



**Healthwatch
East Sussex
Annual Report 2015/16**

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Message from our Director



Hello and welcome to our annual report for the year 2015-16. Healthwatch East Sussex has been involved in the most challenging period of activity, since it was launched in 2013 and has been at the forefront of ensuring that patient voice and experience is given where it is most needed - at the centre of decision making and service delivery.

This report highlights our work across the health and social care sectors, not only within East Sussex, but also in Brighton and Kent where many East Sussex residents access services. This is our statutory document outlining our delivery against our responsibilities as your local Healthwatch.

This year has seen unprecedented change and challenges for our health and social care economy. Locally our NHS Acute Trust was placed into special measures following a Care Quality Commission inspection; Social Care Services are facing extreme financial pressures and there is huge

demand upon our GPs and local Clinical Commissioning Groups to provide high quality care and treatment.

East Sussex's population continues to be a diverse and ageing one, which presents Healthwatch East Sussex with a unique set of views and experiences of local services. To enable these views and experiences to inform the organisations which plan and deliver services, Healthwatch East Sussex has endeavoured to put into place innovative ways of gathering your views and stories, both good and bad, which will help improve the services we all receive. Our Enquiry and Information Line continues to offer a direct contact for people seeking information or wishing to give their views in person. Our Feedback Centre provides the opportunity to give online reviews of services and we have toured the county in our Big Red Bus - going to the places where you are, and talking to you where you live.

This year has seen Healthwatch East Sussex working with local GP practices, developing and supporting Patient Participation Groups, these give patients a forum to discuss their local practice and raise concerns or pass on praise directly to staff.

Our parent company, East Sussex Community Voice has also been delivering the Public Reference Forum. This is an important piece of work which ensures that the thoughts of you as service users are shared with those leading on the work

programme to integrate health and social care, 'East Sussex Better Together'.

Other work has included activity to give a platform to the voice of young people, the Young Inspector programme and a joint project with Macmillan to develop an Information Network across the county.

Our core staff team and dedicated volunteers have also delivered 29 Enter & View activities, 27 reports and many other pieces of work, including reviews of processes and developing toolkits to help with making complaints. All of this with the purpose of ensuring that you, the consumer of the local health and social care services have your voice heard.

I would like to thank you the public, our volunteers, partners and our staff team, all of whom have contributed to the amazing work we have delivered during 2015-16. I hope you enjoy reading our report and if you have any queries or comments, please contact us directly, you can find our details on P.39

Julie Fitzgerald

Director

East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV)
delivering Healthwatch East Sussex

The year at a glance

This year we've reached
1843
people on
social
media
(Page 14)



Our volunteers help us with
many activities
from Enter and
View to giving
information
(Page 34)



We identified 5 top priorities
for the year
(Page 9)



We've visited local services
and
worked
with key
providers
(Page 22)



Our reports have tackled
issues relating to Hospital
Services and
Social Care
(Page 21)



We've met hundreds of local
people at our community
events
(Page 13)



Who we are

Healthwatch East Sussex exists to make health and social care services work for the people who use them.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people. Our sole focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and speak out on their behalf.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work and decision making.

We believe that gathering people's experiences will identify issues that are important to them and when addressed, will make services better for everybody.

Our vision

Healthwatch East Sussex is delivered by East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV). We are a Community Interest Company (CIC), and we are commissioned by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to deliver the Healthwatch functions in the county.

The company is staffed by a small, professional team which works on operational issues and is governed by a board of five non-executive directors,

who are accountable for the delivery of the strategic objectives of the company. ESCV has the following mission: "Independent but not self-serving; non-bureaucratic and non-political; focused around a small central team; professional in all that it does, focused on building partnerships with existing provision; able to expand if appropriate beyond core Healthwatch functions; sustainable into the future and easy for people to become involved".

ESCV commissions the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service (NHS CA) for East Sussex, local Village Agents, and also an Information and Enquiry service to spread the Healthwatch message and to provide support and help across health and social care locally. These commissioned services are supported by the ESCV 'Partner Framework', which is a mechanism whereby we draw on the skills and knowledge of local organisations and consultant services to enhance our activity and delivery of projects around research and public engagement. We recognise the importance of utilising local skills and expertise and the added value that these organisations can bring to our work.

Our strategic priorities

We are here to gather the views and experiences of local people and to use these to improve health and social care for the people of East Sussex. We believe that the best way to do this is

for commissioners to design local services around people's needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are your local watchdog, working across all publicly funded health and social care services, gathering feedback and experiences to make services better and more available.

The county of East Sussex has a population of over 526,000 people, and has a mix of dense urban areas, coastal and large rural/semi-rural areas further in land. It is served by a two tier local government system, with a county council and district and borough councils. The county has three Clinical Commissioning Groups and emergency response services covering the county via the NHS 111 and 999 services, provided by the South East Coast Ambulance Service. There are three healthcare trusts, East Sussex Healthcare Trust, Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust and Sussex Community Foundation Trust, which provide acute, mental health services and community services in the county respectively.

During 2015 / 16 Healthwatch East Sussex has refined its priority/decision making process by reviewing the evidence and information it has received since its launch and is now targeting work according in 5 key areas. These are:

- Social Care and the Impact of the Care Act
- Acute Health Services
- Mental Health Support

- Children and Young People
- Primary Care

With the statutory powers Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) has, we can ensure that the voice and experience of consumers is strengthened and listened to by those who commission, deliver and regulate your health and social care services.

We also provide simple information and signposting services that matter to you, to help you to make informed choices about care and support. We are here to gather the views and experiences of local people and to use these to improve health and social care for the people of East Sussex. We believe that the best way to do this is for commissioners to design local services around people's needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are your local watchdog, working across all publicly funded health and social care services, gathering feedback and experiences to make services better and more available.

The Healthwatch East Sussex Team

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to be delivered through a small staff team.

Our roles and responsibilities included for 2015/16:

- Director - strategic overview and statutory engagement locally and nationally.

- Information & Signposting - enquiries line, signposting and information provision.
- Volunteer & Community Liaison - co-ordinating volunteer and Enter & View activity, community engagement and outreach, liaison with providers, PLACE visits.
- Stakeholder & Relationship Management - growing awareness of the Healthwatch services, strategic development and influencing national policy issues, working with our strategic partners and business development.
- Evidence & Insight - analysis of public views, evidence and feedback on providers of services, design of engagement tools and methodologies and monitoring of health and social care services.
- Marketing Executive - social media activity, creation and dissemination of materials for the public and partners.
- Administrator - administration and support for ESCV CIC and its Board and operations.
- Patient Participation Development Worker - development support to local Patient Participation Groups in GP surgeries across the county.
- Macmillan Cancer Support Information Officer - Developing an information network for people living with cancer across the county.
- Youth Participation Worker (ESCV) - coordinating The Young Inspectors, a team of trained young people who provide a service to organisations through a range of inspections.

For more information about our team please visit our website:
www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-team

healthwatch



Listening to people who use health and care services



Gathering experiences and understanding people's needs

2015/16 has been a challenging time for the health and social care economy, locally and nationally. The far reaching financial shortfalls and critical gaps in workforce are creating a very challenging context within which providers must continue to deliver high quality, consumer focussed services.

Healthwatch East Sussex has worked hard to ensure that it has positive relationships at a strategic level with commissioners and providers for health and social care services and that we are respected as a critical friend, here to ensure that the voice of the patient, service user and consumer is heard where it is most needed and that good practice is shared. Healthwatch East Sussex is ideally placed to listen to experiences of the public and make sure that they are taken into account when services are designed and delivered.

We have spent the year looking at new and innovative ways to listen to the views of people who use health and social care services, as well as continuing to provide non-clinical advice and information via our dedicated Information and Enquiry Line.

This year we have:

- Toured the county in our Big Red Bus, going to locations across East Sussex to talk to people where they live.
- Launched the Feedback Centre, an online system where you can find information about services and

also leave reviews about services.

- Increased our social media presence via Facebook and Twitter, this is now a critical source of public views.
- Supported the East Sussex Better Together Programme (via our CIC East Sussex Community Voice), a 150 week programme to deliver the integration of health and social care. We manage the Public Reference Forum, going out to collect people's views wherever they are and ensure that these are heard by decision makers.
- Started work to develop and support Patient Participation Groups across all GP practices; these give patients a platform to give their views about their local practice.
- Encouraged Young People to get involved and give their thoughts via the 'Young Inspector Programme', which examined services from the perspective of young people.
- Worked jointly with other local Healthwatch to look at out of county services which residents of East Sussex may use, such as the Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton.
- Commissioned a team of Village Agents to raise awareness of Healthwatch East Sussex in rural locations and provide signposting and advice services.

Our Big Red Bus

We considered a business case for this awareness raising engagement activity following successful tours in our neighbouring Healthwatch in Surrey and Kent during 2014 and 2015 respectively.

The main aim of the Bus Tour was to raise the profile of Healthwatch in East Sussex by taking the staff team, volunteers and staff from partner organisations into the community to inform people about Healthwatch and gather their experience of using local services. We also asked them to vote in a county wide poll which tested which services matter most to the public in the communities we visited.

We also visited areas in the county where people are traditionally less engaged with services i.e. areas with high recorded health inequalities and rural areas, in particular rural towns close to the county borders.

During the week we:

- Distributed over 6000 items of Healthwatch information including: leaflets, feedback forms and information about volunteering opportunities.
- Collected over 750 votes in our poll on what services matter to local people.
- Had conversations with 160 people about East Sussex Better Together, the programme to integrate health and social care services.

- Had several news items published in local newspapers and a radio interview publicising Healthwatch East Sussex.
- Distributed balloons and organised activities for children engaging them while their carer spoke to Healthwatch East Sussex staff.

Summary of Feedback gathered:

Our Feedback Centre received significant additional input following the Red Bus Tour. The main themes people commented on included:

- Access to local health services.
- GP's waiting times.
- Hospital experiences and;
- Dentists and emergency care.

We are touring the county again this year, so please come along and see us.

A list of dates and places we are visiting can be found here:

www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/healthwatcheastsussexredbustour

What we've learnt from visiting services

All of the planned activity that Healthwatch East Sussex delivers is based on the information that you, the public, tell us. We analyse the information looking at themes / trends and look at how positive people are about their services.

Using this information we then take one of the following actions:

- present this directly to the organisations as part of our regular strategic engagement.
- take immediate action to ensure that someone is able to access help and support about their issue and;
- plan wider activity such as an ‘Enter and View’ visits. The planning and delivery of this activity involves providers of services, to ensure that they fully understand the reasons for Healthwatch raising any issue. This ensures that the work carried out is in the best interest of you the consumer, and that your views and experiences form an integral part of our work to improve services.

This year as part of our Enter and View activity we have delivered:

2 unannounced visits

18 planned visits to maternity units at our acute hospitals and;

9 planned visits as part of our Complaints review

You can read more about these activities throughout this report.

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to build on positive and robust relationships with providers across the whole health and social care spectrum. This, we believe, has enhanced our ability to not only challenge services where necessary, but also to ensure that good practice and praise are shared so that this can be replicated across the county.

Using Social Media

Alongside a variety of traditional methods of collating views e.g. surveys, workshops and public events, we have invested in the use of social media and new technologies to interact with residents and organisations.

These media platforms provide Healthwatch East Sussex with exciting opportunities to engage more widely and to communicate our messages and gather evidence.

During the year our social media activity has grown, and we will continue to develop this as a way of communicating with you. In 2015-16 our activity included:

- Over 300 posts via Facebook, with 1543 people ‘liking’ our page.
- 350 tweets.
- 1,426 followers via Twitter.
- 11,443 visitors to the Healthwatch East Sussex website.
- 1465 subscribers to our e-bulletin.
- 401 views on YouTube for the videos we have created.

Maternity Services and Social Media

As part of our support to East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, we planned some activity to talk to people about their experiences of using local maternity services. Healthwatch was also hearing of some experiences directly which we felt needed further investigation.

In May 2013 a decision was made to reconfigure local maternity services, creating an obstetric unit at the Conquest hospital in Hastings and a midwife led

unit in Eastbourne. The quality of these services was a key area of concern in the 2014/15 CQC inspections of the Trust.

Our call for evidence initially received 64 responses. Following focussed social media activity, this number increased to 197. Using the evidence gained through these responses we were able to plan and deliver some further work and this then led us to undertake some statutory Enter and View activity, which involved several of the people who responded to our call for evidence, as 'Experts by Experience'.

On completion of this work, participating parents were able to meet with key hospital executives to share their findings and experiences in person.

The full report on this and all linked other activity will be available on 30th June, via the Healthwatch East Sussex website.

**Listening | Learning | Influencing |
Improving**

East Sussex Better Together

East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) is a 150 week, £750m transformation programme in East Sussex, being led by East Sussex County Council, Hastings and Rother CCG, and Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford CCG. It started in August 2014.

Healthwatch East Sussex has built a strong relationship with the lead organisations. From the beginning of the programme, Healthwatch East Sussex was invited to be a key strategic partner in supporting the public communications, engagement and experience data gathering strategy for the programme.

Healthwatch East Sussex provides the programme lead officers with focused advice and recommendations, supporting the communications and engagement drive, strengthening patient and public engagement. This enables the programme to take genuine account of the issues and concerns of local people.

"I think this is a very good idea. They should have done it years ago. I will be looking forward to seeing what happens with this and how it works out. I'm glad they have you to give our views".

In June 2015, East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) launched a public reference forum to increase ways for local people to have their say and inform the development of local services under East Sussex Better Together. Its focus has been to increase the number of local people interested in joining clinicians and professionals, to co-design health and social care services.

Between July 2015 and June 2016 the Public Reference Forum has:

- Talked to **1437** people.
- Signed up **337** people to hear more about ESBT.
- Collected **584** surveys about people views on local health and social care services.

Emerging themes from this work were:

- Older people services (including dementia care and home care).
- GP Services.
- Hospital Services.
- Mental Health Services (including Child Mental Health).
- Wheelchair services.

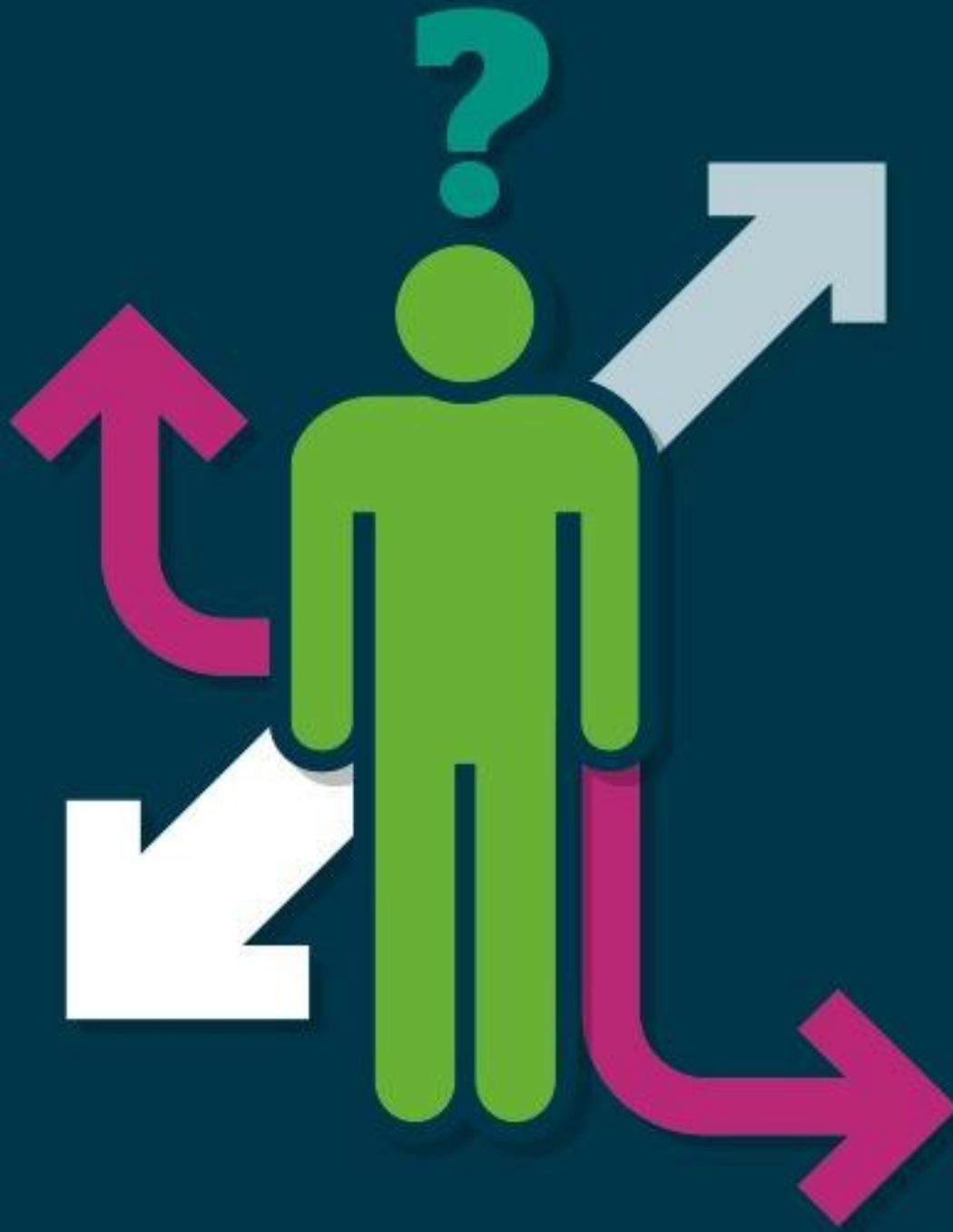
- Cancer Services.
- End of Life Care.

How has this helped improve people's experiences?

“Healthwatch East Sussex has played a critical role in shaping our plans to transform health and social care through our Better Together programme. They have enabled us to achieve the widest possible level of engagement with patients and the whole population, to deliver clear evidence of what will make a difference to people. They have set the standard for what we can all do in East Sussex to make sure all our services reflect the needs and expressed wishes of our local communities”

www.healthwatcheastsex.co.uk/our-work/east-sussex-better-together

Giving people advice and information



Helping people get what they need from local health and care services

Healthwatch East Sussex provides many opportunities for people to feedback on their experiences of using health and care services. Our main point of contact for local people is the Information and Signposting service. This service is delivered on our behalf by seAp and provides:

- a dedicated low call rate number available from 10 - 4 pm Monday - Friday.
- a dedicated email address and;
- an option to text via a dedicated number.

For the year 194 contacts were logged on our Enquiry Line which required intensive help and advice from our team.

Overall the Enquiry Line received 585 telephone calls and 534 emails.

Most callers to the service require:

- information about local health and care services.
- support to access the NHS independent complaints service; or
- the option to leave feedback about their experiences of using services.

In addition to the above, our information service also provides a gateway for local people who may not understand the system for raising concerns about a service or an individual who may be at risk of harm.

Healthwatch East Sussex also launched its Feedback Centre in July 2015. This is a

new and innovative way for providing a single point of access for signposting information about services, as well as providing people with the opportunity to leave a review of a service.

Healthwatch East Sussex is working hard to promote this service and its unique features. For example, people looking for a service which is not yet listed have the opportunity to add it themselves. This provides great flexibility to add services that may otherwise be missed and in turn provides improved opportunities for Healthwatch East Sussex to develop a wider evidence base as this system. Each service which is added contributes further to the wealth of patient and service user experience that can be gathered.

To date 246 reviews have been left for 85 individual services.

Leave a review at:

www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Macmillan Cancer Information Network

The Macmillan Cancer Information Network is a two year project to establish a network of Macmillan cancer information points across East Sussex.

There are two aims to this work:

- create partnerships and identify potential sites for Macmillan cancer information, working with partner organisations to find places and spaces that can host information on cancer and services.
- work with partners to raise awareness of this project, through training and engagement sessions,

enabling them to signpost people to the cancer information sites and to become advocates for the service.

There is a need for the information network to target sites in rural areas with poor transport links and areas with high levels of deprivation as well as communities situated a long way from acute health settings and or other support centres.

There are two types of information that the network will provide:

1. Information about cancer:

Risk factors and prevention; screening and diagnosis; treatments and therapies; treatment side effects; specific types of cancer and accessing cancer health services.

2. Information to help people live well with cancer and survivorship:

Health and wellbeing; physical activity; emotional support; relationships; welfare and benefits advice; bereavement and information for carers.

Much of the initial work has been about mapping out the current information provision in East Sussex, identifying where, how and in which format current cancer information is available. The success and effectiveness of the information provision very much relies on capturing the views and experiences of those affected by cancer and then using that information to inform the work done with partners in identifying potential sites to host cancer information.

Therefore the approach is to be very much people centred - engaging with patients, their families and carers to understand where, when and how they

would like to access information. Patient experience, the public and communities will be listened to and feedback used to provide information services in the places they have recommended.

Work has already started to make improvements to the current information provision in both the Conquest and Eastbourne General hospitals, and July 2016 will see the opening of a Macmillan information hub in partnership with Age Concern Eastbourne situated in the Venton Centre, Eastbourne.

The Macmillan cancer information network will continue to grow and expand; partnerships are already underway with GP surgeries, private hospitals, day care and community centres and libraries to create access to information for those affected by cancer in East Sussex.

How we have made a difference



Our reports and recommendations

All of the information and experiences shared with us form the evidence which we use to plan and deliver our work. This means that Healthwatch is able to focus its activity in the areas which matter to the public and provide observations and recommendations to commissioners and providers of services based on current themes and experiences. This ensures that consumer experience is an important part of strategic decision making and service provision.

During this year we have produced 27 reports, covering areas such as Complaints, Mental Health Services, Maternity Services, Care Home Discharge as well as regular reporting on the feedback we receive. All of our reports are shared with providers strategically and are also published on our website.

All of our reports contain our recommendations and are followed up with providers at agreed periods, to ensure that these are taken on board.

Listening | Learning | Influencing | Improving

“Navigating Mental Health Services in East Sussex”

Healthwatch East Sussex published two reports (and an overarching report), highlighting people’s experiences of navigating mental health services in East Sussex together with a summary of what Healthwatch found out during that review.

We carried out two focused activities; one looking at young people, their

families and carers experiences of using Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS). We found out that: *“it’s a difficult journey, but a fantastic service once you get there”*

The second activity looked at Telephone Support Services available for people with mental health needs, particularly in crisis. This service area is also identified as a gap in the Crisis Care Concordat and forms part of their action plan. Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) was pleased to learn, after sharing their findings with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, that a review of the service was launched.

www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports

Making long, wordy documents more accessible

‘Youth-proofing’ documents has involved the Young Inspectors (with staff support) taking long professional documents, usually jargon-filled, and providing feedback to the organisation who produced it.

These documents often have vital information for young people on service provision, statistics regarding young people or access to services. However, these young people are not always able to understand the information due to the language used or the length of the report, which can make them inaccessible for the intended youth target group.

The Young Inspectors read the documents and make recommendations on how they

could be more easily understood and more appropriate for the target audience. This assists organisations to understand how they could better support and involve young people in producing appropriate information.

ESCV delivering Healthwatch in East Sussex are looking at new ways they can support young people to develop their skills in ‘youth-proofing’, as it believes this plays an important role in the engagement of young people throughout the County.

‘Youth-proofing’ is also about breaking barriers between professionals and young people, which is vital for their sustained engagement with local services.



Acknowledgements

With special thanks to the Young Inspectors

Working with other organisations

Working with the Care Quality Commission

Healthwatch East Sussex works closely with the Care Quality Commission, the

regulator of all Health and Social Care services and this is a key relationship for us. The strength of our relationship allows for the immediate escalation of concerns about safety or poor quality of service delivery. It also provides Healthwatch with a strong basis from which to ensure that regulators are aware of issues and good practice examples locally, to inform any activity they may have planned. We meet with the CQC on a quarterly basis to share information and discuss our priorities and work activities. Commenting on our working relationships our CQC partners said:

“(We) think the work Healthwatch has been doing to support East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust is making a real difference to how the trust engages with the local community. There were undoubtedly bridges that needed to be built and Healthwatch has supported the Trust - and indirectly the local population - in developing improved relationships and involvement.”

Working with Healthwatch England

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to provide work with Healthwatch England and is a founding member of the South East Regional Forum for Healthwatch. This forum is attended by all local Healthwatch in the southeast region and Healthwatch England representatives. This gives Healthwatch locally a strong voice to raise wider issues that affect residents who use services across our boundaries, as well as enabling us to directly feed in concerns to Healthwatch nationally.

Supporting the work of Healthwatch England - developing a complaints toolkit

We have developed a complaints toolkit in partnership with Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch in Norfolk and Wiltshire.

Why work on complaints? Complaints are a source of vital information to service providers about how they are performing and can provide early warning of wider system failings. If local systems do not respond well to complaints, there is a risk that situations like those in Mid-Staffordshire, Morecombe Bay Trust's and Winterbourne View Hospital area are repeated.

Locally, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) was placed in special measures following two CQC inspections, 2014 - 2015 the outcome of these were a rating for the Trust of 'inadequate'. The complaints process for ESHT was heavily criticised in the inspection reports. Healthwatch East Sussex provided an independent peer review of the Trusts' complaints process and offered suggestions for improvement.

Making Complaints Personal - independent lay review of the complaints process

The review team which consisted of Healthwatch volunteers, examined a random selection of complaints received

by ESHT, with each complaint scrutinised for process. A total of 66 cases were reviewed.

Observations and findings

It was clear there was a process and a structure of acknowledgement in place and that it was generally followed. There was also evidence of:

- Responses which were generally sympathetic.
- The Trust communicating well with other agencies when more than one organisation was involved.
- Long delays for complainants at various points of the process.
- Some delays stretching over six months from the initial point of contact.
- No fast track system for more serious complaints.
- Clinical and standardised responses which could lead to the complainant feeling that they are not being treated as an individual.

The response received from the Trust was:

"It was a pleasure to work alongside the Review Team, and I would like to thank them for their support, enthusiasm and commitment to helping the Trust understand what needs to change to improve how it handles, investigates and responds to complaints to deliver better outcomes.

Whilst it is pleasing to read that the Review Team were able to offer positive feedback on the overall process and noted a number of

particularly positive aspects, including responses being generally sympathetic, the existence of a good complaints handling framework and that a senior manager signs each response, there are clearly areas in which we need to improve. You will therefore be pleased to know that since the Review Team worked alongside the Trust's Complaints Team, a number of improvements have already been introduced to improve the process.

Since February 2016, the Complaints Team now actively try and contact all complainants (where a contact number has been supplied) to discuss the complaint and either agree the issues they wish to have addressed or offer them the opportunity of an early resolution meeting. In all cases, complaints are now acknowledged within three working days in 100% of cases.

...it is vital that complainants feel their complaint has been listened to and wherever appropriate, has made a difference or an improvement to services. We will establish a Complaints Action Plan that includes the findings within the Healthwatch Review and this will be monitored through the Patient Experience Steering Group.”

The full response can be viewed in the report of this work published June 30th

The resources developed for this activity have been included in the toolkit, which alongside other local Healthwatch examples, will be available to the

Healthwatch network to adapt and use locally.

Involving local people in our work

In May 2015, East Sussex Community Voice funded the recruitment of a Patient Participation Support Worker. The key function of this role was to develop the relationships between Healthwatch East Sussex and local PPGs, to develop and support PPGs and GP Practices where appropriate and to enable PPGs to link into wider changes in the local health & care system, notably East Sussex Better Together.

It was anticipated Patient Participation Groups (PPG) would provide a rich source of local user intelligence data, which would inform local commissioning decisions and management priorities for local GP Practices. The new GP contract (April 2015) required all General Practices to have a PPG in place.

The work delivered in the last year has led to increased levels of patient experience data on primary care, assisting Healthwatch East Sussex in its priority setting. It has also provided support to GP practices, and their clinical commissioning group's engagement team; and it has supported many PPGs. It was essential to develop our PPG contact lists, and to obtain information about each practice in order to find out whether or not there was a PPG in place. We needed to know which groups we were reaching, and those we were not. This was done both by phone contact and by visiting GP practice websites. In this way it was also possible for us to observe the ease of access and quality of information available for patients who

might be thinking about getting involved with their PPG.

As a result of our mapping and contact activities, our PPG communications are now sent to at least 67 out of 77 practices across East Sussex. Work continues in renewing contact with GP practices whose status has changed, for example where practice mergers have taken place.

We found that some PPGs in the county were thriving and while they might benefit from communications and being part of a wider network of groups, they do not need individual support. However, some PPGs, for a variety of reasons, were finding it difficult to maintain positive momentum. The PPG support worker, by working together with both patients and staff, has been able to facilitate positive developments in many cases.

An example of this is a GP practice which CQC identified as having no PPG. We initially met twice with the practice staff to inform, discuss and agree an action plan about setting up a group. Healthwatch paid for and facilitated the practice to join NAPP (National Association of Patient Participation) and use their resources.

Having identified six patients who wanted to support their much loved practice, but who knew little about PPGs, the PPG support worker led the first meeting which was essentially an information session, with questions and answers from both patients and staff. They were all interested enough to return for a second meeting for which they took responsibility. A chair and secretary were

elected, and they went on to identify a useful action to complete before the next meeting.

At the next progress meeting between CQC and practice staff, it was noted that the practice had achieved well in establishing their group so quickly and effectively.

Many PPGs have reported to us that they struggle with recruiting new volunteers to their groups. Almost all PPGs report extreme difficulty in attracting younger adults (i.e. of working age), to volunteer and get involved. Added to this, General Practices are under pressure to demonstrate to the CQC that they have made reasonable efforts to encourage patient participation. In response to these identified needs, Healthwatch, in partnership with patient representatives and practice staff, created a 3 minute video to gain the attention of patients who might not have heard about PPGs or what they do, and to hopefully plant an idea that they could get involved.

It is a simple message which can engage someone for a short time while sitting in a waiting area. We had to consider that someone watching it will be only half concentrating on the video because they are on alert for their appointment call or thinking about the reason why they need to be there that day.

The video is free for all to view and share online:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GhqH7r

[MCK](#)

We are now in the process of providing all GP practices with a cd copy which can be used by, copied or lent to whoever is interested.

The PPG support worker also leads on producing a quarterly newsletter which is distributed to most practices in East Sussex. The only exceptions are, as mentioned earlier, some practices that do not currently have individual contacts because they are in the process of merging with others.

The PPG support worker has developed contacts with University of Brighton, voluntary sector organisations, and CCG staff to seek opportunities for PPGs to develop their involvement more strategically, as they grow and become more confident.

Our work in focus



Our work in focus: Safeguarding

All of our members of staff have key link roles with providers and stakeholders across all of the services, including voluntary sector partners. We have regular liaison meetings with decision makers and escalation procedures in place, should we need to raise urgent items quickly. Healthwatch East Sussex also independently chairs the Client Carer Advisory Safeguarding Network (CCSCAN). The CCSCAN meets quarterly as a sub-committee of the Safeguarding Adults Board in East Sussex.

This advisory network brings together representatives from Partnership Boards and other groups of people who represent clients and carers to connect with the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). These include organisations that support and represent people with disabilities, mental health and learning disabilities, together with older people and carers. The network enables a two way exchange of information, ideas, views and experience between the SAB and clients and carers on the topic of adult safeguarding.

The network provides a mechanism for the SAB to meet its statutory duty under the Care Act to take account of the views of people who use care and support, their families, and carers when developing policies and strategies to protect adults who may be at risk of abuse and neglect.

Healthwatch East Sussex values this involvement as it provides opportunity to share views from local people (including

carers) who are concerned about feeling safe when receiving care and support.

A total of six possible safeguarding alerts have been signposted to the local authority in East Sussex. Of those, four involved alleged poor care in care homes, one involved an individual in sheltered housing and one involved a patient that received the wrong medication following a discharge from hospital.

The local authority and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have been able to use this information as part of their regulatory activity.

At the time of writing this report, a further two concerns have been received involving services outside of East Sussex which resulted in alerts in Brighton and Hove and Surrey as the responsible authorities.

Our work in focus: Maternity Services

Special measures to special moments - an overview of maternity services provided by East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, from the parents and families perspectives

Following the call out for evidence (January - February 2016) inviting women to share their experiences of local maternity services, a working group was created to look at the 197 on-line responses. The Facebook campaign was seen by 43,932 people. The experiences women shared through this on-line survey related in the main to the service at the Conquest Hospital.

Key themes, actions and learning points include:

- Staff attitude - the experiences reported by women contributed to an overall negative experience in some instances.
- Very complimentary references to staff on the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) and to community midwives.
- Ante-natal care - a number of women commented on their belief that they had undergone an unnecessary emergency caesarean section and on the waiting times for induction.
- Labour care - overall largely positive experiences, the most negative experiences were reported at the Conquest Hospital.

Women giving birth at the Eastbourne unit were very complimentary.

- Post-natal care - the highest proportion of respondents were critical of their experience at the Conquest Hospital. However where the feedback was positive, care was described by women as 'excellent', 'fantastic' and 'supportive', across both sites.
- Cleanliness and hygiene - most of the negative comments received related to the showers and bathrooms at the Conquest Hospital.
- This feedback assisted HWES in planning and shaping 'Enter and View' visits that followed.

Authorised Representatives visited both units over a three day period in mid-March 2016 (including a weekend). The maternity units at Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH) and the Conquest Hospital were both visited and women who had used the service were involved in the planning and shaping of this review, a total of 50 face to face survey interviews were completed.

Comments received:

- Women on both units at the time of the visit shared mostly positive experiences about their interactions with nursing and midwifery staff.

- The midwife led unit at Eastbourne was very highly rated by women and their partners and described by some as a 'gold standard service'.
- Travel between the two units led to some negative responses, especially in relation to transferring back to Eastbourne from the Conquest.
- Delays were mentioned at both units by women having labour inductions.
- Frank Shaw ward was observed as being very busy at times and staff appeared stretched.
- It was suggested that better information for fathers and partners could be provided including information on access arrangements to wards at night.

Healthwatch East Sussex is continuing to work with the Trust to take forward the learning identified in this review. We are also exploring the introduction of a Maternity Guardian role in East Sussex; this would be an independent access point for women, to share experiences and concerns.

Our plans for next year



Future priorities

During the coming year we will continue to analyse feedback from the public to guide us to our priorities for work.

Currently we believe this will see us working further on care home provision; people's experiences of the care act; mental health services for young people and the quality of primary, community and acute services provided within our borders and in neighbouring counties.

We will also be very engaged with the various programmes which are underway which seek to integrate health and care services, bring provision more close to communities and respond to the big challenges which face us, such as health inequalities and the scarcity of workforce in some key areas.

In all of this we will continue to work closely with the public and with our committed volunteers to whom a huge thank you is due for all they have achieved over the last year.

Our people



Decision making

Our board and governance

East Sussex Community Voice (CIC) has a Board of five non-executive directors who are accountable for the delivery of the strategic objectives of the CIC. The Board meets four times during the year and has three sub-committees: Finance, Human Resources and Business Development, which meet in between Board meetings and report any recommendations to the full Board.

Healthwatch East Sussex decision making

Healthwatch East Sussex has a Priorities Framework process which prescribes how we analyse the evidence and feedback we receive and how this information along with other local and national criteria determines how we decide on our work priorities for any given period. This year we simplified this process to focus on 5 key areas, as outlined on P.5 of this report. We then plan and carry out work activity, which is directed by you, the consumer.

During 2015-16 emerging themes as priorities included:

- Support of East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
- Mental Health Support for access
- Develop a robust complaints toolkit - to ensure that making a complaint is seen as a right
- Patient involvement within their local GP practice

You can find out more about our priorities here:

www.healthwatcheastSussex.co.uk/about-us/policies-priorities

As a staff team we have in place a performance monitoring tool, to allow staff the opportunity to highlight and discuss their work areas and provide our Board and Commissioner with a quarterly update of progress. Our performance tool in East Sussex closely aligns the Healthwatch aims and objectives, as set out within the “Local Healthwatch Outcomes and Impact Development Tool” as well as incorporating the wider East Sussex Community Voice work.

How we involve the public and volunteers

Without the efforts and dedication of our volunteers, Healthwatch East Sussex would not be able to deliver the high levels of activity it does. To deliver a very ambitious project supporting our local Trust with an extensive package of engagement activities requires a large resource of volunteers.

In September 2015 a significant number of local people (82) responded to our call to become involved in a ‘Volunteer Task Group’ to work specifically with the Trust.

Healthwatch East Sussex already had in place a robust recruitment process which included an application form, reference checks and DBS clearance. To process this number of applicants was a challenge; however it demonstrates the depth and passion local people have in

their services and a genuine interest to make them better.

The local media also ran with this and added a largely positive slant on the task in hand.

Approximately 50 new volunteers came through the process joining our existing group of volunteers and brought our total volunteer resource to over 80, which was phenomenal!

Before any activity could take place Healthwatch East Sussex had to satisfy the Trusts Board that our volunteers had undergone appropriate training, had the right skills, experience and attitude to approaching this activity. It was a test of our relationship, which, with the executive leadership at that time had many challenges.

As the work got underway and new leadership structures started to embed, then the relationships began to grow in strength; Board members visited our information volunteers in the main reception areas, staff became less anxious about our visibility as their understanding of local Healthwatch grew. With that strengthening of the relationship, came also the confidence and trust in the outcomes of our work, leading to some really unique and innovative approaches to engaging with patients relatives and carers, providing a sound building block for continuing this work in the year ahead.

One volunteer commented on our training:

“I attended one of the training sessions you delivered recently and felt compelled to give feedback as it was

one of the best training sessions I have ever attended (I have attended many).

The session was very well organised and delivered in a professional and engaging manner which instilled great confidence. It was comprehensive while being concise, interesting and invigorating, with lots of useful interaction. And the input from Phil Hale’s personal experiences was really helpful.

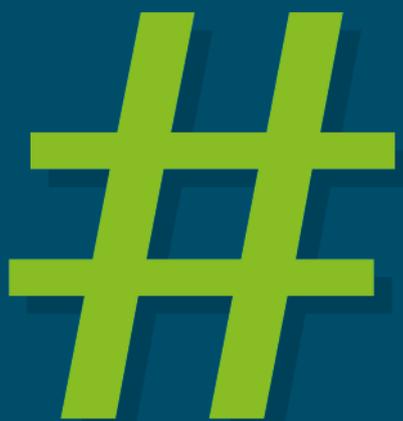
By the end of the training I felt extremely excited about the prospect of joining Healthwatch, and the training confirmed my beliefs about the importance of the work of Healthwatch. All this in a lovely friendly welcoming atmosphere”.

Our finances



INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		519,380.19
Additional income		104,595.87
Total income		623,976.06
EXPENDITURE		£
Operational costs *		210,749.54
Staffing costs		290,837.33
Office costs		132,239.36
Total expenditure		633,826.23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes commissioned services costs and NHS Complaints Advocacy 		

Contact us



Get in touch

The name, address of registered or principle office, and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract with the local authority as of 31/3/2016.

Healthwatch East Sussex

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Greencoat House

32 St Leonards Road

Eastbourne

East Sussex

BN21 3UT

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 0333 101 4007

: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

 www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

The name, address of registered or principle office and contact details of any relevant local Healthwatch sub-contractors as of 31/3/2016.

NHS Complaints Advocacy

seAp

P O Box 375,

Hastings,

TN34 9HU

0330 440 9000

We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2016 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, 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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