

Young People and Parental Engagement Service Report

March 2016

INTRODUCTION

This report is a summary of the work carried out by Young Solutions for Healthwatch Worcestershire as part of the Young People and Parental Engagement Service 2015-16. It builds on the work carried out during the 2014-15 contract.

It covers three areas of work:

1. Engagement and mapping of current forums used by health and social care networks, and independent forums and networks for engaging with young people and parents of children
2. Feedback and key issues from young people and parents of children about health and social care services
3. Engagement model recommendations

1. ENGAGEMENT AND MAPPING OF CURRENT FORUMS

1.1 Information Sharing, Contact Building and Networking

The engagement work in 2015-16 built on the work carried out in 2014-15 including updating the detailed mapping exercise on forums and networks which exist for engagement with young people and parents.

Health and social care services, practitioners, commissioners, voluntary and community organisations across Worcestershire were contacted to find out the means they use for engagement. Information was also gathered from external organisations and individuals who have experience of these engagement methods, either directly or through supporting young people who are involved.

1.1a) Individuals

During 2014-15 we met with, spoke to and shared Healthwatch Worcestershire information with 279 people from 123 organisations/ departments across Worcestershire. This included voluntary organisations, Positive Activity providers, Early Help providers, Police, Fire, Health Improvement Coordinators, District and County Councillors, schools, colleges, sports and arts organisations.

Many of these people were met again during 2015-16 as well as an additional new **368** people. These included **154** professionals, parents and young people who gained general information about Healthwatch and received leaflets, and **214** young people and parents who reported individual experiences. **153** of these gave structured feedback to the engagement topics around services for parents with children under 5, issues for young carers, and GP services and **61** completed feedback forms about their individual experiences (the "Your View" form). In addition we promoted a number of online surveys which contributed to gathering responses for the engagement topics.

The Chairman of Healthwatch Worcestershire was invited to present an award at our Tryangle Awards evening for young volunteers and spoke about Healthwatch to the 104 young people parents and professionals who attended.

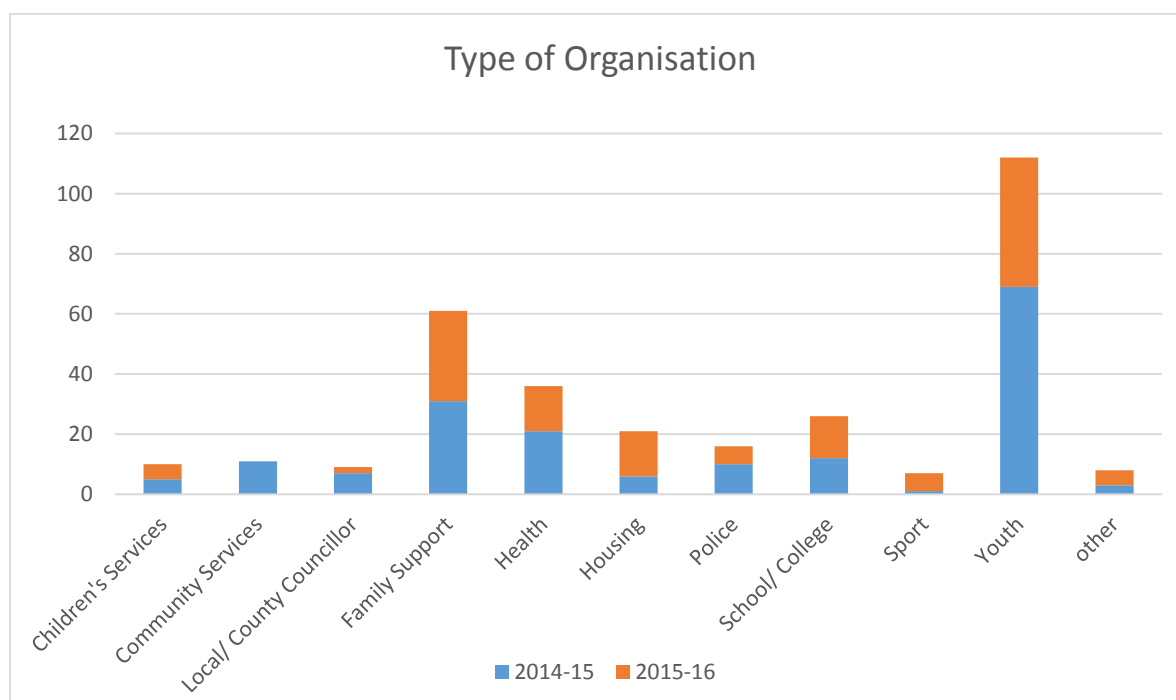
See Appendices for a full list of people engaged with during the year.

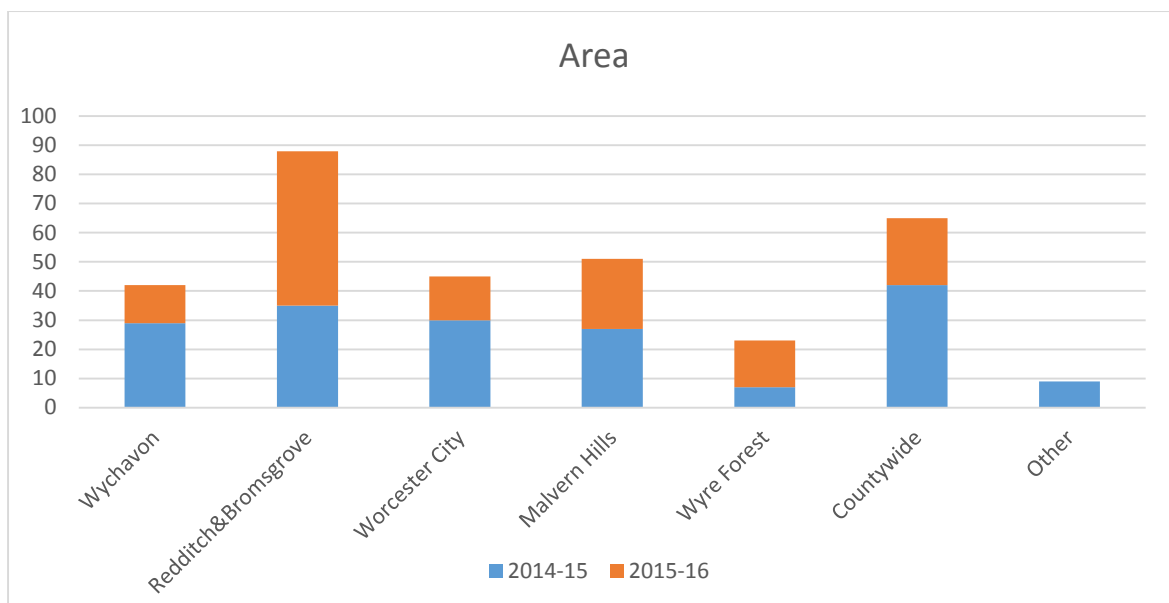
1.1b) Number of People Engaged With 2015-16

	Young People	Parents	YP&P
Numbers engaged in order to raise awareness of HWW			
Individuals	21	14	35
Statutory organisations			62
Voluntary and community organisations			57
No engaged with to raise awareness	21	14	154
Numbers reporting individual experiences			
Structured feedback to engagement topic	85	68	153
Completing feedback form about individual experiences	50	11	61
Total no reporting experiences	135	79	214
Numbers recruited to HWW -			
Organisations completing applications to REGs			20
Experts by Experience signed up to REGs	0	0	0
Total no signed up to REGs			20
Registered for information	34	9	43
Co-opted Board Members			

1.1c) Organisations

During the year we met or had contact with people from 81 organisations or departments.





1.1d) Network Groups

We attending the following networking groups and where appropriate shared information about Healthwatch Worcestershire and fed back about health services:

- Malvern Hills Early Help Strategic Board
- Malvern Hills Youth Advisory Network
- Malvern Hills Volunteering Forum
- Tenbury Positive Youth
- Martley Positive Youth
- Worcester City Early Help Strategic Board
- Worcester City Early Help Health & Wellbeing Subgroup
- Healthy Worcester
- Droitwich Children's Centre Area Board
- Redditch Positive Activities Subgroup
- Redditch Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People's Task and Finish Group
- Positive Activities Network
- Youth Engagement Network Group
- Family Nurse Partnership
- CAMHS Partnership Board
- Engagement and Learning Forum

1.2 Current Forum Mapping - NHS and Worcestershire County Council

The following forum information was shared by organisations:

NHS England – Youth Forum

The forum comprises 20 young people recruited from all over the country and is linked in to a facebook network of hundreds more young people. It aims to provide a voice for young people and works with NHS England, Public Health England and Department of Health to work in partnership to improve the services for young people.

NHS South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group

South Worcestershire CCG do not have their own engagement group but link in with other groups, hold a Takeover Day event each year and carry out surveys at Worcester University Fresher's Fairs. They have previously worked with the YMCA Young Health Champions, and linked into the Youth Mentors at the Hive. They have some young people registered for information and these are mainly university students.

GP Surgeries

We have not been told of any surgeries that already involve young people (other than having a young person turn up once to a meeting), but have been told that Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are very keen to find ways to engage with young people. Some have tried to engage with local schools, eg in Droitwich, but discovered that the pupils are often not from the local surgery catchment area. A group of PPGs in the Evesham area have linked together and are planning to try to make contact with the local school there.

NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group

RB CCG do not have their own engagement group and usually use other organisations such as the voluntary sector or schools for targeted engagement work. They have:

- linked with the Young Health Champions
- worked with the Health and Care Trust
- a few young people aged 14 – 18 signed up to receive information
- links with the voluntary sector eg BARN

They are keen to develop their youth engagement.

NHS Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group

The Patient and Public Engagement Manager started in post in November 2014. The previous engagement officer didn't have a specific youth board but used voluntary organisations such as St Basils in Kidderminster to engage young people. They have several young people registered for information and are keen to develop engagement work with young people.

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

The Trust have a Youth Board which is attended by young people aged 14 to 25 from a variety of places. These include Christopher Whitehead School, Kidderminster & District Youth Trust, Worcester University and Health & Social Care students. The Board meet bi-monthly and have approx 10 members.

Previous the Youth Board have helped to design the website, were included in an interview panel for CAMHS, questionnaires, were asked views about services etc.

The Trust also have a few young people registered for information.

In terms of suitability for Healthwatch Worcestershire engagement, it will be important not to duplicate the work of this Youth Board and instead to work in partnership with it. It should be a useful mechanism for engagement.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

The Acute Trust do not have a youth forum. Young people usually access their services for only a short or limited amount of time, unless they have an ongoing condition, so their engagement work has been in the form of feedback forms and suggestions during their stay. They have been fairly successful with this. They are keen to get young people more involved if possible.

Worcestershire County Council - Youth Cabinet

This is made up of 24 young people aged 11-18 elected in each district. They currently meet monthly and have additional topic meetings. They provide a voice for young people, give advice to organisations about involving and engaging with young people and consult with thousands of young people in Worcestershire to find out their views.

This forum would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with.

Worcestershire County Council Children in Care Council – Who Cares, We Care and Speak Out

The Children in Care Council have two forums – Who Cares, We Care (for approx. ages 12 – 16 year olds) and Speak Out (for young people who are leaving care approx ages 16-19). These groups meet every 3 – 4 weeks and the number attending varies but is around 24. They hold the County Council to account as their legal guardians, give views about services and also do consultations with other young people in care.

Both forums would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with.

Worcestershire Safeguarding Children’s Board – Young Person’s Panel

The WSCB have a Young Person’s Panel made up of young people from the Youth Cabinet and Who Cares, We Do. This panel meet approx. every 6 weeks, there are up to 20 young people and are aged 13 plus. The panel are used for consultation and providing advice and guidance about external information and consultations eg designing questionnaires.

As this group are made up from other youth forums, they may be of less use to Healthwatch Worcestershire.

District Councils

The district councils do not have any formal youth engagement forums but would use others which exist in their area or some areas go through the Local Children’s Trust.

1.3 Forum Mapping - Other Organisations

Our Voice

Our Voice are a network of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs. They have a steering group but can also distribute information around all registered parents. Our Voice were formally affiliated to Worcestershire Parent & Carers’ Community (WPCC).

Our Voice would be very useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with.

Worcestershire Maternity Services Forum

This group is an independent advisory body that exists to plan, monitor, develop, safeguard and improve maternity services through pregnancy, labour, birth and the first 6 weeks after birth. It is for parents who have had a baby in Worcestershire within the past 2 years and meets quarterly. It also has regional reps from each district who gather feedback from other local service users in their area by visiting various parenting groups, liaising with local service providers (such as Early Help) and arranging meet ups from time to time to act as a feedback between the forum and their service user group.

This forum would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire engagement.

Worcester City Early Help – Youth Ambassadors

The Youth Ambassadors act as a Youth Forum, provide views to shape the service, sit on interview panels, volunteer at events, do fundraising etc. They are young people aged 14 -18 (open to those aged 12 – 19) who are all former service users and there are currently 11 young people. They meet about once a month. **This forum would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire engagement.**

Redditch & Bromsgrove Early Help – Redditch Youth Forum

Early Help in Redditch and Bromsgrove have recently set up a Youth Forum. They have been working on recruiting young people and numbers are growing slowly. They have two age bands (8 to 12 and 13 to 19 years) and aim to meet approx. every 6 weeks. As part of their work, they are trialling question sheets which will be given out regularly to young people and separate ones for parents. They are keen for other agencies to give them questions for their sheets.

This should be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire in the Redditch area.

Worcestershire Young Carers – Focus Group

The Young Carers have a focus group of 12 young people which meets monthly for ages 14 to 23. Their overall aim is to provide a voice for young carers so that they are able to inform and influence services that are meant to meet their needs. They also aim to raise awareness of young carers and of issues affecting their lives as children and young people with caring responsibilities. They have also participated in consultation exercises involving other organisations such as Safeguarding Board.

This group would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with.

Fortis Malvern – Teen Champions

This is a forum of 18 young people aged 11 – 16 years old who meet approx. monthly. They provide views as well as volunteer at events and act as Champions for Fortis.

This group would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with.

They are also setting up a Youth Board in partnership with St Basils. **This group would be useful for Healthwatch Worcestershire to engage with once established.**

1.4 Other Organisations with Internal Youth Forums

The following organisations have internal forums of young people. These usually just advise on issues for the organisation but could potentially be used by Healthwatch Worcestershire for engagement:

- The Cube (Malvern)
- Your Ideas (Redditch)
- Stoke Parish Youth Club (Bromsgrove)
- Outside (Evesham)
- Pershore Riverside Youth Centre (Pershore)
- KYDT (Kidderminster)
- St Basils (Kidderminster and Bromsgrove)
- Bewdley Youth Café (Wyre Forest)
- Young Farmers (countywide)
- Explorer Scouts (countywide)
- Worcester Community Trust (Worcester)

2. FEEDBACK AND ISSUES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE AND PARENTS ABOUT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

Who We Spoke To:

Our work in 2014-15 gave us a good indication of some of the issues that young people and parents said they were experiencing with health and social care services. In 2015-16 we continued to gather information from young people and parents, carried out formal engagement work, held group discussions, individual conversations and recorded views on Healthwatch Worcestershire's 'Your View' form. We also concentrated on specific engagement topics which emerged from issues in the first year as requested by Healthwatch Worcestershire.

In total we spoke to **135** young people with ages ranging from 10 – 19 (majority aged 16 – 19) and 55% were female. They came from the following places:

- Youth Cabinet
- Broadway Youth Club
- Malvern Special Families/Regency After School Club
- Who Cares We Care
- Worcester YMCA
- Redditch YMCA
- HOW College Freshers
- The Basement Project
- DAFFY
- Young Farmers
- Charford Youth Club
- Your Ideas
- Kidderminster College
- South Worcestershire College
- Young Carers

The parents were predominately met at toddler groups and activity groups in Malvern Hills district and Redditch as these were target areas of interest requested by Healthwatch Worcestershire. We met with **79** parents.

Main Findings:

2.1 Engagement Topics

Topic 1. Access to GPs for Young People

A "Young People's GP Access and Complaints Survey" was designed by Healthwatch Worcestershire, aiming to find out the views of 13 – 19 year olds about making appointments, visiting the GP surgery and knowing how to make a complaint. Young Solutions gained feedback from young people about the survey design and distributed it widely across Worcestershire through Survey Monkey and hard copies. Views were also gathered through conversations with formalised groups. In total contributions were received from **119** young people.

The findings can be summarised as follows:

- Overall young people told us that they are happy with the service they receive and felt that staff at GP practices are helpful
- Majority of the young people go with a parent or carer to appointments (particularly 13 to 16 year olds)
- Although more than half said that Doctors spoke more to the person they go with than directly to them, many said they preferred this, whilst some said that they did not always understand what the Doctors are saying.
- Responses suggested that young people would like more appointments available in evenings and at weekends and that being able to make appointments on line or by text would be helpful.
- Most of the young people did not know how to raise a complaint about their GP practice and said that not knowing how to give feedback is the most likely thing to stop them doing so.
- Findings suggest it would be helpful for GP practices to raise awareness of the ways feedback can be provided and the use of both paper and on line surveys. In general the younger people (aged 13 – 16) seemed to prefer using text for contact, such as making appointments and giving feedback, whilst 17 – 19 year olds preferred using online methods.

A report was drafted from the findings by Young Solutions, then finalised by Healthwatch Worcestershire. It has been shared with CCGs, GPs, Healthwatch England, NHS England and with the general public through the websites of Healthwatch Worcestershire & Young Solutions.

Topic 2. Issues Affecting the Young Homeless

This topic was designed to feed into Healthwatch Worcestershire's long term work collating the views of those who are homeless about issues when accessing health and social care services. Some work had already been carried out by Healthwatch at St Basils Foyer in Kidderminster and follow up work was carried out by us with Healthwatch Worcestershire at the YMCA foyers in Worcester and Redditch. **29** young people and staff shared their views and we were told that:

- Young people found it difficult to get an appointment as they have to contact the surgery at specific times
- The forms can be complicated to fill in and misleading, especially for people with complicated lives
- Receptionists/Doctors can be seen as judgemental and this can be a barrier to treatment.
- Several young people and staff reported that their Doctor didn't know how to treat someone with depression and some Doctors wouldn't refer for treatment

The findings have been fed into Healthwatch Worcestershire's homeless report.

Topic 3. CAMHS Service

This topic was identified as a result of issues raised with Healthwatch Worcestershire and Young Solutions by many young people and professionals during our general engagement work. An online survey was designed and circulated by Healthwatch Worcestershire aimed at those who had either accessed or tried to access CAMHS support for themselves or their child. Young Solutions helped to promote the survey as well as gathering face-to-face feedback from young people and parents through discussions at group visits. The survey was completed by **94** people between July and December 2015 (29 young people and 65 parents/carers). This is a similar response rate to the survey carried out by Worcestershire County Council as part of the 2015 CAMHS Needs Assessment.

The main findings were collated into a report by Healthwatch Worcestershire and were:

- Many people who have accessed support from CAMHS had found the support beneficial, the majority felt that staff were kind and compassionate and they had been treated with respect.
- However the feedback also suggested that there is a need to reduce waiting times and ensure that all young people are receiving the support they need.
- Findings suggested that there may be a delay in receiving a diagnosis and more specific support required for those with Autism or ASD.
- There may also be a need for better partnership working between CAMHS and schools and other agencies.
- Feedback also suggested that CAMHS need to ensure that those from Black Asian and Ethnic Minority communities can access support
- There may be a need for effective transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services.

The report will feed into Worcestershire County Council's review of CAMHS and to their Transformation plan for children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Topic 4. Young Carers – Accessing GP Services

This topic was identified while gathering feedback in 2014-15 from Young Carers about accessing GP services. The Young Carers shared several issues with us and this seemed an appropriate topic to follow up in this year. We attended their forum meeting and received views from 12 Young Carers, with 6 additionally completing the new GP survey (Topic 6).

The main findings were:

- Some young carers find it hard to make appointments as it can take a long time to get through on the phone and appointments go quickly
- Sometimes they felt that staff at the surgery (receptionists, doctors and pharmacists) didn't understand their role of young carer, didn't take them seriously or didn't listen
- Sometimes information wasn't shared with them or their views about patient care weren't included
- It can be hard for them to pick up medication for the person they care for and occasionally are given the wrong medication

Things the young carers thought could help were:

- Doctors being aware that they are a carer and this being flagged on the patient's file
- Doctors/receptionists being more aware about the role of a young carer and giving the carer more understanding and respect
- Being able to see the same doctor each time
- Having a Young Carer's/Someone relies on me card

The information we gained has been shared with a GP surgery who are keen to meet the young carers and follow this up. The feedback will also be distributed to commissioners and GPs.

Topic 5. Parents/carers of under 5's

Focussed engagement work carried over the last 18 months with parents/carers identified several areas that Healthwatch Worcestershire wanted to investigate further. Healthwatch therefore designed a survey to find out the views of parents/carers with very young children about maternity, advice and support and health services. We assisted in completion of this

survey by visiting various toddler groups and health clinics in the county, focussing on specific areas of interest such as rural areas of Malvern Hills district and Redditch, and completed the survey and feedback forms with **44** parents/carers.

The Healthwatch Worcestershire's main findings were:

- Most people were happy with the information and advice they received during pregnancy and the care they received from their Community Midwives. While many people told us they were happy with the care they received in hospital, we also received a number of comments about understaffing and poor post-natal care.
- Most parents and carers are happy with the support they have received from their Health Visitor. In particular they were happy with the outcome of developmental reviews. Many people felt reassured and found their advice and support valuable in the early days of parenting following the birth of their child.
- Parents and carers access information and advice from a number of sources. Family and friends are highly valued as a source of information, especially in the early days of parenting. As were other face to face sources of information and advice. However, services need to consider a variety of approaches to ensure that information reaches different groups and communities across the County.
- Most parents and carers felt that they were able to access health care for their children when they needed to and that they were happy with the care and advice given. About half of the parents we spoke to had contacted 111. Many parents found that the 111 service was helpful in providing advice and that, in some situations, it had ensured children had received timely medical treatment.

Our feedback has been included in the main Healthwatch Worcestershire report which will feed into the current redesign of prevention services for 0-19 year olds -Starting Well. The experiences of maternity services will also feed into work around the Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire and Healthwatch's response to the National Maternity Review.

Topic 5a. Impact of closure of maternity services at Alexandra Hospital

As an extension of Topic 5, Healthwatch Worcestershire were keen to find out how the closure of the maternity ward at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch affected mothers who gave birth around this time. We visited health clinics at various children's centres in Redditch and spoke to **24** parents.

Main findings:

- All those who gave birth at Redditch in the 4 months before the closure said they found the facilities good but the staff seemed over-stretched and short-staffed
- There was some confusion in the days before the closure, with one mother saying that Redditch and Worcester hospitals both tried to send her to the other one
- Those who gave birth at Worcester generally found it a good experience and several said they preferred to be at Worcester than Redditch after previously having bad experiences at Redditch
- The distance to Worcester was a major concern. Many said they had been worried about getting to Worcester or would worry about getting there in the future and that it was hard for family and friends to visit. One mother said they felt alone after the birth as no one could visit and another couple said they were thinking of moving out of the area so that they would be closer to medical facilities. Several said it was a serious consideration for whether they have another child.

- The limited amount of parking at Worcester Hospital and the cost of parking there was the biggest issue and this is the issue that the parents feel needs addressing.

Healthwatch Worcestershire will use this information to feed into future consultations.

Topic 6. GP Access

Healthwatch Worcestershire wanted to expand Topic 1 and get more views about out of hours access to routine appointments, triage systems for appointments and continuity of care i.e. seeing the same Doctor. They produced a new survey, which we took to young people and parents and received feedback from **26** people.

The feedback we were given was very similar to that in our initial survey:

- Half the people found it hard to get an appointment on the day they wanted
- Half said they found receptionists to be unhelpful, though some said it depended on the receptionist
- The majority found the nurses to be helpful
- Half didn't know how to make a complaint

Some other common comments were:

- They felt the receptionists sometimes asked too many personal questions when trying to book an emergency appointment and they were uncomfortable giving this information to the receptionist
- Appointments were often delayed and this could be a problem when using pay and display parking
- The service was very person-dependent – some respondents said that some receptionists/doctors were very good but others were felt to be less empathetic or understanding of issues

Our feedback will be included in Healthwatch Worcestershire's report.

2.2 Additional Views from Engagement Work

Much of our engagement work was focussed on the topics above, but additional views were also received. 61 Our View forms were completed and given to Healthwatch to log and the views that were not included in the topics above are summarised here.

There was a big divide in people's views about the health and social care services that they have received, and it seemed to be either really good or not good at all. This was quite subjective and often depended on the hospital/surgery/facility or on individuals within the facility.

Positive feedback included views that the staff (doctor, nurse, receptionists etc) were *"nice"*, *"polite"*, *"friendly and approachable"*, *"amazing, always good and kind"*, *"good experience"*, *"helpful"*, *"very supportive"* and one young person said *"The people are friendly, quick service, they explain things in words that I understand and make me feel comfortable when I am afraid"*. Treatment for babies and children was generally seen as being very good, taken seriously and timely.

Less good feedback can be grouped into four areas:

i) **Appointments:** many found it hard to get an appointment at the GP surgery and some also mentioned the dentist's - *"takes a long time to get an appointment"*, *"difficult to get an urgent appointment after school"*, *"All appointments go very quick"*, although many parents

told us that it was much easier to get an emergency appointment for a baby/child and they were seen as a priority.

When attending appointments, feedback was that they were sometimes delayed – *“they always run late”, “wait is too long”, “shorter waiting times would make it better” “the wait is way too long, once I had to wait 2 hours”*.

This was a big concern for those waiting to be seen with babies/children, and also for those who had to pay for car parking as they were concerned about getting a parking ticket. Some said they rushed through their appointment once they were seen so that they didn't overrun in the car park.

ii) **Staff:** As well as positive feedback, we also received some negative comments about staff members. There was quite a lot of feedback that receptionists are perceived as being *“rude”* and that they *“ask loads of questions”*, some doctors in both GP surgeries and hospitals were seen as being *“not very understanding”*, *“intolerant when having to explain medical issues”* and some dentists were seen as *“rude”*.

iii) **Treatment:** Some people felt that they didn't receive the right treatment or diagnosis or enough information – *“problem not solved”, “didn't give the medication needed”, “they never go into depth about what is wrong, always diagnose you with the same things”, “renewal of prescriptions a pain”*.

iv) **Continuity:** It was important to people to be treated by someone who they felt had an understanding of their issues and medical history. This was especially important to those with long term conditions or who were carers. They wanted people who would *“listen”, “explain things”* and didn't want to have to *“keep explaining the life story of your case”*. One parent of a child with a disability said that had continuity was so important to them that they would be very reluctant to move house and have to start again.

The following suggestions about ways to improve health and social care services were given to us by young people and parents:

- *A&E should have current waiting time information on their website so people planning to visit A&E could find out how long they were likely to have to wait.*
- *Services should be welcoming*
- *Services should give you a cup of tea before you go in to relax you*
- *Include Healthwatch leaflets in the pack given to new parents after birth*

2.3 Takeover Day

For Takeover Day, we arranged for a group of 10 students from Kidderminster College and South Worcestershire College to spend the day finding out more about health and social care services in Worcestershire and the importance of giving feedback. We supported Healthwatch Worcestershire to run group discussions asking the students to give their ideas on health priorities, health messages, sexual health services, emotional well-being and how services can be made more young person friendly.

Healthwatch Worcestershire young people had an opportunity to present their feedback and ask questions to local commissioners and providers, including: Dr Anthony Kelly, Chair of South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group; Rani Virk, Lead Nurse for Quality and Patient Experience at the Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust, Peter Pinfield, Chair of Healthwatch Worcestershire and Debbie Herbert, Commissioning Manager for Early Help in Children's Services at Worcestershire County Council.

The young people told us they think schools should be placing more importance on teaching health messages and that they need to do this from a younger age. They felt that young

people need to be a target group in their own right for reducing harm from alcohol in the new Health and Well-being Strategy due to the social expectations around drinking.

The questions they raised included: how can services make sure doctors and other professionals communicate in a way that young people can understand? How can GP appointment systems allow young people to make appointments without having to call when they are on their way to college? How can young people access help and support for mental health issues, especially those without parental support to access services?

The feedback gained has been used to feed into Healthwatch Worcestershire's response to the Draft Health and Well-being Strategy 2016 to 2019, and to give feedback to the engagement being carried out around sexual health services. They also used feedback around emotional well-being and mental health to feed into Healthwatch's input on the CAMHS Partnership Board.

3. RECOMMENDED ENGAGEMENT MODEL

Young people are difficult to engage with and retain, most have little interest in health issues as they rarely access health services and it is difficult to bring young people together from across the whole of Worcestershire. Our suggestions are therefore to **have several methods for engagement:**

3.1 Forums

3.1a) Current Forums

Where forums exist, these should be used (see Section 1) and Healthwatch Worcestershire links developed.

3.1b) New Youth Forum

At this time we would not advise setting up a new Healthwatch Worcestershire young person's forum, but it may be that further work can be done with interested individuals to create an active group. Smaller forums could be created in local settings building on existing models, eg at a college, foyer or youth club but these could be work-intensive to keep active and the young people involved.

Our suggestions would be to recruit a small group from one centre/area who can then support and motivate each other, or recruit around a specific topic or task and finish project in order to keep the young people involved and help them see an outcome.

Examples of this could be:

- Recruiting a small number from the Midwifery course to look at the closure of the Alexandra maternity services
- Creating some 'Comments Champions' by sharing information with small group of college students studying health and social care about their rights and how to give feedback/complaints. The group could then be supported in both disseminating this information to others and also in going to services and eg checking the visibility of their comments boxes.
- Contacting those who have accessed a service, eg CAMHS, and holding a feedback event for them.

This format of these groups will depend on the number involved, their location, budget available and staff time available to develop the group. Transport could be an issue, especially due to the size of the county and lack of transport in rural areas, and funding may be needed for this.

We advise having an experienced youth worker to facilitate any discussion group or forum.

3.2 Organisations

3.2a) REGs

The following have been put forward by us to join the Healthwatch Worcestershire REGs:

2014-15	2015-16
Worcester Community Trust Mentorlink Worcester Action for Youth Action for Children Your Ideas Tribe Ourside Redditch Early Help / YMCA Malvern Special Families Snoezelen Talentmatch/Shaw Trust Woodrush Youth Club	Kidderminster Youth House Batchley Support Group DAFFY Friday Fun Club WMYDMYB What's Your Point? Spectrum Days Bewdley Youth Cafe Wychavon Youth Bus Wallace House Community Centre Café 27 Hansel & Gretel St Basils Positive Activity Zone RYCE at the Redi Centre The Basement Project Simply Limitless Young Carers Wyre Forest Nightstop Spokes CIC

3.2b) Key Youth Workers

We suggest that key youth workers from within these organisations are identified.

This may be the person already registered for the REG, but additional contacts in the organisation may be needed, especially if the organisation works in several different areas or with a variety of young people. We know from experience that information is often not disseminated through organisations and having key workers will give Healthwatch Worcestershire direct contact with those who work directly with young people, allow a much greater reach for Healthwatch and increased engagement.

These key workers can be contacted if views from young people are required. Some will be happy to carry out the discussions or surveys with their young people, whilst others may require Healthwatch Worcestershire to visit the group and talk to the young people directly. This will also depend on the information being sought.

3.2c) Network of Selected “Opinion Organisations”

We suggest developing a network of 10 -12 selected organisations across the county from those organisations in point 3.2a) and that Healthwatch builds relationships with

them. These “Opinion Organisations” would be available for more in-depth work with young people, quick feedback or quarterly updates. They could agree to either half yearly or quarterly general visits from Healthwatch Worcestershire to speak to the young people and find out their views.

This would give Healthwatch Worcestershire direct access to 100-200 young people across the county from a wide range of organisations. (The actual number would depend on the nature of the engagement required and time available as finding out more in-depth views would reduce the numbers met).

3.3 Individual Young People

43 individuals have given us their contact details and agreed to become registered for information with Healthwatch Worcestershire, including 34 young people.

Having young people involved in Healthwatch Worcestershire is an area that requires careful thought. Healthwatch will need to be clear about what they can offer the young people who register and what they expect in return.

From our experience, many young people do not access health and social care services on a regular basis and **we would therefore suggest that if Healthwatch Worcestershire want to build this area, then they need to target those who have a specific interest.** This could be from personal experience or a long term condition, family member with an illness or career goals eg those studying a health and social care course at college or university.

We would advise against recruiting a young person to be a Co-opted Board Member at this time. If Healthwatch did want young people involved in a senior capacity then they would need to maintain a culture which makes young people feel that their views can be heard and valued. Other things to consider are:

- Timing and location of meetings
- Number of people attending the meeting (a smaller number could make the meeting less daunting to a young person) and seating arrangements
- Use of jargon, language and expected knowledge about services
- Age of other attendees
- Recruiting several to give moral support
- Ensuring an inclusive and supportive atmosphere

Individuals would be unlikely to become involved with Healthwatch Worcestershire on their own unless they were highly motivated and confident and most likely be over 18 years old.

To get young people’s views included at board level, **we suggest that the board member with responsibility for children and young people could contact some of the “Opinion Organisations”** to find out views.

3.3a) Contacting Young People

When engaging with young people who have registered for information, we would advise sending information by post rather than email as many young people have told us that they don’t use their email. They felt that post was much more exciting and is something they would prefer.

Social media is a good way of engaging but can be hard to get right. Facebook is used by some but not all and it is something that young people use between themselves. They wouldn’t necessarily choose to ‘like’, comment on or engage with a Healthwatch Worcestershire facebook page. Facebook Messenger could be used as a means to directly

correspond or 'chat' with young people though would only work with some young people. Twitter is similar. Other popular 'apps' include Whatsapp, Snapchat, ooVoo or Skype, though young people tend to be one step ahead and change quickly to new apps.

Social media would need a lot of time investing in to maintain communication and follow the latest trends. We would suggest using a variety of apps to cover different groups of young people. Appropriate safeguarding and confidentiality policies and procedures should be put in place before contacting young people.

It also needs noting that social media usually requires the recipient to have a smart phone and data credit. Those with low income or without a generous benefactor to pay the bills may not have these and therefore may not be able to engage in this way.

The young people told us they wanted their own leaflet but then said they wouldn't read it. Pens, stickers and wristbands were classed as good incentives and a way of sharing the Healthwatch message.

3.4 Schools and Takeover Day

Schools are a good way of accessing a large and diverse number of young people quickly. **We would suggest developing relationships with key teachers or support workers** in schools as they can help to encourage the students and also ensure engagement in subsequent years. Contact details for schools interested in supporting Healthwatch Worcestershire have already been shared with Healthwatch.

Takeover Day is a good way of raising the profile of Healthwatch Worcestershire, sharing information with young people and finding out views. **We would suggest Healthwatch hold an event** for this, but bearing in mind the following:

- Target the schools or colleges that deliver a relevant course e.g. Health and Social Care, or develop the day with just one or two local schools.
- Tailor the day as much as possible to the school/college's curriculum, be clear what the students can get from the day and how it can benefit their studies or future.
- It is difficult for schools to get students out lessons so it is important to build the relationships with the right key teachers in advance and book the date early.
- Make the day as short as possible if targeting a wide number of schools, allowing for registration in school first and travel time.
- Hold the event at a central location, provide travel for the students or reimburse travel costs. Provide lunch and age appropriate refreshments (including squash/juice/hot chocolate).
- Make the event accessible and inclusive.
- Make the sessions interesting and informative, bearing in mind the students may have little understanding of health and social care services.
- Enable the students to share their views and what the outcomes will be.

D. FUTURE WORK

We have enjoyed carrying out this contract for Healthwatch Worcestershire and it has been very interesting to meet and hear the views of young people and parents.

We are keen to continue to support this engagement work, and are willing to facilitate further engagement topics or events.