

# **REPORT TO THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2015**

## **Healthwatch Barnsley Annual Report**

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<b>Received by SSDG:</b>	20.7.2015
<b>Date of Report:</b>	11.8.2015

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update the Health and wellbeing Board on the activities of Healthwatch Barnsley during 2014/15.
- 1.2 Inform of priorities for Healthwatch Barnsley 2015/16.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Health and Wellbeing Board members are asked to:-

- Note the Healthwatch Barnsley Annual Report 2014/15 and share with respective organisations.
- Look at how the Health and Wellbeing Board would like to work with Healthwatch Barnsley during 2015/16

### **3. Introduction/ Background**

3.1 Healthwatch Barnsley is in its second year of operation, each year we are statutorily required to produce an annual report which outlines activities of the past 12 months and clearly demonstrates impacts and outcomes. The annual report will accompany this cover report to the Health and Wellbeing board which outlines some of this year's hi-lights, including information on the Healthwatch network, and Healthwatch Barnsley's Outreach, engagement, impacts and outcomes.

### **4. The Healthwatch Network**

4.1 Healthwatch Barnsley is one of **148** Local Healthwatch in England, and we are supported by a national organisation called Healthwatch England, who sits with the Care Quality Commission.

Local Healthwatch are the eyes and ears on the ground providing information to Healthwatch England about people's experiences.

Healthwatch England analyse national data to identify issues that affect large numbers of the population, and carry out their own research to reach out to groups who are often not heard.

Healthwatch England use their legal powers to raise concerns with people who commission, regulate and provide health and social care services to encourage change.

Across this network there are **890** staff members & **5400** volunteers working to gather patient opinion and act on the trends developing to encourage change.

In October 2013 40 local Healthwatches raised concerns about the new plans to share people's GP records with NHS and Care services through the Care.data programme. NHS England proposed that information would be collected by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) and used to inform the improvement of treatment and care. But local people were worried about anonymity and how data will be shared.

So in February 2014 Healthwatch England challenged NHS England calling for a delayed roll out of the care data until people had the information they needed to choose whether to opt out. As a result NHS England announced a 6 month pause on the programme, and since then Healthwatch England has continued to ask for more to be done so that the public understands the programme. More recently Healthwatch England has also called for more action to improve the complaints system. Drawing attention to the complexity of the system, highlighted the fragmentation of advocacy services and presented to Government people's experiences of complaining about health and social care. This helped lead to coordinated action from across Health and Social Care system and increased recognition that the complaints system needs to change.

Then in Feb 2014 Healthwatch England Launched their first special enquiry into unsafe discharge, to which Healthwatch Barnsley were one of the 100+ Local Healthwatch who contributed to the enquiry. Through the inquiry Healthwatch England will help marginalised people to tell their stories of unsafe discharge from hospitals and mental health institutions. Local Healthwatch identified this issue as an entrenched problem that needed to be addressed nationally through a fresh approach.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of July Healthwatch England launched the findings of this enquiry and the report, which does not outline recommendations but challenges the department of Health to make improvements.

Healthwatch Barnsley's work has also featured in the following Healthwatch England Reports to the Department of Health:

- Primary Care a review of local Healthwatch Reports

- Healthwatch Children and Young People The Role of Local Healthwatch Nov 2014.

## 5. Healthwatch Barnsley Outreach and Engagement

5.1 Locally Healthwatch Barnsley has worked hard over the past two years to develop as an organisation, and develop networks and links into local communities and across Health and Social Care organisations.

Healthwatch Barnsley has since the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2013 engaged **9000** members of the public recruited **1600** Healthwatch Members **500** of which are Children and young people.

We have also gained **32** active volunteers who support us as Strategic Advisory Board Members, or Healthwatch Champions.

Our volunteers are committed to what we do as an organisation and during 2014/15 supported us to attend **258** local outreach and community engagement events across the borough.

## 6. Impacts and Outcomes

6.1 Healthwatch has already reported to the Health and wellbeing board the impacts and outcomes of our work through our regular reporting. Throughout our Annual Report you will see a number of impact stories which also outline Impacts, partnership working, and outcomes for Barnsley people.

Where we have seen the most significant growth this year is with the Signposting and information service, during 2013/14 Healthwatch Barnsley received 43 signposting and information requests but in 2014/15 our signposting and information requests more than doubled to 90 requests for information.

In a recent audit of the signposting and information service we received 24 responses to our survey 22 of which stated that they were happy with the signposting and information that they received and would use Healthwatch Barnsley again. Comments included:

*“I contacted Healthwatch when my husband was ill and I didn't know what services were available to help. I was given helpful and accurate advice which meant that we were able to access support equipment to help us cope. Thank you Healthwatch”*

*“I did not want to go through another agency I only wanted help to write a letter to my GP as English is not my first language. Healthwatch helped me with this”.*

## 5. Conclusion/ Next Steps

5.1 Healthwatch Barnsley's activities and priorities for 2015/16 will be to:

### Activities

- Expand our programme of outreach and promotion with front line staff within health and social care services.
- Continue to promote Healthwatch Barnsley to members of the general public and raise our profile locally.
- Continue to train and develop our Healthwatch Champions, and ensure they have plenty of opportunities to meet with and talk to members of the public.
- Develop our involvement with the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Continue to look at opportunities in line with our remit and bid for local/regional contracts.

## **Priorities**

- Healthwatch has chosen its priorities for 2015/16 based on the information we received as part of the reflective audit and the comments collected over the last 12 months. Next year we will focus on:
- GP Access - looking at people's experiences of accessing general practice, and variations between practices.
- Mental health services - completing our work on Children Adolescent Mental Health Services as well as looking at peoples experiences of accessing mental health services when in crisis.
- We will also continue to remain responsive to the trends data that we receive.

## **6. Background Papers**

9.1 Healthwatch Barnsley Annual Report

9.2 Healthwatch Presentation Slides

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**Date:** 11.8.2015