

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Healthwatch North Lincolnshire Annual Report 2014/15**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a summary of progress for Healthwatch North Lincolnshire.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 A ninth report was submitted to this Board at its meeting of 16 June 2015. The HWNL June 2015 progress update was attached as an appendix to the board for consideration.
- 2.2 The HWNL progress report was noted by the Board, along with the activities so far conducted by HWNL in relation to its strategic objectives and priorities set for year 3. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is a partner on the HWB and will continue to:
- a. support the Board to meet its priorities as outlined in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and
  - b. fulfil its statutory duty to involve local people and be accountable to the community.
- 2.3 Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has delivered a number of needs led initiatives and captured a number of local health and social experiences.

**3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 To consider the HWNL Annual Report 2014/15, which details progress made over the past year and plans for delivery in year three.

**4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 made Healthwatch the new consumer champion for publicly funded health and social care. As part of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, Healthwatch was granted a statutory seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board. All Local Authorities have a statutory function to commission a local Healthwatch for their area. It is therefore necessary for

this Board to receive and consider regular status reports from Healthwatch North Lincolnshire.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1. Any resource implications arising from this report will be met from within existing approved contract arrangements.

**6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

6.1 Not applicable

**7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

7.1. There are no conflicts and interests to declare.

**8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1. That the progress of HWNL during year two is noted and that Healthwatch North Lincolnshire continues to fulfil its role on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

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Date: 15.10.15

**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire Annual Report 2014/15

# Healthwatch

North Lincolnshire

Annual  
Report  
2014-15







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# 1 Note from the Chair



I am delighted to be able to provide the foreword for the second annual report outlining the achievements of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire. I am proud to say that this year has been considerably busier than our first year and we have some even more exciting plans ahead. Our second year has been one of relationship building and the promotion of our services to a wider range of local people. Local Healthwatch groups all over the country are working hard to represent the voices of patients, service users and carers. In all there are 152 local Healthwatch groups, some of them based in inner cities with a large staff team and hundreds of volunteers, others with only one part-time worker and a small board of 2 or 3 people. However, we all have one thing in common, we believe that health and well-being is crucially important to everyone, and the structures and people involved in delivering health and care services are of immense value and should be protected and constantly improved.

Our society is a victim of its own success. We have health services that save lives and improve well-being on a daily basis, but the whole system is creaking under the strain, as more and more of us live to a ripe old age and need these services far longer. This means that sometimes very tough decisions need to be made about what services to provide and where. This year, the staff and directors of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire have dedicated their time and energy to finding ways to work with the providers of these

important services to ensure they keep patients and carers' needs at the heart of every decision they make. We also recognise that when you are ill, or caring for someone else who is struggling to cope, it can be very confusing to deal with large organisations and a range of specialists who use terms and procedures that you are unfamiliar with. It is essential that you have someone to turn to who can act as a guide through this unfamiliar territory.

As we go into our third year we are looking to reach out more to local people and community organisations to make effective links that will support the most vulnerable in our local area. We want to share the good relationships we have developed with service providers and commissioners and work together to improve access to the very best care. I hope more of you will join us.

Julia Pollock

Chair, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire



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## 2 About Healthwatch

**We are here to make health and social care better for ordinary people. We believe that the best way to do this is by designing locally commissioned services around their needs and experiences.**

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Everything we say and do is informed through our connections to local people and our expertise is underpinned by their experience. We are the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care.

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

As a statutory body our role is to ensure that local health and social care services, and the local decision makers, put the experiences of people at the heart of the delivery of their care.

### Our Vision

Health and Social Care affects many people in the local community, and services are often changing and developing within a complex system. Throughout this process, it is crucial that the views of local people are taken into account.

Our aspiration is to be an independent champion for people who use health and social care services in North Lincolnshire. We want to see excellent health and social care services being provided for people in our area, that have been shaped by local needs and experiences.

To achieve this, we have been set up to gather and represent the views of the public. We aim to ensure that all those who commission and provide services in North Lincolnshire listen to the voice of local people and that they work with them to shape good quality provision that meets people's needs.

### Our Mission

As a local organisation in the heart of our community we work closely with groups, individuals, organisations and professionals to achieve measurable improvements in health and social care services.

We are committed to ensuring that local people are aware of the health and social care services available to them and to support them to become involved in having a say about how these services are run.

In carrying out this role we will be guided by our core values:

### Independence

Meeting New Horizons, a Community Interest Company, has been awarded the contract by North Lincolnshire Council to support the set up and development of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire. This ensures that as a Healthwatch we are independent of the local authority, service providers and commissioners.

### Transparency

All decisions which impact on local people will be carried out through clear, open and transparent processes. Details of our performance will be in our annual report and other publications as appropriate. So that the community know their voice is being heard, we will regularly report back to the public about our work and how we are making a difference.



## Inclusivity

North Lincolnshire is a varied and diverse area with many new and emerging communities, therefore we will use local networks to involve all communities and provide face-to-face opportunities for them to tell us their views and experiences. We will represent the views of people who use, or may use, local health and social care services and maintain a focus on seldom heard groups. We will raise awareness amongst commissioners, providers and others about the importance of engaging with all sections of the local community.

## Credibility

We will use strong evidence to represent legitimately the interests and views of local residents. We will ensure that information is collected in a professional way and that sources are checked for reliability and validity wherever possible.

## Visibility

We will work with local community groups throughout North Lincolnshire. Information and promotional material will be provided which clearly explains the role of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire and how local people can become involved in our work.

## Approachable

We will be proactive and available within the community, working to gain the trust and confidence of local people, patients and carers. Our aim is to empower local people to ensure they can make their views on health and social care known to those who design and deliver our local services.

## Self-reflection

We will regularly review progress and monitor our performance. We aim to be a learning organisation and will support our staff and volunteers to access opportunities for personal and professional development.

## Our Strategic Priorities for 2014/15

Each year, we review our priorities to ensure they reflect the views and experiences of the people in North Lincolnshire. We have used surveys to identify the issues which are important to local people, so that we can be looking at the right areas as priorities in our work plan. Local Healthwatch have a number of statutory requirements to meet and how we achieve these outcomes is monitored by our local authority.

These requirements are built into our workplan, to ensure our priorities reflect those activities. During 2014/15, our strategic priorities were:

### Primary Care

- Strengthening and Supporting the Role of Patient Participation Groups
- Access to Primary Care Services

### Secondary Care

- Monitoring the progress of improvements at Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Foundation Trust
- Mapping patient care pathways
- Mental Health Services

### Emergency Care

- Young people's access to emergency care
- Improving the experiences of those with a learning disability

### Social Care and Integrated Services

- The Care Act and the Better Care Fund and how these are implemented locally



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## Our Staff Team

We have a small staff team based at the Queensway Business Centre in Scunthorpe. Within our Healthwatch North Lincolnshire office we are also able to provide Independent Complaints Advocacy through a contract held by the Carers Federation. Our staff team includes:

Kirsten Spark - Delivery Manager

Vacancy - Research and Support Officer

Helen Kirk - Information and Signposting Officer

Annabel Tindale - Marketing and Communications Officer

Angela Treadgold - Independent Complaints Advocate



Kirsten Spark



Helen Kirk



Annabel Tindale



Angela Treadgold





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## 3 Engaging with people who use health and social care services

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### Understanding people's experiences

During 2014/15 Healthwatch North Lincolnshire embarked on a programme of engagement to ensure the local community have a variety of ways to interact with us. Our aim was to gather experiences and views across the local community, in particular views from the minority community and seldom heard groups.

### Gathering local people's views

Our regular experience survey is in place to record the views and experiences of people who use our health and social care services as we are out and about in the local community. Views and comments we receive from the survey are fed into our intelligence database so that we can identify issues as they arise. This enables us to carry out research to gather further evidence about things that concern local people.

### Listening to young people

During November 2014, Healthwatch staff carried out a series of sessions with students at North Lindsey College aged 16 and above who were studying Health and Social Care courses. In total we engaged with 138 students, delivering public health messages as part of the 'Making Every

Contact Count' initiative, alongside raising awareness of health inequalities. We took this valuable opportunity to stimulate debate with students about health issues and generate feedback on how young people in North Lincolnshire access health services. The views and experiences shared with us were used as part of our general survey to identify themes and trends in concerns.

During various outreach events including those within the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community, we used a simple questionnaire to enable children aged four and above to express their views about visiting their doctor, dentist, hospital, optician or school nurse. In total 44 children aged between four and 17 years old completed a questionnaire and their views were added to our intelligence database. No concerns were raised and children reported that they were generally happy with their care.

Healthwatch also visited Invenio Academy School to run five workshops with Year 11 students as part of their Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE) sessions and invited other health partners to attend and contribute to the delivery of the workshops. Students were asked to consider how a 'Young people friendly' health service would look and their views became part of a report which was shared with service providers and commissioners.



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### Listening to older people

In November 2014, Healthwatch Authorised Enter and View Representatives visited twenty care homes as part of our Enter and View programme. During these visits we spoke with many older people including the frail and elderly. A great deal of insight was gained into resident's experiences of living in care homes, but also regarding their needs and what quality of life means to them. Through this engagement we gained a powerful narrative detailing the things which matter most in the day to day lives of older people, which we have shared widely with service providers and commissioners.

### Listening to people who live outside of North Lincolnshire

During 2014/15 we have not specifically focussed on obtaining the views of those who volunteer or work in North Lincolnshire but who live elsewhere. However, the views of the working population is a priority for targeted engagement for Healthwatch North Lincolnshire during 2015/16, and those living outside our area will be considered as a group whose voices are less likely to be heard.

### Listening to the views of vulnerable people

North Lincolnshire has a developing migrant and BME community, and in the past year we have undertaken a number of targeted engagement events aimed at strengthening our links with this emerging community. Healthwatch played a key role in the development of a local group attended by women from the BME community and organised an event during August 2014 to listen to their experiences of health and social care. The findings were shared widely amongst partners including the Health and Wellbeing Board and the North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group. This has enabled

partners to further understand the needs of this community and Healthwatch organised a follow-up event to provide testing for Hepatitis C within the BME community alongside healthcare providers.

We also worked jointly with the Alzheimer's Society to hold an event to gain a better understanding of perceptions within the Sikh community of dementia and services and support available within North Lincolnshire. The findings were welcomed by the local Dementia Action Alliance group and prompted the local Alzheimer's Society to undertake further research.

Healthwatch are also supporting the production of materials which will help those with a learning disability to understand what happens during a visit to the outpatients department at hospital. The need for information to support those with a learning disability was raised with Healthwatch during meetings with a local advocacy service, and we are working with the hospital Trust to facilitate the production of a film and booklet.

### Listening to the views of those who are seldom heard

Sometimes groups in our local community can get overlooked by those making decisions about how services are provided. Some local people are not necessarily vulnerable or hard to reach, and they may be consulted by commissioners and service providers but sometimes despite being consulted they do not feel that their views are taken into account. We have started to gain the views of young people in our work with local schools and colleges. Our priority for the coming year is to extend this to target the working population whose views are less often specifically sought by commissioners. We are beginning to identify opportunities to build links with the working community through business networking events and local employers and hope to build



contacts and increase interaction with this population in North Lincolnshire during 2015/16.

### Valuing people's insight

During the period from January to August 2014, Healthwatch collected the views of 195 local people using our experience survey questionnaire. A report was produced which provided an insight into local people's views on health and social care in North Lincolnshire and identified emerging trends that may require further investigation.

The findings formed the basis of our intelligence for conducting our Enter and View visits at our local hospital, identifying wards to visit and topics to cover. It also highlighted concerns regarding access to primary care services, in particular booking procedures and opening times for GP surgeries.

### Enter & View

#### Privacy and Dignity at Scunthorpe General Hospital

Local Healthwatch have been given the power under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to undertake Enter and View visits to settings where publically funded health and social care is provided. Over the past year, we have embarked on a programme of Enter and View visits.

Following on from a CQC inspection in July 2014, the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust had come out of special measures and were given an overall rating of 'requires improvement', with a rating of 'good' for the care provided. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire used concerns and issues gathered to support the CQC inspection, to inform wards at Scunthorpe General Hospital in which to carry out Enter and View visits. This would provide reassurance to the public where good practice is identified as well

as monitor where further improvements were recommended. The work clearly fit in with our priority of monitoring the impact of Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust's improvement plans.

Our trained and authorised Enter and View representatives spent time on the wards talking to patients, carers and staff to explore views regarding how privacy and dignity is respected at Scunthorpe General Hospital. They were also able to capture observations concerning the environment and routine in the wards.

Immediately following each Enter and View visit, the authorised representatives and members of Healthwatch staff met with Matrons from the wards to provide timely feedback so that improvements could be made where possible in the interests of patients.

The findings were then collated, interpreted and a report was produced which included recommendations for service improvement. Healthwatch gave The Trust the statutory 20 working days to respond with a plan to address the issues identified. A comprehensive action plan was subsequently drawn up by the Trust in response to our report. This was incorporated into their Quality Development Plan which is monitored by their Patient Experience Group with the aim of improving standards across all the Trust's hospitals. Healthwatch have been successful in securing regular meetings with the Trust to receive updates on progress against this action plan.

Some changes were made very quickly following the recommendations and the Trust committed to undertake a number of actions including:

- More intensive work to ensure that staff introduce themselves and patients are clear about who is responsible for their care



- A review of communication skills training with regard to improving privacy and dignity for patients
- Using feedback from Healthwatch to extend work on discharge planning
- Further improvements to meal options and how food is served to older patients

Issues regarding appropriate ways of communicating with patients were able to be addressed by Matrons immediately following our visit. The need for doctors to introduce themselves to patients was taken on board and alongside new name badges, there was a re-launch of the 'My Name is...' initiative as well as named nurse/clinician boards beginning to be installed for every bed space. A booklet for patients to explain the discharge process has been produced and our recommendations have been fed into a Discharge and Transfer group.

We expect patients and carers to see a positive impact as a result of the changes that have been reported to us and we anticipate these improvements to be reflected when we re-visit Scunthorpe General Hospital.

Our Enter and View work has also helped raise awareness of Healthwatch with patients, carers and staff and helped us to build a working relationship with the Trust, who recognise the value Healthwatch can add in communicating the views and opinions of those using their services.

### **Nursing and Residential Care Homes in North Lincolnshire**

During November 2014, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire carried out a series of Enter and View visits to residential and nursing care homes in our area. Planning for this work began after the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel of North Lincolnshire Council approached us with a view to us

using our Enter and View powers to go into homes and speak with residents, relatives and staff to find out about activities provided and quality of life for residents. On several visits, the Healthwatch team were joined by a Scrutiny Panel member as an observer. The request to work jointly with the Scrutiny Panel was timely, as Healthwatch had received very little feedback from the public regarding care homes and was keen to progress work in this area.

The purpose of the visits was determined as being to observe the environment of the care home, contribute to the sharing of good practice and overall raising of standards and to understand the experience of those living in care homes and where it was felt improvements could be made.

Most of the residents, once they are in there they never go out. I think it would do them good to go out, even if just to the local shop.

**(Care Worker, Residential Care Home)**

It took me a year to get used to it. My attitude is very positive and the staff are very good.

**(Resident, Residential Care Home)**

A thematic report covering the 20 care homes visited was shared with the homes and service commissioners. Where individual concerns had been identified, these were initially discussed with care home managers and then shared with the commissioner's quality assurance team. Healthwatch continue to be updated on any actions taken by commissioners following the reports and have established a good working relationship to enable findings to be shared and joint working to facilitate service improvement.



Healthwatch were pleased to note that following a number of issues raised through our Enter and View visits to one of the care homes visited, the service commissioner visited the home and a subsequent visit from the Care Quality Commission reports that our initial concerns have in fact now been addressed and the service appears to have improved.

### **Emergency care centre at Scunthorpe General Hospital**

A series of Enter and View visits and an accompanying survey were planned in light of mounting concern about pressures on urgent care nationally during 2014. Our Enter and View team spoke with 169 people visiting the Emergency Care Centre during November 2014 and the survey gathered a further 200 responses. Our report is due to be published during 2015 and will be available on our website as well as being shared with service providers and commissioners, the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch England.

Reports and recommendations from all our Enter and View visits can be found on our website at

[www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk)

### **Authorised Enter and View representatives**

Our Enter and View exercises over the past year have developed and strengthened our volunteer team, providing them with experience of engaging with patients and carers and building good working relationships with staff who positively welcomed our feedback. The following Healthwatch volunteers took part in our Enter and View visits during 2014/15:

Furzana Akhtar

Linda Byrne

Kate Ellis

Bushra Khan

Susan Marrison

Shadia Reisa

Nadia Reisa

Anika Rahman

Michael Wilson





## 4 Providing information and signposting for people who use health and social care services

### North Lincolnshire Health and Social Care Signposting Directory

During 2014, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire had the opportunity to work with a commercial company to put together a directory which contains contact details for GP surgeries, NHS Dentists, Pharmacies, Opticians and Care Homes in North Lincolnshire. The Directory also includes details of local and national support groups and explains the role of local and national bodies involved in providing, commissioning and monitoring health and social care

provision. The aim of the Directory is to help local people understand how health and social care is provided; who to contact to get the help they need and let them know what is available to them locally such as how to access free NHS health checks for those aged over 40. A successful launch event was held to promote the publication which was supported by one of our local MP's Nic Dakin, along with a number of partner organisations and members of the public.

In excess of 12,000 copies of the Directory have been distributed at health and social care venues throughout North Lincolnshire as well as to local information access





points such as Link offices, libraries and recently the Wellbeing Hubs. Demand for copies of this publication was high and a second edition is scheduled to be produced in July 2015 with the option to look again at an update for 2015/16.

## Outreach Sessions

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has taken many opportunities during 2014/15 to be available within the local community at outreach sessions, having attended 76 events. Some of these involved having an information stand at stakeholder and community events, some opportunities allowed us to deliver a talk at local support and community groups about the work of Healthwatch and to explain how the local community can become involved. We have worked in partnership with Public Health to accompany their NHS Health Checks team to local venues, to work alongside them promoting the work of Healthwatch and providing advice and information to the public.



We have also piloted a series of outreach sessions in a local community advice centre situated at the heart of the BME community. These sessions have been promoted to provide guidance to those wishing to make a complaint about NHS services, within an environment already used by the community as a local advice centre.

The success of Healthwatch depends on our ability to make ourselves available within the local community, and getting out into locations to listen to what people feel about local services is key to our success. During the coming year, we will continue to deliver targeted engagement and outreach sessions to enable more people within North Lincolnshire to access information and advice and share their views and concerns.

## How we have helped people find the information they need

During the past year we have responded directly in our office to 84 requests for information about services and how to access them. In addition to this a number of calls have been dealt with through our telephone helpline provider. Some of these calls were as simple as advising a caller which dentists in North Lincolnshire are currently accepting new NHS patients, however others have more complex enquiries.

## Receiving unplanned health care in another country

A family living in North Lincolnshire had recently travelled abroad to Germany. During their time overseas, the father lost consciousness and was rushed to hospital. Doctors in the hospital in Germany confirmed that his loss of consciousness may have been due to problems with his pacemaker. The hospital advised the patient to contact his surgeon upon return to the United Kingdom. A short while after the family returned, they received a bill for £687 for healthcare provided whilst they were in Germany. The family could not understand why they were being charged for their care while they were away.

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire contacted the NHS Overseas Healthcare Team to establish the protocol for this kind of issue. The Overseas Healthcare Team was able to contact the enquirer and advise them about the charges.



The enquiry highlighted the need for travellers to prepare by applying for the free European Health Insurance Card which can help reduce health costs in the EEA, and the need to take out additional travel insurance to help with the costs of unplanned healthcare abroad. It also highlighted that people may not fully understand the implications of travelling overseas once they have had a pacemaker fitted.

### Helping a teenager with a fear of needles

Healthwatch were contacted by the family of a teenager with selective mutism that needed a meningitis booster. The GP surgery had struggled to understand why the patient had problems with needles. It was thought that the teenager was reluctant to cooperate as she had previously been told she had received her 'last' injection and surgery staff had failed to fully explain the 'booster' that was required. The family did not know where to turn to for help.

Healthwatch helped to explain to the surgery that the teenager had most likely thought there were to be no further injections and had a fear of needles. The surgery arranged for a nurse, who the family described as excellent, to work with the teenager using a photographic storybook to explain what would happen.

### Supporting people to make a complaint about an NHS service

The registered charity Carers Federation has been appointed to provide NHS Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA) for Healthwatch North Lincolnshire. This is a totally free and independent service and offers people the support of an experienced Independent Complaints Advocate to support them through the NHS Complaints Process. During 2014/15 our Independent Complaints Advocate has provided support to 53 clients.

During 2015/16 we will be running clinic sessions held at a local community venue so that people can drop-in and speak to someone about making a complaint.

### Reaching out to local people

Throughout the past year we have continued to promote the work we do using a variety of communication methods. Our website is updated on a regular basis and includes details of our recent activities and a calendar of forthcoming events.

We make regular use of social media, and at the end of 2014/15 we had 845 Twitter followers, 134 Facebook likes and there had been a recorded 8,791 visits to our website.

We publish a regular newsletter, both as an 'e-news' bulletin and a version distributed in paper format. The newsletter provides updates on local Healthwatch activity along with details of activities and events and how to get involved with our work. At the end of 2014/15 there were 379 people signed up to our newsletter and this number is increasing.





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## 5 Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people

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### Producing reports and recommendations to effect change

Making reports and recommendations about how local health care services could or ought to be improved is one of the key statutory activities that Healthwatch undertakes. During the past year, Healthwatch has produced substantial reports following Enter and View visits at Scunthorpe General Hospital and across twenty care homes in North Lincolnshire.

The care homes report was presented to the People Scrutiny Panel to feed into their wider review of care home provision in North Lincolnshire. The report was welcomed by the panel, some of whom had accompanied Healthwatch Authorised Representatives during the visits to see the work we do. Details of the care homes visited were shared with our local authority quality assurance team to help inform their inspection process. As is standard with our reports, the findings were also shared with Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission. Where concerns were raised, the local quality assurance team took action in response to our recommendations.

Our report following the Enter and View visits at Scunthorpe General Hospital was received by the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust and a comprehensive written response was provided within 20 working days as required by legislation. The Trust produced an action plan as a result of our recommendations and this was incorporated into their Quality Development Plan which is monitored by their Patient Experience Group with

additional oversight by the Quality Patient and Experience Committee. Some of the issues raised were recognised as being applicable Trust-wide and actions have been agreed across the organisation.

Regular meetings have been established for Healthwatch to discuss progress with the Trust and with some improvements reported as being completed, the Trust welcome a further visit to review progress in the future.

There were no instances during 2014/15 of Healthwatch having submitted a report where a response from providers and commissioners has not been forthcoming and we are pleased to report that the response to our recommendations has been very positive overall.

### Putting local people at the heart of improving services

Local Healthwatch are required to promote and support the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services.

Volunteers with Healthwatch North Lincolnshire have been involved with local services through the strong positive relationships we have developed with key stakeholders who have responded well to working with Healthwatch. Wherever possible, we use our influence to remind service providers and commissioners of the value of local people's insight and take every opportunity to provide information about the experiences of local people. Healthwatch has been successful in formalising working relationships with



local partners including:

- North Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board
- North Lincolnshire Council Health Scrutiny Panel
- North Lincolnshire Council People Directorate
- North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (NLCCG)
- Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust (NLaG)
- Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH)
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire (VANL)
- Scunthorpe and District MIND

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is regarded as an equal partner on the Health and Wellbeing Board and has a standing agenda item at their meetings which are attended by the Chair of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire. Where Healthwatch have raised issues at the Health and Wellbeing Board, such as the lack of information available locally on where to seek help regarding self-harm, partners around the table were asked to provide information to the Board on this issue. The Healthwatch team support our Health and Wellbeing Board representative by providing a regular update to share with partners at the meetings.

Furthermore, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for North Lincolnshire identifies the 'big picture' in terms of health and wellbeing needs and inequalities of the local population. North Lincolnshire has a JSNA Steering Group chaired by the Public Health team, and Healthwatch North Lincolnshire have joined that group to ensure the patient and public experience forms part of the JSNA and that seldom heard groups are included.

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has also built a good working relationship with our local MPs. This has allowed information about local concerns to be shared, adding focus to both their work and our own research.

### **Supporting involvement in the commissioning, provision and management of local services**

One of the aims of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has been to actively promote our work within primary care services, to encourage debate on quality and improve communication with those providing services. During the past year, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has worked with the lay representative of North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group to develop and support local Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) for GP practices. Work to date has included producing an induction pack for new PPG members and visiting PPG meetings to deliver presentations. A regular meeting is held with representatives of a growing number of local PPGs where presentations regarding issues such as Primary Care Co-commissioning and Care Quality Commission Inspections of GP Practices have been provided. The aim of this work is to support patients who wish to join their PPG, to be effective and influential in ensuring a quality service for all patients in their practice.

### **Our local Healthwatch volunteers**

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has a small team of volunteers, who provide valuable support to our day to day work. We have been keen to encourage volunteers from a cross section of the local community to ensure as far as possible that involvement in Healthwatch is representative and meets local needs.

Volunteering is a great way for the local community to become involved in Healthwatch and perhaps learn some new skills through being trained as an



Enter and View representative. This gives people an opportunity to get involved in their local community and help others to have their say about health and social care in our area.

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire have recruited and trained volunteers of all ages and backgrounds, including during the past year a number of young people.

### Shadia's story



In the autumn of 2014, Shadia Reisa heard about Healthwatch North Lincolnshire whilst she was studying for her 'A' levels at the local college. Healthwatch were looking for a volunteer to help out with some administrative tasks in the office and Shadia was keen to help. After having an induction with Healthwatch, Shadia spent a couple of days a week in the office helping with general office tasks as well as being given sole responsibility for preparing a portfolio of evidence to support our application for the North Lincolnshire Council Healthy Workplace Bronze Award. As a result of the hard work and effort that Shadia put into this portfolio, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire were subsequently awarded the Bronze Healthy Workplace Award. Shadia went on to train as an Enter and View Representative and undertook several of the visits to care homes during November. Since volunteering with Healthwatch, Shadia has now taken up employment with the Civil Service and we wish her well in her future career.

"I enjoyed my time volunteering for Healthwatch North Lincolnshire and supporting the staff team. Volunteering gave me the opportunity to develop existing skills and learn new ones through Enter and View, gathering the thoughts and views of local people to help influence change to health and social care services locally."

We have also involved some of our volunteers in a piece of research work to outline the care pathways of a selection of patients in North Lincolnshire. Volunteers used their skills to carry out in-depth interviews with patients and carers and produce a summary to feed into the Healthwatch report which included a set of recommendations for service improvement.

Healthwatch has signed up to the Dementia Action Alliance and a number of our volunteers have been trained to become Dementia Friends and help raise awareness of the symptoms and services available locally.

### Working with others to improve local services

During 2014/15, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has worked at a local level with service providers and commissioners to effect change. This is evidenced by our work with the Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust, where we were provided with a response to our set of Enter and View recommendations within 20 working days, followed up by a comprehensive action plan with is embedded within the Trust's Quality Development Plan. Regular meetings with the Trust have been established to review progress against the action plan, and a good working relationship has developed where they Trust welcome our findings and insight into the patient experience.



Following our Enter and View visits to residential care homes across North Lincolnshire, we worked with commissioners to ensure that any concerns about individual care homes were shared to ensure improvements could be agreed with the homes and the quality of service raised. This piece of work was vital in establishing a link between Healthwatch and social care commissioners, to ensure that future work continues to influence service development and service improvement.

During April 2014, Healthwatch North Lincolnshire was approached by the Care Quality Commission who requested any feedback we had relating to patient and carer experiences of Scunthorpe General Hospital. In response we shared our survey responses with them, and promoted involvement in their listening event on 23rd April, where the public were invited to share their views directly with the Care Quality Commission.

Although during the past year Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has not had cause to make recommendations to the Care Quality Commission for reviews to be undertaken, either directly or via Healthwatch England, all of our reports and findings are shared with them as part of our reporting process. No special reviews or investigations were instigated following our reports during this year. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire remains mindful of our statutory powers to make such recommendations and would have no hesitation in taking such action if it were considered necessary.





## 6 Impact Stories

### Helping patients understand how GP appointment systems work

One of the difficulties patients and carers often raise with Healthwatch is being able to book an appointment with a doctor at their surgery. This has been brought to our attention through views expressed in our on-going experiences survey and from discussions at events we attend.

The practice of having to call a surgery at 8am on the day an appointment is required sometimes leaves patients and carers frustrated as demand on phone lines means many are unable to get through to a receptionist. Sometimes when the call is able to be answered, the allocation of appointments for that day may already have been taken and the person is asked to call again the following morning.

Not able to make appointments.  
Told to call back at 8.30am and then told all appointments are gone.

■ Respondent to experience survey

Some practices now offer a range of options for those requiring an appointment. In some cases callers may not require an urgent appointment and could use an online booking system where these are available. There are surgeries that offer a telephone consultation with doctors and some now operate extended opening hours to cater for those who are less able to attend an appointment during working hours.

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire highlighted concerns with appointment booking in our report, 'Insights into Local Health and Social Care' in September 2014.

One of our local GP practices took action as a result of this and wanted to let their patients know that alternatives to calling at 8am were available. The practice produced a special newsletter to inform patients of their options for booking an appointment, explaining how appointments are allocated as well as explaining alternatives to visiting the doctor for treating minor conditions. It is hoped that raising patient awareness of options for booking appointments will improve their experience and their perception of access to primary care.





## Helping patients get the food they enjoy eating whilst in hospital

During our Enter and View visits at Scunthorpe General Hospital, we spoke with patients about how their nutritional needs are being met. Overall most patients said they were asked about their dietary needs and staff did check they had enough to eat and drink.

What patients did tell us was that some of the older generation would prefer foods such as stews, pies, soups and puddings. They also said that some patients were used to having a supper later on in the evening. Sandwiches had been provided in the cardboard packaging, without being supplied with a plate.

Healthwatch recognised that it is often some of the more subtle changes that could be made to enhance the patient's experience of their stay in hospital, and being able to enjoy meals as fully as possible is an important part of recovery from illness.

Following our Enter and View recommendations, the hospital Trust immediately took this issue on board and a review of the patient menu commenced supported by a dietician.

Sandwiches are now automatically provided with a plate for ease of serving and a new menu has since been introduced. In March 2015 the hospital introduced mobile hydration stations which serve a wider range of hot drinks and soups at the patient's bedside as a replacement for the old style 'tea trolleys'.





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## 7 Our plans for 2015-16

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### Opportunities and challenges for the future

The work of Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is driven by the views of the public, patients and carers and our insight into what they want and need. During 2015/16 we will build upon the significant progress we have made during the past year, giving people in our local community a more powerful voice. We have started during year two to influence the commissioning and delivery of local services and we will continue to develop this with a focus on targeted engagement and the inclusion of seldom heard groups. Although we have been successful in developing our relationship with service providers and commissioners, our main challenge will continue to be raising our profile within the local community to enable us to listen to what concerns people in North Lincolnshire.



During the third year, our focus will be:

- Issue led investigations, such as experiences of access to GP appointments and access to services for people with hearing impairments
- Targeted engagement to ensure service providers and commissioners hear the voices of those who often go unheard, such as the working population and young people
- Developing our team of volunteers to enable us to deliver a more comprehensive programme of Enter and View visits and further influence service improvement
- Expand the range of information and advice we offer, providing information and guidance and taking it out into the local community including our more rural areas

We look forward to taking this work forward in 2015/16.



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## 8 Our governance and decision making

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### Our Board

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire has established a Board of Directors, who set our strategic direction and oversee our workplan. They are all volunteers who spend valuable time getting out and about within North Lincolnshire to hear people's views. The Healthwatch Board hold regular public meetings, the details of which are available on our website at [www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk)

Our Board members are:

- Julia Pollock - Chair
- Wendy Coffey - Vice-Chair
- Karen Cowan - Director
- Richard Leach - Director
- Carol Lightburn - Director
- Martin Hopley - Director
- Marcus Isman-Egal - Director
- David Wall - Director

Our Healthwatch Board hold their meetings in public and ensure we:

- Have a widely shared and publically available workplan
- Set our priorities in response to analysis of our evidence base, which identifies issues that concern people in North Lincolnshire
- Make publically available our reports and recommendations that result from our work

### How we involve lay people and volunteers

All of our Healthwatch volunteers receive induction training, which includes an outline of the specific role they have agreed to undertake. We ask volunteers to complete an application form so that we can assess their suitability as a volunteer and to learn about the skills and experiences they have to help us in our work. Volunteers undergo Disclosure and Barring Service clearance to enable them to carry out their roles.



Our Board members L - R: Karen Cowan, David Wall, Wendy Coffey, Martin Hopley, Julia Pollock, Marcus Isman-Egal, Carol Lightburn, Richard Leach.





## 9 Financial information

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	175,021
Additional income	0
<b>Total income</b>	<b>175,021</b>

Expenditure	£
Office costs	37,073
Staffing costs	118,325
Direct delivery costs	11,529
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>166,927</b>
Balance brought forward	8,094

From the funding received from the local authority shown above, our Independent Complaints Advocacy service is subcontracted to the Carers Federation. This service includes a dedicated NHS Complaints Advocate located within the Healthwatch North Lincolnshire team, the support of a call centre to provide advice as well as receive and allocate caseloads. The service also provides clients with self-help information packs and other literature and resources which are also available from the Healthwatch North Lincolnshire office.



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# 10 Contact Us

## Get in touch with us at:

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire  
Unit 25, Queensway Business Centre  
Dunlop Way  
Scunthorpe  
North Lincolnshire  
DN16 3RN

Telephone: 01724 844986 (office)

NHS Complaints Advocacy: 0808 802 3000

Email: [enquiries@healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk)

Website: [www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorthlincolnshire.co.uk)

TWITTER [@HealthwatchNL](https://twitter.com/HealthwatchNL)

FACEBOOK [www.facebook.com/HealthwatchNorthLincolnshire](http://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchNorthLincolnshire)

The contract to provide Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is held by:

Hull CVS and Meeting New Horizons CIC

The Strand

75 Beverley Road

Hull

HU3 1XL

Telephone: 01482 324474

The Independent Complaints Advocacy subcontract is held by:

Carers Federation

1 Beech Avenue

Sherwood Rise

Nottingham

NG7 7LJ.

We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2015 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and our Local Authority.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact Healthwatch North Lincolnshire at the address above.

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