

Healthwatch Rotherham



Annual Report
2014/15



Easy Read



About Healthwatch Rotherham

Healthwatch Rotherham helps local people say what they think about health and social care services in Rotherham.



This information helps health and social care services change the way they work for the better.



Healthwatch Rotherham:

- Is part of the local Health and Wellbeing Board. They tell the board what people in Rotherham think of health and social care services.



- Supports people to make a complaint about NHS services.



- Reports any worries about health and social care services to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Changes that have happened this year



This year Healthwatch Rotherham has seen lots of changes in health and social care in Rotherham.

Some of the things we have helped change:



- Rotherham hospital has changed the information patients get before they have an operation. This is because some people said it was hard to read.



- Staff at a local doctor's surgery have been given training about helping patients with cancer.



- People who have problems seeing now find it easier to get the ball at the end of their white stick replaced.

Enabling local people to monitor the standard of local care services.



Healthwatch Rotherham has shared people's views about health and social care services with Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust, Rotherham Foundation Trust, Rotherham Council and Yorkshire Ambulance service.



Each year these services have to write a report called "Quality Accounts". "Quality Accounts" say what each service will work on over next year.



Healthwatch Rotherham will check that all of these services are doing what they said in their "Quality Accounts".

Making reports and recommendations

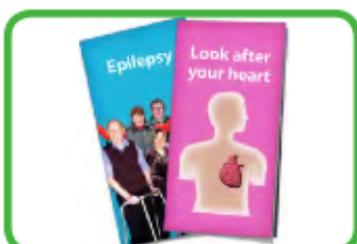


Healthwatch Rotherham has told health and social care commissioners (people who buy services) of any issues they have found with services.

Providing advice and information about access to care services.



Healthwatch Rotherham wants to make sure that people have the right information so they can make decisions about their care. We have helped 86 people access services.



Healthwatch Rotherham has lots of leaflets, posters and information on our website, Facebook and Twitter pages.

Working with the Care Quality Commission



When Healthwatch Rotherham is worried about a health or social care service we tell the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC check that health and social care services are doing their job correctly.

Sharing views with Healthwatch England



Healthwatch Rotherham tells Healthwatch England what people in Rotherham think about health and social care services.

Healthwatch Rotherham has told Healthwatch England that:



- Lots of people are confused about where they can make a complaint about NHS services.



- Transgender people have had problems with their old hospital notes being linked to their new notes.



- Decisions about funding meant that some people were having to stay in mental health hospitals for longer.

Engagement Methods and Activities (finding out what people think)



To make sure Healthwatch Rotherham is a success our service needs to be accessible so that lots of people can have their say about health and social care services.



Healthwatch Rotherham uses its website, Facebook, Twitter, local events, telephone, email, drop in sessions and our high street shop to find out what people think.



But we know that some groups find it hard to get their voice heard so we have set up groups to help people do this. (See page 28 of this booklet to find out more).



Our shop is open to the public 6 days a week Monday to Friday 9.30-4.30 and Saturday 10.00 -2.00. Our shop is on Rotherham High Street and is accessible.

Who are our members?



- 393 people are members of Healthwatch Rotherham.
- 575 Organisations are members of Healthwatch Rotherham.

All our members are sent a newsletter, which tells people what we have been doing and it is free to join.



The Board and Governance

Our board is made up of 8 volunteers. The board makes decisions about the work Healthwatch Rotherham should do (see page 32 for more information).



The Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Rotherham is a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This board looks at health and wellbeing in Rotherham.



Healthwatch Rotherham makes sure that the voices of people in Rotherham are heard at these meetings.



Naveen - meets with the manager of Healthwatch Rotherham before meetings to make sure he knows what the people of Rotherham's views are on topics.

Recognition of good work



Lots of people who have used our services have said that Healthwatch Rotherham is doing a good job.



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Note from the Chair



I was very proud to be at the 2014 Annual Healthwatch Conference and to see the Healthwatch Rotherham team be highly commended at annual conference for

teamwork and going the extra mile. I was also proud to hear Healthwatch Rotherham mentioned numerous times for good practice during the event.

This annual report reflects on the successes Healthwatch Rotherham experienced in its second year. Whilst it is good to reflect on the past, we have to work to the future and already we have a number of successes to put into next year's report.

I was pleased that the local MP's were able to visit the Healthwatch team in September. The meeting was extremely useful, and I was delighted to receive a letter from John Heeley following the meeting that said "the testimonies of patients and the national recognition for your work this year is a tribute to Healthwatch Rotherham."

Whilst we are part of a national network we must remember we are here for Rotherham and we continue to listen to the needs, comments and suggestions of

the Rotherham public. We will continue working in partnership with the commissioners and providers as their 'critical friend' and encouraging them to use a variety of ways to engage with patients, carers and service users.

It continues to amaze me how many impacts we have had over the year and that is down to the public informing us of their experiences and the services themselves embracing this feedback to allow for positive change to occur.

The work on Rotherham CAMHS is ongoing and we remain in constant dialogue with the service provider and commissioners of that service in the drive for improvement.

So much working together has taken place to benefit Rotherham residents such as Yorkshire Ambulance Service working with the Rotherham Impairment Group; Rotherham Deaf Futures doing a walk though at Rotherham Hospital to explain the issues deaf patients are experiencing. Those groups may not have come together if it was not for our involvement.

We have seen an increased demand for our services, particularly our advocacy service and this will be addressed in the year ahead.

Moving forward, I am delighted that we have 60 members signed up for our Rotherham Young Healthwatch scheme.

I would like to thank fellow directors, the staff our wonderful volunteers and all our partners for their support this year. I am informed that volunteers have given a total of 640 hours to the service - thank you.

There is still much to be done and this is a challenge that we are all looking forward to.

Naveen Judah



Note from the Chief Executive



I am delighted to have joined Healthwatch Rotherham as CEO in January 2015 and am totally committed to making health and social care services a better experience for all residents of the borough of Rotherham.

I am very fortunate in leading an excellent and dedicated team at Healthwatch Rotherham and am grateful to my predecessor Melanie Hall, whose excellent work and relationship building I am hoping to carry on and expand.

I would like to express our gratitude to our commissioners at RMBC for supporting us in the move to for Healthwatch Rotherham to become an independent social enterprise and for having the confidence in Healthwatch Rotherham to extend our contract. We are fortunate to have delivered positive and cooperative working relationships with Rotherham CCG, The Rotherham Foundation Trust, and Public Health and look forward to building on these relationships as we take forward the work of making sure that patient voice is at the heart of service improvement in health and social care.

We have recently made a significant investment in a new and innovative CRM System (provided by LHM Media) which I and our Board of trustees are confident will enhance our ability to gather the views of Rotherham Residents and provide information and reports to both service providers and commissioners alike. We will also continue to use a wide range of other engagement methods and attend public events such as Rotherham Pride and Rotherham Show in September.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first few months of what is, for me, a return to working in Rotherham after an absence of 10 years and I am looking forward with enthusiasm to the next 12 months as challenging as that may be!

Tony Clabby



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 local services around their needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in 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 watchdog 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 their care.

Healthwatch Rotherham have now become accredited as a dementia friendly organisation

Our vision

Healthwatch Rotherham will be known by all communities and individuals as delivering on its promises backed up by robust action and supported by improvements in local services.

Our mission

To be the first point of contact for all of Rotherham's communities and individuals,

to help them to have a means of improving their own and others quality of health, wellbeing and social care.

We will do this by promoting the local people's following rights

- ✓ The right to essential services
- ✓ The right of access
- ✓ The right to a safe, dignified and quality service
- ✓ The right to information and education
- ✓ The right to choose
- ✓ The right to be listened to
- ✓ The right to be involved
- ✓ The right to live in a healthy environment

Our Values

To be an impartial and trusted friend to help communities and individuals achieve their desired results and be recognised for being a fiercely independent organisation by the citizens of Rotherham.

Our strategic priorities

Issues raised by the public have been prioritised by Healthwatch Rotherham, and have formed the basis of our work during the year. Such work has included work on:

- Discharge
- CAMHS
- Dentists



Engaging with people who use health and social care service





Understanding people's experiences

The key to our success is the number of people we hear from. To ensure we get the views of all people we have to make sure Healthwatch is accessible. We use many methods to collect views from the people of Rotherham, these include:

- Facebook
- Website
- Twitter
- Local events
- Telephone
- Email
- Drop in sessions
- The High Street shop open weekdays and Saturdays

Healthwatch Rotherham has been gathering local people's views over the last 12 months. We have gathered 1,101 comments (last year it was 717) about care services which local people have received. Within these comments there are several issues. The issues have been a mix of positive and negative and relate to many care services, as people tell us about their whole journey.

The shop is open for public access 6 days a week Monday to Friday 9.30 - 4.30 and Saturdays 10-2. We are on the high street with disabled access. The shop is also contactable via phone and email.

We opened our drop in sessions across Rotherham Borough. We run fortnightly sessions where people can come see us in their community or near where they work.

- Maltby Lesiure Centre

- Dinnington
- Swinton
- Shiloh

The sessions run from 2:00pm - 4:30pm We have ensured the sessions can be accessed by children and young people after school hours. We recognise that not everyone in the Rotherham Borough can access the Rotherham Town centre.

We have gathered 1,101 comments (last year it was 717) about care services which local people have received.

A website and social media are used by Healthwatch Rotherham. We recognise this form of media is widely used by the population as a source of information and contacting services.

The methods previously identified that are used help Healthwatch Rotherham communicate with young people (under 21) and older people (over 65) as well as people volunteering or working in the area but who may not live in Rotherham.

Healthwatch features in the Rotherham Youth Cabinet Manifesto 2014-2015. The manifesto has a commitment to work with Healthwatch Rotherham over the coming year. Healthwatch Rotherham is looking forward to working with the Rotherham Youth Cabinet. Healthwatch Rotherham was invited to attend the pilot of a new educational tool to help children and young people understand their rights when using the healthcare system designed by the National Children's Bureau. This educational programme will be rolled out during the coming year.



Disadvantaged people or people you believe to be vulnerable voices can be heard at the weekly drop in attended at Shiloh.

People who are seldom heard can have the opportunity to make their views known through the drop in sessions, visiting the town centre shop or using electronic methods, whichever method they feel comfortable using.

Moving forward, the website will be redesigned in June time to allow more feedback to be obtained and to allow for greater signposting opportunities as well as promoting events for health organisations.

We use a number of engagement methods to gather people's comments. We also use local intelligence from the Rotherham Advertiser, Patient opinion website, I want better care website, NHS choices website and the GP annual survey. We ask that all comments are contextualized with the year of which their experience is gained from.

The comments and issues we gather are held on a secure database, comments are not linked to people's names, only the source they have been collected from.

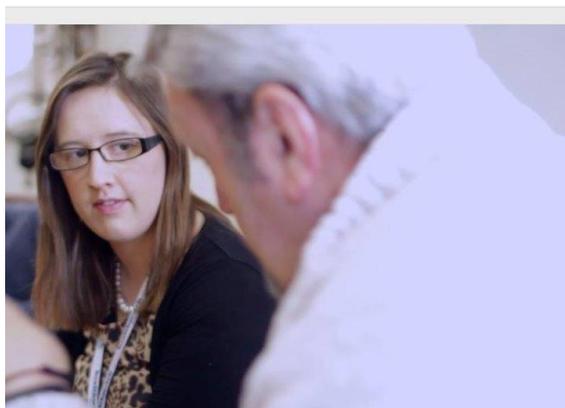
On a regular basis we check which services are most talked about, positively and negatively. We then contact the service provider to tell them what we are hearing.

As a critical friend our approach is to speak to the service provider first.

We realise that it is the service provider that will make changes to improve. The quicker they can do this the more people will benefit. That is why we aim to always talk to the provider first. We have found that some providers are not aware of what people's views are of their service, but they all welcome feedback from their customers.

Healthwatch Rotherham provides local people with an Advocacy service to help people make NHS complaints. We understand that making an NHS complaint can be difficult for some people for many reasons. We also take into account the comments we receive about services when a complaint is made. Within these comments, there is usually a positive issue.

The Advocacy service has helped 106 (last year 70) people which has led to services making changes to their provision and how they do things. This has helped others to have a better experience of care services.





Enter & View

Healthwatch Rotherham has the statutory power to Enter and View any health or social care service (excluding children's services) to access the people who receive care. We can ask people what their views are on the provision they are receiving. We will only do this if we have evidence that this needs to be undertaken.

Healthwatch Rotherham has not undertaken any Enter and View activities. The decision of when to use Enter and View is detailed in the Escalation policy. We have had responses from all the

providers we have contacted. Changes have been made to services following the comments from the public we have passed on. Our newsletters show the impact of our work.

The Board have not had enough evidence to support the use of our statutory power to Enter and View a health or social care setting.

Enter and View training has taken place during the reporting period. If the issues arises where Enter and View is required, Healthwatch Rotherham has trained volunteers in place to conduct the visits.





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

We have signposted 301 people (last year 86) to services

Healthwatch Rotherham aims to provide people with as much information as needed and in a format which is best suited to help people to access the right services and make decisions about their care.

We have signposted 301 people (last year 86) to services. The most popular services are:

- Dentists Accepting NHS Patients
- DWP
- Rotherham Disability Network
- NHS Choices
- Lifeline
- CAMHS
- Age Concern
- Lost Chord
- Action on Hearing

We have a large selection of information leaflets and posters in our High Street Shop, plus our website, facebook and twitter accounts are updated regularly.





Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people

Producing reports and recommendations to effect change

Healthwatch Rotherham have produced the following reports in this reporting period:

- Adult Mental Health and Older People's Liason Service.
- Access to Dental Practices

Focusing on the Dental report, Healthwatch received the following response from NHS England:

"The report is welcomed and very useful and informative. It is particularly pleasing to note that dental service provision appears to be in the locations where it is most likely to be needed. An Oral Health Needs Assessment for the whole of South Yorkshire & Bassetlaw is nearing completion and this will be used to support future commissioning plans.

The report raises a number of issues about the national NHS Choices website. It is recognised nationally that there is some work to do in ensuring that the database is up to date as it is accessed one million times per month. This website is now the main site for information on NHS dental services and all of our practices have editing rights and are asked to regularly update their pages. The content of NHS Choices is currently being reviewed at a national level with

support from local teams. It is generally recognised that the information on whether a practice is accepting NHS patients or not is perhaps not the right terminology to be used as this can fluctuate within the same week. Patients should always be advised to contact a practice by telephone to check that they are taking patients on. The Area Team regularly communicates with practices on this issue and follows up any erroneous or misleading information. The emergency dental care information is provided in a free text box rather than a specific section of the website therefore some practices include this detail while others do not. Where I think the Area Team can help is to do the following:

- *Contact practices with a suggested script about accessing urgent dental care. This will stage that in hours patients should contact their normal practice or NHS 111 if they do not have a dentist. Out of hours all patients should contact NHS 111.*
- *To request that any reference to A&E in this context is removed*
- *To review any pages that are for referral services such as special care dentistry to see how this should be publicised.*

The number of dental calls to NHS 111 did increase in September 2013 because that was when the service went live for dental calls and practices were advised to put



this number on their answerphones. It would appear that the public are unclear what the pathway is for urgent dental care, particularly the most vulnerable such as homeless people and we need to think of ways of promoting access to these groups across Yorkshire and the Humber.

There have been issues with NHS Pathways which is the algorithm used by NHS 111 to determine where a patient should access treatment and within what timeframe. It is not clear if the patients accessing emergency ambulance services were directed via NHS 111 or chose this option themselves, although we do have evidence of inappropriate emergency ambulance activity for dental cases via NHS 111.

The current urgent dental care pathway is being reviewed across Yorkshire and the Humber to ensure that services in place meet patient needs in the most appropriate way.

A recommendation in the report suggests that you would like to see waiting lists included on NHS Choices. I am not sure what the plans are for this nationally however the local professional network has developed a website and plans to include waiting times information on it. The website is available at <http://www.england.nhs.uk/north/syb-at/dental-lpn/>

A further recommendation suggests establishing the number of appointments available per postcode area. The contract currency is however units of dental activity (UDAs) we can provide you with

the number of UDAs commissioned by postcode if you would find this useful.

The report recommendations have been shared with the Local Professional Network particularly to identify how we can work together to deliver the final recommendation through the work that the Local Authority Public Health teams commission in respect of improving oral health and the support of Public Health England. It is also understood that there is national work commencing on an anxious patient pathway. Some work has been done in Sheffield on this and a presentation is being made to the LPN at its next meeting. Sheffield Healthwatch attend the dental LPN on behalf of all Healthwatch organisations.”

Putting local people at the heart of improving services

Your voice counts. From all the views, comments, compliments and complaints Healthwatch Rotherham has collected, we have seen many changes in health and social care.

These impacts benefit the citizens of Rotherham and ensure services are more effective in saving public money.

Some of these changes are...

Healthwatch Rotherham are working with Rotherham Deaf Futures and The Rotherham Foundation Trust to do a walk through of the out-patients and pharmacy service at the Hospital. Additionally Rotherham Deaf Futures will be providing deaf awareness training for Rotherham Hospital staff. Following representation from Healthwatch Rotherham, the hospital have agreed to flag appointments for deaf patients requiring an interpretation service.



Following issues raised by young people in Thurcroft, RDASH “Know The Score” service are going to go and visit the young people at youth centres in the Thurcroft area to carry out alcohol and drug awareness. This will then be repeated throughout the Rotherham Borough.

Rotherham Hospital has now recruited Learning Disability Champions. All the champions have had training and there are now resource packs and communication tools in place. The Hospital has also created a new Learning Disability Lead Nurse, who will be the main point of contact for people with learning disabilities and their families as well as keeping in contact with the champions.

Following a complaint raised with The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust a positive outcome has been achieved. The person who made the complaint has volunteered at the Hospital requests to attend training sessions to share their own experiences to staff within the Trust.

The hospital have introduced new bed boards which make dietary requirements much clearer and which should be updated every day by the nurse in charge of patient.

A service is looking at changing the message it uses on its franking machine, as it becomes apparent to others looking at the front on the envelope who has sent the letter, which has caused some distress.

A service is looking at the commencement of regular carers groups and a review of the duties to include communication with families as part of that job role.

Escalated an issue regarding domiciliary dental care as it appears that no clear or transparent criteria is used by practices to determine who does or doesn't get to receive the service.:

The comments made by service users will be used to inform and improve discharge services have been shared with all members of the Trust Patient Experience Group to be passed on to all departments. This is important because it ensures that feedback is shared widely and to a diverse group of staff. Each directorate is sharing the comments with matrons and ward sisters from all ward areas. A review of nursing admission documentation is undertaken led by the Professional Advisory Forum. This review will ensure that the question ‘Do you have anywhere to go following discharge?’ is routinely asked. It is important that all patients are asked about their social circumstances on admission to hospital to avoid repetition of events such as those described in the report. The Discharge Policy is reviewed with reference to the Healthwatch report and will ensure that appropriate focus is placed on the social elements of discharge planning. The comments provided will be used for next month's patient story to the Board of Directors. Every month the directors hear a story that describes patient experience at the Trust and in October this will focus on discharge planning for vulnerable groups.

The Healthwatch Rotherham team was able to challenge an inconsistency in a patient notes, which has lead to her being able to continue with her dream to join the armed forces.



A Healthwatch Rotherham volunteer has gained employment - congratulations to them.

Rotherham Hospital is reviewing its communication with families as it was identified to strengthen their practices. Commencement of regular carer groups and a review of the duties of the name nurse to include communication with families.

Dinnington Group Practice, they have informed us that in May they updated their appointment system to make the process easier for everyone. They have also informed us that they have had some extra staff training around confidential, data protection and information governance.

Following a letter sent to Crown Street Surgery informing them of the comments received about their service, they wrote to inform us that they have a suggestion box in place and people are encouraged to join their PPG (Patient Participation Group).

We have written to The Village Surgery Thurcroft to inform them of the positive comments we have received about their service. The comments covered the excellent customer service they offer and staff going the extra mile.

The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust has changed many of its practices and procedures following comments passed on to them regarding the stroke unit. One such change is that 2 beds have been ring-fenced for the use by the stroke unit only. Another change is that a new system for those attending A&E for

“brain attacks” is in place to spot the signs a lot quicker and enable treatment to begin a lot quicker.

Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust have made a commitment to increase staff supervision on the stroke unit.

Since passing on comments to them, Rotherham Hospital have relocated its CDU (Clinical Decision Unit) to a designated ward area with a dedicated meal service and improved bathroom facilities.

Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Rotherham is a full member of the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board. Naveen Judah attends, or in his absence the CEO Tony Clabby. Before attending meetings, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, Naveen is briefed on the views of local people relevant to the agenda.

Healthwatch asks questions of the other members of the board with the comments and issues the citizens of Rotherham bring to us. Naveen often asks ‘what does this mean for the people of Rotherham?’

Working with volunteers

People in Rotherham are keen to see that the environment in which people receive care in hospital is of a good standard. We have supported Healthwatch Rotherham volunteers to conduct PLACE assessments.



During the work on PLACE, the volunteers see the environment from the public's eyes and identify the possible need for environmental changes which staff can become blind to. This helps the hospital to spot changes early and aims to improve the environment for all patients.

Volunteers have received training to conduct PLACE assessments with Rotherham Hospice and The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust.

I am writing to in regards to your help and support in my placement as a volunteer at Healthwatch, Rotherham.

This has enabled me to access further training and opened up job opportunities. I would recommend being a volunteer for Healthwatch to any individual who has an interest in the health and social care of the people of Rotherham.

Once again many thanks. Please forward this to the board.

Kind regards

M. Green

Working with others to improve local services

When we identify significant concerns or a member of the public requests it, we share information with the Care Quality Commission.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) monitor services' performance against national standards. They regulate:

- Treatment, care and support provided by hospitals, GPs, dentists, ambulances and mental health services.
- Treatment, care and support services for adults in care homes and in people's own homes (both personal and nursing care).
- Services for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.
- Registered care homes and commissioning activity.

They have the power to enforce change and in some cases closure of services which do not meet the standards of good quality and safe services.

We have passed concerns to The CQC which has aided their visits to care providers.

The working practices between Healthwatch Rotherham and the CQC are highlighted in case studies presented to other local healthwatch as good practice.

Healthwatch Rotherham has contributed to the following CQC inspections:

- Yorkshire Ambulance Service
- Rotherham Foundation Trust
- Childrens services

The views and comments we have received from the people of Rotherham have been used to feed into organisations' Quality Accounts. Each year, RDaSH (the



Mental Health Foundation Trust), The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (Community Health and Acute Hospital), Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and The Yorkshire Ambulance NHS Trust (Ambulance 999 Service, Patient Transport, and 111 in Yorkshire), all produce Quality Accounts.

Quality Accounts tell the public which areas of quality the organisation has worked on over the last year and what they plan to work on in the coming year.

The comments which we have received are passed anonymously to the above mentioned services. They are able to inform their quality accounts and focus on areas of improvement for the next year.

Healthwatch Rotherham monitors care services through the above system but also through our Trend Analysis process. If we hear about an issue more than once in a short space of time, we notify the provider of the service. We have an escalation process to deal with the issues and comments we receive. If we start to see a trend over a period of time, this is also subject to the escalation process.

When we notify providers and they tell us they are changing the way they do things, we go back to them to check and ask for evidence.

Healthwatch Rotherham has made strong links with the organisations which commission health and social care services in Rotherham.

We have strong links with quality assurance and scrutiny processes including, Health Select Commission, the Quality Surveillance group chaired and with the Quality and Performance unit.

Our regular meetings and the attendance at meetings with commissioners and quality leads, gives us the opportunity to raise the issues and comments the people

of Rotherham give to us. We have done this using our escalation policy (www.healthwatchrotherham.org.uk)

NHS England receives regular reports on trends from primary care services, Dentists, GPs, Opticians and Pharmacies. The Health Select Commission officer receives reports on the areas they scrutinise.

Healthwatch sends over the views and comments of the public to the Health Select Commission.

The comments from local people have added to local and national scrutiny reviews via Healthwatch Rotherham.

Healthwatch Rotherham is part of the National Inquiry Panel into unsafe discharge. Sharon, one of our engagement officers, is on the National Special Inquiry Panel set up by Healthwatch England to look at the unsafe discharge issue across England. The purpose of the Special Inquiry is to ensure improvement in national policy and local practice. The panel will look at experiences shared by people discharged from a hospital, care home or secure mental health setting focussing on the experiences of homeless people, those with mental health conditions and older people. The comments collected by Healthwatch Rotherham, as always, were passed on to the services concerned so that they were aware of them.

We have had no providers and commissioners who did not respond (even if none) to your information requests.

We have shared reports, recommendations, escalations and intelligence with Healthwatch England. This is done either through the Healthwatch information hub and at regional Healthwatch meetings.



Impact Stories

Case Study one

Yorkshire Ambulance Service Trust



Guide Dogs meet YAS

Rotherham Healthwatch arranged for Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) to attend the Rotherham Impairment Group. The Group had raised comments to Healthwatch Rotherham about the experiences they had.

The Yorkshire Ambulance Service learned a lot through talking to the members and attending the meeting. Following the meeting the following impacts have occurred:

Designed a learning resource for ambulance staff to reduce harm from patients falling. This includes specific information about visual impairment and a reference to sighted guiding - ie walking slightly ahead of the person, rather than behind.

On the back of a conversation with one of the Rotherham Impairment Group members with a guide dog about what would happen to her dog in an emergency Yorkshire Ambulance Service contacted Guide Dogs for the Blind for advice and guidance. Guide Dogs for the Blind ran a workshop for Yorkshire Ambulance Service staff. This is going to be the start

of some work with them to develop best practice guidance for guide dogs on emergency vehicles.

The Key learning points were:

In an emergency most guide dog owners will have friends or family members who can look after the dog. But if no one is available, a crew can transport the patient with their dog to hospital.

Dogs should travel in a position where they are least likely to slide or move if the vehicle breaks suddenly. This could be by the owner's feet if they are in a seat in a PTS vehicle, against the bulkhead of an A&E vehicle or in the passenger footwell (as long as they are safely below the height of the airbag).

Guide dogs are kept to higher standards of grooming and hygiene than normal pet dogs and there is no reason to refuse transport on hygiene grounds. Vehicles should be cleaned between patient journeys in line with usual procedures.

“The Trust is working with Guide Dogs for the Blind to develop its guidance for guide dogs on Trust vehicles and to raise awareness of key learning throughout the Trust.”





Case Study Two

Hear to Help

In May 2014, The 'Hear to Help' Service, a free support service for hearing aid wearers in Rotherham provided by Action on Hearing Loss, a voluntary organisation, had unfortunately lost their funding.

A number of comments had been received by Healthwatch Rotherham which had been forwarded to the Prevention of Hearing Loss and John Healey, MP, and the service had received an extension for a month (June).

Rotherham Foundation Trust had put in an alternative service to help residents but there was concern that there was no service provision in the Dinnington and Kiveton Park areas. Comments had been received from residents in those areas and those again were passed on to the relevant bodies.

A meeting was held on 12th June, 2014, and thanks to the support of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Councillors, Voluntary Action Rotherham and John Healey, MP, Rotherham CCG had given Rotherham Foundation Trust funding to re-commission the Service and reinstate drop-in sessions

In July 2014, Action on Hearing Loss have obtained funding to restart the popular drop in sessions they were holding across Rotherham.



Healthwatch Rotherham received in excess of 80 comments from people who used this service and we passed those views on to the local MP John Healey and Action on Hearing Loss. This shows your voice counts, without your comments this would not have been achieved.

This work demonstrates how Healthwatch makes local people's voices heard. The people of Rotherham came, wrote, emailed and phoned us to tell us that they value this community services which reduces their social isolation and positively impacts on their health and wellbeing. We were able to supply local people's views as evidence to inform decision makers. We are very pleased that local people have been listened to and action has taken place. We wish Action on Hearing Loss the very best on their joint work with The Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust.





Our plans for 2015/16

Opportunities and challenges for the future

Our plans for 2015/16 will naturally be determined by the comments we are receiving from the public and we need to be flexible and adaptable to meet those challenges. One area of focus this year will be CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

We will be working together with Rotherham CCG to improve the engagement and participation of Rotherham residents in improving health and well-being across the borough.

Patient participation groups

Establish four GP patient participation groups where they do not currently exist. Our approach will be to Co -design, with the CCG engagement team, a patient engagement and recruitment process. Healthwatch will work with the four GP practices to engage with patients and put the new PPGs in place.

Young Healthwatch Ambassador Pilot programme

Rotherham Healthwatch is developing an innovative programme with young people to promote wellbeing and healthy living. The Rotherham Young Healthwatch Ambassador Programme aims to give young people (aged 12 - 18) a voice in the design and delivery of the health services they receive. The programme will be piloted in 2015 initially with a group of young people from Wales High School in

Rotherham. The young Ambassadors will act as peer educators, opening up access to a wide range of health services and promote positive messages about being safe and healthy.

This approach aims to provide a point of contact for young people who may not feel able or comfortable engaging with existing mainstream services. If successful this programme has the potential to lead the way in the active and positive engagement of young people in health services and could be rolled out more widely across the Borough.

Its findings may be helpful for health and social commissioners and service providers alike.

Rotherham Healthwatch Peoples Forum

The aim of the Peoples forum is to develop a living and breathing network of individuals and groups who wish to work with us to improve the health of the Borough by developing greater co-operation and accountability of services.

We will build on our existing network of active groups and individuals across the Borough, pulling them together into a more coherent constituency. We aim to utilise a range of ways to have meaningful dialogue including social media, face to face discussions and large scale events.

The space we create for this will also provide the opportunity for service providers to consult with a relevant and appropriate body of local people.



Our governance and decision-making

Our board

The board is made up of volunteers who were selected due to their skills and experiences.

The Healthwatch Rotherham board and as of 31st March 2015 they were:

-  Naveen Judah
-  Sue Barrett
-  Chris Smith
-  Gary Kent
-  Paul May
-  Catherine Porter

Directors who left from April 1st 2014 to 31 March 2015:

-  Aaron Wildman
-  Brian Daniels
-  Susan Shepherd
-  Joanne Hallatt

The Board make key decisions in our organisation and set the direction of the work we do.

How we involve lay people and volunteers

Key decisions and work planning are based on the evidence that Healthwatch Rotherham collects from the citizens of Rotherham. They use the decision

support tool to aid them and to prioritise the work.

The decision support tool collates the public comments and the local and national strategic relevance. The Board play an important part in gathering and feeding in the strategic relevance as they attend the 6 health and wellbeing board priority workstreams.

The escalation of issues is determined by the operational staff using the escalation policy. This is then fed into the Healthwatch Rotherham Board.

The Healthwatch Rotherham Board sign off all the letters to service providers when issues (positive and negative) are raised through the trend analysis process

We recognise that volunteers vary in their availability due to other responsibilities such as work, caring or their own health needs. This is why we have different types of membership which people can opt for depending on their personal interests and the time they have available.

The volunteers have dedicated a total of 640 hours (last year 296) to Healthwatch ensuring that local people have their say about Rotherham's Health and Social care services.

Volunteers have dedicated a total of 640 hours to Healthwatch ensuring that local people have their say about Rotherham's Health and Social care service



Contact us

Get in touch

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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, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, 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 us at the address above.

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