



# healthwatch

Bath and North East  
Somerset

Healthwatch B&NES report to the Health and  
Wellbeing Select Committee – January 2016

## **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.

### **Summary of activity: October – December 2015**

Over the last quarter Healthwatch B&NES has carried out a range of activity as follows:

#### **Supporting quality**

Healthwatch has a volunteer representative on the NHS BaNES Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) Quality Committee. This committee carries out a 'deep dive' every month on a specific service, triangulating feedback and themes from Healthwatch, Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS), patient and public involvement activity, Friends and Family tests and so on in order to identify good practice and service improvements. Healthwatch has contributed two detailed reports during this quarter, sharing patient and public experiences on services provided by Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and Arriva Transport Solutions – South West.

#### **Partnership working**

Healthwatch is working with NHS BaNES CCG and B&NES Enhanced Medical Services (BEMS+) to host a joint public event in January. This event will provide an opportunity for interested parties to review the first year of the pilot project, Primary Care: Preparing for the Future. Two public events took place in spring 2015, prior to the pilot starting, to gather feedback on how the pilot should look and any specific considerations it should make to support the most vulnerable or 'at risk'

patients. The January session will inform people of what has happened over the last nine months and give an opportunity to understand the impact that the pilot project has had.

### ***Your care your way* community champions**

Healthwatch B&NES is supporting the *your care your way* project team to train community champions who will help design and shape community healthcare services from April 2017 onwards. In addition to supporting the training, four Healthwatch B&NES representatives are also being trained to contribute towards the discussions. Work started on this during December in conjunction with B&NES Council and NHS BaNES CCG. The training will take place in January.

### **Young people's discussion group about *your care your way***

In October, Healthwatch B&NES worked with Bath Area Play Project and NHS BaNES CCG to hold a focus group for young people to discuss the *your care your way* consultation paper.

The event was held at a community hall in the early evening so that young people could attend after school/ college (food, travel and expenses were provided for attendees). A representative from Young Healthwatch in Bristol and South Gloucestershire also attended to share their experiences of being part of a Young Healthwatch programme and a review of community healthcare services. This was the first specific young people's consultation event that we have held and is something that we want to develop further in conjunction with the Children and Young People's Network facilitated by Bath Area Play Project.

### **Elevating patients' voices**

During year two of the project Healthwatch heard from members of a community group that the Blue Badge assessment process can be a negative experience, with patients feeling 'talked down to', particularly if their application was refused. This information was shared with B&NES Council's Community Transport Liaison Group, of which Healthwatch is a member. These comments were reiterated by another organisation and the council undertook a review of the process. In October, Healthwatch heard that the assessment process has been amended to take into consideration people's movement over different surfaces, their overall health and wellbeing, i.e. if they are having a good or bad day, and more clarity if a Blue Badge is refused.

This information was shared with the community group that raised it and Healthwatch will continue to gather feedback in order to monitor the impact these changes have.

In October Healthwatch exercised its statutory right to raise a question on behalf of a member of the public at the Health and Wellbeing Board. The question was regarding the Council's Placemaking plan and provision of lifetime homes in new housing developments. Healthwatch has shared the Board's response with the commentator and is waiting for follow-up questions from them.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter** – Work is continuing on the Charter; Healthwatch B&NES and The Care Forum's Voluntary Sector Service have been supporting New Hope and St MungosBroadway to promote focus groups with service users and the voluntary sector to discuss the draft charter.

It is hoped that the charter will provide a reference point for service users and their families/ carers to understand what support they can expect from mental health professionals and service providers. The charter will provide a tool for service users and their families to 'review' their experience against (feedback to be channeled to Healthwatch, which has mental health as a priority), and an evaluation method for mental health professionals, service providers and commissioners to use to assess the quality of their treatment and service provision.

**Personal Health Budgets peer network** - Healthwatch B&NES and the Voluntary Sector Service are working with NHS BaNES CCG and B&NES Council to develop a peer network for people in receipt of a Personal Health Budget (PHB). This will be an ongoing piece of work, which aims to bring together those people that have received a PHB to share their experiences of the application process and identify what works well and what needs to be improved. We hope to hold the first network meeting in mid-March 2016.

Report prepared by Alex Francis, Interim General Manager, Healthwatch B&NES.

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