list includes meeting attended by the Executive Director, Chair, Board members representing Healthwatch Oxfordshire, and members of the Healthwatch Oxfordshire staff team. The list does not include groups and organisations contacted as part of our listening / outreach activity.

¹ Enter & View - The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

- West Oxfordshire District Council - Cllr Baker, Cllr MacRae, Health and Wellbeing
- Locality Forum Chairs & Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (in attendance)
- Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 20th September
- Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Task and Finish Group - MSK/Healthshare
- Health & Wellbeing Board - workshop
- Health Improvement Board - Healthwatch Ambassador
- The Children's Trust - Healthwatch Ambassadors
- Oxfordshire Adults Safeguarding Board 26th September full Board meeting & joint meeting with Oxfordshire Children's Safe Guarding Board
- Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group - Primary Care Commissioning Committee (non-voting member)
- Cherwell Partnership Network (member)
- Teleconference with Care Quality Commission managers
- Health Inequalities Commission - Implementation Group

6 Media

Since July 2018 Healthwatch Oxfordshire has received 32 requests for comments from the media; we have had 21 individual items of media coverage including radio, television and local newspapers. Stories that have received media coverage include:

- Dentistry in Care Homes
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Board meeting in public in Wantage
- Potential closure of Cogges GP surgery in Witney
- A&E expansion at John Radcliffe Hospital
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Annual Report
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire pop-up shop in Abingdon
- 10am-10pm hospital visiting hours.