



Healthwatch Somerset

Annual Report 2014/15





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Morgan Daly,
General Manager

It is our great pleasure to present the 2014/15 Healthwatch Somerset annual report.

Welcome to our Annual Report. My name is Morgan, and I am the manager of Healthwatch Somerset. I would like to begin by thanking our volunteers for the time, knowledge, skills and effort that they contribute to the work of Healthwatch. We genuinely could not exist without local people who bring such an exciting range of views and backgrounds to this project! This year our volunteers have helped local care homes to improve the service they provide; they have represented Healthwatch at important local meetings and conferences, and they have made sure that the views of local people have been used to help local health and social care services to learn and improve.

Cliff Puddy was Chair of Healthwatch during 2014/15, and continues to play a key role on our Executive Group and as part of our Enter and View team. As is the case with all of our volunteers, Cliff has excellent skills and experience which he uses to improve how local services work, via his voluntary role with Healthwatch.

We would both like to commend this report, and to thank you for taking the time to read it. Please remember that Healthwatch relies on people local to

Somerset in order to be successful - and this could also include you!

This year has seen an incredible increase in the number of issues and concerns shared with Healthwatch Somerset by the public. This is partly due to our media efforts and awareness raising, but also reflects the diverse ways that we have gone about speaking to local people.

Healthwatch Somerset staff have recognised that local people need to be given the chance to speak about things that matter to them, at a time that suits their schedules, and in a format that meets their needs. This year we have implemented this learning, and the result is an increase in feedback of over 600%.

We are proud to report that, during 2014/15, Healthwatch has spoken to groups of people who are often seldom-heard. We have taken the time to visit people who have had a stroke. We have worked hard to explore the experiences of adults and children from Eastern European backgrounds, many of whom do not use English as a first language. We have empowered volunteers who have been service users in the past to make improvements to the services of today.

Healthwatch Somerset provides information and signposting to the public through the Well Aware directory of groups and organisations. This has meant that whenever we have heard the voices and experiences of local people, we have been able to offer them the chance to find out more about local support services - and by doing so, we empower local people to improve their health and well being.

Well Aware is an online database offering health and wellbeing services and



importantly, it also features a freephone telephone number for those who do not, or cannot, access the internet. This is especially important in Somerset, a county with a significant number of people who are not trained - or sometimes not able - to use computers and the internet.

Well Aware is accessible - it provides access to specialist information for those with learning difficulties via an easy-English function and contains low vision resources. This excellent signposting tool employs Google translate and browse aloud functions, for those who do not use English as a first language and for those who are visually impaired.

SEAP (Support, Empower, Advocate and Promote) was funded by the Local Authority in 2014/15 to provide the NHS complaints function. SEAP works in partnership with Healthwatch and has a place on the

Healthwatch Executive Group. Healthwatch has worked hard to create positive relationships with providers and commissioners in 2014/15, and will work to ensure that the large amount of user feedback that we generated continues to be used to make a difference to the lives of residents during commissioning and planning in 2015/16, and beyond.



Healthwatch Somerset Vision

Communities and people in all their diversity in Somerset can maintain their health and wellbeing, and care for themselves and each other.

Healthwatch Somerset Mission

Healthwatch Somerset involves local people to help improve health and wellbeing services.

Everything Healthwatch says and does is informed by the connections to local people and Healthwatch expertise is grounded in their experience. Healthwatch is uniquely placed as a network, there is a Healthwatch in every local authority area in England. Healthwatch organisations have come together regionally in the South West to share what has been heard and this gives Healthwatch Somerset the opportunity to work closely with other Healthwatch. Healthwatch replies to the NHS Trust quality account (QA) and working co-operatively with other Healthwatch enables us to share some of the work. Some trusts cover several Healthwatch areas and Healthwatch Somerset is working with Healthwatch Wiltshire to reply to the Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (QA).

As a statutory watchdog the Healthwatch role is to ensure that local health and social care services, and local decision makers, put experiences of people at the heart of their care. Each quarter Healthwatch collects and collates children, young people and adults' views of their health and social care services and publishes these to service providers, commissioners at the Local Authority, CCG, NHS England, the regulators the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch England. The issues are viewed at the Healthwatch Executive group and decisions are taken to take up themes from the analysis to undertake more research into the areas of concern.

Healthwatch will:

- be representative of all communities and empower people to have their voices heard
- provide information and signposting about health and social care services
- ensure local people who wish to complain are signposted to SWAN Advocacy to provide them with the support to enable them to undertake this
- be independent, respected, accountable and accessible
- be the voice of people with health vulnerabilities



Healthwatch Somerset Strategic priorities



Using the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the information heard direct from local people, the 2014/15 priorities were to:

- promote and support the involvement of local children, young people and adults in the commissioning of local health and care services which include adult and children's community health services, Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT), patient transport services and home care services
- empower local children and young people to inform commissioning processes
- promote and support innovations such as the 'Symphony' project currently being delivered at Yeovil Hospital
- hear from patients, service users and carers about their experience of their long term conditions and the introduction of personal health budgets to identify and challenges faced and feedback to commissioners
- champion the voice of older people and people with dementia through enter and view visits to residential care facilities and making reports and recommendations about how the care services could or ought to be improved
- work with the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that the views of stroke patients, their families and carers are used to improve stroke support
- make recommendations to service providers, commissioners, CQC and Healthwatch England
- provide Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively.

Work Plan 2014/5 **healthwatch** Somerset



Engaging with people who use health and social care services



Understanding people's experiences

Healthwatch Somerset provides local people with a range of ways to share their experiences of health and social care services. People can share their feedback with Healthwatch via Tell Us Your Story leaflets, the Healthwatch Somerset website, social media, telephone, text and freepost address.

Healthwatch has an active twitter account with 1,500 followers as well as a Facebook account that is used to share local health and social care information to residents of Somerset and ask for their views.

Healthwatch Somerset produces monthly e-bulletins that are shared through email, the website and social media.

Healthwatch Somerset is advertised on three large signboards in Yeovil Hospital together with our "Tell us your story" leaflets and the Hospital information map.

Healthwatch Somerset is also present in Taunton Hospital, Bridgwater Community Hospital and Minehead Community Hospital via an advert that is on display on their hospital screens.

Healthwatch Somerset has spoken frequently on BBC Radio Somerset this year as well as 10 Radio station to share reports and inform people of how to get involved.

In addition to this, we recognise that some people prefer to speak in a more personal, face-to-face way. As such, we have provided a series of surveys for adults and children and young people, which have proven popular. These surveys have been formatted to be suitable for different communities of people. For example, being translated into several European languages, or being made young-people friendly.

People have told Healthwatch that they are sometimes reluctant to share feedback with their service provider for fear of repercussions. The option to share feedback with Healthwatch anonymously allows everyone to

have their voice heard and access support. However, in instances where individuals are happy to speak to their service provider, then we encourage them to do so.

To increase public awareness of Healthwatch and obtain information about local people's needs and experiences of health and social care services, Healthwatch Somerset has engaged with community groups and the general public, using a variety of approaches and being flexible to meet their communication needs. The Healthwatch Somerset team has also attended public events and visited community groups to speak to people who are seldom heard, or potentially vulnerable.

- Healthwatch visited community hospitals across Somerset, to ensure that the views of people from different geographical areas were heard. We worked with the local hospitals to ensure that the feedback provided (which was generally very positive) was used to inform how services are delivered. We also ensured that Somerset Partnership was made aware of how local people felt about their community hospital. A total of 13 visits to Community Hospitals were made between mid-September and the beginning of November. The team spoke to 315 people, gave out over 400 leaflets and recorded a total of 126 issues during these visits.





Engaging with people who use health and social care services

- We have had a series of in-depth consultation events with people who have had a brain injury, to explore their needs particularly around discharge from hospital. Several of those we have spoken to would be considered seldom-heard or otherwise vulnerable, particularly as their experiences often relate to treatment immediately following the acquisition of a brain injury.
 - Local and national research shows that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (LGBTQ) people have higher levels of anxiety and depression. Healthwatch Somerset has worked with The Diversity Trust to develop and launch an LGBTQ Community Health Survey for Somerset. Berkeley Wilde, Director of the Diversity Trust, said: “We are really pleased to be launching this survey. We have carried out similar health needs assessments in other local areas and we are mapping the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ people across the area. We plan to use the results to influence public policy and decision-making. We have found ...that LGBTQ often experience barriers when accessing services even fearing discrimination. We want to gather evidence to make a real difference to the lives of LGBTQ people in our local communities.”
 - Young Healthwatch in Somerset has conducted a large project at Yeovil College, which has given young people the chance to give their views on awareness of mental health support services. This report was presented to Healthwatch by the young people, and is being used to inform future commissioning by Somerset Partnership.
 - During our consultation work with people of European heritage, Healthwatch conducted a survey regarding access to services outside of a patient’s local area. Somerset is a very large county and exercising choice regarding services, or accessing specialist services, often results in travel. Several Somerset residents spoke to us about living or working in Somerset, but accessing services in other counties (and in one instance, in another country).
 - Healthwatch Somerset has consulted with older people and carried out Enter and View visits in care homes which care for clients with dementia.
- Since January 2015, the Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group has drawn project proposals from the feedback from the public and volunteers. Each project is also designed to link with work being carried out by commissioning groups in Somerset, to maximise the impact our findings will have. The Healthwatch team prioritises engagement towards seldom heard, vulnerable or disadvantaged groups to ensure that their voices are heard. An example of this process can be seen in our work conducted with stroke clubs, which included face-to-face specialist engagement work, conducted by a volunteer who has experience of communicating with those living with the effects of a stroke.
- This approach enabled the volunteer to take the time to hear the opinions of people with communication difficulties, as well as the carers and families of those using the stroke clubs. A number of those consulted are likely to be seldom-heard, vulnerable or disadvantaged.
- The report produced following this work has been provided to the provider of this service, with recommendations for improvement of the service based upon the experiences of those who have used it.



Healthwatch Somerset has twelve authorised Enter and View representatives. An Enter and View Planning Group was established in spring 2014 and since then there have been eight Enter and View visits to care homes across Somerset, these were:

May 14: Headway
October 14: The Manor
October 14: Croft House
Nov 14: West Abbey Care Centre
Nov 14: Sydenham House
Jan 15: Fletcher House, Wells.
Feb 15: Rosetti House, Frome.
March 15: The Firs, Taunton

The purpose of the Enter and View visits is to identify good practice that can be celebrated and shared with others, and to identify any issues which concern service users, their relatives or the Enter and View representatives.

This Enter and View work is part of an on-going programme being implemented by Healthwatch Somerset to understand the quality of residents' experience within local care homes, particularly where residents have, or could be expected to have, dementia.

Care homes are identified for Enter and View by:

- Concerns around safeguarding, Somerset Council invitation to visit independently and report on a care home
- Intelligence provided by the Care Quality Commission
- Making sure that homes from various areas of Somerset are visited
- Identifying concerns that have been raised about a care home through Healthwatch Somerset
- Placing an emphasis on the care of elderly people with dementia
- Managing a balance of visits to the small family owned care homes, or local/regional providers and large (national) providers of care for elderly people.

The benefits of our Enter and View programme are often significant for those living within these homes, as we are usually able to recommend improvements or changes that have a significant positive impact on the wellbeing of residents. One example of this is the fact that we have been able to highlight to several care homes the importance of thinking about whether a hearing loop system is present and well-positioned. Healthwatch Somerset has been able to link homes up with a charity which can offer this expert support. All enter and view reports are sent to the CQC, Healthwatch England and local authority commissioners. The Health and Wellbeing Board in Somerset has also been made aware regularly of this work.

To date, we have identified improvements for care homes, and shared good practice, but have not had to take any further action beyond this (for example, safeguarding escalations).



Providing information and signposting for people who use health and social care services

The Care Forum provides an information and signposting service, Well Aware, accessible online (www.wellaware.org.uk) and by freephone. An online database of health and wellbeing services, support organisations, activities and groups provides up-to-date information on what is available locally, regionally and nationally. There is specialist information on learning difficulties, low vision resources, mental health, employment and men's health and wellbeing issues. Easy English, Google translate, and Browse Aloud are some of the accessibility features and functions.

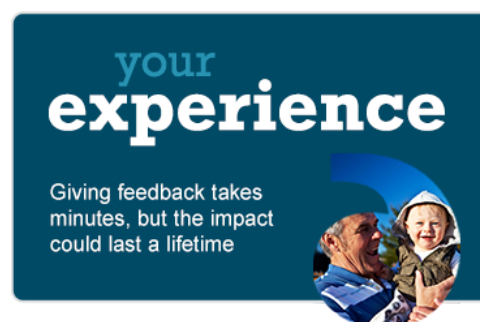
Well Aware covers the Avon and Somerset area, thus providing information about services in neighbouring areas which may be of relevance to Somerset residents. 257,038 people accessed the Well Aware website between April 2014 and March 2015 across this wider area. Well Aware also has a free phone telephone service which is used by people who do not have access to the internet.

The top five areas searched for were:

- mental health
- dementia
- befriending
- gardening
- counselling

In February 2015 a new website was launched for Healthwatch Somerset with an interactive feedback centre. Every statutory health and social care service is listed on the website and people visiting the site can review services and leave feedback on their experiences. The website links to the CQC website displaying recent CQC inspection reports.

This will help people to make informed choices about services and provides another opportunity for people to leave feedback on services using the same indicators as the Friends and Family Test.



Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people



Healthwatch Somerset produces a quarterly report detailing the issues and concerns heard from local people. This report is shared with Healthwatch England, the Care Quality Commission, NHS England and the Quality Surveillance Group, CCG and the Commissioning Support Unit, NHS Trusts and service providers including the Patient Advice and Liaison Service and support agencies.

Number of issues heard 2014/15: 611

Number of issues heard 2013/14: 83

(Increase: 641%)

Leading themes 2014/5 (these are themes that were recurrent, or emerged from more than one quarter's feedback data):

1. Clients and home care staff are concerned about the quality of home care services. Visits are often reportedly too short, and sometimes do not meet the needs of the client.
2. People across Somerset are finding it difficult to make timely appointments to see their GP. Local people often experience long waits before they can see a GP.
3. Discharge from hospital is often not managed or planned well enough. Healthwatch Somerset has heard that there needs to be better support for the patient, their family and carers; better communication between secondary and primary care, and improved signposting to voluntary and community sector services for continued support following discharge.

Healthwatch has produced several reports and recommendations this year to effect change, all our reports are shared with Healthwatch England including a combined response to the Healthwatch England national initiative on unsafe discharge in August 2014.

Healthwatch Somerset contributed to Healthwatch England's discharge inquiry by hosting a series of in-depth focus groups with groups and communities including people who have had a brain injury. The findings in Healthwatch Somerset's Discharge Report were shared with local commissioners.

Healthwatch regularly provides intelligence to local providers, which is used to inform decision-making. A great example of this can be seen in the way in which the Somerset Partnership monitors feedback about their services, and respond to Healthwatch to ensure patients are kept up to date on how they are considering feedback and, in some cases, acting upon it.

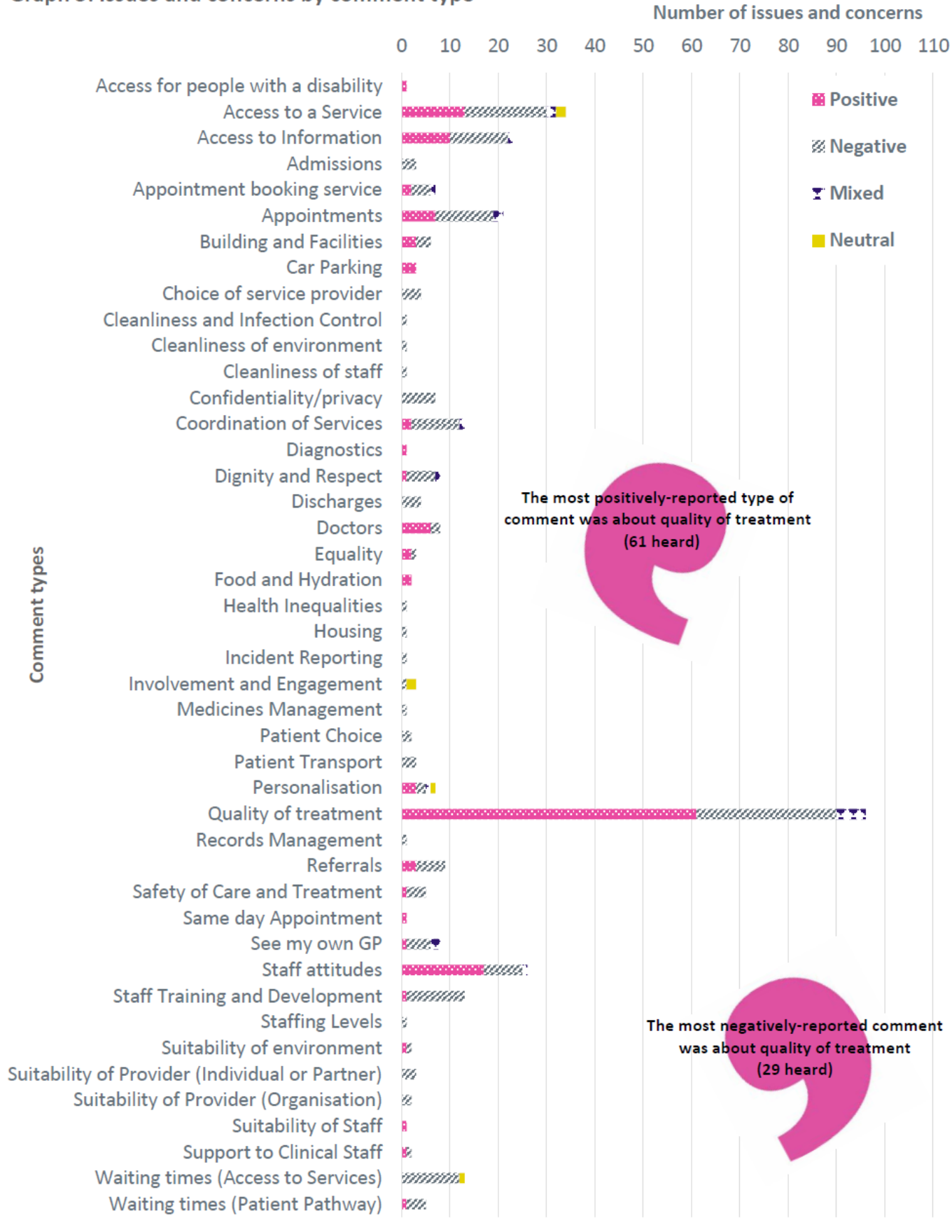
'We do need to make sure that we have enough trained nurses for our beds, and this has meant closing beds in some places while we recruit more staff. We are pleased to say that we have recently recruited extra nurses which has meant we are able to re-open some of these beds.' Lucy Nicholls, Somerset Partnership.

Producing reports and recommendations to effect change



The graph below displays the issues and concerns that Healthwatch Somerset heard in Quarter four, between January and March 2015, which is typical of the quarterly reports that Healthwatch disseminates to commissioners and service providers.

Graph 3: Issues and concerns by comment type





Putting local people at the heart of improving services

Healthwatch provides volunteer representatives to take part in a number of service improvement programmes. Volunteers provided feedback for the Quality Accounts of several local providers this year, ensuring that local voices have influenced this piece of work.

Healthwatch includes the perspective of people who use services through volunteer representatives at patient experience groups and trust boards across the health and social care sector. Representatives report back informing Healthwatch of what is current and important enabling staff to identify themes and initiate enquiries.

We have set up a growing network of networks, which allows other local networks of voluntary and community services to have their voice heard through their local Healthwatch. Healthwatch has empowered local volunteers to take part in an extensive programme of PLACE (Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment) visits, which have led to a number of improvements being made to local services. One example of this was around the use of signage in a mental health facility, which a volunteer with personal experience of using similar health services flagged up as inappropriate and likely to cause conflict with clients.

Working with others to improve local services

Healthwatch Somerset worked in partnership with local agencies to support care homes to make improvements for residents. For example, we worked with Action on Hearing Loss within four local homes to examine whether more could be done to cater for the needs of hearing impaired residents; Healthwatch linked up with local transport schemes to explore whether some care home residents could be supported to be more active and mobile; and we worked with a local scheme which provides grants to enable older people to access computer training and equipment within two local care homes.

Healthwatch Somerset holds quarterly meetings with the Care Quality Commission to share information about work plans. Where possible, Healthwatch Somerset and the CQC work together to gather feedback about services and share our reports.



Young Healthwatch:

Somerset Rural Youth Project



Somerset Rural Youth Project (SRYP) has been working in partnership with The Care Forum since April 2013 on the Healthwatch project. Over this time, delivery has taken various forms, including through ongoing focus groups, one-off surveys and health-based social action projects.

General Promotion

SRYP youth workers have delivered a range of promotional events to ensure young people were aware of Young Healthwatch. Visits to events/organisations have included:

- **Compass Disability Day**
- **Somerset County Council (SCC) Children in Care teams**
- **getset team meetings**
- **Strategic Clinical Network, Transition to Adulthood steering group**
- **Young Parents groups**
- **Young carers groups**
- **2BU Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) group**
- **Young farmers groups**
- **A range of youth clubs, both led by SRYP and external**
- **Patient Participation Group training days**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Participation Strategy groups.**
- **Publicity about young Healthwatch has been shared at college freshers' fairs each year. SRYP is booked in again to attend in 2015.**

This general promotion has taken a range of forms. Events have been used to complete surveys with young people, to give out Healthwatch and other health-based leaflets and to signpost young people to health based services as and when required.

Focused work with young people

Over the project so far, a range of groups have developed over short-medium term periods, to enable the development of Healthwatch. Initially, a group was held in each of Somerset's districts, based in Taunton, Yeovil, Bridgwater and Shepton Mallet. These four groups worked on a range of issues, including visiting Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to help them make their premises more young people friendly, supported the training of pharmacists, and visits to a range of clinics to help them achieve the Young People Friendly kite mark. This involvement was done alongside a range of other training for young people, including training as young leaders, and as part of Duke of Edinburgh group. The Taunton group also functioned as a support group for young people with mental health issues. Whilst this model of having groups in each district worked relatively well, it was also a very labour intensive way of working with young people, and as each group reached the end, it became difficult to recruit new members to these groups.

In year two, the project tried a different approach, focusing on one core group, based in Yeovil as an ongoing project. The Yeovil group has worked really hard at exploring young people's issues, and wrote a report themselves on their findings. This consultation engaged with 60 young people and identified a range of feelings towards health services. These were largely positive, but did identify some areas for improvement (including around communication between health professionals and young people).



Short term Young Healthwatch engagement

Sustaining long-term engagement with Young Healthwatch has proved challenging for SRYP, due to the level of engagement that is needed and the amount of time that is required. As such, SRYP has also engaged with young people in a range of short-term, health based social action projects. In particular, National Citizen Service (NCS) has been at the forefront of this, and the following projects give an indication of the type of work that has gone on.

Project ‘Journey’ wanted to give something to young people and teenagers who are being treated at the Bristol Royal Infirmary in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust. On one of their facebook posts they wrote:

“We are Journey, a group of Teenagers who are fundraising for the Teenage Cancer Trust, as volunteers, and going to Bristol Hospital with entertaining activities such as Karaoke nights or Onesie parties with the Teenagers and Children. The idea for the project was based around one of our own members, who last year battled Cancer and beat it back, and is now recovering well.”

Similarly, ‘Through Their Eyes’ who wanted to raise awareness of young people and mental health:

“We are Through Their Eyes and we are a group of 16 and 17 year-olds who want to make a difference. We are doing flash mobs in Clarks Village, Glastonbury and Wells to raise awareness and lift stigma around mental health in youths. We have chosen to raise awareness for mental health as it is such a large issue. 1 in 5 people aged between 5 and 16 are affected by mental health disorders. This means that you will almost certainly know someone who has mental health issues and as a group we most definitely do.”

Both teams have successfully raised monies for their chosen project (Through Their Eyes: £216.86 and Journey: £1259.46).

Through NCS and SRYP’s network of youth clubs and projects, this short-term approach to engagement will continue to be used to engage young people practically in health based activities.



“Taking part in this report has given me a valuable insight into mental health and I will continue to research and increase my knowledge of mental health issues. Volunteering with Healthwatch has been an interesting and inspiring experience which I would recommend to anyone.”
Georgie Dexter, Volunteer



How we have made a difference to local health:

People with a brain injury

Healthwatch Somerset has been working closely with Headway Somerset during the past year. At Headway's request a small team of Healthwatch staff and volunteers visited Headway's three centres in April 2014 and met with service users to hear about their experiences of the Support Service that Headway provides. Feedback from this activity helped Headway to transfer best practice across its three centres and make sure that it is providing a high quality service for all its service users throughout the county.

The Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group decided that people living with the effects of a brain injury were likely to be seldom-heard, and therefore a priority for Healthwatch engagement work. The Special Inquiry into hospital discharge also identified a worrying trend of poor support, and several accounts of avoidable readmission to hospital, from those who had recently acquired a brain injury.

We identified that service users valued attending Headway centres, appreciating a space where they felt accepted, understood, supported and valued. As such, we focused our engagement in the form of focus groups and informal group discussions to meet the preferences of respondents. We also recognised that one-to-one support on offer at Headway would allow some respondents to take part who might otherwise have felt marginalised.

Healthwatch Somerset has conducted a feedback event to launch the findings of this work. The event was attended by representatives from the local Clinical Commissioning Group, Somerset Partnership and the Local Authority.

How has this helped improve people's experiences?

- People with a brain injury who attend hospital are more aware of their rights, and have been supported to understand what constitutes good quality care.
- Local providers have been asked to provide an update in 2015/16 regarding how they will implement improvements based upon this research.
- The launch event was widely publicised, including via local media.
- We have produced a series of video clips, illustrating what has been achieved, and outlining recommendations for improving local services.





Case Study One

How we have made a difference to local health - people who do not speak English as a first language

Healthwatch Somerset has been working closely with Midwest European Communities Association (MECA) to ensure that the experiences of people who do not speak English as a first language are heard and used to improve local services. A series of surveys have been provided to MECA, and translated into a number of European languages. Healthwatch asked about GP services, accessing support services for children, and accessing services across boundaries within Somerset, but also across the wider region.

Intelligence from this work is ensuring that local commissioning and monitoring processes are informed by the opinions of people who would otherwise have gone unheard.

The Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group works to ensure that Healthwatch actively engages with groups of people who exhibit one or more characteristics which are protected under the Equality Act 2010. As such, the needs of people of European (but non-British and Irish) background were identified as being a priority.

The views of individuals gathered during this work enabled Healthwatch to fulfil our aim of supporting people with a variety of cultural backgrounds, as well as helping us to ensure that we hear the voices of those who are seldom-heard or marginalised from health and social care decision-making. In addition, some of those we spoke to had recently arrived in the area and so valued the signposting and support which we could offer to them.





Healthwatch and MECA working together

Finally, it was identified that many of the families we spoke to had one or more young children, which was of specific interest to Healthwatch due to our interest in hearing about the experiences of people from a range of age groups, and from women and men with recent experiences of maternity and or paternity support.

Healthwatch received dozens of surveys containing feedback from men, women and children and young people. We made good use of our community pot to support MECA to engage with their clients on our behalf. This empowered us to reach people who do not use English as a first language, and who might otherwise have been unable to communicate as effectively with us.

Healthwatch Somerset has agreed with the Local Authority to work together in 2015 to identify how to make best use of feedback around support services for children. Similarly, we have agreed with local NHS commissioners to examine implications for GP services and other services which draw patients across boundaries.

How did we tell the community about the changes?

- Healthwatch Somerset e-bulletins have contained updates on this work
- Healthwatch Somerset has conducted a media campaign in local newspapers, on local radio and via MECA to publicise this work
- at the end of 2014/15, Healthwatch conducted a launch event in Taunton and launched a summary report which also outlined this work.





Volunteers are key to all aspects of what we do in Healthwatch Somerset. During 2014/15 the volunteer team was delighted to have increased significantly the cohort to 30 volunteers active in one or more of the three roles.

- 25 Champions
- 12 Representatives
- 13 Enter & View Authorised volunteers

Many different approaches to recruitment were tried throughout the year and a review concluded that most potential volunteers were found through face-to-face contact. Champions have represented their community/ constituent group so that Healthwatch Somerset can reflect a wide range of views.

Representatives have facilitated a two way flow of communication between boards and service deliverers including the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board. Representatives have also contributed to community engagement work by attending presentations and stands in order to promote Healthwatch Somerset, volunteering opportunities, Well Aware and to collect experiences of health and social care services from the public.

The enter and view team has been focusing on care homes, particularly those with an element of dementia care. All reports have been published on the website when finalised. Enter and view volunteers have also taken part in Patient Lead Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) in local hospitals.

Seven volunteers have served on our Executive Group which provides governance and leadership on the annual work plan, priorities etc. Executive Group meetings have been held monthly across Somerset to encourage public participation.

Volunteers have played a big part in promoting Healthwatch Somerset. Six volunteers shared their experiences about why they became involved, what they hoped to achieve and what they have taken from their participation in Healthwatch Somerset. These profiles, which highlighted what a diverse and active bunch our volunteers are, featured in a number of local newspapers. One volunteer undertook a 30 minute live interview on the BBC's Radio Somerset.

During the year the volunteer team has provided a rolling core programme of role specific training including equalities and safeguarding training. As well as this Healthwatch Somerset has also offered a range of additional training and awareness raising sessions to enhance skills and build confidence, such as carers awareness.

Quarterly volunteer peer support meetings across the county have been well attended and contributed to by volunteers. Some volunteers attended The Care Forum's staff, volunteer and trustee workshop on volunteering and a wealth of valuable contributions were made which will inform strategy and procedures going forward.

The screenshot shows the Bridgwater Mercury website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'NEWS', 'SPORT', 'POST YOUR EVENT', 'FAMILY', 'WHAT'S ON', 'JOBS', 'PROPERTY', 'ANNOUNCEMENTS', 'CARS', and 'LOCAL INFO'. Below this is a featured article titled 'Healthwatch Somerset chairman tells people who have had a stroke to get a voice'. The article includes a photo of Cliff Puddy, the chairman, and text stating that he plans to visit all 12 stroke clubs in the county to help members make their voices heard. To the right of the article is a sidebar with social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Email) and a 'Send us your news, pictures and videos' button. Below the article is a 'MOST READ STORIES' section with a list of local news items.



Healthwatch Somerset volunteer satisfaction survey

“I joined Healthwatch to help people to voice their views”.

“Varied range of volunteering opportunities to meet most needs.”

“Meeting new people and trying to make a difference in the community.”

A selection of Healthwatch staff and volunteers





Plans for the future

The Healthwatch issues and concerns report 2014/15 identified three major themes arising from the feedback of Somerset residents.

Home care provision made up one of these themes. Comments particularly identified and discussed the challenges of providing home care across a large geographical area, and to urban and rural areas within the county.

Comments were received from a wide cross section of society, including clients, staff who deliver home care and various other professionals who support clients who receive home care.

In light of the strength of the theme which emerged from Healthwatch data, the Healthwatch Executive Group recommended a piece of work to consult further with clients, carers and staff via a series of surveys, composed in partnership with the Local Authority.

Healthwatch is working with the Local Authority to conduct a survey with the clients who receive home care, their families and unpaid carers, and with staff who deliver home care, to identify how this service could work better in the future.

Healthwatch has also agreed in principle to survey local people's priorities regarding GP services. This is as a response to an emerging concern regarding the capacity of local GP practices to recruit staff to serve the needs of the people of Somerset in the future.

Finally, Healthwatch is recruiting a large cohort of young volunteers, to enable us to inform and support the commissioning and monitoring of children's services during 2015/16 and beyond. This is particularly relevant in light of challenges facing children's services, which were rated 'inadequate' in a recent Ofsted report.



Our Governance and decision making

Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group

The Healthwatch Executive group is responsible for the strategic direction, operational priorities and planning for Healthwatch Somerset. Its role is to:

- identify and agree project proposals;
- identify areas that require further research and/or information and will set up sub groups to undertake the work, or use the Community Pot budget to task a voluntary sector group to undertake the work;
- agree the priorities of communicating to the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- sign off the annual report to Healthwatch England.

The Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group has been set up to include volunteers to lead on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. There is also a Health and Wellbeing Board Representative and an Enter and View lead.

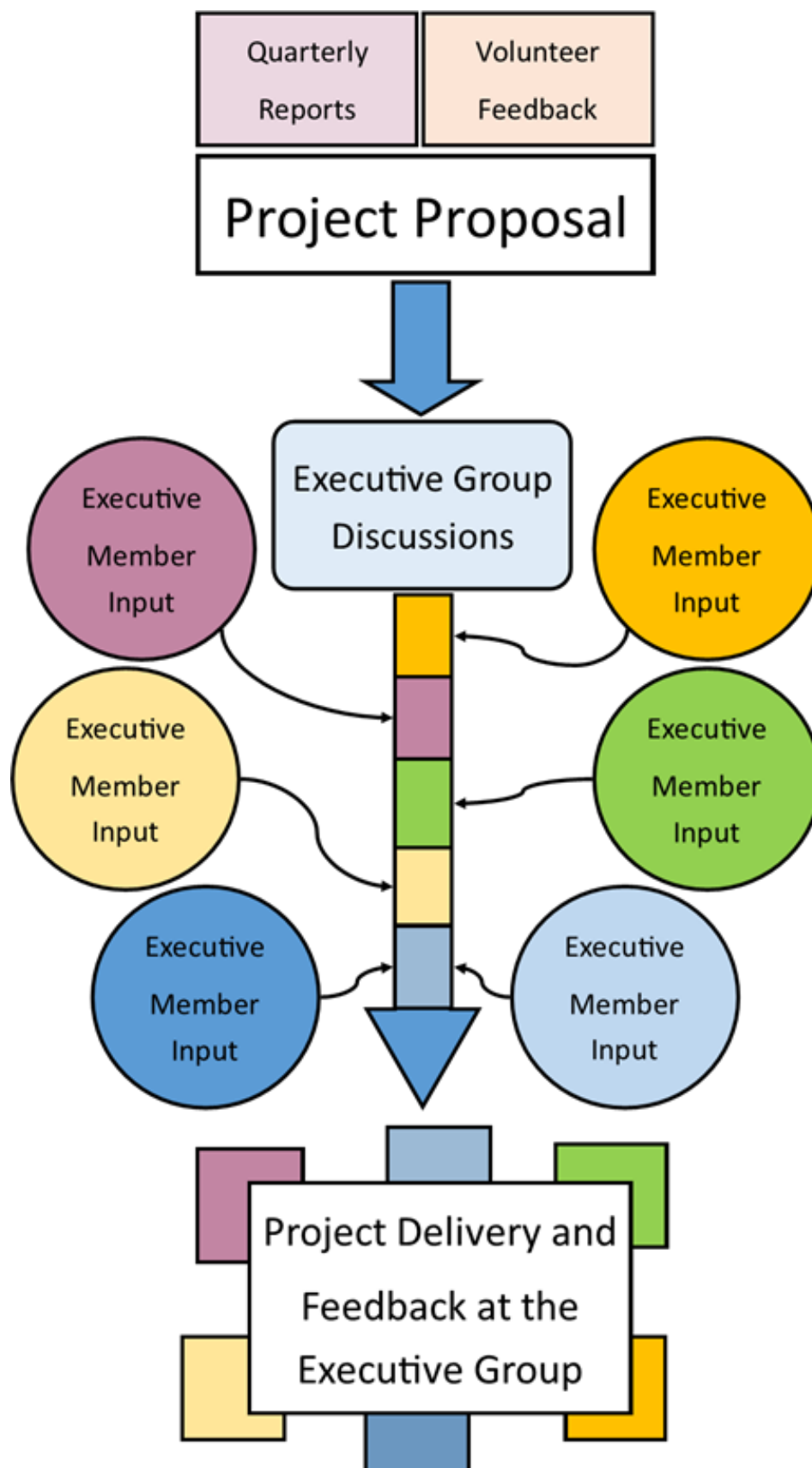
Others invited to the table are a representative of advocacy through SWAN and the CCG volunteer Patient Participation and Involvement (PPI) representative.

The Executive Group meets monthly and members of the public are encouraged to attend and give information to the group through the public submission. The minutes from the meetings are made publically available on the website.

Each quarter, the Executive Group conducts an open meeting with local commissioners and the general public. At these meetings, Healthwatch consults with commissioners regarding a proposed piece of work, discusses consultation results or presents a report. This meeting ensures that the work of the Executive Group aligns and complements commissioning work that is taking place locally.



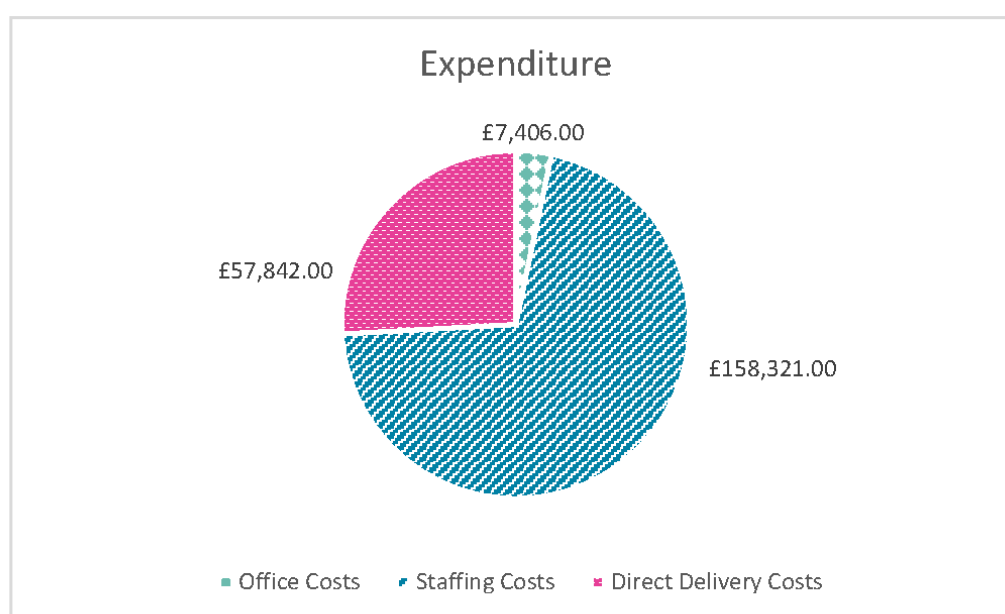
See diagram below for a visual explanation of the decision-making process at the Healthwatch Somerset Executive Group.



Financial information

INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		199047.00
Additional income B/Fwd Year 1		23827.00
Total income		222874.00

EXPENDITURE		£
Office costs		7406.00
Staffing costs		158321.00
Direct delivery costs		57842.00
Total expenditure		223569.00
Balance brought forward		-695.00





Contact us

Registered Office:

- Healthwatch Somerset, The Care Forum, The Vassall Centre, Gill Ave, Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2QQ
- Sub contractors: Young Healthwatch: Somerset Rural Youth Project, Unit 2 Suprema Estate, Edington, Bridgwater, TA7 9LF.

Get in touch

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Web: www.healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @HWSomerset

Find us on Facebook: Healthwatch Somerset

We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2015 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and our local authority.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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