**Information & Signposting Advisor – May 2021**

**BACKGROUND**

A key function for Healthwatch East Sussex, is to provide an Information Service to help people to understand, navigate and access health and care services in East Sussex as well as gathering people’s experiences to help improve local services.

We know that people often struggle to access the support and information they need and that the pressure on health and care services is increasing.

Each month we receive a number of enquiries via telephone, email and face to face when out in the community about topics including GP appointments, accessing social care, hospital discharge, NHS Dental charges, making a complaint and finding local community or advocacy services.

As an independent and confidential service, we listen to people’s experiences and provide quality information about their next steps and the choices available to them. – in short Healthwatch plays an important role in providing advice and pointing people in the right direction!

The Information Service works alongside the Healthwatch East Sussex’s Engagement and Evidence and Insight Teams to gather people’s feedback, views and experiences of health and care, and to work with service commissioners and providers to make sure that they take this into account. We have powers under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) to help us make sure that we are heard.

Healthwatch East Sussex comprises a small team of professionals and trained volunteers – but we have big ambitions. We want to be an effective agent of local change, and to reflect the highest standards of national and international best practice. To do so, our success will depend upon building an accessible, person-centred Information Service, as well as developing constructive partnerships with the NHS, local authorities and voluntary and community organisations.

Since our Information Service was re launched in July 2017, we have helped hundreds of people find the information they need about local NHS and care services — either through our telephone support line, online platforms, our outreach activities or our published guides to care.

If you think you’ve got what it takes to help us provide an excellent Information Service, we’d love to hear from you.

**The role**

The core function of the Information & Signposting Advisor is to work as part of a small team to continue to develop, promote and deliver the Information Service.

**Key accountabilities**

* To handle telephone, email and face to face enquiries from the public and professionals who require information on local services. This includes:
* Ensuring that people are provided with appropriate and clear information in response to their enquiry.
* Ensuring that people contacting the service feel supported and treated with empathy and respect.
* Facilitating access to information for people who may face barriers in finding or using information about services.
* Escalating any urgent, emergency or safeguarding issues to the appropriate authorities.
* Effectively listening to and recording people’s often difficult experiences of health and social care.
* To work closely with the Team and as part of a small team to ensure that the service is delivered in line with all relevant policies, procedures and standards.
* To undertake outreach activities in order to increase awareness of the Information Service among referral organisations and the public. This includes:
* Undertaking planned outreach activities including events, presentations and service visits across East Sussex.
* As part of that continuing development of the service, to review existing systems and processes, explore with the team any new initiatives and approaches in line with national guidance from Healthwatch England.
* Networking and creating opportunities to promote the service.