



# healthwatch

Bath and North East  
Somerset

Healthwatch B&NES report to the Health and  
Wellbeing Select Committee - September 2015

## INTRODUCTION

This report will demonstrate the progress made by Healthwatch B&NES to promote the needs and views of local people.

Input from the B&NES Health and Wellbeing Network is included alongside the Healthwatch update, to demonstrate how the views of providers, patients and the public are being woven together by local Healthwatch to create meaningful improvements in how health and social care services work into the future.

Healthwatch is the statutory, independent champion for patients, carers and the public. The Health and Wellbeing Network hosts provider organisations, in both the statutory and community/voluntary sectors, to debate current issues and recommend actions for progress. The update provided below corresponds to the three themes from the B&NES Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015 – 2019.

### **Preventing ill health by helping people to stay healthy**

Work is progressing with Julian House to understand the experiences of local homeless people and how we can help them to improve their health.

A survey has been drafted by Healthwatch and is now being agreed with Julian House staff. The survey includes questions about a range of health and social care services, including primary care, Accident and Emergency, NHS 111, drug and alcohol services, social services and more, in addition to the commissioned in-house medical service provided at Manvers Street Hostel and Julian House's own services, namely the hostel and homeless discharge work at the Royal United Hospital Bath.

We hope to run the survey during the autumn.

### **Improving the quality of people's lives**

Healthwatch regularly receives feedback regarding primary care. This feedback varies greatly, but often includes:

- concerns about waiting times for appointments;

## HEALTHWATCH

### B&NES:

- 78 comments were received from April – June 2015 (Year 3, quarter 1)
- The most positively reported type of comment was around quality of treatment.
- The most negatively reported type of comment was around coordination of services.
- The three main themes that have emerged from the quarter 1 feedback are:
  - 1) People want better access to information, particularly around access to services and referrals.
  - 2) Patients value good practice in GP settings, particularly friendly, helpful staff and flexible practice.
  - 3) Appointments at GP surgeries - negative opinions were expressed about the difficulties in accessing appointments when patients needed them and with specific staff.

- the need for more information and signposting to voluntary and community-based services to help people manage their health independently; and more recently,
- concerns about new housing developments and the provision of primary care services in areas where there is already a perceived strain on resources, for example, Foxhill and the Mulberry Park development

Healthwatch also hears positive comments regarding primary care services, for example:

- The group said that Newbridge Surgery has a really easy telephone appointment system for practice nurses and GPs. The GPs aren't always able to call back on the same day but you get allocated a day and time slot.
- Commentator said that St. Chads is a great surgery. They provide staggered GP surgery start times to cover 7am - 8pm. The surgery also has a Friends group that raises funds for the surgery.

All examples of best practice and the concerns raised by patients are shared with the Primary Care Co-commissioning Forum, which has recently been set up by NHS BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group to help shape future service provision and address areas where things need to be addressed.

Since April 2015, people have been able to rate and review health and social care services via the online Healthwatch B&NES feedback centre. Healthwatch is seeing a steady increase in use of this feedback centre by members of the public, patients and their families/ carers. A new feature has now been added to the website which enables providers to respond to feedback about their services.

Responses can be made by service providers to acknowledge positive or negative feedback received from the public, for example demonstrating where improvements have been made, or to help people find information or services that they may need.

Once a service provider's response has been approved to go on the website by Healthwatch B&NES, the person who wrote the review is notified by email that a response has been provided. The service provider response is then listed online attached to the relevant review.

To review a service, or view the feedback Healthwatch B&NES has received W: [www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbathnes.co.uk)

In July 2015, Healthwatch provided an opportunity for the public and voluntary and community sector organisations to find out about the Royal United Hospital (RUH) NHS

Foundation Trust's 'Fit for the Future' redevelopment programme. Steve Boxall, Head of Capital Projects presented the plans to the group and took questions, which included:

- improvements around disabled parking access;
- specialist support and therapy for people living with neurological conditions; and
- the experience of using the on-site pharmacy, which was an issue that Healthwatch had already raised following the week-long visit carried out to the RUH in March 2015.

Healthwatch has also heard feedback from members of the public regarding the relocation of services from the RNHRD to the RUH. All feedback regarding the relocation of services to the RUH will be shared with the Trust and NHS BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group Quality Group.

Healthwatch will continue to promote opportunities for consultation and engagement with the RUH around the relocation of services and the redevelopment programme via the Health and Wellbeing Network, monthly Healthwatch e-bulletins and social media.

### **Tackling health inequality by creating fairer life chances**

Healthwatch is working with B&NES Council, St MungosBroadway and the B&NES Health and Wellbeing Network amongst others, to develop a Mental Wellbeing Charter.

The charter is linked to 'Think Local, Act Personal', a national initiative which helps organisations to make personalised services truly person-centred. It helps to set out people's expectations of the support and care that they will receive through a service(s) using a range of "I" statements, for example:

*"I have the maximum possible choice over how I am supported. My support is planned with family and friends and is regularly reviewed with support of staff when needed"*

*"I feel in control of my wellbeing and feel safe"*

The Mental Wellbeing Charter has been drafted and will be discussed with service users, carers and their families through a series of community-based focus groups to ensure that it truly reflects their expectations and aspirations. These will take place during October and November. Discussion has already begun with mental health and wellbeing service providers, both statutory and voluntary/ community sector, to build on the Charter and help implement it across their work.