

Loud and Clear: Making Your Voices Heard

A Year In Review 2014/2015



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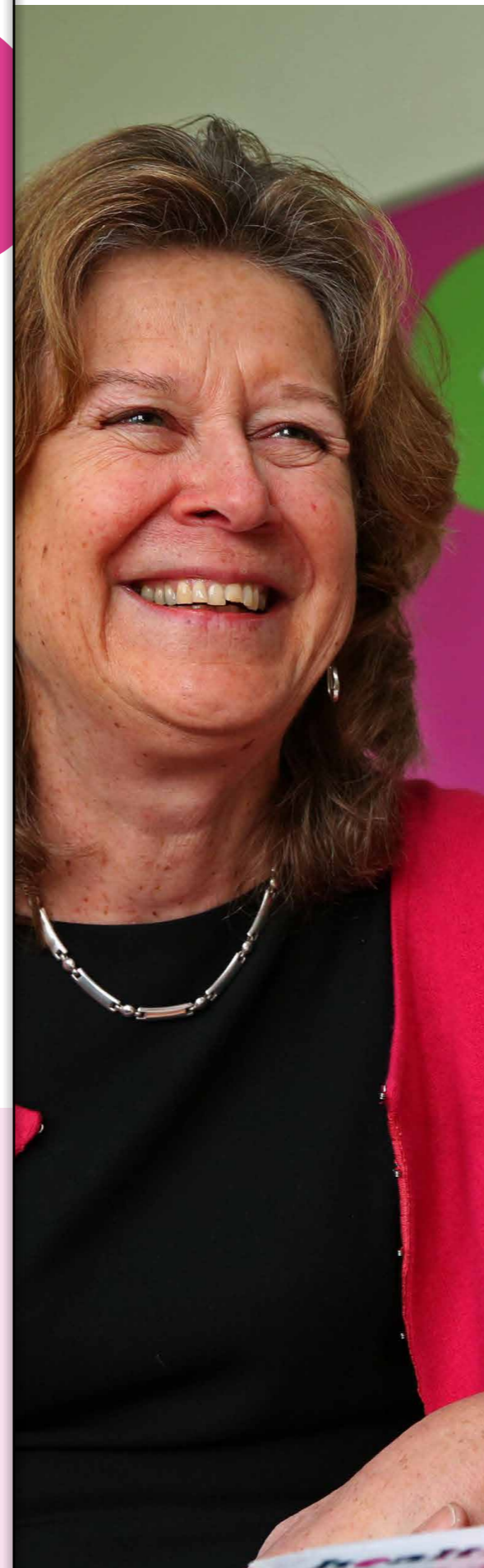
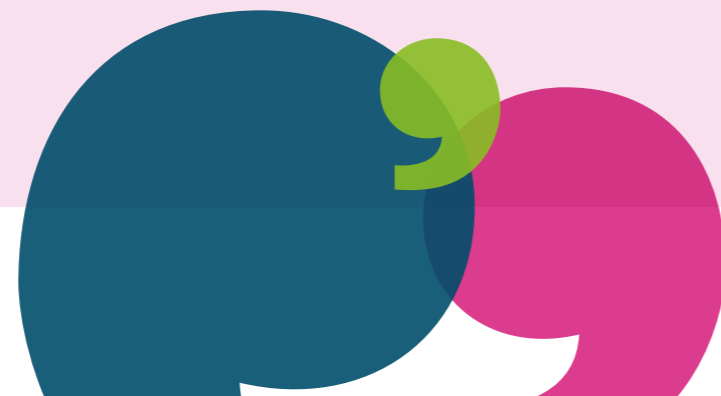
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Healthwatch Dorset is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Dorset.

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!



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 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 very important community services - Help & Care, Dorset Race Equality Council and Citizens Advice in Dorset. This year, we've expanded our reach and helped more people than ever get their voices heard. We've invested in projects that help the most vulnerable and this magazine includes some great examples of this work.

I am particularly concerned that there are still many of us who do not like to make a fuss or complain about the services they receive and it is vital that we represent them.

Our wide-ranging work includes help for those with Mental Health issues, the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community, people with disabilities, gypsy and traveller communities, children and carers. The health and social care system covers a wide range of people and we make sure no-one gets lost in that mix.

Our Mystery Shopper work (see page 14) is a great example of our influence. We pass recommendations onto Healthwatch England and NHS England and, as such,

can bring about change on a national scale, not just in Dorset.

Another fantastic example of our influence is our "Every One Matters" project which you can read about on page 12.

We've also used Social Media to engage with a broader age range throughout the community. Twitter is the perfect opportunity to give us feedback quickly and easily - and in 140 characters or less! We hope to inspire other regions to utilise new technology in this manner, too.

Most importantly we need to ensure that everyone in Dorset knows we are here and that we are their champions.

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





Reaching out via Social Media

We are delighted with the response to our social media strategy. We started reaching out on social media in 2013 and being an early adopter of new technologies has helped us stay ahead of the curve and reach as many people as possible.



We use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and more to engage with people and ensure that, no matter what your concerns, your voice can be heard.

In fact, Healthwatch Dorset has the most active social media community of any local Healthwatch in the country! We now have more than 760 Facebook 'Likes' and a weekly post reach of 5,000; we also have more than 3,500 Twitter followers.

Find Us On Facebook

We have recently [launched a poll on our Facebook page](#) so you can tell us what you know about Healthwatch and what you think of this report. The survey takes just a few minutes to complete and will help us to further improve our service in the coming year. How much do you know about us; and what can we do to help? Get online and join the conversation and help us action real change in the community! Together, with your help and feedback, we will continue to drive the necessary changes in the system.

Social Media helps us engage with younger people but it's also ideal for taking queries from those who may not be able to come to talk to us face-to-face (we're at your local Citizens Advice Bureau) or maybe have a concern that they would prefer to share in a more anonymous way. Combined with our interactive website, we make sure that you can send us your feedback 24/7 - we are listening!

We will continue to use Social Media to share photos, updates on our projects and to list events where you can come and meet our Healthwatch Champions, the

human faces behind the campaigns. Social Media is not just informative - it's fun! See the back page for a full list of contact information.

Tweet With Us

We've been working to get others using social media too. We have a seat on the two Health and Wellbeing Boards in Dorset. Those Boards are attended by the people in charge of local health and care services and at the beginning of their meetings they have a slot where they can hear and answer any questions sent in by local residents.

The Boards have been going two years but they had never received any questions from the public. So we set up a new system where people can send questions to us on Twitter and we make sure those questions are asked and answered at the beginning of the Board meetings - and it works!

Both Boards are now receiving and answering questions from the public. It's an example of how we're working to make sure local people's voices can be heard. And now we're tweeting live too from the Board meetings, so you can keep in touch as it happens.

In the past, meetings of the Boards were open only to those who could attend in person. However, now people can participate through social media, whilst audio recordings of the meetings are also available to the public online. With several new initiatives utilising the web, it's an exciting time as we are opening up our meetings to the world! Look out for the

hashtags and join the conversation. Follow Board meetings as they happen by using the hashtag #bpdhwb.

Connect with us - a list of all our social media channels:



Press and awards!

We are delighted that we've featured in the media, locally and nationally, on and offline. What's more, award nominations highlight our work and help educate the public about who we are, what we do, and how we can help.

We want as many people as possible to know where to find us! So we have widened our net this year to reach out to the media who, in turn, know that they can come to us to comment on any health or wellbeing issue.

On the Jeremy Vine Show

More than seven million listeners heard Martyn Webster, our Healthwatch Dorset Manager, take part in the Jeremy Vine show on Radio 2 (the UK's most popular radio news show) to talk about a local and national story about 'Bed Blocking' (a situation where hospital patients are well enough to leave hospital but are prevented from doing so by other factors like first needing care arranged for them at home or in a care home). We also appeared on BBC Radio Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio Solent, Wessex FM and Wave 105FM, BBC TV South Today and the BBC1 national Breakfast Show, as well as in local press and the national newspaper The Independent.

This national media opportunity was a great opportunity to join a UK-wide debate and also demonstrate how we in Dorset can influence national change.

Local Media Champions

All the key newspapers and free newsheets - notably the Daily Echo (whose website gets over a million hits a month), their supplements and Advertiser titles - are hugely supportive of Healthwatch Dorset.

An interview with our new Chair, Joyce Guest, earlier this year was a brilliant way to help us get the message across

that 'Your Voice Counts' and listed the numerous ways to get in touch with us. In terms of local radio and TV, BBC South Today and Radio Solent have interviewed both Martyn and Chris Wakefield, our Volunteers Officer.



Martyn Webster Featured on BBC South Today.



Building Healthwatch

within the community

Our partnership was formed by three local organisations - Help and Care, Citizens Advice in Dorset and Dorset Race Equality Council - across Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole.

We are constantly striving to build Healthwatch in our community to ensure we can reach as many vulnerable people as possible. As such, we are very proud of our close-knit relationship with the CAB and, in turn, they are helping raise awareness of Healthwatch Dorset and the services we offer the community.

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is often the first point of contact for people concerned about the health services they are receiving, or those with loved ones who are suffering and not sure who to turn to. This in turn helps us,

as the CAB are a well-known 'trusted brand' who are well placed to provide the face-to-face information and signposting service for Healthwatch Dorset.

The county's eight Citizens Advice Bureau are in Bournemouth, Bridport, Christchurch, Dorchester, Sherborne, Poole, Weymouth, Portland and Purbeck.



Citizens Advice Bureaus

East Dorset

Wimborne:
Hanham Road,
Wimborne,
Dorset BH21 1AS

Ferndown:
1A Princes Court,
Princes Road,
Ferndown,
Dorset BH22 9JG

Weymouth and Portland

2 Mulberry Terrace,
Great George Street,
Weymouth DT4 8NQ

North Dorset

4-7 Newbury Court,
High St, Gillingham,
Dorset SP8 4QX

Bridport

45 South Street,
Bridport,
Dorset DT6 3NY

Dorchester and District

1 Acland Road,
Dorchester,
Dorset DT1 1JW

Purbeck

Mill Lane,
Wareham BH20 4RA

Christchurch

2 Sopers Lane,
Christchurch, Dorset
BH23 1JG

Sherborne

Manor House,
Newland, Sherborne,
Dorset DT9 3JL



Speaking

Access Dorset
Nothing About Us Without Us!

Enhancing Everyday Lives in Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole

Up

Access Dorset is a local user-led organisation run by disabled people, older people and carers, working to remove the physical, attitudinal and communication barriers that exist and are faced daily by people.



Over the last year, we have supported Access Dorset through funding to create a series of films as part of their citizens journalist project, highlighting the experiences of local people. Below are two examples of the films.

We Should Get Support Right First Time

One of the videos focuses on a 19-year-old called Dan who wanted to move out from his childhood home and live independently. Because Dan was safe and supported in his family home he was not eligible for social services support. However, Dan felt that he wouldn't be

able to live a truly independent and successful life unless he moved away from his parent's house.

As such, Dan took the plunge and moved into a rented flat. However, soon after moving into his new home, Dan came across several problems which made him feel uncomfortable about living there. Dan did not feel safe or happy in the flat, however, neither did he want to move back to his parents' house, as he felt this would be taking a step back. As such Dan spoke with his social workers who were able to help Dan as, having moved away from the family home, he was now eligible for supported housing. Dan

moved into a supported flat and is now very happy in his new home.

Our aim in funding this video, which is now on the Access Dorset website, was to produce a video which can now help others like Dan by showing them there are options available for independent living.

However the video also raised an important question - should people receive the right support first time around? As mentioned in our aims for the upcoming year, this will be an issue we are aiming to look into further.

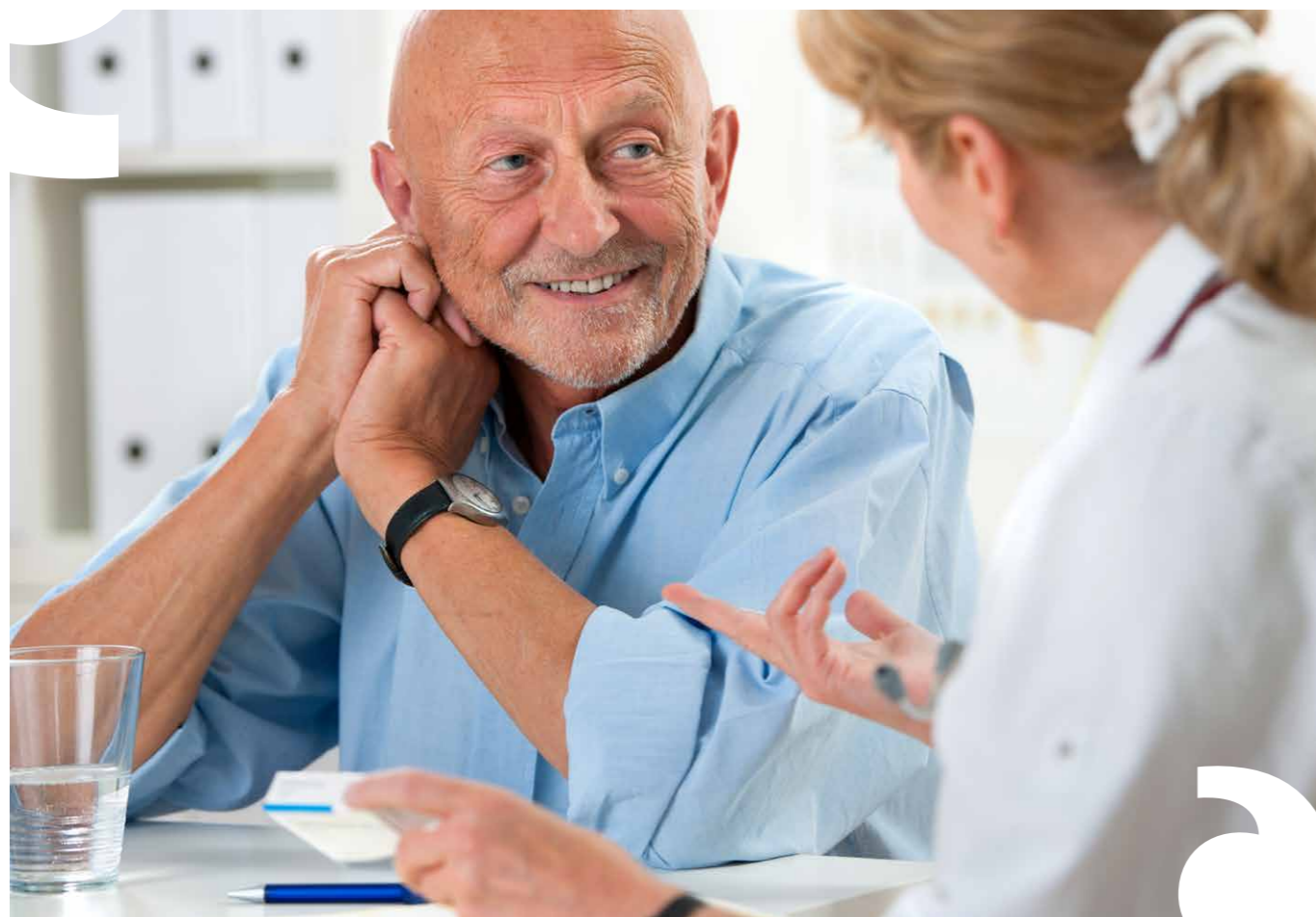
Watch the video below...





Patients In Control

Access Dorset has also made a new series of films called Patients In Control. The films support patients and carers to be more active in developing strategies to self-manage their own health care. One of the films - Having our voice & using our experience - features Healthwatch Dorset and you can **view it below**.

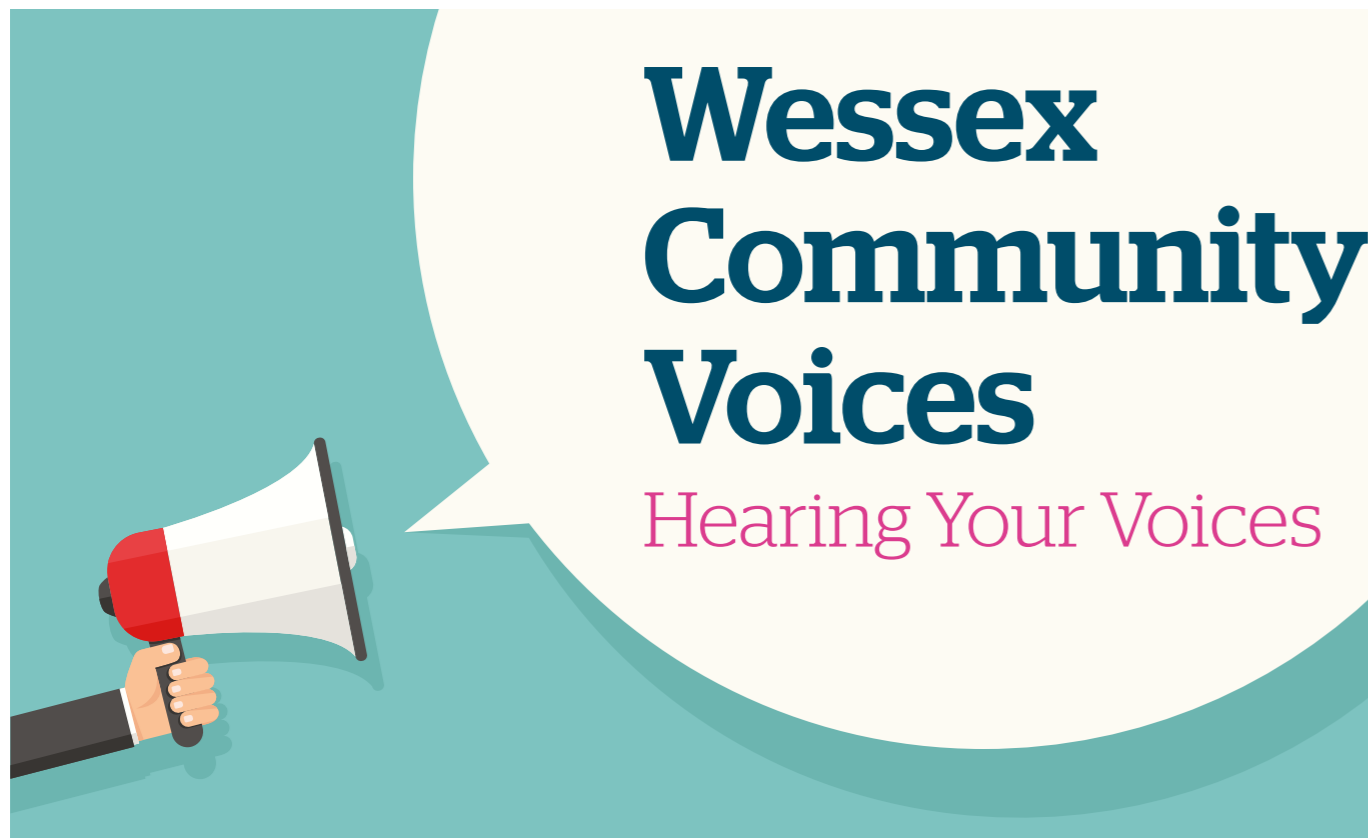


Care In The Home

We have begun an investigation into home care services. We have already sent out 2,600 surveys to everyone who has social service funded home care in Poole and Dorset at the end of April this year and had a brilliant response. We really appreciate people taking the time and trouble to respond to us when they have so much to deal with day-to-day, so thank you. We are currently analysing the results so keep an eye on the website and Twitter feed for the results.

This is only the first stage - we're now surveying people who pay for their own home care services and then we're going to survey people who work as home care support workers, people who run care agencies and people who commission home care services. No stone will be left unturned so look out for these surveys - it's your chance to help us help YOU!

By the time all the surveys are complete, we will be able to build a picture of what people think of home care services - both what is good and what could be improved. This will help people make informed choices when it comes to home care but also help people feel empowered. If you are not happy with the way things are going, we are here to help you.



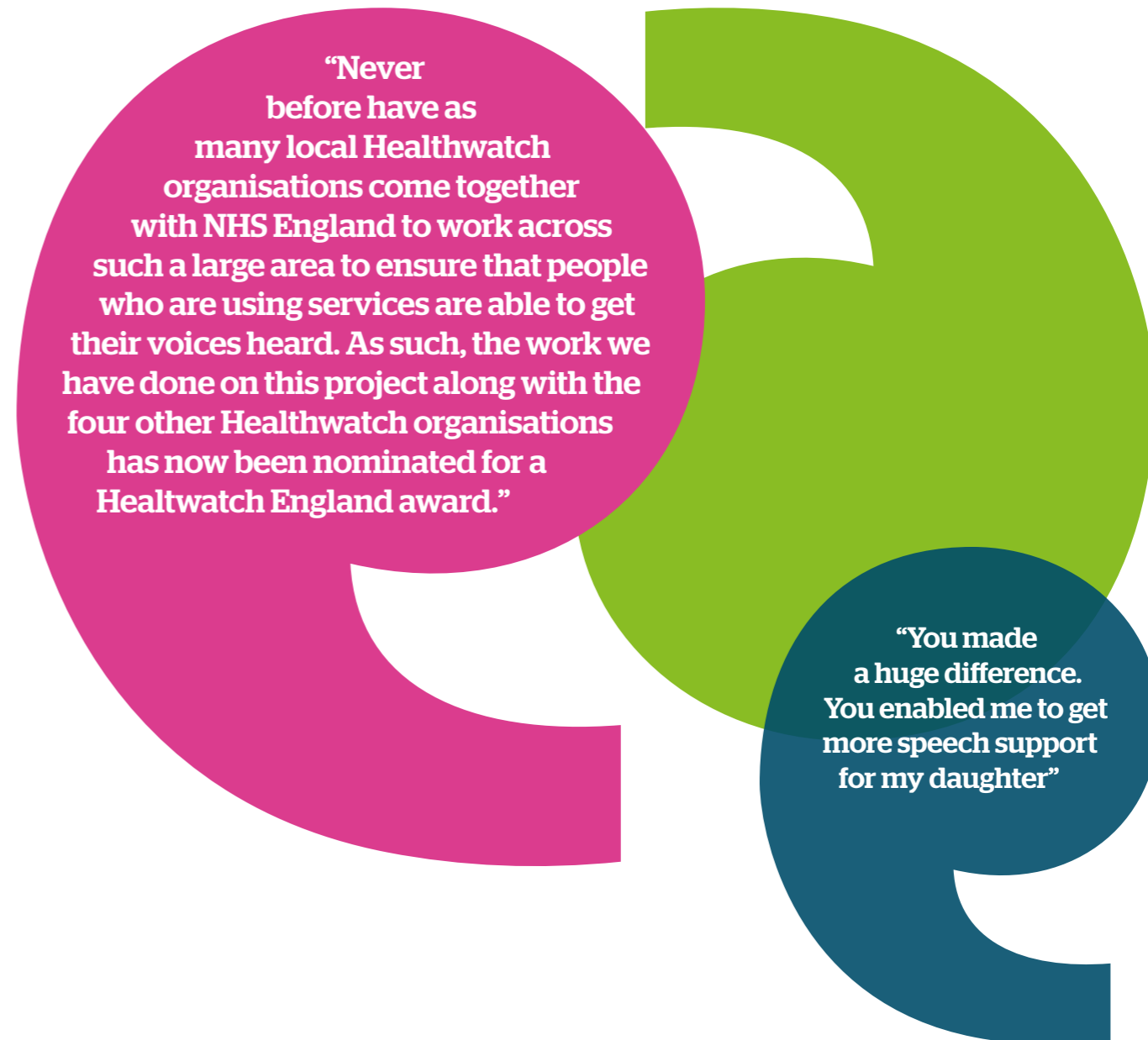
This year Healthwatch Dorset, along with four other local Healthwatch organisations (Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth) were approached by NHS England Wessex to work alongside them to make sure that local people are involved in designing and commissioning services. Through this collaboration, a ground-breaking new project “Wessex Community Voices” was born.

In talking with local people about their experiences of local services, it became clear that there was a distinct gap between those who worked at the commissioning level and the real-life experiences of patients and the public. As such, Wessex Community Voices recognised a need for the voices of the public to be heard when it comes to designing and commissioning local health and social care services. Our aim was to ensure that the experiences of local people play a key part in the design and commissioning processes by giving them the tools to get their voices heard.

To do this, as Wessex Community Voices, we held workshops across the five Wessex region for local people who were interested in having more of a say and influencing how their local services are commissioned. Through these workshops we helped keen members of the public to develop their understanding of how the commissioning and designing processes work within the NHS. By teaching how these systems work, people gained an understanding of how they can have more input and use their own personal experiences in order to influence decisions.

The workshops were also key in helping those responsible for designing and commissioning services to listen to the public and understand that, even if a decision may make sense from a clinical point of view, this is not always best for the patient.

As Wessex Community Voices, we also designed a **tool kit** for commissioners to use when making decisions, to ensure that the voice of those who matter most (the public!) is always at the heart of their decision-making.



Looking to the future, we will continue to work together to ensure we continue to give as many people from across Dorset and beyond the chance to be involved and influence the commissioning of their health and social care. Wessex Community Voices has proved that together we are stronger and that we really can make a difference! We've made a short film about Wessex Community Voices.

Every One Matters

Over the past year we have been involved in a project called “Every One Matters”. The purpose of the project was to collect the opinions of as many patients as possible from across Dorset’s three major hospitals (Bournemouth, Poole and Dorchester). From this we wanted to gain a true reflection on the level of health care delivered in these hospitals, based on the voices of those most important - patients, their families and carers.

To do this, in-depth feedback was collected from patients at The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Poole Hospital and Dorset County Hospital. Alongside this we also collected feedback from patients of the 12 Community Hospitals across the county where care is provided by Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust.

It became clear in the many opinions we collected that there was a distinct amount of variation in the experience of care being provided throughout our hospitals.

Feedback on hospital services varied from positive praise such as: “staff were cheerful and caring...I was amazed by the efficiency of the unit.” To more critical responses: “we felt frustrated and abandoned.”

From everyone we talked to, the most common feedback related to the quality of service and the attitude of hospital staff.

As champions of health and social care across Dorset, our subsequent report acted as a microphone - to get the voices of those patients whose opinions we collected heard by their hospitals.

Now, thanks to these voices, each of the three major hospitals have responded to the report and taken positive action towards improving the experience of care delivered in their hospitals. The areas they are taking action on include communications, waiting times, staffing levels, meeting the needs of patients with disabilities, the process around discharge from hospital, and how to raise concerns or complaints, plus launching an outpatient improvement programme which will focus on reducing long clinic wait times.

Chief Executive of Dorset County Hospital, Patricia Miller, commented on the report:

“The report contains some excellent feedback on our services. I was however concerned to read the negative feedback. As an Executive Team, we have discussed how we can respond to this and improve experience of our patients. I wanted to provide you with some feedback from our discussion and in particular what action we are or will take in relation to specific areas.”

This proves the influence real-life stories and patient opinion can have on influencing and improving healthcare across Dorset; demonstrating that your feedback on services really is “gold-dust” and that truly every single person matters.

“Having talked to you, I’m now better able to understand the standard this service is expected to deliver”

“We are getting so much help from you for our inspections and I hope you all know it is greatly appreciated.”

Ellen Fernandez,
Care Quality Commission

“Thanks to you I managed to get my shingles vaccine in my 70th year which means I have something less that I need to worry about!”



GP Practices

In April 2014, our Healthwatch Champions visited all 100 GP practices across Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth and made a note about how they were dealt with when they asked about making a complaint. The aim was not only to assess how staff dealt with complaints but also how prominently information was displayed in their practice and on their website to explain the complaints process.

The results were mostly positive - mystery shoppers were dealt with politely and either 'immediately' or 'promptly'. Although on 24 occasions, the shopper noted a 'change in attitude', only 5 of these responses were considered to be 'defensive' - mostly, staff were concerned and sympathetic. And there was only one occasion when the reception staff member on duty did not know how to handle a complaint.

The majority of our mystery shoppers - 95% - were correctly directed towards the practice's website for more information on making a complaint.

Only 6 practices did not have websites but 4 websites did not mention complaints at all. That means that 10% of practices surveyed could use the internet better. We also found that 25% of brochures or flyers handed out also needed updating - they had incorrect or out of date information.

Of course, this exercise is just a "snapshot" of how GP practices in Dorset handle complaints but being based on real people and real experiences, we find it hugely valuable.

As a result, we recommended some **changes**: that practices review the written and web-based information offered to patients; making sure it is not only clear and concise but also displayed prominently at the surgery; and encourage staff to be 'open and positive' to those who want to give feedback. In terms of a website, a 'Complaints' page should be accessible in a single click from the home page.

Following up

At the beginning of 2015, we followed up by looking at GP websites and asking the practices for feedback on the mystery shopping exercise report.

We were delighted to find that not only had the practices found the exercise to be useful, many had actioned the changes we recommended. 48 practises - almost half those surveyed - made changes to their websites, updated their complaints processes or documentation or provided more staff training.

Only three still don't have a website. One of these has advised that they are actively seeking to develop their web presence and one (Corfe Castle Surgery) has a listing on the NHS Choices website instead, including information about how to make a complaint.

"I really do feel that the mystery shopper has brought to our attention a serious flaw in our system so I am very happy that this exercise has been carried out". (Poole Practice)

"This is just what general practice needs. All too easy to become complacent or to be stuck in the past. I am looking forward to discussing this with my team!" (West Dorset Practice)

"Any guidance on how we can improve our service is always welcome" (Purbeck Practice)

"This will make a great discussion document for our team meetings next week. I am most grateful for this" (West Dorset Practice)

As our team of Healthwatch Dorset Champions grows (over 250 to date!), we have more opportunities to gather real-life information on Primary Care services - doctors, dentists, opticians - and compile 'Mystery shopper' style reports. Champions may visit practices in person, gather information over the phone or help us compile information from comments from the general public sourced via our website, events, CAB feedback and social media. We can look

at specific aspects of a service - for example, how a GP practice deals with complaints (see below) - and feed back to the service itself and, if appropriate, pass on to the Care Quality Commission and NHS England. This means our Champions action real change and it comes from real experiences. As the Chair of Healthwatch England, Anna Bradley, has pointed out that complaints are like 'gold dust' as they help services improve.

Dentists

Our latest mystery shopper exercise looks at dental services in Dorset, combining people's experiences with the results of a telephone mystery shopper project carried out by our Champions and a review of dentists' websites.

We received feedback from patients and the public - through our website, via community engagement events, through Citizens Advice Bureau, via our feedback forms. Most of the comments we have received concern issues with locating an NHS dentist accepting patients, issues around quality of treatment and lack of clarity on costs and charges (especially for people on low incomes or receiving benefits).

Many thanks to everyone who shared their experiences with us. Here are a few of your comments:

"Tried to get emergency dentist telephone number from 111, after numerous phone calls back and forth between different 111 telephonists I was called by a very unhappy doctor who told me in no uncertain terms that he was not a dentist and couldn't help me and that I was wasting his time, I still do not know emergency dentist number...shocking!"

Mrs C has been with X dental practice for about 12 years. Recently she was asked if she could register with another dentist because they couldn't cope with the pressures of disabled patients who use

wheelchairs, etc. She would be grateful if someone could explain to her why she is being asked to leave the Practice without being given any assistance to find another.

"I have no permanent residence so I find it really hard to access a dentist. Emergency dentists are very expensive".

X has had bowel cancer and secondary liver cancer. His teeth are falling out as a result of chemotherapy and he advised he could not get free dental treatment because he had not been to dentist for two years and thus had been dropped from the list. He was having chemo Therapy all that time.

"There's not enough information about dental costs. I pay privately and it's expensive. If I understood the NHS charging system and knew how to find a dentist taking NHS patients, I would change".

Our recommendations (which we have made to NHS England and NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group) to improve dental services in Dorset include: ensuring consistent and up-to-date information is available to patients in a variety of ways - on paper, online and over the telephone; information should include whether or not the dentist is accepting NHS patients and also a link to the NHS Choices website; accurate information about "out of hours" and emergency dental services should be readily available both through practices and NHS 111; patients must be made aware of charges before treatment

begins; information on how to make a complaint should be readily available, both in hard copy on practice premises and online (in a single click from the homepage); practices should also gather and respond to patient feedback themselves.

We'll keep you informed as we monitor the responses to our report in the coming year.

So as you can see, mystery shoppers don't just visit shops! If you would like to be one of our Champions and take part in future reports, contact us today - see the back page for details of how to get in touch by phone, by post or online.

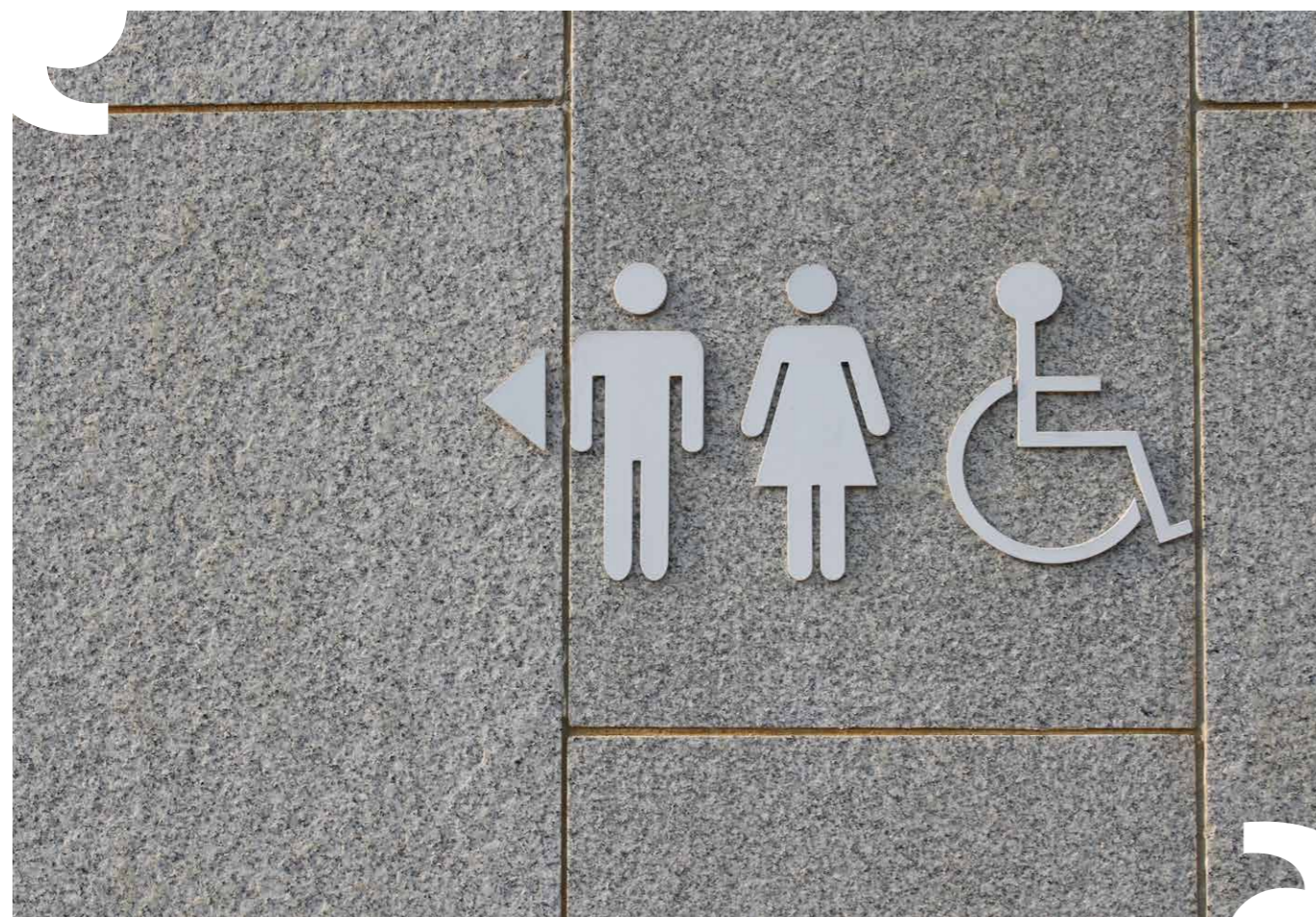
Since this mystery shopping exercise, we also received feedback from local charities and community groups about difficulties homeless people are experiencing in getting urgent dental care. We passed on these concerns to NHS England Wessex and they have responded to us, saying "We are concerned to hear that the current route to get an urgent NHS dental appointment is not working for those who are homeless. We would be very interested in working with this... interested groups to review this and identify how this could be made better - not just for those with an urgent need but also to try to make regular visits with a dentist easier for this group of patients. Our Primary Care Contract Manager for Wessex would be pleased to work with you and has already shared this experience with NHS 111 to discuss how improvements can be made."

Changing Places



Changing Places toilets are toilets specifically designed to meet the needs of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their carers, as well as people with disabilities such as Motor Neurone Disease, multiple sclerosis and cerebral palsy. They're different to standard accessible toilets (or "disabled toilets") with extra features and more space.

We became aware that none of the three major hospitals in Dorset has a Changing Places toilet. As such, we contacted them (not only on our own behalf but also, at their request, on behalf of three local disability support groups - Bournemouth People First, Poole Forum and People First Dorset) and asked them to install Changing Places toilets. Each of the hospitals is now considering what it can do. But we have already had a positive response from the Royal Bournemouth Hospital. Last year Bournemouth People First carried out a mystery shopping exercise there and one of the things they identified was the need for a Changing Places toilet. Now, following our approach, the hospital has told us that a Changing Places toilet is to be part of a building project to be carried out and due for completion by the end of this year.



Something to complain about?

Don't be put off - if you are genuinely not happy, there's help available to make a complaint. Healthwatch Dorset is YOUR champion and we will hold the system to account for how well it engages with the public. You have the right to complain if you are not happy with the treatment you received from a health or social care service, or you have been refused treatment for a condition.

We know that in the past people have felt frustrated or confused about how to make a complaint. That's why we have worked closely with Citizens Advice to produce not just a [guide](#) but practical tools such as letter templates. And, of course, if you need help being talked through the process, it's easy to get in touch with us.

So if you have a complaint about a health or social care service, don't suffer in silence. In extreme circumstances, your whistleblowing could potentially save someone else an awful lot of pain in the future.

The complaints procedure is slightly different for each service so be sure to look at our website - we have a detailed section on complaints here: <http://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/guides-making-complaints-about-health-and-social-care-services>

We can also refer you, if you choose, to another local organisation, Dorset Advocacy, who provides an advocacy service called "Help with NHS complaints."

<http://www.dorsetadvocacy.co.uk/page54.html>



“Thank you for being there when I needed it”



Full of Life

Healthwatch Dorset working closely with older people’s groups across Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth. Each year the Dorset Partnership for Older People Programme, Dorset Age Partnership, and Dorset FiftyPlus Forums Association join forces and put on a conference event. This year the conference was about care for older people across Dorset including homecare, nutrition, and nursing care. Healthwatch Dorset supported the event, which was attended by over 100 local people, and another event is planned for the autumn.

Hilary Foggo, Dorset Fiftyplus Trustee told us: “We’re very pleased that Healthwatch was able to support the joint conference, it’s so important that we work in partnership to improve the care and wellbeing of older people in Dorset”

In Poole we supported a number of Older People’s “Full of Life Day” events last year, including Tai Chi on the beach, a Poole

Housing Partnership (PHP) open day, a memory walk in Poole Park and a pop-up shop in Poole’s Dolphin Centre.

In Bournemouth we have a close relationship with the Bournemouth Older People’s Forum, a group which gives older people a platform to get their voices heard.

“Healthwatch Dorset have been involved with our forum since its conception two years ago. Since then, they have been fantastic at regularly attending our events and providing us with any information about ongoing projects of concern to older people across Bournemouth. Of course, they don’t just provide information but, like us, also listen to the voices of our members to help ensure health and social care services reflect our needs. Several of our members, including myself, are also Healthwatch Dorset Champions so we work very closely with them.”

Pat Lewis

Chair of Bournemouth Older People’s Forum





Championing

Health and Social Care

Could you be a Healthwatch Dorset Champion? We are happy to announce that we recruited a further 100+ volunteers over the past year who are now helping us as our Healthwatch Champions. People find us through a variety of methods - word of mouth; our website; referrals; our exhibitions and work throughout the community. We also have held a series of information talks and seminars throughout Dorset to inform people about our work. Volunteering for Healthwatch is hugely rewarding.

You have the chance to really influence change and, through our work with Healthwatch England and NHS England, potentially make suggestions to be put into practice on a national scale. Let us give you an example of how just one volunteer was a catalyst for real change. She was visiting for an eye test and, when she is called in by staff, the nurses walk off so quickly she had difficulty seeing where they had gone. She was beckoned by staff from the other side of the room and not asked whether or not she needed assistance. She suggested that staff do this at the beginning of each and every eye test -

after all, not all people have a friend or relative with them to guide them. And if a patient asks for help, when they are called to their appointment they could raise their hand, so staff know to walk over and help them get to the right room.

We raised this with the hospital and the Matron in the eye unit responded very quickly. She discussed various options with staff - for example colour-coded chairs for those who have asked for extra help.

However, it was decided that patients will be advised at reception that if

they require assistance to raise their hand when they are called. This will signal to the staff to go and help them, as our volunteer suggested.

This was also shared with the Hospital Board and also raised with the Manager for all outpatients reception to spread best practice for all patients who may need assistance. So a big thank you and well done to our volunteer for being the catalyst for real change at our local hospitals. It shows how important it is for services to see things from the patient's perspective.



"I think that the reception staff should ask the patient if they need any assistance and if they say "yes", then the receptionist should advise the nursing staff when coming out to call the patient in for their appointment."

"The patient should be advised to put up their hand when called and the nursing staff should go over to them and guide them to the cubical and onto the consulting area when they have finished their eye tests."



Lisa Brooks

An Award-Winning Healthwatch Champion

Massive congratulations to Lisa Brooks, pictured here with the certificate she received from the Mayor of Bournemouth at the Volunteer of the Year Awards in May.



Lisa has been a Healthwatch Dorset Champion for the last year, helping us out with all sorts of projects from information and promotion stands in local hospitals, shopping centres and colleges to helping us get the mailshot out for our home care survey.

She may have only been with us for a short space of time but Lisa has already actioned real change. Lisa has been volunteering for more than 20 years for more than a dozen community and disability groups. Her experience is as valuable as her compassion and drive.

“Champions such as Lisa are essential in explaining not only what we do, but how Healthwatch makes a real impact on Primary Care services,” said Chris Wakefield, Volunteer Officers of Healthwatch Dorset. “She helps us with hospital assessments and has given

feedback that’s been passed on to Healthwatch England and NHS England.

“She has so much energy and is one of our most active volunteers.”

45-year-old Lisa lives in Bear Cross with her husband David. Since the early 1990s, she has also helped many other organisations and centres, including Boscombe Day Centre, Shop Mobility and Autism Wessex. She was vice chair of Pro-disability and is currently Director on the Board of Dots Disability and also on the Board of Trustees at Access Dorset. Due to her amazing work with us and several other organisations Lisa recently featured in the Bournemouth Echo.

The Volunteer of the Year award in Bournemouth started in 1988 to recognise voluntary charity and community project workers in the area. It is awarded by Bournemouth Council and the Mayor.

Interview with Lisa Brooks



Q Hi Lisa! Can you tell me a little bit about you and your work with Healthwatch?

A “I’ve been volunteering for Healthwatch since November last year. I work on a lot of different projects - admin, hospital spotchecks and working on promotion stands in local hospitals, shopping centres and colleges. I also worked on the homecare survey.

Q What other organisations have you worked with?

A “Lots! I live in Bear Cross and try to help out in the community as much as I can. I don’t just work with blind people, I try to help out with community projects too, including Boscombe Day Centre, Shop Mobility and Autism Wessex. I was vice chair of Pro-disability and am currently Director on the Board of Dots Disability and also on the Board of Trustees at Access Dorset.

Q Why did you decide to volunteer with Healthwatch?

A “I’m blind, myself, and I’ve been volunteering for more than 20 years, for more than a dozen community and disability groups. I love the fact that Healthwatch have the power to action real change, and really value my opinion.
“I help with hospital assessments and have given feedback that’s been passed on to Healthwatch England and NHS England. I feel very lucky to be part of the Healthwatch family.”

Q Lisa, you were recently honoured by the Mayor at the Volunteer of the Year awards. How do you feel?

A “It was a lovely surprise and I didn’t expect it at all. I would like to thank the Healthwatch team for putting me forward - it just inspires me to work even harder from now on.”



Community Investment Projects

Each year, under the banner of our Community Investment Projects, Healthwatch Dorset works with a number of local voluntary and community groups to hear the voices and experiences of people and communities who are often under-represented in consultations and involvement activities.

Fighting Mental Health Stigma: Face 2 Face

As part of our community investment projects, this year we worked with "Face2Face", a project run in conjunction with Zoofish and the Richmond Fellowship, which aims to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.

Face 2 Face do this by bringing together people who don't have mental health problems with those who do, primarily through art projects such as ZapArts, a regular arts workshop which takes place in Poole. As well as art projects, Face2Face also attend

musical festivals, fetes and other events across Dorset to help spread awareness and to fight the stigmas surrounding mental health. In the past year, Face 2 Face have had a presence at over 25 events and have achieved over 1000 social contacts.

Healthwatch Dorset has supported Face2Face at many of their events and also funded volunteers at Face2Face to take part in social media training. This has enabled the volunteers to use another platform to continue to tackle mental health stereotypes and

promote their message further. The page which is updated daily and has over 100 likes provides an online platform and community for those who run the page to share support, advice and awareness for both those who have mental health problems and those who don't.

Face2Face has been awarded with an "EnRich" Award for "Excellence in Inclusion" recognising the fantastic work the project has done to address stigma in discrimination within the community.



"We would love to have you in attendance at our school again as last year was a really successful event, and the students are once again looking forward to it!"

Fiona Scott, Poole High School





Space Youth Project

This year, Healthwatch Dorset have worked with the [Space Youth Project](#) to engage with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) young people about their experiences of health care in Dorset. We worked with 50 LGBT young people, between the ages of 15 and 19, from the Space Youth Project helping them to share their experiences through different mediums such as art work and forum theatre.

Through this work a trust and rapport was built and people were happy to talk openly about topics such as gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and disability within health care. Healthwatch Dorset collected their feedback which consisted of answers to three key questions:

- Q 1. Are you happy with your medical professionals?
- Q 2. Are you honest about your sexuality / gender identity?
- Q 3. Do you think health professionals could do more to support LGBT+ young people?

Nearly all the LGBT young people felt that health professionals could do more to support LGBT+ young people and the feedback collected on how this could be improved included suggestions such as “Be more informed, be up to date and have the latest training”, “to not assume things, like gender / pronouns”, “Be non-judgmental”, “More ‘gayperwork’ in doctor’s surgeries to help young people”, “More gay sex education. (One teacher still thought it was illegal to talk about LGBT issues)”, “Older generation of doctors need to be less discriminative, to have more equality training” and “less assumptive professionals”.

LGBT young people also suggested that in the future perhaps the LGBT community could educate health professionals, in the same way an LGBT youth worker would give information to an LGBT young person.

Through this work we have been able to collect the invaluable opinions of LGBT young people across Dorset and how they feel health care services can be improved for their benefit.

Mental Health awareness: Among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

Last year, we were approached by Jessica Akeb, a PCT (Person Centred Therapy) and CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) Counsellor. Jessica told us that she had discovered during her work experience with various counselling agencies that the number of people from black and minority ethnic communities accessing mental health services was significantly lower than for other communities across Dorset. Through our Community Investment scheme, we supported and funded Jessica’s project so that she could carry out community engagement work and gather views from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities.

Through her community engagement work, Jessica explored the perceptions, misconceptions and negative stereotypes about mental health in general and tried to find out what factors are preventing people from BME communities using mental health or counselling services.

What was particular special about Jessica’s project is that she worked with people on a one-to-one basis and was able to collect detailed and personal accounts of people’s experience of mental health care. Through these personal interviews Jessica was able to collect detailed information about their experiences and barriers to services.

[Jessica’s Project has produced an invaluable report which Healthwatch Dorset can now use in the future to support any discussions on local mental health services for people from Black and ethnic minority backgrounds.](#)

“The workshop was fascinating - Jessica’s research explored mental health issues and the BME community, in particular the barriers to accessing services. The question was, how can the findings be used? Using the knowledge and experience of the workshop participants, many practical ideas came forward, hopefully leading to this work making a real and positive difference.”

Sue Bickler,
Head of Community Regeneration, Environment and Regeneration, Bournemouth Borough Council

“A lot of people from African backgrounds do not believe that mental illness is a sickness and get help, they believe in being bewitched or cursed”.

“Why would I tell a stranger my problems because they don’t understand our culture they don’t believe us”.

“Need familiar faces in treatment (people from various backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities etc.)”

“Coming from a black ethnic background I kind of felt I could manage on my own because most people from my social group who are black as well were able to manage so it is my belief that if I got help I might come across as a failure. There is a need to decrease the high levels of ignorance people have from these groups”.





Dorset's Vision -

Helping to shape Dorset's Future Healthcare Services

Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the group responsible for commissioning the majority of NHS services in the county, is currently undertaking a major review of health care in Dorset. The review, called the Clinical Services Review, is being undertaken to ensure that everybody in the county is able to receive safe, high-quality, effective and affordable health services.

At Healthwatch Dorset, we have been holding regular discussions with the CCG and offering advice, particularly about their plans to engage and consult with patients and the public across Dorset. Some of the actions the CCG has taken as a result of our advice have been to give voluntary and community organisations the opportunity to feed in what they know of people's experiences, and actions to involve "hard to reach" groups and also the general public (as opposed to people who already have some contact with the CCG's involvement and engagement work). The review is looking at the future of the entire healthcare system in the county and so it will be important that as many local people get involved, have their say and are listened to. A formal consultation on the CCG's proposals will begin in August 2015 and a final decision will be taken in Spring 2016.

“Thank you once again for helping the General Medical Council with this important consultation. I hope we can work together again in the future.”

Howard Lewis,
Regional Liaison Adviser
General Medical Council





Keeping People Safe



Sometimes, the feedback we receive gives us serious concern that someone might be at risk of harm or abuse. In those circumstances, we do not hesitate...

We immediately raise the alarm with the local council's Safeguarding Team or even, in very extreme circumstances, with the Police. For instance, there have been a number of occasions on which people have told us of something they have seen happen in care homes that has disturbed them. The action we have taken in raising those concerns with the appropriate authorities has led to immediate unannounced inspections and investigations and action taken to ensure people are safe. We also pass on these concerns to the Care Quality Commission (CQC, the independent

regulator of health and social care services) for their own records, to help them build up their knowledge of local services and to inform their own inspections.

Another example of how we can and do use your feedback to help to ensure that everybody receives the safe and high quality care to which they are entitled, and that the most vulnerable people in our society are protected.



One of the issues of concern for some local people, which we picked up through our work in Citizens Advice Bureau, is the variation in practice among GPs in relation to patients' requests for them to supply medical evidence as part of a benefits claim process. We became concerned that some people who were already suffering from sickness or disability were being put under even greater strain by being asked for money (which they may not have) to supply this evidence.

We made a Freedom of Information request to all 100 GP practices in the county, to find out what each did when asked by patients to supply this evidence. We found that there was a wide variation in the scale of charges for this information. With our colleagues from Citizens Advice in Dorset we also met with representatives of the Department for Work and Pensions and with the Local Medical Committee. We found that the provision of such evidence by GPs is not part of their contract but is decided on a local basis. So there is a variety of practice among GP practices in the county, and even in some cases between different doctors in the same practice. Our conclusions were that this is a system issue and can only be solved on a system-wide basis. So, we shared our findings with Healthwatch England and asked them to take up the issue.

Their view is that patients being charged for information about their own health is against the government's drive towards transparency and patient empowerment.

Now, Healthwatch England have formally escalated the issue with NHS England, raising concerns about the impact of this issue on patients. In a meeting with NHS England they told them that they considered the current situation "unfair and confusing" and have asked that in future clearer information about such charges should be made available to patients and also that this issue should be taken up when GP contracts are reviewed in 2016.

This is another example of how the voices of how local Healthwatch can use local people's experiences and feedback to have an impact nationally.

Changing Perceptions of Eating Disorders in Dorset



The number of teenagers admitted to hospital with eating disorders, has nearly doubled in just three years. Two new videos aim to raise awareness of the impact of eating disorders on those affected by the conditions and their families.



Healthwatch Dorset have teamed up with Bournemouth University and Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust to produce videos to raise awareness and reduce stigma about eating disorders.

The videos feature people from Dorset speaking about their experiences of eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia nervosa, and their recovery - alongside friends and family talking about how they were also affected.

How did the video come about?

We gathered feedback about child and adolescent mental health services that suggested that we should do a project on eating disorders, focused on hope and recovery. We thought that developing a video would also provide us with a useful resource for our work with local schools.

How did you develop it?

The collaboration worked really well, we've worked with Bournemouth University before on a video project called 'Living Well with Dementia in Dorset'. For this collaboration, we part funded the project and found people who are affected by eating disorders who were willing to take part in the videos, as well as promoting and supporting the launch event. Bournemouth University took the lead and organised the filming and video editing with support and additional funding from Dorset Healthcare.

What difference will it make?

Collectively the videos have already had over 3000 views on YouTube which is

fantastic. We hope that the videos will raise awareness of eating disorders and give hope to people that it is possible to recover and lead a normal life and that there are people who can support you through that process.

We want to reduce stigma about talking about eating disorders, and give positive messages about recovery. By using real people's experiences of having an eating disorder, we hope it will encourage others to come forward who may be suffering in silence.

We're also running a survey which aims to look at people's experiences to establish whether watching either of these videos has started to change or reinforce existing attitudes towards eating disorders.

What feedback have you had from public so far?

We unveiled the videos as part of Carer's week at Bournemouth University to a packed audience of mental health professionals, service users and carers and received a really positive response. People have told us that they were shocked by some of the statistics included and found the videos powerful, informative and emotional. We've also had comments from people saying that they will find the videos a useful resource for their work, meaning our messages will be shared further - which is really fantastic news.

The two videos - called [Realising I have an eating disorder](#) and [Recovering from an eating disorder: hope, strength and life](#) - are available to view on the [Bournemouth University YouTube channel](#).



"I was impressed how staff contacted me again to follow up on how things had worked out and provide additional information"



Supporting our MPs to Speak Up For Local People

In March this year a debate was held in the House of Commons about children and young people's mental health and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). Before the debate, we prepared and circulated to Dorset's MPs a briefing note, a summary of the feedback we've received about CAMHS, to inform them if they took part in the debate. Healthwatch England told us that our briefing was "the perfect mix of topline information on trends but also sharing real life peoples' experiences". You can read the briefing for yourself [here](#).



Out and About With Healthwatch Dorset



As the champions of health and social care in Dorset, the opinions of the local communities across Dorset are vital to the work we do. This means we strive to listen and collect the opinions on health and social care from as many people as possible; no matter what your age, ethnicity, sexuality, religion or cultural belief - we want to hear from everyone in Dorset.

One way in which we aim to do this is by spreading our presence as far as possible - two or three days every week we set up our stalls in high streets and public places all-round the county which gives us the chance to speak to many different people.

As well as our weekly high street stands we also attend many of the community events across the county; Healthwatch has had a presence at over 250 events, in every part of the county, in the last year alone.

We already have several more events coming up in the near future to make sure we can speak to as many people from the public as possible in hear your stories. If you're thinking about attending any of these events please do stop by for a chat.

For a calendar of all of our upcoming events please visit: www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/content/events





Our plans for 2015/2016



As Joyce mentioned in her introduction, we are not going to rest on our laurels. We have big plans to expand the service in the coming year and by expanding and improving our service, we can help as many people as possible. We've just set our priorities for the next 12 months. They are to mount investigations into: CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Access to Primary Care, Carers, and Mental Health Crisis Care. We are also looking to ensure there is readily available, accurate information about local care services.

Carers

There are about 83,000 carers in Dorset - that we know of. A carer may be young, or old. Healthwatch estimates that there may be some carers who are only at primary school age in our region. Often schools don't have the time or resources to pick up on these problems. So who can they turn to?

We want to do more with schools and a #WOWDay this

April was a great launching pad for us. We went to Oak Academy in Bournemouth to take part in a community outreach day that involved students AND parents. WOW stands for 'what's on where' and included 26 organisations, including Healthwatch Dorset, the YMCA and specialist health, careers and bereavement services to let people know help is out there for the most vulnerable.

Access to Primary Care Services

We don't just look at big projects - we appreciate the day-to-day dilemmas of access to basic care from picking up a prescription to arranging an eye test. A survey in March of this year from local Healthwatch organisations all round the country found that access to primary care services including GPs, dentists and opticians is the public's number one health concern. Many people report frustration at getting appointments when required but this is of particular concern to those with particular needs.

This backs up our Mystery Shopping exercise ([pg 14-15](#)) from last year, using

volunteers to visit every GP practice in Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth to find out how easy it is for people to get information and support if they want to raise a concern or make a complaint about GP services.

Our work is based on what YOU, the people, tell us. A GP Patient Survey reported that 85 per cent of people say they are satisfied with their family doctor and 84 per cent say the same about their local dentist services, which is great to hear. But at the same time some people are experiencing difficulty getting the services they need, so we will investigate further in the coming year.

Mental Health Crisis Care

Mental Health is a serious concern on a national scale. Here in Dorset, we are in desperate need of investment and more resources. Our manager Martyn Webster says much more still needs to be done. He told the Daily Echo: "There's a wider need to invest in mental health services across the board and to build capacity in the system. People need to be able to get access to specialist support quickly, which in turn will lead to recovery more quickly."

Here is some more feedback we've received:

"Mental health crisis care is very bad, slow to respond. It used to work well but in the last year or so it's gone downhill. A young man needed to be hospitalised, was taken to Brighton from Dorset because there was no mental health inpatient beds in the area. He was then moved to Bexley Heath."

CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

It's clear to us that more needs to be done to help children and young people who are experiencing mental health issues. Our feedback suggests that there are long waiting times; children may be struggling to get the care they need because their parents are also battling their own depression or anxiety; and many people have said that there was a lack of support available in a time of crisis, when they felt they just couldn't carry on anymore.

Of course, children in the care system are particularly vulnerable and there are also concerns about the transition from child to adult mental health care. Some people are getting lost in the system.

Of course, we have also had some positive feedback about CAMHS and there is no denying that they are making a real

difference in people's lives. But one area of concern is that we are also getting negative feedback from healthcare professionals, themselves, who are concerned about a lack of resources.

Here is some of the feedback we've received

"CAMHS is a very poor service. A CAMHS mental health worker told me "we can't help because your child won't engage with us, so go back to the school emotional literacy program". I've heard from several other parents who've had a similar experience. It's just not good enough. Where are you meant to go if your child has mental health issues?"

"Parents need to be given the chance to talk to CAMHS on their own because issues can be very upsetting for children to listen to. CAMHS need to understand what the child's behaviour is really like, but just asking the child won't give them the full picture. As a parent, you sometimes feel like you're not being listened to."

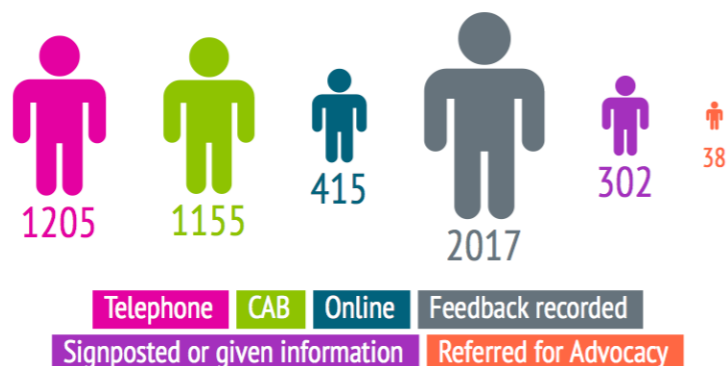
"When a child reaches adult age - no continuing care from youth into adult therapy in mental health."

Facts and Figures

(April 2014 - March 2015)

Contacts

Numbers of people who contacted us through our telephone helpline, at the CAB (Citizen Advice Bureaus) or online (our website and email); number of pieces of feedback on services we recorded on our database; numbers of people we signposted or gave information to, and the number we referred on to the specialist Complaints Advocacy Service.



Topics

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



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 2014- 2015 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 £357,274. 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 £64,322. 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 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 licenced 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.

Healthwatch Dorset CIC

Healthwatch Dorset CIC is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales (No. 08548235)

Our registered offices are at:
896, Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BH7 6DL.



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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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