



# **Guided by you**

Annual report 2019-20

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## About us

**Healthwatch Southend** has a vital role to make sure that the views of the people of Southend are heard by the NHS and Southend Borough Council. Although we are funded by the Council, we are independent of them and local NHS bodies. We gather people's experiences by offering a telephone line, helping residents access local health and care services, not only from public bodies, but also voluntary and community organisations. We also run events (or attend those organised by others) where we can speak to groups of people about the good and the bad things they have seen in local services. Although not a part of Healthwatch Southend, we also provide an independent complaints advocacy service, which can help local people make formal complaints about the NHS. This can give us more evidence about areas where care might be improved. We also have the legal power to enter buildings to see how services are run and to talk to patients, service users and carers to find out their views.

If a number of people are worried about something, we can investigate further and ask the NHS or Council to make changes. When the Council or NHS are planning and buying services (commissioning) we will pass on your views about what works and does not work.

The vast majority of contact that local people have with the NHS will be with their general practitioner. There are 28 surgeries spread across Southend. The majority of hospital care, both for emergencies and waiting-list care, is provided by Southend Hospital. Now that the Hospital is part of the Mid & South Essex Foundation Trust, centres of excellence will be shared across Southend, Basildon and Broomfield Hospitals, so that some care may in future take place outside this area. Community-based services, such as district nursing or speech and language therapy are provided by the Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust.

Social care is more complicated, with a number of independent care homes and home care agencies providing services to vulnerable children and adults.

**Owen Richards** 

Strategic Manager Healthwatch Southend



# Message from our chair

The past 12 months have been turbulent for citizens, the NHS and Healthwatch Southend.

Taking over as chair, after a "getting to know what it's all about" period, was challenging at times and I can only pay tribute to previous chair, Chris Gasper, who afforded me so much of his time and knowledge in helping me take the reins.

My first priority was to ensure that all members of the Healthwatch team were clear in what they were expected to be doing and to ensure they had all the back office support they needed. Representing the citizens of Southend is a privilege and we must be constantly working to improve our communication channels with those we represent.

Southend is a fast-growing, incredibly diverse town with a population of around 340,000. We have extremes of poverty and wealth within our borough and Healthwatch has to ensure it fully represents all views of all citizens. Our Board is completely voluntary and we receive no remuneration for our time and effort and we have no financial interest in any part of the NHS or social care section.

Over the past 12 months I have built what I believe to be a Board with a wide and appropriate range of skills, including financial management, high-level nursing and medical care in particular the challenges facing care homes, good understanding of the social care/social work scene, the ambulance service and the important democratic links between citizens, Southend Borough Council and the NHS.

The Mid and South Essex (MSE) NHS changes, bringing Southend, Basildon and Broomfield hospitals together under one merged Board and senior management team, has not been without its own problems.

One problem we have identified in the NHS Long Term Plan, is that of a lack of automatic patient representation. We are seeking answers from MSE senior management and will work hard to ensure that the patient is included at all stages of the development of local health services.

Healthwatch, as an independent body, has often questioned the local changes and how they might/will affect patients and their families. We will continue our role as guardians of the ethos of the medical professional – do no harm. And we will continue to listen, question and seek answers across the broad range of NHS services.

We have entered a new age of the NHS – which is largely technology driven. It's good for patients in many areas but we must ensure we do not build technology barriers to access the best care possible. Not everyone has a smartphone or a computer. We are always conscious of and will endeavour to be inclusive at all times.

Freddie Dawkins Chair Advisory Board Healthwatch Southend June 2020



#### **Our vision is simple**

Health and care that works for you. People want health and social care support that works – helps them to stay well, get the best out of services and manage any conditions they face.



#### **Our purpose**

To find out what matters to you and to help make sure your views shape the support you need.



#### **Our approach**

People's views come first – especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.

#### How we find out what matters to you

People are at the heart of everything we do. Our staff and volunteers identify what matters most to people by:

- Visiting services to see how they work
- Running surveys and focus groups
- Going out in the community and working with other organisations



Find out more about us and the work we do Website: www.healthwatchsouthend.co.uk Twitter: @ HWSouthend

# Highlights from our year

# SOUTHEND AGAINST MODERN SLAVER



## Highlights

More than 2000 people shared their views with Healthwatch Southend, through calls, emails and face-to-face We are part of a Healthwatch regional network, that provides support and development to enable us reach more people Healthwatch Southend attended over 30 community events, speaking to local residents about their experiences



As a patient that will now have to travel to Basildon every fortnight for treatment I used to get in Southend – I worry about how I am going to manage getting there now...Southend Hospital Patient

Friars Children's Centre Fun Day

#### **NHS Long Term Plan**

Following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, the NHS published the 'Long Term Plan' in January 2019, setting out its key ambitions over the next 10 years. Healthwatch Southend took part and asked over 400 people to give their views on how the plan should be implemented.

We held focus groups with service users and stakeholders alongside the survey questions to give as many people as possible to have their say. The top issues that people told us they wanted services to focus on are:

- Easier access to GPs
- Improved communications with Hospital
- Transport links to improve access
- Support for Vulnerable children

# How we've made a difference



#### Health and care that works for you



## **9 volunteers**

helped to carry out our work. In total, they gave up 400 hours of their time to help us.

We employ **5 staff** 

# **£119,095 in funding**

from our local authority in 2019-20

#### Providing support



## 400 people

shared their health and social care story with us

### 800 people

accessed Healthwatch advice and information online or contacted us with questions about local support

#### **Reaching out**



#### **3000 people**

engaged with us through our website, 1800 people engaged with us through social media, and 400 people engaged with us at community events.

#### Engaging with people in Southend Getting the word out.... session

Last summer we were able to launch our brand new Healthwatch Southend Website. Healthwatch Thurrock kindly seconded their Marketing & Communications Officer, to support us. Our new format went live in July. It has improved layout has already seen an increase in visits and engagement. We will continue to issue a printed, monthly newsletter to keep you up to date.

We attended community groups in local settings and gave interactive presentations with Q&A sessions.

We attended Balmoral Community Club, St Lawrence Members, University of Third Age, Age Concern Southend in Hamlet Court Road, Patient Participation Groups in GP Surgeries and Project 49 in Alexandra St Southend. We regularly attend the Patient Participant Group Forum, Southend Homeless Action Network meetings, EPUT Mental Health Service Users Forum, along with regular monthly sessions at the Civic Centre, Victoria Hub, Westcliff Library, Cluny Square and Shoebury Information Hub.

We were delighted to attend the West Locality Roadshow hosted by SBC & CCG, Southchurch High School Parents Open Day, Summercourt & Friars Children's Centre Fun Days.

We attended Trinity Family Centre and hosted an information session for participants who have recently moved to Southend. Support is offered for the families who often don't know how to access services for themselves and their children. We will be ensuring that information and signposting can be produced in a range of languages.

We intend to recruit more volunteers to enable us to engage with as many residents as we can in the next year. We are working towards putting in place a Volunteer Development Training Plan that covers; Mental Health Awareness Training, Managing Conflict, Domestic Abuse Awareness and Active Listening Skills Training.



Healthwatch visited our group and told us about their services, we didn't know about the help they can give... Balmoral Pensioners Club

Project 49 Summer Fun Day

NHS Complaints Advocacy is part of the work we do and we are able to support those who would like help with pursuing a complaint about health services in Southend.





If you want to find out more about the Health Complaints Advocacy Service, visit our website or contact us 01702 416320.

#### Navigating the complaints process at the local hospital

#### **Case Study:**

Mr X contacted our service after making a formal NHS complaint. He was unable to obtain answers to questions raised after a routine surgical procedure. Mr X was suffering with ongoing health and mobility issues, he was struggling with the poor complaint handling from the Hospital Trust involved.

Mr X met with the advocate and was able to progress through the complaints procedure successfully. He attended a local resolution meeting, supported by the advocate who ensured his voice was heard. The complaint was resolved satisfactorily and he was offered on going support for health issues.

He received an apology and acknowledgement from the Trust that there had been failing with communication both during his treatment and through the complaints handing.

Mr X was pleased that the advocate's attention to detail and support had been exceptional, and empower him to pursue the complaint. He felt he was supported at every stage and the outcome reduced the distress he had been feeling and enable him to move forward.



Keep up the good work, first class help. Helped me get my complaint sorted – I don't think I would have been able to do it on my own Patient/Resident





#### **COVID19 Pandemic in Southend**

#### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The Covid-19 Pandemic highlighted the need to ensure that health and social care staff and their patients/clients were sufficiently protected from contracting or spreading the virus. Health and Social care workers may be subject to repeated risk of contact and droplet transmission during their daily work. Guidance on the use of PPE was issued by Public Health England in order to help staff minimise the risk of contracting or spreading the virus.

At the end of 2019/20 we raised concerns with Southend Hospital about staff concerns about protective equipment.

As an independent representative of the people of Southend, Healthwatch Southend was then contacted regarding concerns about availability of PPE within the social care sector. The Healthwatch Advisory Board decided to take some action in order to validate concerns. Healthwatch representatives conducted a survey within Care Homes and home care agencies to see if there were concerns regarding the availability of PPE. A total of 21 organisations were approached which included 6 domiciliary care agencies and 15 care homes.

The survey aimed to find out whether there were problems obtaining appropriate supplies of PPE and secondly whether the official advice was clear on its use. It was identified that the supply of PPE was not problematic however there appeared to be conflicting advice on its usage which had caused confusion and created concerns that staff and service users were put at risk.

The report was shared with Southend Borough Council and local Councillors who responded positively to Healthwatch involvement in seeking clarity of the PPE situation.

The results of this survey provided a snapshot in time and it has been acknowledged that the current pandemic is fast moving and public health guidance changes to reflect the current situation. As a consequence Healthwatch Southend plans to conduct further surveys, utilising a similar methodology in order to compare data and monitor progress.

Wendy Dodds, Advisory Board Member



# Helping you find the answers



Finding the right service can be worrying and stressful. Healthwatch plays an important role in helping people to get the information they need to take control of their health and care, and to find services that will provide them with the right support.

This year we helped people get the advice and information they need by:

- Providing advice and information articles on our website.
- Answering people's queries about services over the phone, by email, or online.
- Talking to people at community events.
- Promoting services and information that can help people on our social media.





We have distributed 1000 leaflets, 150 posters around to Surgeries, Pharmacies, Dentists, Libraries, Sports Centres and community settings. If you would like us to visit your group or club please let us know.

#### Information & Advice Case Study

Client B contacted Healthwatch Southend to enquire what the current Southend CCG policy directive is regarding NHS treatment provision by GPs for patient ear syringing services. Client B was confused. He had received mixed communication from staff in his GP surgery; the practice nurse explained the CCG no longer provided equipment to offer the syringing service and the GP advised the service was not available at local practice level. The GP referred the patient to Southend Hospital. Further confusion arose when Client B had his hospital appointment cancelled by telephone and was advised by the hospital clerk he might have to consider going privately for treatment. He was advised the hospital consultant cancelled the appointment due to incorrect referral criteria.

We contacted the GP Practice and the CCG for clarity. The CCG is aware that

this is causing concern to members of the public and is reviewing options that may be available in order to provide alternative options to patients. GPs can refer patients to ensure they receive the treatment they require, which in this case the GP has done so.

The CCG NHS Guidance was emailed to Client B for clarity together with appropriate CCG contact details at the client's request.

Our client was grateful for our support and sent a final email thanking Healthwatch Southend.

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It would have been difficult for me to sort this out with Healthwatch Southend helping me...thank you.



# Improving access to Health & Social Care

Over the past year Healthwatch Southend has been proactive in ensuring that residents of Southend are aware of what we offer. Throughout the year we made over 30 visits to local groups and support agencies to find out how they rate the services they use.

People told us that it is difficult to get guidance on where to go for support especially around the changes to services following the merger of Southend, Chelmsford and Basildon Hospitals.

We attended patient participation group (PPG) events at local surgeries and made sure that people knew about how they could involve themselves at local level.

We have been able to be part of the conversations about how changes to primary and secondary care will impact on residents and will work in partnership with the integrated commissioning teams to improve services. We were able to raise concerns about the pressures on services due to additional housing projects across Essex at the People Scrutiny Committee. We raised the issue of waiting times for children who need a special educational needs/disability (SEND) assessment at the Health & Well Being Board.

We want to ensure that all sections of the community will be able to share their experiences with us, and to use the information to inform future planning.

Healthwatch Southend will be working to ensure those who do not often have a chance to share their experiences, are able to do so.



As services are changing locally and I am undergoing treatment for cancer, its important that I have all the right information I need so I can get the best care. Southend Hospital Patient





St Lawrence Hall Community Group





#### Mental Health

We noticed a number of people were phoning up to ask for information about mental health services they could go to for support whilst waiting for their follow up appointment. We conducted a survey with the Mental Health Service Users Forum to determine that 'now care' was much needed. Discussions with EPUT have resulted in crisis referrals being taken by telephone so someone suffering crisis can be seen at Project 49 premises quickly.

#### Special Education Needs:

We take regular calls from parents whose children have started school and who wish to make enquiries and applications for support for children's additional learning needs. We identified an issue with access to information for parents. Healthwatch Southend have asked for a pathway to be available for parents who are at the start of a process to support their child.



#### Care Homes :

Following a call from a resident, who had concerns about her mother's choices and access to GP services whilst she is resident in a care home, we will be exploring how best we can support residents of local care homes to have access to appropriate care, know and understand complaints process and how they can be fully supported to makes choices that meet their needs.



If you have a query about a health or social care service, or need help with where you can go to access further support, get in touch. Don't struggle alone. Healthwatch is here for you.

Website: www.healthwatchsouthend.co.uk Telephone: 01702 416320 Email: info@healthwatchsouthend.co.uk

#### Helping you find the answers

#### Scrutiny

Part of our work is to put forward the views of local people in meetings with the NHS and the Council, offering constructive challenge

We are an official member of the Health & Wellbeing Board for Southend. This brings together senior people from the Council, NHS and voluntary and community organisations. The Board works in partnership to improve health and wellbeing for Southend's residents. We attended a number of meetings not only to talk about our own work and plans, but also to take part in discussions about important topics like teenage pregnancy.

We also attended meetings of the People Scrutiny Committee at the Council. This meeting looks at decisions made by the Council and NHS which affect local people. Councillors who are not part of the decision-making are able to question those who are. Healthwatch can raise concerns or put forward views of the public which we have collected through our work, or through our knowledge of the community. The other important meeting we can attend is the Governing Body of the NHS Southend Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

With the move to closer working across Mid and South Essex, more decisions are being taken at that level. The Southend Board still has responsibilities for its own finances and the performance of local services – we recently asked questions about the Financial Plan for 2020-21.

The CCG is also required to hold a public meeting to discuss the contracts for primary care services, which we attend as members of the public; this gives a picture of how well GPs and others are performing.

Because of coronavirus, most of these meetings have not been taking place, which has made our work harder. We have been checking for meeting papers and raised questions where we can. We will continue to be involved in the new approaches being made by health and social care services, to involve and listen to residents who use services locally.





#### At Healthwatch Southend we are supported by VOLUNTEERS to help us find out what people think is working, and what people would like to improve, to services in their communities. This year our volunteers:

- Raised awareness of the work we do at events, in the community and with health and care services.
- Helped us to carry out a survey about obtaining PPE with Care Homes
- Helped support our day-to-day running.
- Listened to people's experiences to help us know which areas we need to focus on.

We are very grateful to and reliant upon our volunteers who are a core part of our Southend team. They bring their experience, enthusiasm and knowledge to their various roles, from engaging directly with members of the public, providing administration support ensuring that all the feedback we receive from our surveys and events is used appropriately in our reports, to our Advisory Board members who have quided and supported our work over the last vear, attending essential meetings, ensuring we had representation.

We recently recruited three additional board members and are thrilled to have their expertise and support added to our small team during the past year. Our volunteers formed part of our team at several family fun days during the summer, raising our profile, gathering people's views and lived experiences and helping out where they were needed. On another occasion a volunteer undertook a special delivery and engagement task to all local GP surgeries making sure our leaflets and posters were displayed and available in the surgery public areas. Usual administrative duties ranged from data input, to creative writing (pen-pal invite letters to local care home residents), to computer design work and helping to make the content for up our Healthwatch display engagement board.

#### Volunteer with us

Are you feeling inspired? We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please get in touch with us

Website: www.healthwatchsouthend.co.uk Telephone: 01702 416320 Email: info@healthwatchsouthend.co.uk

# Finances



We are funded by our local authority under the Health and Social Care Act (2012). The figures in this section show that we underspent on our budget for the year. This was because we tried to recruit a manager for the service but were not able to, even though we advertised twice. We now have someone in post and have carried the underspend into 2020 to pay their costs.





# Our plans for next year



#### Services are changing in Southend

Chris Gasper sits as an Advisory Board Member for Healthwatch Southend and is Chair of Mid & South Essex Service User Advisory Group

#### NHS 5 Year Plan update

#### How did we get to where we are now?

The NHS reorganised in 2013 to create Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for each area to involve GPs and bring the purchase of services more locally.

In 2018 Southend CCG and Rochford & Castle Point formed a joint management structure to save money but still operate as 2 CCGs.

#### **Problems Identified**

CCGs identified separate priorities that created difficulties in commissioning services covering a wider area than that covered by an individual CCG. Hospitals, ambulance services and mental health services are some of these.

Some inconsistences were also identified in the current health and social services systems for example:

- A significant difference in life expectation for people living in adjacent areas.
- People presenting to the NHS with serious conditions that would have been less serious had they been identified earlier, especially those who are frail and elderly.

These are particular examples that have been selected as a priority to seek to improve.

#### What's to be Done?

The NHS Long Term Plan lists a number of important ambitions for the next few years, but central to the delivery of all of them will be the need to work together. See https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/ for full details.

Southend is part of the Mid and South Essex area (MSE) with 3 hospitals, in Chelmsford, Basildon and Southend. The hospitals have merged under one administration and will concentrate some treatment for advanced cases in one of these. For example, the Cardiac unit at Basildon has dealt with serious heart complaints for some time and is recognised as a UK leader in cardiac treatment.

#### Forming a Partnership of Care

It is realised that hospitals are not the only agents in raising the health of the population. Primary care, social care, organised by Councils, community and voluntary services all play an essential role. Southend Council has increased the operation of their Integrated Commissioning Unit, working closely with the CCG, Community and Voluntary organisations.

A new NHS organisational structure is therefore being developed. The GP surgeries we all use have been grouped into Primary Care Networks (PCNs), each with a Clinical Director. There are 5 PCNs in Southend: North Road Plus, Southend Central, Southend East, West Central and West Leigh. The CCG website gives details https://southendccg.nhs.uk/about-us/pcn .There are 28 PCNs in Mid and South Essex.

#### **Extra Local Resources**

Each PCN has the opportunity to employ a range of additional staff to offer extra services depending on the needs of the local area. For this year, each PCN can choose from; pharmacy technicians, care co-ordinators, health coaches, dietitians, podiatrists and occupational therapists. It is hoped that this extra local resource will start to address the priority to improve the health inequalities highlighted above.

The 5 CCGs are merging into one for Mid and South East Essex but 4 separate "Place" organisations are being formed. These are, South East Essex (including Southend, Rochford and Castle Point), Thurrock, Basildon and Brentwood, and Mid Essex.

The 4 Place organisations will give support to the PCNs in their district and monitor health factors over their area. A <u>Locality Strategy (Living Well in Thriving Communities</u>) also sets out the principles of collaborative working in south east Essex. The approach is based around the needs and locations of people, rather than the boundaries of organisations and will focus on prevention and supporting the strengths of communities and individuals.

#### The Central Management System for Mid and South Essex

The central management structure for Mid and South Essex is a "System", with an Executive Structure run by a Partnership Board, formed from representatives from NHS partners, Southend, Thurrock and Essex Councils, Representatives from Community and Voluntary Services and the 3 Healthwatches from Southend, Thurrock and Essex. The Board will set strategic objectives and allocate funds to all agents delivering services within Mid and South Essex.

#### Implementation

The circumstances of the Covid - 19 Pandemic has affected progress of the reorganisation but the structures above are either in place or will be embedded over the next 12 months.

Chris Gasper - Southend Patient Representative, Chair STP Service User Advisory Group May 2020



#### Our priorities for 2020 and onwards

We have set the following broad areas as our focus for the coming period. Clearly this may change as we emerge from the first wave of Covid-19, or as local, regional or national priorities alter.

#### Looking at the impact of Covid-19

This could include looking at the mental health of young people, or those with severe mental illness. Many people in these groups may have had to self-isolate, or have not been able to attend schools, colleges or other places of support. We also know that new ways of seeing clinicians will remain –do video consultations meet the needs of all our communities, for example?

• **Special educational needs** We know that the Council and CCG are making improvements to the way in which they work with the families and carers of children and young people with special educational needs. Can we help by engaging with these families, carers and even young people themselves to see how effective these changes are?

#### • Vulnerable people

Vulnerable people, particularly people supported at home or in care homes will be another part of our work plan. How well can they access primary care services, for example? Are there other services that would benefit their health and wellbeing?



## • Improving how we reach local people

We know we need to improve how we communicate with local people and really get to hear their views. Some groups find health and social care services hard to access – we need to get better at talking to these groups, in ways and places where they feel safe and comfortable to talk. Groups such as people who are homeless, people from black and Asian minority ethnic groups (BAME), or LGBTQ+ people often have poorer health. It is our role to make sure their feelings and ideas are heard.

#### • Working with partners

Our Annual Report talks about the changes in health and care across Mid and South Essex. We will be arguing for local people to have a strong voice as services are changed, whether at a grass roots level or on a broader scale. We will offer our skills and experience in working with communities to our partners, so that you benefit.



#### Strengthening Healthwatch Southend

The people of Southend deserve a strong organisation to represent them. Elsewhere you will read about the Quality Framework we intend to use to look at how well we do this and where we need to improve. We also want to get more volunteers working with us in lots of different ways. Finally, we want to make sure we have proper ways of working in place, so that we are really independent and well-run.

#### **Quality Assurance Framework**

We are reviewing our governance arrangements this year and will be able to demonstrate our commitment to having a fit-forpurpose service that meets the needs of our community.

As part of the that commitment we will be implementing Healthwatch England's Quality Framework.

At Healthwatch Southend we believe that it is very important to work in a transparent way, ensuring that we are responsive to the needs of residents, providing a high-quality service and showing our work is driven by the belief that understanding local people's experiences is key to providing effective support. We want to be sure that the insights we gather from the public is able to make change the hearts and minds of service providers.

We want to be able to show that we make a difference in Southend, showing local people that sharing their views and experiences with us is worthwhile. We aim to build positive relationships with local partners so that it is more likely that they act on our recommendations and feedback. We also want to be able to show that we can provide value for money and that our work is worthy of investment. With this in mind the Advisory Board has decided that we will engage in a quality assurance exercise over the next twelve months, using a framework recently developed by Healthwatch England.

This framework will help us focus on how we make a difference and sets out how we measure and communicate the effectiveness of our work. It will also help us to identify what might not be working so that we can set clear targets to address this.

The Quality Framework looks at six areas of activity and indicators which should show whether a Healthwatch is operating effectively. These areas are:

- Leadership and decision making
- People
- Sustainability and resilience
- Collaboration
- Engagement, involvement and reach
- Influence and Impact.

All Advisory Board Members will be involved in this process, providing oversight and valuable input, together with all staff. There will also be opportunity for feedback from residents and partners and we look forward to presenting our findings within our future planning.

Tricia Cowdrey Advisory Board Member

# Thank you

Thank you to everyone that helps us put people at the heart of social care, including:

- Members of the public who shared their views and experience with us.
- All of our amazing staff and volunteers.
- The voluntary organisations that have contributed to our work.

## **Contact us**

Healthwatch Southend Centre Place 15 Prospect Close Southend-on-Sea Essex SS1 2JB

Contact number 01702 416320 Email address info@healthwatchsouthend.co.uk Social media @HWSouthend

www.facebook.com/HealthwatchSouthend

Website www.healthwatchsouthend.co.uk The contract for Healthwatch Southend is managed by Family Action, a registered charity (264713) 34 Wharf Road London N1 7GR

Contact number 020 7254 6251 Email address info@family-action.org.uk

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If you need this in an alternative format please contact us.

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