

Healthwatch North Tyneside

Annual report
2014/15



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Welcome to Healthwatch North Tyneside annual report for 2014/15

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Welcome from our Chair



This past year has been a very busy one for all of us at Healthwatch North Tyneside.

A lot of time has been taken up on becoming a new charitable incorporated organisation, independent of the Carers' Federation that won the original contract to deliver Healthwatch in North Tyneside. We all found this process far more time consuming than we had envisaged and I am particularly grateful to the staff for the way they coped with the extra demands on them.



Unfortunately, our first Director, Claire Arthur, decided to leave at the end of April 2015 for personal reasons but, thanks to her leadership, we now have strong foundations on which to build the new organisation.

Despite the distraction of becoming independent, we have been successful in creating greater awareness and credibility of Healthwatch amongst the people of North Tyneside and our partners.

Our newsletters and other publicity have been successful in reaching a wider audience and, through our engagement work, we are in touch with many communities across the borough.

We have also established a more robust method of recording people's needs and experiences of health and social care services and have delved deeper into some of their concerns, in particular urgent care, North Tyneside Carers' Strategy, Independent Supported Living and ADHD (Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder). We have tried to make the voice of local people heard with decision makers and at the Health and Wellbeing Board and its Integration Boards.

There is still much more we need to do. We need to raise our profile even higher in pursuing our core themes of listening, influencing and providing information.

Thanks to our commissioners at North Tyneside Council for the support they have given us and we look forward to working constructively with all our partners in the year ahead for the benefit of the people of North Tyneside.



Peter Kenrick

Chair of Healthwatch North Tyneside

Director's introduction



2014 - 15 has been a year of transition with a strong focus on defining Healthwatch and what it offers local people.

This was the year that Healthwatch became an organisation in its own right, rather than a project run by a larger organisation. This was a planned transition, agreed at the very start of Healthwatch North Tyneside's existence, and it is very rewarding to have arrived at this point.

As well as the inevitable changeover of process and policy behind the scenes, this also gave us a chance to reflect on our values as an organisation and how we wanted to approach our work.

Taking our commitment to inclusivity, integrity and independence as our starting point, we built a set of goals for the three years ahead which set out how we will gather local views and experiences, and how we will use these to influence the way services are planned and delivered. You'll find more on our vision and strategic priorities on the opposite page.

For my own part, I am shortly to be leaving the North East, so will be bidding the organisation farewell. I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the people who have trusted Healthwatch to work with them on issues close to their hearts. I hope our efforts have moved things in the right direction. I would also like to thank the dedicated staff team at Healthwatch. Their blend of compassion and professionalism is what makes it all possible.

Claire Arthur

Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside

Introducing our new Director

Jenny McAteer has been appointed as Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside and will take up her post at the end of June 2015.



Our vision and strategy

Healthwatch North Tyneside is here to champion the experiences, views and needs of local people in order to positively affect health and social care services in North Tyneside.

Our vision

People's experiences, views and needs are sought, valued and acted upon as part of the planning and delivery of care in North Tyneside.

Our strategic priorities

Gathering information

Gathering views, experiences and needs of local people about their health and social care, focusing on those who are underrepresented in decision making or face barriers to influencing the system.

Gathering and monitoring other key information that tells us how the local health and social care system is working for people.

Influencing

Influencing services and their commissioners to consider and act upon the views, experiences and needs we present.

Championing the involvement of North Tyneside residents in the development and evaluation of services.

Providing information

Enabling people to get the most of the current system by providing information about service provision, the rights people have in relation to their care, and opportunities they have to influence what care looks like.

Who we are

Meet our Healthwatch Board

Peter Kenrick	Chair of the Board
Bea Groves	Vice-chair and governance lead
Julia Charlton	Equality and diversity lead
Claire Easton	Carers' specialist
Iain Kitt	Older people's specialist
Lindsay Perks	Communication and engagement lead
David Robinson	Learning disabilities specialist
Linda van Zwanenberg	Volunteering lead

Dean Titterton, children and young people's specialist resigned from the board in September 2014.

Meet our Healthwatch staff team

Claire Arthur	Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside (from July 2014)
Helen Bedford	Engagement Officer
Geraldine Convery	Engagement Officer (from October 2014)
Christine O'Brien	Finance and Administrative Officer
Meg Woollam	Communications Officer
Lyndsay Yarde	Volunteer Coordinator (temporary contract from February 2015)

Kate Israel covered the manager's role from April to July 2014 when Claire Arthur took up post.

Geraldine Convery replaced Maria Clarke who worked as Engagement Officer until July 2014.

Pictured here: Helen, Claire, Christine, Geraldine and Meg



Providing information and signposting

When Healthwatch North Tyneside was established we set up regular Healthwatch information points across the borough.

In 2014/15 we held monthly Healthwatch information points at:

- ▶ The Meadows, Meadowell
- ▶ Jarrett's Café, Age UK, North Shields
- ▶ Wallsend Customer First Centre
- ▶ White Swan Centre, Killingworth
- ▶ Carers' information point, North Tyneside Carers' Centre

People also contact us by phone, email and online enquiry form as well as talking to us at local events. We help them find information about local health and social care services and listen to experiences and comments on their services. We also talk about Healthwatch and how to get involved.

We heard from a carer who was finding life difficult after the loss of the person they cared for. We researched local services and support groups and gave them information about a local carers' support group and the Age UK leaflet on coping with bereavement.

We also found out about courses on low mood, stress and anxiety offered by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust through the Adult Learning Alliance and shared this information more widely through our website, newsletter and social media.

A change of approach

Our information points offered a useful starting point for raising awareness of Healthwatch and hearing views and experiences. To reach more people across North Tyneside we introduced a more flexible approach from January 2015.

We are meeting with existing groups and going to events planned by other organisations as well as arranging drop-in sessions at community venues such as libraries and customer first centres. We advertise these 'Talk to us' events on our website, newsletters and on-site plasma screens and noticeboards.

We are planning a calendar of topics to focus on over the coming year as this can help get the conversation started. Topics will include hospital food, transgender issues and mental health support.

Engaging with local people



We aim to make sure residents, workers and volunteers of all ages and communities know that their voice can be heard to help improve health and social care services in North Tyneside.

To achieve this we use focussed engagement activities to reach, listen to and record residents' experiences of services, share information about Healthwatch and promote opportunities for people to give views on local services and future plans.

We also engage and build relationships with groups supporting people who may face difficulty in having their voice heard. Examples include North Tyneside Disability Forum, CAMEO, HoHo Hearing Group, Tynemouth Society for the Blind and the PAUSE Project at Meadowell.

Recognising that people across communities may also experience difficulties in having their voice heard we visited and shared information within a broad range of more general interest groups, for example toddler and baby activities, dance sessions, art and craft groups, keep fit, walking groups, and work and luncheon clubs.

We have also attended a range of information sharing events organised by voluntary organisations and health and social care services where we were again able to listen and talk to staff as well as service users and volunteers. These events included Carers' Rights Day, Carers' Wellbeing Forum (North Tyneside Carers' Centre), Big Health Day (Community Learning Disabilities Team) and Older Person's Pathway Event (North Tyneside CCG).

Our carers' specialist on the Healthwatch Board, Claire Easton, continues to lead the Carers' Wellbeing Forum and learning disability specialist, David Robinson, chairs the new Learning Disability Care Forum.

Throughout our engagement people have shared a range of concerns, raised issues, and made enquiries about services as well as offering praise.

Helping voices to be heard

Healthwatch has an important role in reaching people and communities whose views are not often heard or find it difficult to get involved:

People who are seldom heard

Sometimes it is difficult for people to have their views heard and acted upon. We met with a support group for parents of children with ADHD who were looking for support to increase the level of multi-agency collaboration between health, local authority and other agencies. Read more on page 13.

Young people under 21

We met with young people from the Young Person's Health and Wellbeing Board to talk about volunteering with Healthwatch. They will begin training as volunteer Healthwatchers in May 2015.

We talked to parents with young families about their views of urgent care in North Tyneside, see page 17.

Older people over 65

We held monthly information points at Age UK café in North Shields where we gathered views and experiences of health and social care. Much of our engagement work involves older people and our volunteers hear the views of older residents and carers when they visit care homes, see page 11.

Local volunteers and workers who live outside our area

This year we increased our open engagement sessions at leisure centres, libraries, children's centres and community centres and made efforts to engage with staff and volunteers from these sites as well as service users. This has helped raise awareness and understanding of Healthwatch and provided valuable feedback on services.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged people

We held our monthly information point at The Meadows Community Centre alongside the Planning Café for people with learning disabilities. As well as engaging with service users and carers we made useful links with voluntary organisations based at the centre which has increased our reach to local residents, volunteers and workers.



Involving volunteers

Our enter and view volunteers and Healthwatchers support our work by gathering people's views and experiences and raising awareness of Healthwatch at events and through local groups.

Volunteers contributed to our work on **carers** and **urgent care** by talking to people about their experiences at focus groups and supporting them to complete the carers' survey form.

Feedback on **hospital food** was varied and so we wanted to find out more about how food was prepared and served to patients. Volunteers Joyce Greely and Joan Hancock spent a morning with Northumbria NHS catering manager following the hospital food 'journey' all the way to the ward. We continue to ask people for their views on hospital food and in July 2015 will be making enter and view visits to hospital wards to gather more information.

Volunteer Susan Dawson keeps our **Directory of Support Groups** up-to-date and has promoted the directory to GP practices through her role as a member of her GP patient forum. Susan and board member, Lindsay Perks, represent their GP practices at the Clinical Commissioning Group patient forum providing an important link between Healthwatch and the forum.

In January 2015 we recruited a Volunteer Coordinator on a temporary contract to improve the support and supervision of current volunteers, to establish robust volunteer recruitment and selection processes and to recruit more volunteers to undertake the new 'Healthwatcher' role.

Our enter and view volunteers were highly commended and winners in the 'Older people together' category at North Tyneside's Age Takes Centre Stage awards in October 2014. The award was given in recognition of their achievements and contribution to the community.

Pictured right are volunteers Molly Herridge, Neil Tapster, Daphne Hall, Helen Johns and Margaret Thornley receiving their award from the captain of DFDS ship King of Seaways.



Enter and view

Local Healthwatch has the power to enter and view health and social care services to observe and report on services and service delivery. We are not permitted to enter and view social care services for people aged under 18.

We did not carry out any authorised enter and view visits in 2014/15.

Our authorised enter and view representatives are:

Tina Fry	Nicola Garrity	Joyce Greeley
Joan Hancock	Molly Herridge	Emma Herron
Helen Johns	Mary Laver	Neil Tapster
Colin Thomson		

Mary Ayre and Jean Drury ceased to be authorised representatives during the year. This year we were sad to hear that Daphne Hall, one of our longstanding enter and view volunteers, had passed away. We would like to take this opportunity to recognise her great contribution to Healthwatch and the people of North Tyneside.

Independent Observer Scheme

Each summer our enter and view volunteers team up with the council's Adult Social Care Service to deliver the Independent Observer Scheme (IOS).

They visit all 36 care homes for older people to hear from residents, relatives and staff and observe services first hand from a lay person's perspective.

This is different from an inspection or monitoring visit. They report on four main areas: residents feel safe and cared for; they feel involved in their community; people communicate with residents effectively and they live in a pleasant environment.

The IOS reports contribute to decisions on the quality payment band the care home is in so there is a financial incentive for each care home to continue raising standards.

Experienced volunteers buddy up with new volunteers to share their expertise in engaging with residents and reporting in an evidence based way.

Our volunteers review the scheme each year, reflecting on changes from previous years and working to improve the questions and reports. They raised a number of causes for concern as well as some examples of outstanding practice. Plans for 2015 include expanding the opportunities for relatives to tell us about their loved one's care home.



“If people are to be at the heart of improving services, it is essential to listen carefully to their stories and involve those who support them. In our work with parents of children with ADHD, we spoke to the parents and also involved the social worker who provided valuable insight into the condition and the parents’ struggle to have their voices heard.

A priority within Healthwatch North Tyneside’s Delivery Plan is to ‘champion the involvement of North Tyneside residents in the development and evaluation of services’. We have established routes into our statutory partners where people’s voices can be heard. In the case of ADHD, we pressed for and got a hearing for parents at the council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee and also raised their issues in a discussion about young people at the Health and Wellbeing Board.

We also supported a group of carers with concerns about Independent Supported Living services which led to the setting up of the Learning Disability Care Forum comprising the council, carers and providers to enable informed discussion about the delivery of services. This forum is chaired by David Robinson who is our specialist board member for learning disabilities.”



Peter Kenrick, Chair of Healthwatch North Tyneside

Hearing concerns and taking them forward

Our Healthwatch board regularly look at issues and concerns raised by local people and organisations. They look at how we can support others to take their issues forward with local services, commissioners and decision makers. Each year the board agrees some priority areas where we need to gather more views, experiences and information.



Supporting parents call for ADHD review

Parent carers Alison Murray and Heather Karsit explain how Healthwatch supported parents to successfully ask for a review of service provision for children with ADHD and ADD.



“In 2014 members of the North Tyneside support group for parents and carers of children with ADHD/ADD met Healthwatch in an effort to raise the profile of the condition.



We wanted to enlist their support to increase the level of multi-agency collaboration between health, the local authority and voluntary agencies.

Healthwatch successfully raised the issue of ADHD/ADD in children and young people on the agenda of North Tyneside Council’s Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee.

Members of the committee discussed the level of provision and agreed the need to have much more detailed information about its prevalence, levels of psychological support and medical interventions, identified support for children particularly in schools and, most importantly, what outcomes young people in transition into adulthood actually achieved.

Given the significant numbers of children who have and are likely to have this condition it is important both the local authority and NHS evaluate how well their interventions are helping young people succeed. Parent perspective is that too many children are being failed by the lack of a cohesive multi-agency response. A sub-group of the committee will be created in June or July 2015. Healthwatch along with the Parent ADHD Support Group look forward to working with the sub-committee to ensure much improved outcomes for young people with ADHD/ADD.

In 2008 NICE brought out Clinical Guidelines recommending how the assessment, diagnosis and treatment for the condition should be delivered. For the first time, it was recognised that the condition would continue into adulthood for almost two thirds of young people. In 2015 we hope the 2008 NICE clinical guidance will be fully implemented as well as the high priority NICE Quality Standard August 2013.”



Healthwatch - a carer's perspective

Ernie Holden, parent carer and founder member of the Learning Disability Care Forum, gives a carers' perspective of Healthwatch North Tyneside:



“As a parent carer of a daughter with Down's Syndrome, I first made contact with Healthwatch at an event they organised in 2014, to introduce themselves and to listen to peoples' concerns.

Like many residents I had become frustrated at the council's 'consultation' meetings, where the public are divided into separate tables, each led by a council facilitator. This format can lead to the council controlling the event, with the report-back failing to capture peoples' concerns, especially when difficult subjects such as budgets are touched on.

So at this first Healthwatch meeting, not knowing what Healthwatch was about, I was concerned when the team suggested dividing us up. However, I need not have worried. After some scene setting about Healthwatch, we had really useful discussions. We were listened to, and perhaps the biggest surprise of all, was the written report from the event. This was a refreshingly accurate account, and wherever people had voiced concerns, these were recorded verbatim and not brushed aside. To members of the public this verbatim reporting was gold dust, and we commended Healthwatch team for the way they conducted the engagement meeting. It was an example of best practice.

Over the following weeks we got to know the individual team members. Heading things up is the chair, Peter Kenrick. Peter is very experienced, and is genuinely interested and motivated to improve things. Above all, he has the tenacity and determination to make things happen. These characteristics are vital for the success of Healthwatch. Peter is supported by a very competent and hard working team who bring with them lots of experience.

An important concern for carers is the issue of independence, and colleagues have asked me questions such as:

“Who funds Healthwatch?”

“Whose tune does it dance to?”

“Is Healthwatch truly independent?”

So far Healthwatch has shown itself to be independent. A good example was the willingness to listen, investigate and report on problems being experienced by carers.

Healthwatch may not have powers of enforcement, but this independent ear, and its channel to the Heath and Wellbeing Board provide significant reassurance for residents.”

New Learning Disability Care Forum

“My experience to date suggests that our Healthwatch North Tyneside is doing an excellent job. It is what has been missing for years, an independent organisation that is able and agile, while listening and looking for ways to better serve the community, without getting tied down by the huge bureaucracies within local authorities and the NHS. For this reason carers are keen to work with Healthwatch to have their voices listened to and to get the best outcomes from our efforts.

Personally, I feel happy that if I have issues that need to be explored, then I can discuss these with the Healthwatch team to decide how to take them further, and I recommend using Healthwatch to others.”



Ernie Holden, Parent Carer

Putting carers at the heart of improving services

We met with parent carers whose adult children receive services to help them live as independently as possible. They were fighting for the continued provision of an acceptable service for their children. They were deeply concerned that new processes, things like how contracts were awarded by the council and how people's needs were classified, posed the threat of reduced and inconsistent care for their loved ones.

We reported on carers' concerns; the responses from North Tyneside Council; and the risks we identified that need to be reduced and monitored.

Following on from our report a new Learning Disability Care Forum has been set up. The forum is a partnership between carers, users, providers, the council and Healthwatch North Tyneside and it is open to all. The groundwork for the forum was prepared by the Cornerstone Carer Reference group, in partnership with other local carer support groups and North Tyneside Council.

We are fully supporting the forum which is chaired by David Robinson, our specialist board member for learning disabilities.

The forum has been well received. Issues considered to date include access to learning disability respite provision and sharing the position statement on ISL (Independent Supported Living).

For more information about the Learning Disability Care Forum and to read our ISL report go to www.healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk or call the Healthwatch team on 0191 263 5321

Representing Healthwatch on the Health and Wellbeing Board

Our Chair, Peter Kenrick, represents Healthwatch North Tyneside on North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board. He is supported by our Director who also attends the meetings. The board agenda includes regular updates on Healthwatch activities and Healthwatch reports and recommendations such as our report on urgent care.

We have lobbied for and secured changes to improve the way the board operates. A Local Government Association Peer Challenge has taken place which, it is hoped, will lead to further improvements and clarification of the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board in health and social care in the borough.

The protocol for working with partners on the board was instigated by Healthwatch and has been signed up to by all board members. The review of our Healthwatch reporting policy and procedures was influenced by our experience of engaging partners on report recommendations and outcomes.

Integrating health and social care

Healthwatch North Tyneside is also represented on each of the six Integration Project Boards set up in 2013 by the council, the CCG and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to promote greater integration between local NHS and council services. These boards cover: Mental Health; Older Persons; Urgent Care; Joint Disability and Additional Needs (0-25); Integrated Learning Disability; and Healthy Living. Our role is to ensure the views of users of health and social care services are heard and taken into account.

Our Healthwatch board agreed two main projects for 2014/15:

► Experiences of urgent care in North Tyneside (page 17)

Report and recommendations shared with North Tyneside Caring and Wellbeing Forum and considered by the Carers' Review Group (CCG, North Tyneside Council and carers' organisations), April 2015

► Impact of North Tyneside Carers' Strategy and Charter (page 18)

Report and recommendations to Health and Wellbeing Board and Urgent Care Working Group, March 2015

We will monitor implementation of our recommendations and keep people informed of progress through our newsletters, website and reports to the Healthwatch Board.

Right help at the right time

Nationally and locally the way urgent care is provided is changing. In North Tyneside, families with children under 4 are the most regular users of Accident and Emergency and Walk-in services. We decided to find out what is important to them when they need medical help or advice unexpectedly and in a hurry.



We went to children's centres, libraries and community groups in areas with high levels of deprivation or where geography and transport infrastructure influences the way people may use services.

Our staff and volunteers interviewed 44 women at parent toddler sessions.

We heard from teenage parents, grandparents, childminders, foster carers, families who had lost young children and families where children had additional health needs or disabilities.

Everyone told us their main priority is to get their child the help they need.

In areas where people use services in Newcastle and North Tyneside people were unsure where they should go to and said that transport can be difficult:

“You need a car for urgent care... parking is serious and expensive.”

Staff attitudes were important when deciding where to go. People loved the walk-in centre at Battle Hill, but had mixed experiences of urgent care at the GP and pharmacy.

Choosing to care for minor illnesses and injuries at home was dependent on having a source of knowledge, such as first aid training, leaflet or trusted internet sites along with experience and reassurance by a real person.

“Baby first aid was brilliant to go on. It also gave basic everyday symptoms and temperature and time scales so you don't panic.”

The Health and Wellbeing Board welcomed the range of voices and opinions:

- ▶ The Acting Director of Public Health agreed to look at provision of paediatric first aid training.
- ▶ The Urgent Care Working Group said our report would inform future CCG engagement and training.

Hearing carers' views and experiences

North Tyneside health and social care professionals developed a strategy for carers in 2012. It said how local services and support for carers would be developed. Local carers were involved in agreeing a Carers' Charter saying what they should be able to expect from health and social care providers.

As the strategy and charter were due for review we decided to ask carers to share their experiences and tell us if, and how, the strategy and charter had made a difference to their lives.

We worked with North Tyneside Carers' Centre and health and social care groups and organisations to contact carers and encourage them to share their experiences through focus groups, discussions and an online and paper survey.

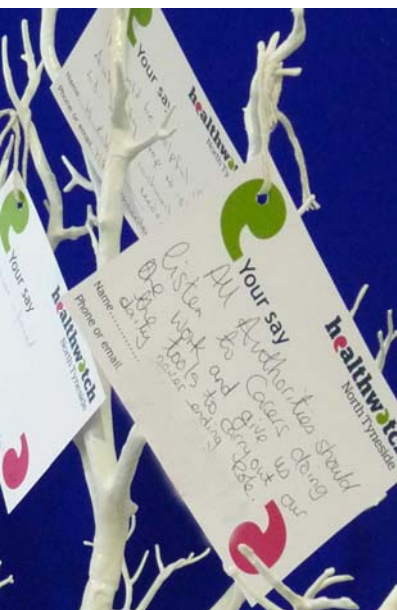
Through the survey we gathered experiences from 70 people caring for 86 children and adults and identified some of the unpredictable impacts that caring can have on carers' lives. Many carers described feeling they had to battle with services and often lacked information and advice, involvement in care planning and discussion about their needs within their caring role.

"I have had to make myself unpopular with the provider to ensure my husband gets the care and therefore the support I need."

"Never been asked to take carer needs into consideration. Seems low priority and impact underestimated."

We shared the report findings and recommendations with carers at the Carers' Health and Wellbeing Forum as well as with local groups and at public events.

Claire Easton, carers' specialist on our Healthwatch Board took our report to the Carers' Strategy Review Group which includes council and CCG representatives.



The review group committed to take forward our recommendations to:

- ▶ Actively promote information, support and services available to carers including emotional support
- ▶ Use the Quality Monitoring Tool to make sure carers needs are identified, listened to and acted upon as well as to assess the wider quality of services

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For a copy of our Carers' Strategy and Carers' Charter Survey Report or Urgent Care Report call 0191 263 5321 or go to www.healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk

Working with others to improve services

Working with the Care Quality Commission

The CQC keep us informed of their local inspection programme and publication of reports on services. They invite us to pass on feedback about services relevant to their inspection and regulatory role. We promote upcoming inspections through our enewsletter and forward feedback received through our local engagement. We have met with our local CQC contact and attended joint meetings with CQC and North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care Services.

This year we did not make any recommendations to CQC or Healthwatch England to undertake special reviews or investigations.

We have regular contact with local providers and commissioners to follow up concerns and information requests. They engage with us on concerns raised by groups and individuals and responded to our informal and written requests for information.

Working with Healthwatch England

We monitor escalations to Healthwatch England (HWE) for issues of concern in North Tyneside. The waiting list for gender identity services in the North East has been raised locally as an issue and is being looked into by a board member. We will share the results of this work with HWE and the local Healthwatch that escalated the issue of access to these services.

We recognised the need to improve our systems for recording issues and feedback on local services and joined the HWE customer relationship management (CRM) pilot in August 2014. We have transferred our local contacts to the CRM database and from April 2015 will use this system to record, report and analyse data.

Anonymised data on people's experiences will be available to Healthwatch England to support the monitoring and reporting of national and local trends.

We share information with Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch through the online Healthwatch discussion forum and at networking events such as the annual Healthwatch conference and HWE communications group and regional meetings for local Healthwatch.



The Growth of an Organisation

“In general the aim of constituting an organisation should satisfy three needs:

1. The statutory needs of good governance, as required under law.
2. Establishing a securely functional framework that supports the operation of the organisation, its democratic accountability and capacity to apply for external funding.
3. A system of governance that limits the administrative overhead (amount of regular paperwork), so that it isn't too onerous for staff, too complex to understand for the lay person, or too expensive to run.

For Healthwatch North Tyneside this limited the choice of constitutional models to Limited Company (Co Ltd), Community Interest Company (CiC), or Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Clearly there were others, for example becoming a co-op, but they failed to meet the criteria in all respects.

Discussion of models was a complex business, needing much input and research, but we finally chose the CIO model as most suitable. This not only meets our criteria but is the least restrictive for our needs, and a common model for organisations of our size. In addition it sends an appropriate public message: our work is charitable and community-based with less of an emphasis on overly 'business-orientated' work.

Since then the work towards organisational independence has carried on apace. We have stabilised board membership, though we are still searching for further volunteers to take part. We welcome enquiries - especially from those with financial acumen! We became independent on 1 April 2015 and I for one was very proud to see us take our place in the national Healthwatch network.

As a body we have learned much, weathered changes in staffing and recruitment exceptionally well, and have formed a board that works well together and is excellently led. Decision making within the board is based upon systematic discussion of points raised from external sources (community, other bodies and individuals) and internal sources (staff and board members). We follow our constitutional requirements, but are very cognisant of the need to involve as wide a variety of input as is possible.”

I am confident that our future will be a sound one, and I look forward to our progress over the coming year.

Bea Groves, Vice-chair and governance lead

Involving lay people and volunteers

Our Healthwatch board is made up of lay people and representatives of local health and social care organisations.

Peter Kenrick, Bea Groves, Lindsay Perks, Linda van Zwanenberg and Julia Charlton are residents of North Tyneside and joined our board as lay people with an interest in health and social care.

Our specialist board members; Claire Easton, David Robinson and Iain Kitt work in their specialist areas in North Tyneside.

The board agenda is structured to enable all board members to contribute to the meeting. Meetings are open to the public and the agenda and supporting documents are published on our website one week before the meeting.

When deciding on Healthwatch priorities for 2014/15 we looked at the issues and concerns raised through our information and signposting, engagement activities and events such as our annual review in March 2014. We also considered the priorities identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Clinical Commissioning Group commissioning plan, Adult Social Care plan, Children and Young People's Plan, Overview and Scrutiny work plans, Public Health plan and NHS England priorities.

When deciding on our vision and strategic priorities for the new independent Healthwatch North Tyneside we held workshops for board members and the staff team to ensure full involvement and commitment.

Roles and responsibilities

It is important that everyone involved with Healthwatch understands how they contribute to our overall aims and achievement of our priorities.

Our board application pack outlines the roles and responsibilities for all board members, what is expected of them and how they may be involved in Healthwatch activities. These are discussed in more detail when members are recruited to the board and at board meetings.

This year our staff team has been involved in drafting new job descriptions prior to transfer to the new organisation. The staff team were also involved in the planning for independence including roles, responsibilities, accountability and policy review.

Our volunteers are given written role descriptions and their training and induction covers the volunteer role they are taking on and how this fits into our Healthwatch activities.

Our plans for 2015/16

In addition to our general outreach, engagement and communication activities we will continue our work on issues and projects begun in 2013/14. This will include sharing our findings and following up and monitoring implementation of recommendations:

- ▶ Urgent care for families and young children
- ▶ Review of the carers' charter and strategy
- ▶ Hospital food
- ▶ Review of services for children and young people with ADHD/ADD
- ▶ Care home visits for the Independent Observer Scheme
- ▶ Transfer of support groups directory to a searchable website

Our board will agree our approach to proposed new projects at their board meeting in July 2015, work areas being considered are:

- ▶ Mental health support
- ▶ Waiting times for gender identity services
- ▶ Patient experiences at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital
- ▶ Review of older people's day services

Distribution of Healthwatch North Tyneside Annual Report

This annual report was published on our website on 30 June 2015.

Download your copy at www.healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk

A copy of the report has been sent to Healthwatch England, Care Quality Commission, NHS England, North Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, North Tyneside Overview and Scrutiny Committee, North Tyneside Council and NHS provider trusts.

We will include a weblink to the annual report in our July newsletter and on twitter and facebook. We will offer printed copies in our summer newsletter, North Tyneside VODA newsletter and at events.

If you would like this annual report in a different format please call us on 0191 263 5321.

Trademark information

Healthwatch North Tyneside uses the Healthwatch trademark which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement

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Financial and contract information

Financial summary	*2013/14	2014/15
Income	£	£
Core contract	148,953	148,953
Carried forward budget from 2013/14	5,319	33,182
Total income	154,272	182,135
Expenditure		
Management and staff salaries*	75,441	93,046
Training, recruitment and other expenses – staff, board and volunteers	3,468	4,129
Operational costs – Office accommodation, ICT, telephones, printing, stationery, insurance etc	36,397	28,166
Marketing and publicity	3,329	3,050
Legal and professional costs	487	1,366
Activities – signposting and information, engagement and events	1,967	5,528
Total expenditure	121,090	135,285
Balance carried forward to 2014/15	33,182	46,850

*The financial summary for 2013/14 was revised following receipt of the final accounts after publication of the 2014 annual report.

The main cost of our engagement, signposting and information activities is covered by staff salaries.

Contract for Healthwatch North Tyneside

North Tyneside Council awarded the contract for Healthwatch North Tyneside to Carers' Federation for three years from April 2013. The contract transferred to the newly established Healthwatch North Tyneside from 1 April 2015.

Carers' Federation

The Carers' Federation Limited is registered in England as a company limited by guarantee.

Registered office: 1 Beech Avenue, Sherwood Rise, Nottingham, NG7 7LJ

Registered number 3123142

Registered charity number 1050779

For more information go to www.carersfederation.co.uk

Healthwatch North Tyneside

Annual Report 2014/15

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