

SPOTLIGHT

A Year In Review 2015/2016



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Healthwatch Dorset is the independent consumer champion for health & social care in Dorset.

We support local people to have a say in how health and social care services are designed and delivered. We take people's views and experiences to decision-makers (health and social care commissioners and providers) to show them what people think is good and what is not good. And we work with them to make improvements.

We also provide local people with information and advice, help them find their way round "the system" and make them aware of their rights and the choices available to them. In the following pages you can read about the sort of work we do, how you can be in touch with us and how you can give us your feedback on local health and social care services and help to make them better.



Welcome!

A few words from our Chair, **Joyce Guest**



Welcome to our latest Annual Report, highlighting the fantastic work of Healthwatch Dorset in the past year. It is a privilege to be involved with Healthwatch Dorset and to be working with a team who are so enthusiastic and completely dedicated.

Healthwatch Dorset, as the voice of the consumer, brings together three local voluntary organisations- Help & Care, Citizens Advice in Dorset and Dorset Race Equality Council.

This year, we've expanded our reach and helped more people than ever get their voices heard. We've even taken your voices right to the heart of Westminister, joining forces with fellow local Healthwatch organisations across the country to raise the real life concerns of people using health and social care services. You can read more about this story on [page 5](#).

Healthwatch Dorset has also been in the national spotlight as we spoke at the National Children and Adult Services Conference about our work with the 'Chatterboxes' collecting young people's opinions on Health and Social Care ([page 8](#)). On [page 7](#), you can find out about a new project we launched in 2016 working with young people called 'Be Yourself: Everybody Else is Taken' - this has gained some great traction already including support from Premier League football team AFC Bournemouth!

This year, Healthwatch Dorset has also focused on aiding diverse communities across Dorset. Dorset has a vibrant, multicultural community and, at Healthwatch Dorset, we have been doing what we can to ensure all voices are heard, from translating information about Healthwatch

into 5 different languages to recruiting a diverse mix of new Healthwatch Champions and our Community Investment Projects. Find out more on [page 13](#).

As always the work of our Healthwatch Dorset Champions, our loyal team of dedicated volunteers, has played a vital part in ensuring Healthwatch Dorset remains on the 'front line' of our community, championing the people of Dorset's views. On [page 14](#) you will be able to read about what our champions have been doing this year plus an interview with one of our valuable volunteers, Pia Graham on [page 15](#).

I'm also extremely pleased to say that Healthwatch Dorset was awarded at the 2015 national 'Healthwatch Network Awards of Achievement' winning the 'Making a Difference Through Volunteering' award. I feel this is a testament to the quality of work which we carry out throughout our county and beyond. At Healthwatch Dorset, we strive to do the very best we can to ensure the people of Dorset's voices are heard.

We are very proud of the fact that we are independent, transparent and accountable - and we're powerful. We have the strength of the law behind us. We are your consumer champion!

Very warmest regards from us all at Healthwatch Dorset to you,

Joyce Guest
Chair, Healthwatch Dorset



Joyce Guest celebrating our award with Healthwatch Champions

A Premier League

Healthwatch Dorset!



Healthwatch Dorset was thrilled to **win the 'Making a Difference through Volunteering' award** at the national 'Healthwatch Network Awards of Achievement 2015' event in July. This national event organised by Healthwatch England, which was held in Manchester, hosted over 400 attendees from the 148 local Healthwatch organisations and celebrated the very best of Healthwatch.

We were delighted that the award particularly recognised the contribution of our volunteers to our report 'Something to Complain About?' This report gave an insight into how supported or able people feel about raising a concern or making a complaint about their GP services. Many of our volunteers acted as "mystery shoppers", visiting all 100 GP practices in the county, to get the intelligence that fed into this report. As a result of the report, 48 local GP practices made improvements to their services.

The award was a great recognition of the huge contribution made by our hard-working and dedicated team of volunteers. Our volunteers are our eyes and ears in local communities, so that we know what people's views and

concerns are when it comes to their experiences of health and care services. We couldn't do it without them and we are very proud of their achievements. You can find out more about our volunteers on [page 14](#).

Along with winning this award, Healthwatch Dorset was also highly commended in the category 'Making a Difference With other Local Healthwatch' for our work to create 'Wessex Community Voices' with the local Healthwatch organisations in Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth.

We were also shortlisted in the category 'Making a Difference to Healthcare' for our report on Dorset's hospitals entitled 'Every One Matters'.

Projecting Your Voice



We took your views to the heart of Westminster

In October 2015, representatives from Healthwatch Dorset travelled to London to join forces with over 70 attendees from fellow local Healthwatch organisations to raise the real life concerns of people using health and social care services.

Attended by more than 30 parliamentarians, as well as key decision makers from across health and social care, the event at the Houses of Parliament, Westminster, provided an opportunity for Healthwatch Dorset to speak with Michael Tomlinson, MP for Mid Dorset & North Poole, about the work we have been doing to shape local services on behalf of Dorset residents, including:

- Our project on home care, which gathered feedback from over 700 people across Dorset
- Creating changes to our local hospitals following the publication of our report "Every One Matters"
- Highlighting problems with mental health crisis care

Joyce Guest, Chair of Healthwatch Dorset, explained:

"Over the last year Healthwatch Dorset has had many successes, including making improvements to

GP surgery patient information, access to dentistry and we also won a 2015 national award for our volunteers, which we're really proud of. This event was a wonderful opportunity to speak to MPs about our local work and to look at the national impact of Healthwatch."



Michael Tomlinson MP said:

"It was wonderful to hear more about the work of my local Healthwatch and I'm keen to support this project which enables local people to really influence their health & care services".



Healthwatch Dorset Champion, Eileen Mitchell told us what the day meant to her:

"It was a very interesting day and I was pleased to have been able to speak to a Dorset MP, particularly about local issues and of my experience as a Healthwatch Champion. Joyce and I even managed a short time in the Gallery of the House of Lords, which was enlightening!"

The reception was hosted by national body Healthwatch England to mark the launch of its third annual report "People as Partners" and highlight the work of the Healthwatch network nationwide.



Shaping the future of Dorset's health services

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the group responsible for commissioning the majority of NHS services in the county, is undertaking a major review of health care in Dorset.

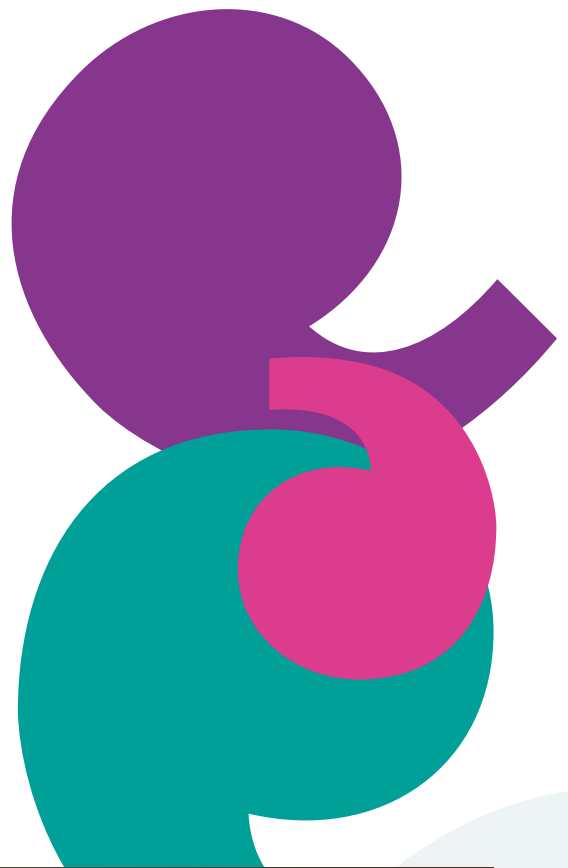
At Healthwatch Dorset over the past year, we have been continuing to hold regular discussions with the CCG and offering advice, particularly about their plans to engage and consult with patients and the public across Dorset. We have emphasised the importance of reaching as many of the general public as possible, to explain (in plain English!) what is being proposed, to listen to people's views and to show how they have taken those views into account when making their final decisions.

Since Dorset CCG released their proposals for changes to Dorset's acute hospitals, there's been a lot of public

interest in this issue. To help provide local people with clear information we have begun a Question & Answer page on our website. If you have any questions about the review, which you'd like to ask anonymously, please contact us & we will continue to add to the Q&A's: <http://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/qas-dorset-clinical-services-review>.

It is expected that a period of formal public consultation will begin in the autumn of 2016 and that final decisions will be taken in the spring of 2017.

Find out more about the review at www.dorsetsvision.nhs.uk



Fobbed Off

In our first year, we carried out a Mystery Shopping exercise to find out what it's like to raise a concern or make a complaint about GP services.

This last year, we turned our attention to the services provided by the NHS Foundation Trusts in Dorset and we got in touch with everyone who had registered a formal complaint about any of the services delivered by either Dorset County Hospital in Dorchester, The Royal Bournemouth Hospital or Dorset HealthCare, the largest provider of healthcare in Dorset. We asked people what they thought about the actual process of making a complaint and what their experiences were like.

Having sent out 800 surveys we received a good response rate and some excellent feedback which will help us to guide and influence a more efficient, user-friendly complaints process. It was sad to find that the vast majority of the particular experiences people shared with us were negative. A phrase people often used about how they felt was "fobbed off"

and so we made that the title of our report. As a result of what people told us, we made six recommendations to the NHS Trusts about how they could improve people's experiences. We'll be monitoring what action they take.



Influencing the future of Dorset's Home Care Services

In 2015, we got in touch with everybody who was receiving home care arranged by Dorset County Council, Poole Borough Council, and a major local care agency.

Going out to around 3000 people, our survey resulted in people giving us some excellent feedback. This allowed us to produce an influential report entitled "Where The Heart Is," which showed that, whilst most people were satisfied with the service they were receiving, there were also major issues which needed to be resolved.

Delivering our evidence to care agencies, local authorities, NHS organisations, voluntary and community groups and local media outlets, we laid out a number of recommendations. These have influenced county-wide NHS and local authority initiatives, as well as


new specifications for Support At Home services being developed jointly by the local authorities in Dorset, which will now be more flexible and personal, putting a greater emphasis on the person receiving home care, their specific needs and the outcomes they themselves want to achieve.

We are continuing to hold bi-monthly meetings with local authority commissioners to ensure that our findings are being taken forward, advising commissioning authorities to involve and consult service users and their families more in the development of new home care services.



Be Yourself: Everybody Else Is Taken

At the start of 2016, we launched a new campaign called 'Be Yourself: Everybody Else Is Taken'. This project encourages young people across Dorset to share their thoughts about health and wellbeing in a creative way.

 Emilia Chase, Healthwatch Dorset's Children and Young People's Officer, explains:


"We're encouraging anyone between the ages of 11 to 25 to tell us about their experiences of mental health, disability, caring for others or the struggles they face with identity, in a digital and creative format. We want to hear about both good and bad experiences."

"You can write a poem, story, diary entry, blog or vlog. Create a film, a piece of drama, dance or send in photography or illustrations about your experiences. Be as creative as you want and we'll use all the entries to help us improve local services."

Schools and colleges from across Dorset have taken part, including Oak Academy in Bournemouth, Oakdale Primary School in Poole and Weymouth College. The Arts University Bournemouth has also promoted the project through various activity days,

encouraging local young people to express their opinions on health and social care through creative means.

We're now working with youth groups & young carers to gather more feedback and engaging with young people through sports & activities.

 Jackie Cornish, National Clinical Director, Children, Young People and Transition to Adulthood at NHS England told us:

"It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Healthwatch Dorset on providing such positive and innovative opportunities for Young People to have a voice on issues that affect them."

"The Healthwatch Dorset project 'Be Yourself - Everybody Else is Taken' is a really clever and insightful way of gathering creative feedback from children & young people. At NHS England we strive to ensure



that public, patient and carer voices are at the heart of healthcare services.

"This project shows the value that giving children & young people the freedom to speak up in a way that suits them, by vlogs, poetry or artwork, has in creating rich & powerful feedback that can help us work together to create better services for the future."

Healthwatch Dorset is also delighted to gain the support of Dorset's Premier League football team, AFC Bournemouth, who have been playing their part in the campaign. You can read how "the Cherries" have been helping Healthwatch Dorset to tackle issues on [page 10](#).

At the National Children and Adults' Services Conference

In October 2015, Healthwatch Dorset were asked to give a presentation at the National Children and Adults' Services Conference. This annual conference is a vital event for all those with responsibilities for or interest in social care, children's services, education, health and related fields.

At the conference, we were able to speak about the work we have done, especially our work with The Chatterboxes (recently featured in British Patchwork & Quilting Magazine!), a Bournemouth-based group of young people with disabilities who collectively produce a youth-led magazine. We worked with the Chatterboxes to gather feedback on health and social care services from over 100 children & young people. All of this feedback was collated in a tapestry which the young people produced to highlight their opinions and their experiences. This project has proved an essential piece of work as it really gets to the grass roots of young people's concerns and thoughts on health and social care in the local area.

To be able to present our findings, together with Poppy Sargeant & Joely Colmer from the Chatterboxes, in front

of an audience of influential people was an ideal opportunity to get young people's voices on health and social care services heard.

Louise Bate, our Communications & Engagement lead, explains:

"the scale of the event was a bit daunting. But everyone was very welcoming and the conference was a fantastic opportunity to share some of the ways Healthwatch Dorset has worked with young people to discover their experiences of health and care."

To find out more check out our Storify of the event: <https://storify.com/HwatchDorset/healthwatch-dorset-at-the-national-children-and-ad>



Wessex Voices

Wessex Voices is the name of a partnership between five local Healthwatch organisations (Dorset, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton, and Portsmouth) and the Wessex Office of NHS England. Its aim is to promote and support the involvement of people across the region in the commissioning of their health services.

In 2015, the partnership produced a Good Practice Guide to patient and public involvement in commissioning and has subsequently been highlighted as a case study in NHS England's new Framework for Patient Participation in Primary Care Commissioning. It also came runner-up at the national Healthwatch Network Awards of Achievement 2015, in the category "Making a difference with other local Healthwatch".

Wessex Voices is now focusing on supporting local people to be involved in the commissioning of primary care, public health, and cancer services.

You can keep in touch with what Wessex Voices is doing by following on Twitter (@wessexvoices) or reading updates on the blog at wessexvoices.wordpress.com.



Turning the spotlight on ourselves.

In our third year of operation, our Healthwatch Dorset Board and our service commissioners (the three local authorities in Dorset) each decided to commission an independent, external organisation to conduct a review of our services. We were particularly interested to hear what other people thought we were doing well and what we needed to do better.

The reviews were carried out by Leeds Beckett University. The Review they carried out for our commissioners engaged with external stakeholders, including local voluntary and community groups, NHS organisations and local authority bodies. The Review they carried out for our own Board complemented that by focusing on the perspectives of our own Board members and staff.

The reports of the Reviews identified some of our strengths, which, included the contribution we make to strategic decision-making bodies, like the Health and Wellbeing Boards and the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees. They also highlighted our effectiveness in involving local people

and understanding their concerns. Areas that were identified as needing improvement included communication. We need to help more people understand what Healthwatch Dorset does and the contribution that it makes, and especially, awareness for our advice and information services.

To date, this has really helped us to understand how others see us, and we have developed an action plan to address the areas that the Reviews identified as needing attention. It was also great to hear that, overall, people thought we were good at helping services to improve, through our investigations and reports.



Who we asked



Over 90 stakeholders in Dorset gave their views. Roughly 25% each from the voluntary, NHS Provider, Local Govt and CCG sectors

What did they think?



More than half thought that Healthwatch Dorset is effective. "Very constructive, don't compromise independence or integrity, don't simply amplify"

What did they think?



There were areas where HW Dorset could improve and a few did not know enough about HW Dorset to comment

Strengths



Strategic

HW Dorset is valued for the contribution it makes at key bodies such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Clinical Commissioning Group, Governing Body and Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Communities

HW Dorset is effective at involving citizens and understanding their concerns. It is particularly valued for its work with seldom heard groups and Healthwatch Champions

Improving Services

HW Dorset is generally good at helping services improve through its investigations and reports

Improve



Priorities

It would help if HW Dorset was more explicit about how it developed its priorities; how these fit with those of others in the health and care system and brought them for discussion before they were signed off.

Communication

Quite a few people still do not understand what HW Dorset does and the contribution it makes; more work on communications is needed. This is the responsibility of the whole health and care system not just HW Dorset

Advice and Information

Many people are not aware of the HW Dorset Advice and Information role. This is probably not just an issue for HW Dorset but a larger one where the respective roles of different advice and information services in Health and Care should be considered.

Reports

There are different views with regard to what constitutes a good report that helps decision making - in particular the balance between quantitative and qualitative information. This could be an area that merits further consideration within the Dorset Health and Care system.



Funding

A quick comparison with other county level Healthwatch shows that funding for Healthwatch Dorset falls in the middle band based on spend per capita.



The challenges that HW Dorset and the Health and Care system face are consistent with those identified by the Kings Fund in their 2015 report for the Department of Health. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417395/KF_Healthwatch_will_c_over.pdf

Reaching out



Teaming up with AFC Bournemouth and tackling inequalities...together!



We are delighted that our continued and close working relationship with AFC Bournemouth, the Premier League football club, is still very much active. We were recently granted a donation from the club for the work we have been doing with the “Be Yourself: Everybody Else is Taken” campaign.

Our very own Martyn and Emilia went to the Vitality Stadium to receive a giant cheque, and also had an opportunity to meet and discuss Healthwatch Dorset with Jeff Mostyn, the club’s Chairman. Mr Mostyn told us:

“It’s great to be able to see this money used for the benefit of the local community”.

The monies raised by the club are donated to community projects that encourage and help young people and vulnerable groups,

or those that promote a healthy lifestyle in Bournemouth.

Martyn Webster, from Healthwatch Dorset, says:

“We’ve been working with AFC Bournemouth for a number of years. They have been supportive and encouraging of our work in the community and by teaming up with them to promote our Be Yourself project, we can encourage more children & young people to get involved and have their say.”



Working with diverse communities across Dorset

Alan (our Equality and Diverse Communities Officer) and Chris (our Volunteers Officer), have been leading a recruitment campaign for volunteers from amongst our diverse communities in Dorset.

This recruitment drive has brought us approximately 50 new volunteer Healthwatch Champions and spread the word about Healthwatch Dorset to a widening range of communities. These have included Ethnic Minority and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) communities, as well as people with disabilities.

Alan explains: 'The voice of our diverse communities about their experiences of health and care services is a particularly important one for Healthwatch Dorset. We are delighted that we have been able to learn so much more about the issues these communities encounter through our new Champions.'



Rooting for improved Dental Services

Last year we showed our commitment to giving people improved access to dental services when we released a report on Primary Care Dental Services.

We were then contacted by a Dorset GP who told us about problems being experienced by some patients suffering from acute dental pain. These included the lack of availability of NHS dentists - and that NHS 111 had referred people to GP Surgeries, Local Minor Injuries Units and GP Walk-in Centres, where there was no-one qualified or trained to manage dental pain.

We investigated further and collected evidence from GPs and patients across the county and approached the Wessex Area Team at NHS England, who are responsible for commissioning Dental Services in Dorset, to discuss the issues that had been raised. In response, they have undertaken a review of urgent care dental services and are now looking into ways to improve communication between GPs and dentists, as well as providing extra call handling training for NHS 111 staff. This has also helped to influence NHS 111 providers across England to discuss national improvements to the Acute Dental Pain Pathway.

As part of our ongoing campaign to get people the right dental treatment, in

November 2015 we arranged for the Toothbus to provide free dental check-ups at the Routes to Roots (R2R) drop-in for homeless people in Poole. R2R spoke to Healthwatch Dorset after they tried, unsuccessfully, to access urgent dental care for several of their clients.

Gabi Sanger-Stevens from R2R told us,

'We support a number of homeless & vulnerably housed people who were refused urgent dental care because they weren't registered with a dentist. We're very grateful to Healthwatch Dorset for getting us a meeting with NHS England to share our concerns, which led to this successful event with the Toothbus.'



Stephanie outside the Toothbus before her dental check up



Calvin Philip - Toothbus promoter

Easy Reading

Last year we publicised some new national complaints guides, produced by Healthwatch England & Citizens Advice. Some of our followers on social media asked us if they were available in an Easy Read version. Healthwatch England and Citizens advice told us they had no plans to produce an Easy Read version and so we decided (with their permission) to make it happen ourselves.

Working alongside Poole Forum, a speaking up group run for and by people with learning disabilities, we produced an easy-read version of the complaints guide.

The initiative received recognition from the National Board at Healthwatch England and we have since been

working with them and Citizens Advice to replicate this project on a national scale. With Healthwatch England planning to produce further documents based on our work, we are proud to have been able to strengthen the voice of those with learning disabilities, not only in Dorset, but across the country.



Spreading the word

As part of our outreach to different communities, we have begun translating information about Healthwatch Dorset into different languages (Portuguese, Polish, Chinese, Arabic and Turkish so far) and are now distributing this translated material across the county.

This is an exciting initiative showing how committed we are to ensuring that the voices of people from ethnic minority communities on health and care services can be as strong as those of people from any other community.

In the picture: Bournemouth Chinese School Principal Kitty So with Alan Mercel-Sanca, holding the Chinese translation of information about Healthwatch Dorset.



Kitty So & Alan Mercel-Sanca



Investing in our Communities

Last year we relaunched our Community Investment Fund, which we use to support small grassroots projects and groups across Dorset that aim to improve the health and wellbeing of their local communities. We offer funding, mentoring and support to increase the support available from community groups and to enable local people have their say and get the best out of their health and social care services.

In 2016/2017 we are supporting 14 community investment projects, which include working with people with dementia, black and minority ethnic groups, ex-offenders, older people, children with learning disabilities, people with physical disabilities, long term conditions, mental health issues, homeless people and young people.

One of the projects we are investing in this year is the first-ever 'Parkinson's Dance Regional Roll-Out'. This project by Pavilion Dance South West addresses the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease, such as tremors, rigidity and difficulties with balance, coordination, posture, and walking, through dancing in a fun, stimulating, motivating and challenging, but safe, environment. The classes are run by two teachers, one a physiotherapist, to ensure the participants leave every week with a noticeable improvement in balance, coordination, and suppleness.

Our Chair, Joyce Guest, explains:

Long term health conditions, such as Parkinson's, can have a devastating impact on people and their families. This project promotes health and wellbeing in a fun environment, helps create friendships and offers support to carers as well.'

We are also supporting the setting up of a new social club for Dorset Blind Association (DBA) in Bridport. The social club for people who are visually impaired is the fourth of its kind to be set up – the other clubs are in Poole, Bournemouth, and Weymouth.

Jonathon Holyhead, CEO at DBA said:

'We're thrilled to receive this funding and with it the opportunity to start a new social group in Bridport for blind and partially sighted people of working age. Without support these people can easily feel cut off from people and things around them, struggle to access information, face huge difficulties getting around, have limited choice of activities and can often feel they are no longer free to decide for themselves how to live their lives. We don't think it's acceptable for anyone to face sight loss alone and this club will help to combat that.'

A full list of our current Community Investment Projects, as well as previous projects, can be found [here](#).



The first Parkinsons Dance Class in Sherborne



Healthwatch Dorset Champions



Volunteering - One Year On!

Our volunteer Healthwatch Champions are crucial to helping us engage with communities in every part of Dorset - and we are absolutely delighted to announce that we now have 340 Champions in total.

Just this year alone, our volunteers have put in an incredible 551 hours! Thanks to their work, we are able to develop and engage with the public through our Information Stands, which we run regularly across the county in shopping centres, health settings, libraries and at community events. They have also worked with the Care Quality Commission to support them to engage with the public when they carry out inspections of our local services.

A number of our volunteers have also taken part in PLACE assessments in our local hospitals. (PLACE stands for Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment and takes the form of site visits focussed on non-clinical aspects of the service buildings, food etc.)

Our Champions are gearing up to take part in our Care Home Project, which will be undertaken later this year. If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please feel free to contact us. The Champions will be undertaking observational work and talking to residents and staff in care homes.

One area that we have tried to develop during the last year is the diversity of our Champions and the extent to which they represent the whole population of Dorset. We now have Champions from across the diversity spectrum (more information about this can be found on [page 11](#)).

Here's some volunteering inspiration from one of our younger Healthwatch Champions, volunteering star - Jack Welch



Jack Welch, Healthwatch Dorset Champion

“Volunteering is a way to explore new opportunities and different ways of working. You can also meet new people and develop your networks. It's the variety that's always the most exciting!

For me, volunteering has helped me to build on social skills, communicate with others and be a bit more independent. You really develop that over time.

For someone thinking about volunteering, I would say go for it. If you spot something that might develop your skill set, help you move into employment or meet new people, get involved!”

You can read more about Jack's inspirational volunteering story [here](#).



Pia Graham, Healthwatch Dorset Champion

Interview with one of our **Champions**, Pia Graham...

Q: How long have been you volunteering with Healthwatch Pia?

A: "I first engaged with Healthwatch just over a year ago, but I was most active with the organisation in July and August in 2015. This is where I was tasked with meeting people in Boscombe and collating invaluable feedback on their experience in the health care sector in Dorset."

Q: We understand you've recently been recognised by the Mayor for the work you're doing with Healthwatch, tell us about that?

A: "I was a little bit surprised to be nominated to be honest, it's nice to be recognised but that's not why I do it. I must admit that I was somewhat embarrassed about getting the recognition as I don't feel like I've done enough for Healthwatch yet, as I've only been involved for 12 months. But I know there's the potential to be involved in more projects going forward. But nonetheless it's great to be recognised!"

Q: What projects have you personally been involved in since starting with Healthwatch Pia?

A: "My main role since working with the organisation is the community engagement work I was doing last summer. But I've also been involved in focus groups. I have also been responsible for writing up some of the feedback gathered from the engagement work."

Q: What do you get out of volunteering with Healthwatch?

A: "There really are so many great facets to volunteering - but one of the best ones is that I really do enjoy it. I am extremely passionate about the NHS and the fantastic service it provides, so to be involved in an organisation such as Healthwatch is great as in a small way my input can help develop the NHS further. This brings me a sense of satisfaction."

I've really loved meeting new people as well and most people you'll find are forthcoming and are happy to talk about their experiences as patients within the NHS. I have heard some very inspiring stories from patients, and other stories which further highlight the need for the invaluable feedback I provide through my engagement work.

I think it's important that we as volunteers are seen as providing an outlet and a platform for people to express their issues (either good or bad) with the health service."

Q: What do your friends think about your volunteering your time?

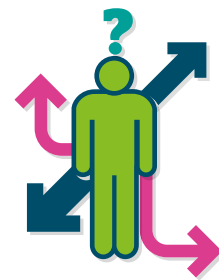
A: "They are all really supportive of what I'm doing, and are impressed with the ways I've been involved. They always show interest and are keen to hear what I've been up to. They can also see that it's helped my confidence and to know that I'm providing a listening ear to those who might not feel comfortable discussing their experiences and concerns within a more formal environment. We all think that volunteering is a great way to develop ones employability and shows commitment and willingness - all of which make for a good citizen in the local community."



Some of our volunteer champions



Informed & empowered



Healthwatch Dorset provides information and signposting to people about local health and care services and how to find their way round the system. We provide this service in **two main ways:**

Through our telephone helpline (0300 111 0102), where you can speak to one of our team during office hours on weekdays

In person at your local Citizen Advice Bureau:

- Citizens Advice Bournemouth, West Wing, Town Hall, Bournemouth, BH2 6DX
- Citizens Advice Bridport, 45 South Street, Bridport, DT6 3NY
- Citizens Advice Christchurch, 2 Sopers Lane, Christchurch, BH23 1JG
- Citizens Advice Dorchester and Sherborne, 1 Acland Road, Dorchester, DT1 1JW and The Manor House, Newland, Sherborne DT9 3JL
- Citizens Advice East Dorset, Hanham Road, Wimborne, BH21 1AS
- Citizens Advice North Dorset, 4 Newbury Court, High Street, Gillingham, SP8 4QX
- Citizens Advice Poole, Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road, Poole, BH15 2BU
- Citizens Advice Purbeck, Mill Lane, Wareham, BH20 4RA
- Citizens Advice Weymouth and Portland, 2 Mulberry Terrace, Great George Street, Weymouth, DT4 8NQ



Emila with a Dorset Learning Disability group

We know that there's an enormous amount of information out there - leaflets, websites and so on - but some information is complex, confusing, hard to interpret or even contradictory. Often people need to make sense of information at a time when they are feeling very stressed by their situation, their health or concerns about a family member. That's where Healthwatch Dorset comes in. Finding and explaining the information available to enable you to make an informed choice about your next steps.

Many people contact us to understand their eligibility for free NHS services, such as prescriptions or dental treatment, or around processes like Choose & Book. People often want to talk through the implications of taking a course of action - especially if they are considering using a complaints procedure. Such action can be lengthy and complex. Healthwatch Dorset advisers help people understand the process and establish what they hope to achieve.

Here are some examples of how we've been able to help.

Mrs. A's parents lived some distance away (out of Dorset). Her dad lived in a house he owned, and her mum had moved into a care home, her place there funded by the local council. Dad was finding it difficult to cope and a move to Dorset to live with Mrs. A seemed sensible, but this would mean also moving mum to a care home in Dorset. This raised all sorts of questions about how selling his home would then affect the level of care funding provided for mum, and whether any of the proceeds could be used to adapt Mrs. A's home for dad. Alongside this was the worry

about how mum would cope in a new care home. Mrs. A talked with a Healthwatch adviser at her local citizen advice bureau about how the system works and what various pieces of jargon mean, like "capital limits" and "deprivation of assets". The adviser was also able to give her information about other agencies who would be able to help her.

A patient being treated for terminal cancer was about to be discharged to residential care and was very unclear about whether he was going to have to pay for this. The Healthwatch Dorset adviser helped him establish that he was eligible for "NHS continuing care" so he would not be charged.

A young man had been 'sectioned' and placed in a mental care unit; he wanted to challenge this. The Healthwatch Dorset adviser realised that he had not been told about the Independent Mental Health Advocacy Service, a vital source of support for people in these situations, and put him in touch with them.

"A positive result, so stating one's case is worth it! Thanks for your support Healthwatch Dorset"

Quote from someone who contacted us for information about a GP surgery

On the Board



Every local Healthwatch has, by law, a seat on the local Health and Wellbeing Board(s): Joyce Guest, our Chair, is a member of the Bournemouth and Poole Health and Wellbeing Board and Margaret Guy, our Vice-Chair, is a member of the Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board.

Health and Wellbeing Boards bring together leaders from organisations across the local health and care system so that they can work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

We use our place on the Boards to highlight particular areas of concern reported to us by local people, to ensure that the Boards have people's real experiences in front of them.

We also have a role in advising the Boards on communication and engagement. One of the ways we've achieved this is by encouraging people to ask public questions at Board meetings via twitter. Our twitter initiative resulted in a national good practice award from the Local Government Association.

Both Health and Wellbeing Boards in Dorset are currently in the process of working together to renew their Health and Wellbeing Strategies, which set out the priorities for the actions they will take to improve the health and wellbeing of their population. These priorities are to:

- Reduce inequalities - in health and wellbeing
- Promote healthy lifestyles and prevent ill health - and also promote health and wellbeing
- Work better together to deliver prevention and early intervention at scale; high quality care; and better value.

We have used our place on the Boards to try to ensure that the Strategies:

- Address the inequalities in health and wellbeing experienced by all disadvantaged sub-groups of the population of Dorset - not just those living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods
- Are written in plain English and avoid the use of jargon and specialist terminology
- Set out clearly the goals for the next three years and how progress toward achieving these goals will be monitored.

Going forward for 2016/2017

Each year we draw up a list of priorities for our attention in the coming year, based on what local people have told us of their experiences of health and social care services.

In the year 2016/17, some of our priority areas are going to be:

- **Children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing**

You can read about our Be Yourself project on [page 7](#).

- **Mental health crisis care services**

We are feeding people's experiences of these services into the Acute Mental Health Services Review being carried out in Dorset, and will be working to ensure that the future of mental health services in Dorset is an integral part of the Public Consultation that will be taking place about the proposals set out in the Clinical Services Review ([see page 6](#)).

- **Care Homes**

We are planning a series of visits to care homes across Dorset, Poole, and Bournemouth.

- **A new round of Community Investment Projects**

14 new projects are starting in 2016.

- **Dental services**

We are investigating concerns brought to us about community dental services in East Dorset, and will be working with NHS England to make sure that local people are fully involved when Out Of Hours Dental Services are re-commissioned in 2016/17.

- **Home Care services**

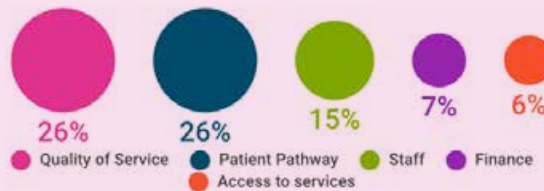
We are following up the recommendations we made following our investigation into home care services last year, in particular to make sure that the insights we gained are influencing a new pan-Dorset service specification.



Facts & Figures

Topics

These are the top five general topics people have wanted to share their views on (both good and bad).



Contacts

In the year 2015-16, we recorded 1,820 pieces of feedback from local people. The chart shows the main sources of that feedback as a percentage of the whole.



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 this period, we conducted a number of unannounced visits - to Dorset County Hospital, Poole Hospital, The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, St. Ann's Hospital and the Forston Clinic.

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 licensed by the Care Quality Commission, for Healthwatch England, to use the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the Healthwatch logo and Healthwatch brand).

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). But more often we do it informally. We made no FOI requests in this period.

Money

Each local Healthwatch is funded by the local council, using money allocated for this purpose by central government. 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 2015-2016 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 Bureaus, administration and finance staff, management, training and supervision), office and running costs (overheads) we spent £385,026.

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 £65,015.



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

It is also available in hard copy on request (0300 111 0102).

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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