

A Year In Review 2013/2014

Informing. Influencing. Together.





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Hello and Welcome

Welcome to this very, our very first magazine, created especially for our friends and supporters of Healthwatch, and of course all of you who want to discover more about what we do and who we help as an organisation.

This magazine highlights what an extraordinary year it has been, with Healthwatch Dorset having been formed as a partnership of three local organisations: Help & Care, Dorset Race Equality Council, and the Citizens Advice Bureau. In just one year, together, we as Healthwatch Dorset have supported those who want to make a real change to the health and social care system.

In this magazine, you will read some wonderfully inspiring stories about people in the local community making a difference. In fact, through our Community Investment Fund, we've been able to re-invest over £25,000 to support those with HIV, people with disabilities, people with learning difficulties and people from the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-gender and Transgender) community, to name but a few. You can read their stories, and many more like them, in the pages of this magazine.



Using our combined resources at Healthwatch Dorset, we ensure that our overriding aim is to improve health and social care services by listening to people just like you. What's great is that we are independent of local councils and the NHS, and our job is specifically to listen to the public and pass on what we find to the NHS and Social Services departments.

We are over the moon with our amazing team of volunteers and supporters - our Healthwatch Champions - they simply are the best! The work that they do is so crucial to our organisation, and we feel blessed to have their help and support. We always welcome new supporters who want to volunteer and get involved. Keep in touch with us via Twitter and Facebook (details on the back cover) - we'd love to hear your thoughts.

We hope you enjoy reading this magazine as much as we have enjoyed putting it together for you.

Together, with your help and feedback, we will continue to drive the necessary change in the system.

Very warmest regards from us all at Healthwatch Dorset,

Dr Samuel Johnson
Chair, Healthwatch Dorset



Healthwatch

So what's it all about?

Last year saw 148 new organisations come into being all over England, called local Healthwatch (to join the national body created the year before, [Healthwatch England](#)). These local organisations were created to be the consumer champion for users of health and social care services across their geographic regions, with the intention of giving local people a stronger voice to challenge and influence how local services were planned and run. Additionally, these bodies were tasked with providing information about local services and help people who want to make a complaint about NHS services – holding them to account.





The partnership formed by three local organisations - Help and Care, Citizens Advice in Dorset and Dorset Race Equality Council - was chosen to deliver the contract for Healthwatch across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

Speaking on behalf of the partnership, Mark Sharman, Chief Executive of Help and Care said:

“I’m delighted that we’ve been selected by Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Councils to deliver Healthwatch in this area. Our model for Healthwatch is based on having a strong network of individual people and voluntary, statutory and private organisations who share an interest in the health and wellbeing of the people of Dorset and a passion for bringing about positive change.”

“A key element of Healthwatch will be our ‘Healthwatch Champions’, an army of volunteers who want to make a difference to how local health and social care services are designed and run”.

To deliver the Healthwatch service, the three organisations together have created a new social enterprise, a Community Interest Company “Healthwatch Dorset CIC”. It has a Board of Directors, three of whom are appointed by



the three organisations in the partnership. The other directors, “Non-Executive Directors”, are appointed by an independent Appointments Panel. You can see and read about all our Directors on our [web site](#).

To launch the new nationwide network of local Healthwatch organisations, Healthwatch England hosted a series of five simultaneous events across the country in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Taunton and Leeds on 11th April 2013. This significant event was attended by Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, MPs and Peers, media, leaders from the voluntary and community sector as well as a range of the Chief Executives and Chairs from local Healthwatch.



Celebrating

Healthwatch Week

Our staff and volunteer Healthwatch Champions hosted a week of events to promote our services during the week of December 2nd – 8th 2013. Our teams took to the streets of Dorset and hosted events across the county to meet the public and gauge your opinions on local services.

The county's nine Citizens Advice Bureaux kicked off the week's events at Kinson Library as well as the Bournemouth Town Hall, and then our teams travelled to have a presence in Bridport, Christchurch, Dorchester, Sherborne, Poole, Weymouth, Portland and Purbeck - gauging vital feedback from the public and finding out what was important in each of these communities.

One of the big highlights was an incredible tractor and trailer float in the 'Father Christmas Arrives in Wareham' Parade, which really helped get people talking, and helped to promote the work we do.

"Healthwatch Week allowed our teams to get across the whole of Dorset county, allowing us to really hear what people had to say about their local service, whether it was about their local GP or even the local care home that looks after their parents - we wanted to hear what people like and what they didn't like, so that we as an organisation could start to feedback the great stuff that local services are doing and, wherever necessary, really influence a meaningful change in the system!"

Louise Bate, Community Engagement & Outreach Officer for Healthwatch Dorset







Change afoot

at Royal Bournemouth Hospital

Over a six-month period in spring and summer 2014 our team are collecting feedback about services at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital from patients, their families and visitors.

Healthwatch Dorset staff and volunteers are taking up positions in the public areas of the hospital, including the main hospital entrance area and the orthopaedic outpatients department, to capture as much feedback as possible. This project was particularly pertinent following a report from the Care Quality Commission in December 2013, which had criticised certain aspects of the care provided by the hospital.

Patients, relatives, visitors and staff are encouraged to tell Healthwatch what they think about the hospital and its services, allowing us to tell the hospital what people think is good; what people think was bad, and what improvements can be made.

Two areas identified from the feedback for improvement from an earlier March 2014 visit included trouble **accessing or sharing information** with other hospitals, along with **ensuring staff have enough time to talk to patients**.

Other work we are currently doing with the hospital includes promoting Healthwatch Dorset to hospital staff as an independent body they can take any concerns to, and supporting the hospital's governors to run a series of focus groups to gauge the public's views on the hospital's services.

Real change - inspired by Healthwatch Dorset

The hospital said that it had already undertaken a whole host of initiatives to improve quality and the experience of its patients. A single informatics department has been created with Poole Hospital and major works to improving clinical systems,



sharing test results and other clinical information, along with a key project for a single set of electronic notes have been well underway.

Following our visits, the hospital has also recognised the need to release more time for staff to provide direct care for patients, and a whole host of actions are now in place, much to the delight of patients. More staff have also been recruited, including 22 new consultant posts, with an additional recruitment drive currently underway for more nurses.

Visiting hours across the Trust have also been extended. Individual wards have also implemented easily bookable appointment times to meet with consultants or the ward sister/charge nurse and this good practice is being shared across other wards.

Tony Spotswood, Chief Executive of The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said:

“We are really pleased to be working with Healthwatch in a partnership that is committed to listening and continuing to improve the patient experience at our hospitals.”

“Healthwatch provides an opportunity for our patients, their relatives and carers to share their hospital experiences independently and confidentially, in addition to the many opportunities that there are within our hospitals.”

Now that we have seen that this “formula” works well, it is our intention to roll this project out to other hospitals across the county.



In our role as a consumer champion, we want to help people who use health and care services to feel that they are more in control.

Information is power...

One of the ways we do that is by providing an information and signposting service. We give information about local health and social care services and how to access them, help people find their way round the system, make people aware of their rights, and signpost them to other organisations who can help too. People can get in touch with our service by calling our telephone helpline (0300 111 0102) or through our [web site](#) or on [Twitter](#) and

[Facebook](#), or in person at their local Citizens Advice Bureau (see opposite page).

In our first year of operation, our telephone helpline took 1693 calls. In general terms, 60% of calls related to people wanting to give us their feedback about services, 21% to giving information and 19% to signposting. The total number of comments we received about services in this period was 1223.

Information is key!

And here in Dorset that's no exception...

Since its inception in April 2013 our team of Information Support Workers (ISW) have answered just over 1690 telephone calls. We help our callers in a number of ways including:

- Help in navigating their way through the complex NHS system
- Needing non-clinical information about local health or social care services
- Wanting to provide feedback / comments and experiences of local services
- Understanding the services available to them
- Needing guidance on how to make a complaint
- Signposting to other organisations etc. CAB's, NHS Complaints Advocacy Services

Often our ISW's are able to give the required information to the caller directly, but on some occasions more detailed research is needed. We aim to resolve any telephone call within 1 to 45 minutes depending

on the level of research we need to undertake. If research is needed, then we will always take the details of the caller and call them back.

As well as recording callers' feedback and enquiries throughout the year, our ISW's have signposted or made referrals for people to appropriate organisations able to offer further information and support appropriate to their needs. Organisations such as NHS Complaints Service, 111 Service, Police, Shelter, Social Services, Rough Sleepers, Liaison Officers, Steps2Wellbeing, PALS, and the British Dental Helpline.

Two examples of calls we've received and resolved include -

"We assisted an elderly gentleman who needed urgent dental treatment at home as he was

waiting to go into respite care but was not able to eat properly and did not know how to get the help he needed. With his permission on his behalf we called the appropriate 111 service and spoke to an advisor who agreed to deal with all the necessary arrangements."

"We put a client in touch with the PALS service whilst he was still in hospital and stated he was having some problems with his treatment. He called us back to thank us for our support as someone visited him later that day to help him."

As well as receiving telephone calls, we are also contacted through all of our social media channels, by email and in person - and each and every enquiry that is received through all of our communication channel are recorded in our CRM system.

Citizens Advice in Dorset and Healthwatch Dorset

As well as being able to use our information and signposting service by phoning our helpline or getting in touch with us online, people can also get the same help face-to-face at any of our local Citizens Advice Bureaux.

We spoke to Caroline Buxton, Executive Manager of Citizens Advice in Dorset (CAiD), who explained the role they play as part of Healthwatch Dorset, and how they've encouraged a "spirit of consumerism" in what we do.

CAiD is a consortium of the nine Citizens Advice Bureau that provide services across the county of Dorset and the boroughs of Bournemouth and Poole. It was this geographical spread (with 11 main offices and over 30 outreaches in GP surgeries, village halls, children's centres etc.) and our 'trusted brand' recognition that ensured we were well placed to provide the face-to-face information and signposting service for Healthwatch Dorset. The Citizens Advice service also has a strong commitment to - and track record of - using client evidence to bring about change, so the 'influencing' remit of Healthwatch is also an excellent fit.

To deliver this service, each bureau has created a Healthwatch 'Lead': a person who keeps up to date on health and care issues, keeps their teams briefed, reviews cases with a health or care issue and ensures that relevant cases get entered onto the shared Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system so they can be picked up by Healthwatch Dorset.

We're proud that this year has seen us:

- Provide information or advice on a health or care issue to over 1000 clients
- Deal with 1900 separate issues (many clients raise more than one issue)

- Promote the service in our local communities, particularly in Healthwatch Week in December 2013
- Work with our colleagues at our Healthwatch partner organisations, Help and Care and Dorset Race Equality Council through quarterly team meetings and joint activities
- Work with the Healthwatch research team on the issue of GPs charging patients for medical reports in support of benefit appeals
- Engage with our colleagues at national Citizens Advice to review support needs for bureaux with Healthwatch contracts, including the development of training materials and updating of our internal information system
- Identify clusters of enquiries around NHS charges, residential care charges, availability of community care, and hospital transport

Our Healthwatch Lead at Bournemouth Citizens Advice Bureau, Jamie, says:

“When the opportunity arose, I became interested in participating in Healthwatch for two main reasons. Firstly, the concept itself interested me. The fundamental aim of examining the local health and social care systems from the perspective of the patient or service user and representing their interests is an important challenge and I was interested to learn more about how this would work. In this respect it complements the social policy work that I already do, too. Secondly, I am also a student aiming to study medicine, which gave me an added interest in the new initiative... It is a role that I have enjoyed doing and I look forward to seeing how it will develop in future.”

So what is the impact of the Citizens Advice Bureau role in Healthwatch? More people can get the help and advice they need on health and care issues face-to-face, and their stories are beginning to make a difference to the services available locally.

Working with Dorset Community Action

Dorset Community Action

(DCA) is a charity committed to helping communities, charities, and voluntary groups across Dorset to achieve their goals by providing groups with the support, inspiration, skills and knowledge needed to make their projects and organisations a success.

Alex Picot, Chief Executive at DCA, explains how the organisation has been working with Healthwatch Dorset during the past year:

“We strive to bring the real life experience of the VCSE to inform service design and help to identify difficulties and barriers at an early enough stage. We have worked together with Healthwatch to strengthen and legitimise the voice of the Voluntary, Community, and Social enterprise (VCSE) sector to influence Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Dorset Health & Well Being Board, and Better Together programmes.”

He went on:

“We're excited to be working together on a new initiative to develop a health and wellbeing network through the Dorset Communities Forum, to support the flow of information from local communities about their experiences of services and to feed back on how well strategic plans are working.”



Our seat on the Health & Wellbeing Board

One of the exciting positions we now hold is as a member of the local Health and Wellbeing Boards – a position that gives us added power to get your voice heard!

Since April 2013 each local council across England has had a new Health and Wellbeing Board - with the remit of promoting the integration of the local commissioning of services, to identify the health and wellbeing needs of local communities, and to set out how those needs will be met by identifying specific priorities. We have two Health and Wellbeing Boards in our area - the Bournemouth & Poole Board and the Dorset Board.

As part of its statutory minimum membership, each Health and Wellbeing Board includes a representative from the local Healthwatch. Our job is to make sure that we use this place effectively, to ensure that the consumer voice is at the heart of the Board's deliberations and decision-making.

Through our seat on the Board, we ensure that the public voice is heard - through engagement and outreach with

local communities - and that we use this platform to really influence local commissioners and service providers, with the solid backing of our gathered intelligence and evidence.

There is little official guidance available to help Healthwatch representatives on Health and Wellbeing Boards so, working with an independent consultancy ([Patient and Public Involvement Solutions](#)), we have produced a guide (available on our [web site](#)). Our guide has now been promoted by Healthwatch England to all the local Healthwatch organisations around the country.



Change in the system

Whilst our remit is to influence change in the local health and social care system, we have also undergone a systems change of our own. To serve the public better, we knew that we needed a system internally that would not only capture crucial feedback about services from the public, patients and service users, but also help us to analyse trends and identify themes, which would help direct the work that we do.

So Healthwatch Dorset invested in a brand new CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system which has allowed us to intelligently log all the comments we receive from patients and service users, including their families, friends, carers and professionals - whether that be by phone, email, through our website, through Citizens Advice Bureau, or through our offline engagement and outreach activities.

This new system is our the place where all the feedback from local people, all the intelligence and evidence, comes together. From here we can look at trends and themes; analyse comments about

particular service providers; see how many comments are positive or negative; and make decisions about whether we need to do further work - such as our research projects and investigations, or our Mystery Shopper exercise.

Most encouragingly, we can also track our engagement activity and manage and support our volunteers and Healthwatch Champions through this new system - meaning that we as an organisation are more organised, more efficient and ultimately delivering even more influential change in the local health and social care system.



Left to right; Bournemouth Councillor Barry Goldbart, Chris Wakefield and Healthwatch Dorset Champion John Pearce, Olympic handballer.

Huge Success for the first 'Being Well, Well Being' event

Healthwatch Dorset Making a real impact on local health and social care.





June 2013 saw the first ever 'Being Well, Well Being' event take place at The Lighthouse in Poole, with nearly 500 visitors in attendance. An initiative taken by Healthwatch Dorset, the free event was designed to celebrate health and wellbeing in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole and support local people to lead healthier and happier lives.

Many local organisations came together on the day to show that there are a range of different ways to improve wellbeing from singing and dancing, to eating well, gardening and volunteering. There were films, talks, music sessions, demonstrations, activities and many prizes to be won. Healthwatch Dorset was the main driving force behind the event, which was organised with its partners on the Health and Wellbeing Boards - the local NHS,

local councils and the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Martyn Webster from Healthwatch Dorset said,

“We were absolutely bowled over by the response we had at the event in June last year. There were crowds of people coming through the door - it was such a huge success. One of the most popular activities was the Handball demo by British Olympic Handball Team member John Pearce. We also had a Wishing Tree where people could leave their thoughts on ways to improve Health and Social Care services in Dorset; and we have over 300 wishes - absolutely phenomenal.”

One attendee said

“This is fantastic; I really didn't realise all this help is out there for us to access. This is a brilliant day to showcase the health and wellbeing services available to everyone. These events should happen on a more frequent basis.”

Dr Forbes Walton from NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, the new GP led organisation responsible for planning and funding local health services said,

“We all need to take responsibility for our own wellbeing and this event was designed to help people know what is out there - and I think the day achieved that.”



Investing

in our local communities



One of our passions at Healthwatch Dorset is investing in community groups that are actively trying to make a tangible difference when it comes to health, social care and wellbeing across Dorset. We not only give our time to help these groups succeed, but we have donated and invested over £25,000 to make their projects become a reality - an investment that has more paid than its share of dividends!

Here are just some of the many groups we are working with...

Intercom Trust

The Intercom Trust is an inspirational group of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Gender, Transgender) people. We have given them help, support and funding to survey the health and care needs of older LGBT people across Dorset.

We were delighted to provide funding and support to get this important survey underway, and Intercom Trust have been collating information and feedback. This survey is being promoted heavily to their target audience and Intercom will be writing up an extensive report of their findings, the results of which we will be using to influence improvements in services.

What is great is that this survey is being run across Devon and Cornwall too, which gives Intercom a perfect platform to compare their data across the South West.

View the survey here: www.lgbt.voicesinaction.com

Using video to make Dorset more Accessible

We're delighted to be working with **Access Dorset** to support them to produce five films to help raise the profile of issues faced by people with disabilities, older people in our community, and carers. Access Dorset is a user led organisation and registered charity, run by disabled people, older people and carers. They work to remove the physical, attitudinal and communication barriers that exist and are faced daily by disabled people.

Jonathan Waddington-Jones, Chief Executive of Access Dorset, commented:

“Access Dorset have a need to raise the issues that are of great importance to our constituents (disabled people, older people and carers) through the medium of film, and to be able to influence service providers and decision-makers to raise awareness of the health and social care issues that are important to us. Funding from Healthwatch Dorset will enable us to make five important such films.”

Jonathan was also kind in his praise of our involvement:

“We would like to credit the support received from Healthwatch Dorset in our virtual centre for independent living and welcome the opportunity to promote Healthwatch Dorset through our many channels of communication with our members.”

The films will also be broadcast on YouTube, and Healthwatch will be sharing these across our social media platforms - see the back page of this magazine for ways to follow us online!

Dementia Awareness – Bournemouth University

We are proud to have been part of a joint project between **Bournemouth University**, **Bournemouth University Dementia Institute (BUDI)**, the **Alzheimer's Association** and **NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)**.

The video challenges potential gaps in perceptions and understanding about dementia, promoting an inclusive and supportive society for people affected by dementia. There is also an online survey, which aims to look at people's experience to establish whether watching this video has started to change or reinforce existing attitudes towards dementia issues.

The video, which was promoted during May's Dementia Awareness Week, was broadcast across YouTube, and you can watch it below:





Face 2 Face

Breaking down the stigmas attached to mental health is an area that warrants much attention. An art project by [Zoofish](#) and the [Richmond Fellowship](#) was one that caught our attention, and our investment too. Healthwatch got right behind this project and funded some much-needed social media training. A number of Richmond Fellowship volunteers were recruited for the project - all of whom have lived with and had experience of dealing with mental health issues.

Through this project, the volunteers attended events and festivals across Poole and Dorset, and invited the public to take part in various arts activities while engaging them in conversations about mental health, with the ultimate aim being to challenge stigma around this often difficult-to-broach subject.

We helped get their art project promoted across social platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, and in return, the project helped us by promoting Healthwatch Dorset at the events & festivals they attended.

Someone To Turn To

One of our biggest aims is to improve local health and social care services. To help that happen, sometimes our role is being a "bridge", bringing together people who use the services with the people who provide or commission them.

In October 2013, Healthwatch Dorset was approached by the Bournemouth and Poole Bi-Polar Support Group who told us of some concerns they had regarding mental health crisis care. Upon hearing this, Healthwatch Dorset's Community Engagement and Outreach Officer, Louise Bate, contacted Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust (DHUFT) who provide mental health crisis care across Dorset.

Louise was able to secure a meeting between Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust and Bournemouth and Poole Bi-Polar Support Group so that they could directly hear the group's concerns and give the group an opportunity to influence the service.

Bournemouth and Poole Bi-Polar Support Group's experiences are now being directly used within reviews currently being conducted by DHUFT, NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and the Care Quality Commission.



Toby's Young Peoples Project

In partnership with [Toby's Project](#) we are working with young people from North Dorset including young people from the Gypsy Roma Traveller Community. The aim of the project is focusing on providing young people with correct information on a range of issues from healthy eating, sexual health and contraception, physical exercise, to drugs, alcohol, and smoking. All the young people who take part have the option of achieving a BTEC Level 2 in Peer Mentoring or alternatively a bronze, silver or gold Dorset award for volunteering - recognising their newly-learned skills to be able to inform friends and peers about the services on offer throughout the local area.

These young people are personally getting to know professionals within the health field who reassure them on issues such as confidentiality and discrimination. Through this personal connection they will now be able to reiterate what they have learnt and assure other young people on these issues.

Alongside this we are running a project which explores the barriers the Gypsy Roma Traveller community face when dealing with health and social care services, how they access them along with their experiences of such services. Through this we gathered information on how they feel health and social care services could be developed.



Assessment of **Health and Social Care** for **Young People** **Living with Disability**



The [Chatterboxes](#) is a Bournemouth based group of mainly young people who collectively produce a youth-led magazine that is designed and created by young disabled people living in the town.

The group we worked with consisted of young people between the ages of 10 - 20 years old, predominately from the Bournemouth and Poole area. The group work hard in showcasing what activities are available in the local area for young people with disabilities - as well as individual youth achievements and educating their community about disabilities.

Healthwatch Dorset recently undertook a project with the group to ascertain their thoughts and feedback on Health and Social Care services around their area. We gained people's views by running interactive workshops in schools, children's and youth centres and with local community groups, in which we gave people some square pieces of fabric on which they drew or wrote their opinions and experiences about service they had used as well as their suggestion about how to improve these services.

Some fantastic feedback was gathered not only on areas that the young people would like to see improved, but we were also there to hear their concerns and take them forward. The main outcome for us was to understand from them how local Health and Social Care services could be improved - and they weren't shy in coming forward! We received 126 comments. We were overwhelmed with their suggestions - here are just a few of them:

“More training to understand the individuals with disabilities. Also needs to diagnose symptoms better”

“Things to improve: More beds in the hospitals. More nurseries. More training about disabilities for doctors. More doctors”

“More mtf and ftm transgender equality in NHS rules for terms of care”

“More doctors for self-harm / depression, before it gets too late...”

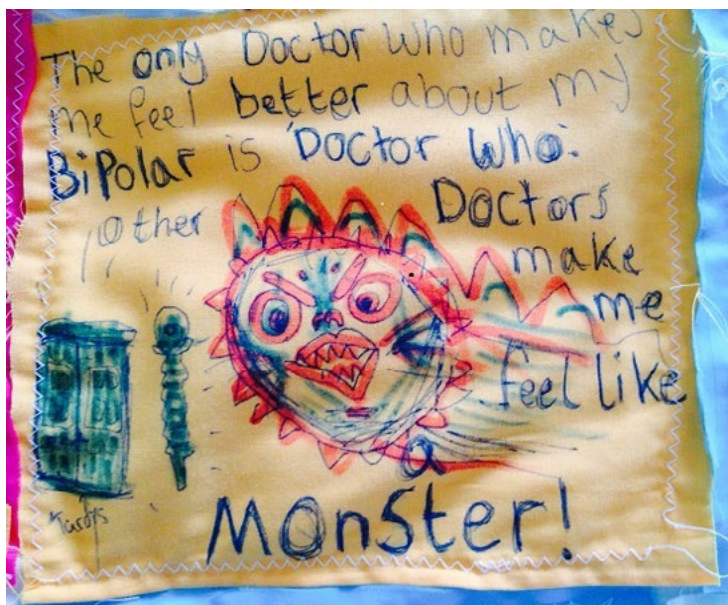
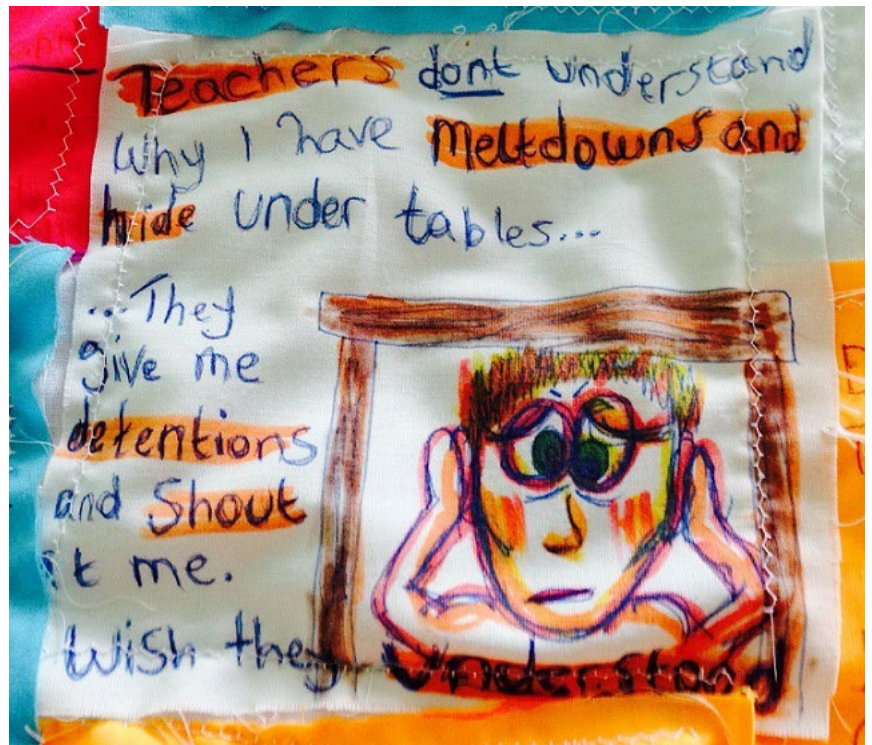
We believe this is an essential piece of work that we have developed as it really gets to the grass roots as to young people's concerns and thoughts on Health and Social Care. We are currently analysing all the feedback that we gathered and will shortly publish the results. Chris Wakefield of Healthwatch Dorset says:

“This has been a fantastic piece of work. It produced a very rich tapestry of feedback and information for us to take forward and discuss how services might be improved as a result”.

Poppy Sargeant, Disability Youth Volunteer Advisor for the [Chatterbox](#) group said:

“We've really enjoyed working in partnership with Healthwatch Dorset. This project has enabled us to collect the views of young people and display their thoughts in an interactive and creative way. Thanks, Healthwatch!”

The pictures show the tapestry that the young people produced highlighting their feedback on the questions we put to them.





PLACE

Assessments



During 2014, a number of our fantastic Healthwatch Champion volunteers have taken part in 14 PLACE assessments. PLACE stands for Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment.

They take place in all hospitals delivering NHS-funded care. PLACE assessments put patient views at the centre of the assessment process, and use information gleaned directly from patient assessors to report how well a hospital is performing in the areas assessed - privacy and dignity, cleanliness, food and general building maintenance. It focuses entirely on the care environment and does not cover clinical care provision or staff behaviours. The hospitals we visited including Poole, Bournemouth, Weymouth and Portland, as well as Dorchester County Hospital.

It's very important that a good environment is delivered as standard when dealing with health care and where standards do fall-short, we should be able to draw it to the attention of managers and hold that service to account. After each assessment a report is submitted,

which is then published online at the [Health and Social Care Information web site](#).

One of our Healthwatch Champions, Mike Osmond took part in this project and visited seven hospitals. We spoke to Mike about his role in this activity. He tells us

“It was a fantastic project to be involved in, especially as I have a background in the NHS - so it was great to see it from the other side. We were given full training before we began our visits. I found it really rewarding to be involved in such a project - and knowing that the information we gathered will go towards improving the services of the NHS is fantastic.

“All the staff in the hospitals were very much involved and some of the Senior Staff we met said that they will find the feedback most beneficial.”

When the final reports are published and made available, Healthwatch Dorset intend to work with a number of the hospitals to ensure that the shortcomings identified by PLACE are rectified.

Come and help us!

Our Healthwatch Champions really are our lifeblood – without their help and support there is no way we could deliver the service that we offer, and do the work that we do. Our Volunteer Officer, Chris Wakefield, is tasked with recruiting and supporting all of our Champions, and over the last year we are very proud to say that we have recruited over 160 volunteers spread across all parts of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

But we need more! As Healthwatch here in Dorset grows, so does our need for even more Champions. Perhaps YOU can help! How much of your time it takes is up to you – and it's mainly simply telling people about us and what we do and encouraging them to talk to us! That's it – championing Healthwatch Dorset! You can read about just one of our Champions and what she's been doing for Healthwatch Dorset on the [next page](#).

It's not only individual people who can become Healthwatch Dorset Champions. But just as importantly we're recruiting organisations (businesses, charities, community groups) who can help the invaluable work of Healthwatch.



We are now engaging with organisations throughout Dorset and encouraging them to become Organisation Healthwatch Champions. All your organisation has to do is to promote Healthwatch to your organisations' members or participants and encourage them to share with us their experiences – good or bad – of health and care services with suggestions as to how things could be improved.



Kathy Garcia

An interview with one of our incredible Healthwatch Champions

One of our army of Healthwatch Volunteers is Kathy Garcia - who's been with us since the start of Healthwatch back in April 2013.

One of our army of Healthwatch Volunteers is Katherine Garcia - who's been with us since the start of Healthwatch back in April 2013. Katherine has been involved in a number of our projects including PLACE Assessments; taking part in Events and Exhibitions; networking on our behalf with other Organisations, as well as our Mystery Shopping of GP Surgeries (see page 28). So we asked Katherine about volunteering for Healthwatch and what she herself gets out of it. She says, "It's great to be involved in such a fantastic organisation like Healthwatch. Chris (Volunteer Officer) is helpful, supportive and encouraging in whatever we are asked to be involved in. I really enjoy listening to people and hearing their experiences of their local Health

Care - and it's nice to know that we're here to listen to their issues and help take them forward for them - in order to make a change and hold services to account.

Kathy went on to say,

 "I've met such a diverse array of people of the last twelve months, and I've really enjoyed working with Healthwatch. I'm proud to say that I'm a Healthwatch Champion. Being a champion has also helped to build my self-confidence. I have certainly become a huge advocate of Healthwatch and I talk to everyone who I come across about the difference we can all make by sharing our thoughts on Health and Social Care services, in our local area, with Healthwatch. It's been such good fun being part of the Healthwatch team and I can't wait to see the results of the work that we're doing."

If you would like any more information about volunteering for Healthwatch Dorset please contact Chris Wakefield (Volunteer Officer) on 0300 111 0102 or visit www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk

Helping Parent Carer Groups find... a voice

This year Healthwatch Dorset has been working with 3 parent carer groups across the county. While working with us, all three groups expressed concerns about the speech & language therapy service. They felt the service was difficult to access with long waits for first appointments. The inability to easily access the service was clearly a major concern for all these parents and an issue that

needed to be addressed. As such we took their feedback and shared it with both the speech & language therapy service provider, Dorset Healthcare, along with a joint scrutiny committee of the local councils. Over the next couple of months, Healthwatch Dorset will be paying close attention to the service in order to discover whether these issues have improved.



Our Literature Super-Champions

Within our group of Healthwatch Champions exists a special group, a Reading Group who all have a special way with words. On a regular basis, local authorities and all NHS organisations share with us literature they produce to do with local health and social care. It is the job of our Reading Group to ensure they are easy to read. Thanks to the Reading Group, documents which can often seem confusing gibberish to people who aren't medical professionals are now readable - meaning that the local community can now read, understand and keep up to date with important health and social care changes. These

Healthwatch Champions, who come from all walks of life, from retired publishers and editors to avid crossword fanatics, are also asked to check such things as grammar and spelling mistakes, and to comment on other elements of the literature. The group works "virtually" - that is they work and communicate online. In short, they provide a unique editing service that gives even the most technical documents a human voice.

If you would like any more information, please contact our Volunteer Officer - Chris Wakefield (all our contact details are on [page 34](#)).

Dorset's MPs are onboard with Healthwatch

Over the past year Healthwatch Dorset has been liaising with the Members of Parliament from constituencies across Dorset. A lot of the MP's in Dorset are now Healthwatch Dorset Champions! This means that, as Healthwatch Champions, the MP's are able to tell their constituents about us; signposting people to us when they hold their local surgeries, speaking with residents, pointing those with any queries or concerns in the right direction. Furthermore, as Healthwatch Champions, any concerns you raise to your local MP regarding health and social care will now, if appropriate, be reported to us at Healthwatch Dorset. This means that Healthwatch Dorset, backed by Dorset MP's, will now have even more influence on local health and social care services to make sure your voice is heard; ensuring local people will get the best out of their local services.



Pictured - Conor Burns MP, who says he is absolutely delighted to be a Healthwatch Champion.

Hearing everyone's voice ,



The views and experiences of local communities are essential to the work we do. But some people more than others feel that their voice isn't heard. At Healthwatch Dorset we know that everyone's opinion matters and as such we strive to get everyone's voices heard, particularly those who are seldom heard. That's the guiding principle behind the priorities of the work we're doing, both ourselves and in the work we do in collaboration with community groups.



This year, we've created two documents to support people with learning disabilities to express their views. The first was a single-question survey with visual aids, to find out what people with learning disabilities felt were the best and worst things about local health and social care. The second document was an easy-read poster calling for people with learning disabilities to become Healthwatch champions.

The documents gained high approval from our national body, Healthwatch England, and were forwarded to MENCAP, the leading UK charity for people with learning disabilities. Following from our work, Healthwatch England are now working with **MENCAP** to produce further documents and a package which will help strengthen the voice of those with learning disabilities.



Teaming up with AFC Bournemouth

This year Healthwatch Dorset has begun an exciting partnership with Dorset's most prominent Football club, **AFC Bournemouth**.

The relationship began after an exploratory meeting between AFC Bournemouth and Manager of Healthwatch Dorset, Martyn Webster, where they found that there was a large amount of crossover between the work both organisations do within the local community. From this meeting, a project has developed which will soon be delivered by AFC Bournemouth alongside our team here at Healthwatch. Utilising the knowledge and skills of Healthwatch, AFC Bournemouth will work with our team here at Healthwatch Dorset to engage with young people and families in communities across Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset through the power of football. The aim of the project is to tackle inequalities, celebrate diversity and encourage health and wellbeing - not only in terms of

physical fitness but also in terms of how we think about, and live with, the people around us.

Rob Mitchell, Commercial Director of AFC Bournemouth says

“We are absolutely delighted to work with Healthwatch Dorset, when we were first approached to work with them locally we jumped at the chance - and have now developed this fantastic project hand in hand with Healthwatch which will have a huge impact on communities across the County.”



Martyn Webster, Manager of Healthwatch Dorset with Rob Mitchell, Commercial Director of AFC Bournemouth, behind the scenes at Goldsands Stadium.



Something to complain about at Dorset GPs?



Every GP surgery in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole - 101 in total - have been “mystery shopped” by our army of volunteers, to see how easy it was to make a complaint. Between January and March 2014, Healthwatch Dorset sent a fully trained team of volunteers to all 101 GP surgeries across Bournemouth, Poole and wider Dorset, and we have now published a [report on our findings](#).

Mystery shoppers recorded how well their enquiries were dealt with. They also recorded the attitudes of staff in dealing with their enquiry and whether additional information was available on practices' websites.

Dr. Samuel Johnson, Chair of Healthwatch Dorset, commented:

“Most people’s first point of contact with the NHS is through their GP service and this is where Healthwatch Dorset wanted to establish whether people are being empowered and encouraged to raise concerns or make complaints.

Overall, our mystery shoppers were greeted with courtesy and attended to promptly. But findings also suggest that there is some work to be done in ensuring that people receive current, up-to-date, comprehensive and accessible information to allow them to make decisions and to feel that making a complaint is a positive and welcomed form of communication. As a result, our seven recommendations for GP practices include reviewing all their information, both written and web-based, and encouraging and training staff to be open and positive to people who wish to express any concerns.

“Our volunteers did a fantastic job in covering so much ground - their feedback is absolute gold dust for us. Every GP surgery in Dorset has been visited and formed part of our report - the most extensive ever in the county.”

One of these GP Practice Managers, Mrs Karen Rumsey, from The Tollerford Practice (West Dorset area) commented:

“These findings are extremely interesting and the report rather informative. We will do our best to act on the recommendations - This is just what general practice needs. It is all too easy to become complacent or to be stuck in the past.”

The report from Healthwatch Dorset, entitled “Something to Complain About”, along with recommendations for action has been sent



to the NHS with an aim to influence positive change in the system. Already we have had good feedback from local GP practices:

“I really do feel that the mystery shopper report has brought to our attention a serious flaw in our system so I am very happy that this exercise has been carried out. We really do appreciate it here and we find the report in no way critical. In fact the more we can change for the better the better service the patients will have!”

“I can see where we need to improve which I found enormously helpful.”

“I can confirm that we will adopt the recommendations and update our website to host a complaints section.”

“Any guidance on how we can improve our services is always welcomed.”

“We had a management meeting this morning to discuss the report. As a result we have made immediate improvement to the website, placing our full complaints leaflet on it with an individual signpost on the home page... We will also be including details of



Martyn Webster, Healthwatch Dorset Manager, explains the outcomes of ‘mystery shopper’ investigation

the inspection on our next quarterly patient newsletter which will be available in hard copy and on our website.”

“Will now use your report to jazz up our training review and make us all stop and think about how we respond. Also very useful to make me check our website to see how accessible the information is (very) and how up to date (not very) so next on my To Do list now!”

We have also had feedback on our report from NHS England, who called it “marvellous”. In fact, they liked it so much they have asked us to do another Mystery Shopper exercise - this time on another group of healthcare providers across our area.

Coming up for Healthwatch Dorset in the next 12 months

Healthwatch Dorset has had a busy first year in operation. But there's a lot more to be done.

We're about to publish a report on a series of in-depth interviews we've done with people using mental health services in two localities - Central Bournemouth and North Dorset. We also interviewed people from the organisations who commission and provide those services. We hope our report will stimulate discussion and we plan to bring people together later in the year to talk together about what we've learned from the project and how people think mental health services could be improved.

We've just submitted a report to a Dorset County Council special enquiry that is looking into the non-emergency patient transport service provided in Dorset (the report will be available on our website from June 2014). Our report sets out the feedback local people have given us about the service and also comments on the difficulties the service has experienced since it began in October, 2013. We're going to be working with E-zec, the company who provides the service, to help them develop the ways in which they gather and respond to customer feedback.

We've also just written commentaries on the Quality Accounts produced by the major hospitals in Dorset and Dorset Healthcare. (A Quality Account is a report about the quality of services by an NHS healthcare provider, produced by the provider themselves.) Our commentaries give our take on how well they've achieved the targets they set themselves and also summarise what we know of what local people think about their services. They will be published on our web site from the end of June 2014.

In the summer of 2014 we're contributing to a Special Enquiry being undertaken nationally by Healthwatch England into the experiences of people being discharged from health and care settings (hospitals, care homes etc.). Our focus here at Healthwatch Dorset will be on the experiences of older people who have been discharged from hospital.

Over the next 12 months, we plan to undertake a project working with councils and care agencies to find out what people think of domiciliary (home) care across Dorset.

We also plan to undertake a number of unannounced visits to health and care providers. This is a great way to see health and social care services being delivered in action, and to learn what other changes might be necessary in the system.

NHS England liked our Mystery Shopper report about GPs so much; they've asked us to do another Mystery Shopper exercise about another group of health providers. We can't tell you yet who they are, because it wouldn't be a mystery then!

Learning from the work we've been doing with the Royal Bournemouth Hospital, we're going to be talking to the other major hospitals in our area about extending our work with them.

But no matter what, you can rest assured that we will go on being the consumer champion for our local Dorset community, being out there - along with our team of dedicated Healthwatch Champions - to enhance the delivery of our health and social care services.



Out & About

Two or three times a week we take our Healthwatch stand out and set it up at events all over Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth - in shopping centres, community venues and so on. In our first year we've done this over 100 times. It gives us a great opportunity to meet people and talk about who we are and what we do: to hand out literature and information about Healthwatch, including feedback forms that people can fill in to tell us their views on local services. You can find details of where we are and when on the [Events page](#) on our web site.

healthwatch
Dorset

your
voice counts

Have your say on health and social care in Dorset
www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk
0300 111 0102



Facts & Figures



Money Matters

Each local Healthwatch is funded by the local council, using money allocated for this purpose by central government for the purpose. In the case of Healthwatch Dorset, the funding comes jointly from three local councils - Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and Borough of Poole. In the financial year 2013-2014 this funding amounted to £446,700.

On staffing (including staff working on Community Engagement and Outreach, Research, Volunteer support and the telephone helpline, together with staff in Citizens Advice Bureaux, administration and finance staff, management, training and supervision), office and running costs (overheads) we spent £338,040. On projects (including reviews of services and research projects); Engagement and Outreach (organising events and meeting groups and individuals to get their experiences of, and views on, their local health and social care services); Marketing and Communication (including e-bulletins, newsletters, advertising, web site etc.); the Community Investment Fund (support to local community groups); Meetings costs and reimbursement of the out-of-pocket expenses of Healthwatch volunteers, we spent £22,406.

We ended the year with surpluses on our original Engagement and Communications budgets, which we have carried forward to fund more Community Investment Projects and to increase our communication and marketing in the coming year.

Enter and View

Each local Healthwatch holds the power of Enter and View. We have the power to enter (announced or unannounced) any premises where publicly funded health or social care services are being delivered, and view the services being delivered there. In the year 2013-2014 we did not use this formal power, as we were able to enter and view services as we wished by agreement. However, in the coming year we will be conducting a number of unannounced visits and these will be done under the power of Enter and View.

Requests for Information

In the course of our work, we have reason to request information from NHS bodies and local authorities, to gather data and collect evidence about local services. Sometimes we do this through the formal process of an FOI (Freedom of Information Request). In the year 2013-2014 we made one FOI, to all 101 GP practices in Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. 28 practices responded within the required period of 20 working days. Many more responded to a reminder. 11 practices did not respond at all.

The Healthwatch Trademark

As the organisation that holds the contract from Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and Borough of Poole to deliver the local Healthwatch service in their area, we are licenced by the Care Quality Commission, for Healthwatch England, to use the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the Healthwatch logo and Healthwatch brand).



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Dorset

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This report is available to the public on the Healthwatch Dorset web site (www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk).

It has also been sent to Healthwatch England, The Care Quality Commission, NHS England, NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, The Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSC) of Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole councils, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and Borough of Poole



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