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Message from our Chairman



Eddie Duller OBE

I am pleased to report that Healthwatch Oxfordshire had a successful year during a period when health and social services were placed under severe strain and scrutiny.

It was a year during which the authorities presented proposals to the general public about changing ways of providing the services, and Healthwatch played an important part in highlighting matters of concern voiced by those who pay for those services.

The first part of the public consultation on these changes dealt mainly with the future of the Horton General Hospital at Banbury and led to large protests, showing just how much the general public is concerned over the provision of healthcare at a local level. The second part of the public consultation begins in the autumn of 2017 and concerns the rest of the county. It is vital that

people who use the services take part in the consultation.

During the course of the year it became increasingly clear that the different areas involved in providing health and social care are not sufficiently joined up, and in particular I was disappointed that the problems of delayed transfer of care from hospitals, which were originally raised by Healthwatch Oxfordshire nearly two years ago, have not been solved by the authorities.

I would like to thank our staff, all of whom are dedicated to reporting faithfully the opinions and comments of the people who use the health and social care services, and I was pleased to see that most of our recommendations for improvements were accepted by the authorities.

“During the course of the year it became increasingly clear that the different areas involved in providing health and social care are not sufficiently joined up.”

I was also grateful for the support, experience and wisdom of the directors, all of whom are volunteers, and I am confident that Healthwatch Oxfordshire can only grow in stature as the voice for the people.

Eddie Duller OBE

Retiring Chairman

Message from our Executive Director



Rosalind Pearce

This has been another challenging year for Healthwatch Oxfordshire, to which the staff team has responded with enthusiasm and great flexibility.

As well as moving to new premises, prompted by last year's cut in funding, we also underwent a change in Executive Director - the second within the space of a year.

We have continued to gather the experiences of people in Oxfordshire who use health and social care services, and to work with the providers of that care to make improvements.

Our project to take the pulse of Witney saw us speak to more than 1,000 people, and gather information on what the local

population think is working - and more importantly what could be improved. This project will now be replicated in other towns across the county.

We made the final grants from our Project Fund to enable a number of local organisations to carry out their own research. The resulting reports from the 1001 Days Coalition, Oxford Against Cutting, Refugee Resource and SeAP will contribute greatly to highlighting the need for improvements in services for many seldom-heard groups.

Our outreach team has travelled around the county meeting people at many different kinds of event. This activity is at the heart of our work, enabling us to hear people's experiences, first-hand.

We have enjoyed a good working relationship with the local media, and that has helped us maintain a high profile, and continue to raise awareness of Healthwatch Oxfordshire.

During 2017/18 we will continue to be the consumer champion for users of health and care services in Oxfordshire, and work with providers and commissioners to identify ways to make those services better.

Rosalind Pearce

Executive Director

Highlights from our year

This year we've reached more than 25,000 people on social media



Our volunteers help us with everything from outreach to enter and view



We've visited a wide range of local services



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from Minor Injuries Units to care homes



We've appeared 97 times in the local media



We've met more than 2,000 local people at our community events



About us

We know that you want services that work for you, your friends and family. That's why we want you to share your experiences of using health and care services with us - both good and bad. We use your voice to encourage those who run services to act on what matters to you.

We are part of a national network, in every local authority area in England.

Our vision

Healthwatch Oxfordshire's vision is that the people in the county are shaping their own health and care services.

Our mission is to be the independent champion for health and social care users in Oxfordshire.

Our priorities

- Advocating for high-quality and timely inclusion of Oxfordshire;
- Participating as a foundation member of the Oxfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board

- Conducting at least one major or two smaller projects into the quality of local services, making recommendations where necessary;
- Maintaining regular contact with the public, service-users and voluntary sector partners;
- Working with voluntary sector partners to engage seldom-heard groups;
- Analysing feedback and reporting the findings to service providers and commissioners;
- Developing our website and social media networks to provide an effective information and signposting function;
- Working closely with Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors to provide evidence for their inspection programme;
- Actively reporting to or participating in local oversight committees.



Funding cuts for 2016/17 2015 led to the loss of Healthwatch Oxfordshire's own Project Fund. Instead, we have found other ways to support local organisations, including:

- Assistance with publicising partner organisations' reports, including writing to commissioners on their behalf;
- Guidance on the process of research - designing a methodology, editing materials and reports;
- Analysing and reporting feedback received by other organisations and in partnership with them assisting in the production of reports;
- Considering research into topics brought to HWO's attention for small-scale projects.

Communications

Healthwatch Oxfordshire has continued raising awareness of its work and raising its profile in the county.

Maintaining a close working relationship with the local media will continue to be an important part of our communications strategy.

Community

This year, we held a series of Healthwatch surgeries at local Citizens Advice Bureaux, libraries and similar locations, as well as visits to 'service-user groups' to hear their experiences. We plan to share what we hear about local services, including creating a new feature on our website, and making recommendations based on what we have learned.

Our Healthwatch Team (from left to right): Richard Maynard, Carol Ball, Kanika Lang, Jen Marks and Rosalind Pearce



The background features a large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping teal and light green shapes. The teal shape is on the left, and the light green shape is on the right, overlapping the teal one. The text is centered within the teal shape.

*Your views on
health and care*

Listening to local people's views

Healthwatch Oxfordshire conducted a study to find out people's experiences of using Minor Injuries Units in the county.

We conducted face-to-face interviews at the MIUs based at the community hospitals in Henley-on-Thames, Witney and Abingdon.

In all 62 people were interviewed over the course of five visits to the three different MIUs.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire found that in the main, most people were highly satisfied with MIU services available, and are using them appropriately, choosing to visit them with a clear understanding of what services are available.

However, during the research, which included interviewing patients and asking them to complete questionnaires after their treatment, we found that some people had attempted to access their GP surgery before attending an MIU, and no one mentioned the 'Choose Well' education campaign in influencing their decisions.

Recommendations in the report included:


- Better communication about opening hours
- Better signposting of the existence of the service

- Better co-ordination of staffing
- More information about waiting times and triage process
- Better facilities in waiting areas.
- Better co-ordination of MIU and X-ray opening times so that people do not have to come back for a second long wait.



Patients were interviewed in the units

Healthwatch Oxfordshire found that people were using Minor Injuries Units appropriately but that more needed to be done to make people aware of them

A large, stylized number '3' is the central graphic. The top loop is a solid pink color, and the bottom loop is a solid lime green color. The two loops overlap in the middle, creating a darker, brownish-green shade. The text 'Helping you find the answers' is written in a white, italicized serif font within the pink upper loop.

*Helping
you find the
answers*

How we have helped the community access the care they need

During 2016/7, we continued to develop our role in helping people find the services they need, and helping them to navigate their way through the sometimes bewildering array of services available to them.

We have continued to develop our website, www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk by expanding the A-Z guide to local services and directory of local organisations. We have also used the site to promote our own activities, including the development of a live calendar for major projects showing when and where we are holding events.

While Healthwatch Oxfordshire does not offer advocacy on individual cases, we are proud of our role in helping people obtain the advice and support they need. The team at Healthwatch Oxfordshire's office regularly speak to members of the public who have a problem but may not know to whom to turn. During the past year, we have guided people towards the right sources of support for problems with social services, dentistry, mental health care, home care, and a variety of other areas. Our staff are able to offer sympathetic advice based on experience and background knowledge.

In the news

Working with the local media continues to be an important part of our work. During the year, we featured in news coverage nearly 100 times. These ranged from newspaper articles through to recorded

television interviews and participation in live radio broadcasts. Subjects have ranged from issues in local health services through to our own activities, and in one radio series, an insight into the lives of the staff team.

We remain an important destination for journalists looking for an informed, impartial comment on local health and care-related topics. This enables us to continue to raise awareness in Oxfordshire of our work.



Conducting an interview for TV news

“The team at Healthwatch Oxfordshire regularly speak to members of the public who have a problem but may not know to whom to turn. ”



*Making a
difference
together*

Working with other organisations

Healthwatch Oxfordshire provided funding and support to enable five local organisations to produce reports during 2016-17. This was the final round of Project Fund Grants.

Reports published included:

Services for Survivors of Female Genital Mutilation and Cutting, published by Oxford Against Cutting.

The report, produced by the charity Oxford Against Cutting with the support of Healthwatch Oxfordshire, found that many FGM/C survivors in Oxfordshire were unaware of services such as the Oxford Rose Clinic at the John Radcliffe Hospital, which offers support to people who have experienced FGM/C.

There was also a lack of understanding on the part of some health practitioners on how to approach conversations concerning FGM/C.

The report led to improved training for hospital staff, to raise awareness of the issue and ensure questions are asked in a sensitive way. The referral pathway for the Rose Clinic was also clarified.

Bereavement Support in Banbury, published by Cruse Bereavement Care Oxfordshire. The aims of the study were to establish what bereavement services were currently being delivered, and should be delivered, in the Banbury area and to gather the views from the providers of services and people who have been bereaved on the impact of the current services in the Banbury area, find out where there are gaps and establish their

views on the best solutions for filling those gaps.

As a result of the report, organisations involved in this field are now working in partnership with the Oxfordshire Bereavement Alliance to address gaps in services and raise awareness of bereavement support across the county.

Primary health care services for refugees, asylum-seekers and vulnerable migrants in Oxford city, published by Refugee Resource. This explored the primary healthcare needs of asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees in the city of Oxford, as there was anecdotal evidence that this group was among those facing the greatest barriers in accessing services. Refugee Resource was subsequently given support by Healthwatch Oxfordshire to give evidence at the Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Commission, resulting in recommendations to improve access to accommodations and services for refugees.

Gypsy and Traveller Community Experiences of using Healthcare in Oxfordshire, published by SeAP. This report looked into how members of the Gypsy and Traveller community in Oxfordshire access health services, and their experiences of the NHS. The project also looked at the experiences of the health professionals who treat and support the travellers to understand better the issues from their perspective.

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All of these reports are available on the Healthwatch Oxfordshire website at <http://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/reporting-back>

An abstract graphic consisting of two large, overlapping circles. The larger circle on the left is a vibrant blue, and the smaller circle on the right is a bright green. They overlap in the center, creating a white space between them. The text 'It starts with you' is written in white, italicized font within the blue circle.

*It starts
with you*

It starts with you

In March 2017, we focused our outreach activity in the market town of Witney in West Oxfordshire.

The aim of the project was to give the people of Witney an opportunity to talk to Healthwatch about their experiences of health and social care services.

After three months of planning, Healthwatch visited 14 local groups, spoke at the annual town council meeting, had a stall in the library, spent a day in the local further education college, talked to people using the local leisure centre and put up our banners and gazebo on three different days in the town centre. We hosted a voluntary sector market place in the Corn Exchange with 22 different organisations attending and more than 100 people visited. “I never knew there was so much help for me out there,” was a comment from one visitor.

We made direct contact with more than 1,000 people who now know who we are and what we do. “Tell us...” was our invitation and 487 people told us their experiences of health and social care services. They also told us what was good about these services and what could be improved.

What do we now know?

People most often told us about their experiences of using GP surgeries (235 comments), acute hospitals (133 comments), emergency or out-of-hours services (55 comments), community hospitals (29 comments) and social care services (25 comments).

70% of people who rated their services said they were good or very good.

74% of people who rated GP surgeries said they were good or very good.

72% of people thought their experience of acute hospital services was good or very good.

What makes a GP service good?

The answer is the staff. Friendly, helpful, caring, nice, polite, and professional staff are what patients most value when visiting the GP surgery.


Easy access to their GP with a variety of ways to book an appointment are just as important as short waiting times for appointments. People also value their appointments being on time. The surgery being accessible, particularly with local parking, was often named as a factor that makes the experience good. For many people, it is their doctor - understanding and how they speak to the patient - that is important.

“The overriding message from Witney is shorter waiting times - both for an appointment and when at the surgery.”

How could GP services be improved?

The overriding message from Witney is shorter waiting times - both for an appointment and when at the surgery. Second on the list is for the patient to be heard by the GP and practice staff.

This report will be used to influence the development of the West Oxfordshire Locality Primary Care Services in the coming months.

A large, stylized number '3' is the central graphic element. The top loop of the '3' is a vibrant red color, and the bottom loop is a bright green color. The two colors overlap in the middle, creating a darker shade of green. The number is positioned on the left side of the page, with the text 'Our plans for next year' written in white, italicized font inside the red loop.

*Our plans
for next
year*

What next?

During 2017/18 we have the following goals:

We will find out about local people's experiences of using local health and social care services by running at least two town events, reporting on findings and actively promoting them to the community, commissioners, and service providers; and running at least two voluntary sector forums. We will use our statutory rights to carry out at least one major project and two more focused programmes and by responding to Care Quality Commission requests for patient/public input into their inspection regime.

We will continue to monitor health and care providers' responses to previous reports, as we have this year following our reports on **Dignity in Care** and **Discharge from Hospital**. Both these reports have resulted in changes to the way services are delivered, and those improvements are still being made.

We will use information about local people's experiences to provide independent and informed advice to relevant local and national organisations about how local services need to change. We will do this by publishing and promoting reports on findings from town events, enter & view activity, what we have heard direct from the public and at events; presenting our findings at national and local conferences, and reporting to Healthwatch England.

We will hold those in charge of local health and social care services publicly to account for the quality and inclusiveness of the services they provide, and to formulate policy and strategy, in line with our advice.

We will achieve this by maintaining an active role on the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, and providing regular input into the Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

We will provide advice and information to individuals about access to local care services by promoting our advice line and support service information on our web page; developing our database of referral / support agencies, and continuing to develop our working relationship with the seAp advocacy service.

We will develop the Healthwatch brand and promote our brand values by updating our promotion materials, increasing use of social media and improving our website.





Our people

Decision making

Board meetings are held in public at various locations around Oxfordshire, and members of the public are free to attend and ask questions. All Board papers, agendas and minutes are published on our website.

Our Board

We would like to thank Richard Lohman and Geraldine Shepherd, who stepped down this year, for their services to the Board. The current Board from April 2017 comprises:

George Smith, FRS, Chair

George Smith is a retired science professor at Oxford University, and former district councillor with a personal and long-standing involvement in health matters in his capacity as family carer.

Tracey Rees - Vice Chair

Tracey Rees, after 22 years in the NHS, chairs an Oxford City Patient Participation Group and works with the city's patient forum.

Eddie Duller OBE

Eddie Duller OBE is an independent marketing and PR consultant with many years' experience as a campaigning journalist and award-winning regional newspaper editor.

Caroline King

Caroline King is a parish priest in South Oxfordshire with an interest in social care and advocacy for those with learning difficulties.

Martin Tarran-Jones

Martin Tarran-Jones has wide experience in business, having spent 27 years in Chairman roles, with 20 different companies.

He joined the Woodlands Medical Centre Patient Participation Group, as its Chairman in 2012, and is still acting in that role. He was Locality Forum Chair for South West Oxfordshire for 3 years and remains an active member of the South West Locality Forum.

Dave Butterworth

Dave Butterworth FREng is a chemical engineer who became involved on the voluntary sector as a trustee of two charities and as the OCVA (Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action) Community Ambassador for Abingdon. He also launched a new charity called Healthy Abingdon which is aimed at harnessing the community spirit in Abingdon to improve health and wellbeing in the town, in close collaboration of the NHS and Social Services.

Sylvia Buckingham

Sylvia Buckingham originally trained as a nurse, and worked at the old Radcliffe Infirmary and John Radcliffe Hospital. She is also a former Head of Children's Nursing at King's College Hospital and has undertaken research at Degree and Master's level in transforming practice. She is currently working as an external examiner for Portsmouth University on their Masters in Business Administration course.

Jean Nunn Price MBE

Jean Nunn Price is a former scientist and senior member of the Co-operative movement with many years' experience working with the Local Involvement Network and Patient Forums. Jean is a previous Chair of Healthwatch Oxfordshire. She holds a law degree and volunteers at her local advice centre.



Our finances

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is funded by a grant from Oxfordshire County Council, with additional income derived from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	£235,948
Total income	£235,948
Expenditure	
Operational costs	39,340
Staffing costs	£157,780
Office costs	£14,768
Total expenditure	£211,888
Balance brought forward	£24,060



Contact us

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Healthwatch Oxfordshire

The Old Dairy, High Cogges Farm

High Cogges

Witney OX29 6UN

We will be making this annual report publicly available on June 30 2017 by publishing it on our website and sharing it with Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, Oxfordshire Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and Oxfordshire County Council.

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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