

MEETING	PUBLIC BOARD MEETING 16 September 2019
Agenda item and Paper Number	8 CM/10/19/08
Agenda Title	Healthwatch England Update
Sponsor	Sir Robert Francis – Chair of Healthwatch England and Non-Executive Board Member
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PURPOSE OF PAPER:

Actions required by the Board:

- For the Board to **NOTE** the update from Healthwatch England

1. This report provides an update on the following:

- NHS Long Term Plan
- Clinical Standards Review
- NHS Accountability
- Mental Health
- Friends and Family Test
- Patient Transport
- Healthwatch Conference
- Network Effectiveness and Impact
- Reports Library
- Communications Support
- Digital Support

- Campaigns Support
- Young People
- Advice and Information Content
- Insight report – what people have told us

2. NHS Long Term Plan

We are pleased to report that the Healthwatch Long Term Plan engagement programme has been progressing very well. The work has been greeted positively at a local level by NHS partners and others, and at a national level has helped demonstrate the value of the network to partners in the voluntary sector, NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care.

Between March and May, we now know that local Healthwatch engaged with more than 30,000 people via the online surveys, gathering people's views on how the NHS can help them stay healthy, as well as collecting insights about how services support people with specific conditions. In total, more than 6,500 respondents reported having a long-term condition.

Local Healthwatch also carried out over 500 local focus groups and attended hundreds more engagement events, including community picnics, festivals and carer's cafes. Engagement activities such as Healthwatch Somerset's campervan helped them get to 18 locations across the county, covering over 250 miles in the process.

One of the major successes of the work has been our reach into communities who don't often have their voices heard in big decisions, with specific focus on people with sensory impairment, homeless people and groups from the BAME communities.

The 44 coordinating Healthwatch have shared their [findings](#) with their relevant STP/ICS leads and have published their final reports. They will now be working with their local partners to ensure this insight is reflected in the local implementation plan that each area have to finalise by November. The timeline for this has been set out in the [NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework](#).

30,000 people responded to two surveys. We shared the early findings at the NHS Expo Conference in Manchester on 4 September and with the NHS Assembly. We will be working with a group of local Healthwatch to share their findings and experiences of the programme

with system leaders and facilitating a discussion about how the NHS can communicate to people how local plans are addressing people's needs.

Emerging headline themes includes:

- **Access to primary care** - including people struggling to get appointments and a growing desire for the NHS to facilitate more direct access to a wider range of appropriate healthcare professionals. There is a strong sense from the feedback that the best way to demonstrate the Long Term Plan is improving the quality of care is by fixing some of the 'front door' access issues in primary care.
- **Transport** – people are accepting that health services (in particular diagnostics) might be delivered further from home, but they definitely want all their recovery, recuperation and ongoing healthcare support local (close to home with continuity of care). Where they do have to travel they want services to consider roads, parking, patients transport services, public transport etc.
- **Technology** - needs to be embraced by the NHS but people have also urged caution, stressing that services need to avoid making assumptions about who will use different forms of technology. They consistently raise the need to ensure technological solutions are designed to address real world problems and are properly user tested before being rolled out.
- **Communication and language** – people want the NHS as a whole, and individual staff, to focus on improving communication ensuring it is timely and in plain English. They also want staff to make time to listen to them. More broadly they want NHS to avoid using words such as 'crisis' and jargon such as 'social prescribing'.
- **Prevention** – people place significant emphasis on the importance of prevention, both for their own health and the sustainability of the NHS. They want services to do more to proactively help them stay well, suggesting everything from annual health checks for everyone to early assessment and intensive early support for those who are at risk of particular health problems such as diabetes.
- **Mental health** – people's feedback recognises the need for urgent investment and improvement in mental health services, with a strong emphasis on the NHS communicating how services are actually changing, not just on delivering care better. This is vital to breaking down image that you have to be "contemplating suicide" before someone can get help.

Elsewhere on the Long Term Plan, in June the Health and Social Care Select Committee published their report on the legislative proposals put forward by NHS England. These plans were focused on helping systems to work better together across STP/ICS footprints. We provided written evidence to the inquiry and Sir Robert Francis gave oral evidence in May.

While the proposals didn't make an explicit recommendation to change arrangements for local Healthwatch, there was a significant risk that attempts to streamline or regionalise structures could have had a negative impact on the local element of Healthwatch. We also felt it provided an opportunity to strengthen the role of Healthwatch at a regional level, so that insight from people could be used to help system leaders make better decisions.

The Select Committee essentially agreed with our view and suggested that Integrated Care Systems 'mirror' the existing public involvement mechanisms that are working well locally, such as Healthwatch and Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Since the publication of the Select Committees report, NHS England has now published their proposals and confirmed that the intention is to keep local Healthwatch embedded in local communities. In the supporting documentation NHSE have also made clear that additional arrangements to enable Healthwatch to work effectively with STPs/ICS will need to be clarified in future guidance. Sir Robert has signed a joint letter to the Secretary of State, lending his support to the proposals along with leaders from across the sector -

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-england-and-nhs-improvement-board-meetings-in-common-agenda-and-papers-26-september-2019/>

3. Clinical Standards Review

NHS England completed the first phase of field testing for the proposed new standards for urgent and emergency care. The second field testing phase began at the end of July and ended in early September.

NHS England have agreed to support six local Healthwatch to evaluate the impact of the new standards on patient experience in select pilot sites. These sites, and their respective local Healthwatch, are as follows:

- West Suffolk (Healthwatch Suffolk)
- Cambridge University Hospitals (Healthwatch Cambridgeshire)
- Either Chelsea and Westminster or Imperial (Healthwatch Central West London)

- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals (Healthwatch Wakefield)
- Poole Hospital (Healthwatch Dorset)
- Nottingham University Hospitals (Healthwatch Nottingham & Nottinghamshire)

We have worked with the local Healthwatch in each of these areas to facilitate communication with NHS England and develop an approach to the evaluation work. All six local Healthwatch are now in the field and we will be reporting back to NHS England early findings at the end of October. A full public report will be made available later in the year.

4. The new NHS England and NHS Improvement Joint Accountability Framework

In May the Government published the Joint Accountability Framework for NHS England and NHS Improvement. This document replaces the NHS Mandate.

In this document the Department of Health and Social Care has set out what it wants the NHS to achieve over the next 12 months. This largely focuses on two priority areas:

- Putting the foundations in place to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan
- Ensuring the NHS is fully prepared for leaving the EU

From a Healthwatch perspective, it was positive to see the Department use the framework to send a strong message around the need to involve the public in changes to services.

The Secretary of State referenced in his foreword the important role Healthwatch had played by bringing 85,000 people's views in to the development process and how this had significantly shaped the priorities set out in the Long Term Plan.

The Minister of State for Health, Stephen Hammond MP, also wrote to us responding to our submission and outlined how the Department was taking each element on board. In particular, he stressed the vital role user testing will play in how NHSX rolls out new technologies across the NHS, and the importance of evaluating the impact of changes to NHS targets on the experiences of patients in A&E and those waiting for elective care.

5. Mental Health

The Long Term Plan sets out some bold ambitions for mental health. It also promised that resources would grow faster for mental health than other parts of the NHS to deliver this transformation. It was therefore good to see NHS England publish in July a more detailed breakdown of how the money will be invested.

Healthwatch has been progressing the scoping of our children and young people's mental health project. Our mental health programme steering group met on 22nd July to consider a proposed approach for our work going forward.

We expect to build on the findings of local Healthwatch reports and our existing intelligence on CYP mental health, including the deliberative research commissioned earlier this year, to identify and investigate examples of good practice in mental health support for young people.

We will share our intelligence on what young people have told us about good mental health support so far, and work with local Healthwatch and Young Healthwatch to test our current findings. Based on what young people tell us about their experiences, we will work to understand how successful and innovative mental health support services are developed and delivered to inform local Healthwatch and other key stakeholders of how to drive improvement in their own areas.

We aim for the products from this work to be of use to commissioners and front-line providers, of both clinical and non-clinical support, as they work out how best to invest any new money in achieving the ambitions around CYP mental health set out in the Long Term Plan.

Over the last year, our network has gathered views and experiences from thousands of women and their partners about mental health experiences before, during and after pregnancy.

Three common issues

- People feel their mental health problems are triggered by a variety of issues
- People don't know where to turn for help
- People feel scared about how people will respond if they speak up.

We shared our report with our partners and the network to help promote awareness of the common issues than can help contribute to mental health problems, and how people can be better supported. Full report is in Appendix i.

6. Friends and Family Test

Following recommendations made by Healthwatch and others over a number of year, NHS England has announced changes to the Friends and Family Test. These are expected to take place from 1 April 2020.

Whereas the current version asks about whether people would "recommend" the service, the new version will ask "Overall, how was your experience of our service?" There will be six new response options. This change reflects the feedback Healthwatch England provided as part of the review. There have also been other key changes building from our response, including:

- more flexibility around when people are asked to complete the FFT, as this can significantly influence how people respond
- stress put on services demonstrating how they are using the qualitative feedback gathered through FFT, not just the scores, to help drive improvement.

Alternative options will be available for ambulance services to reflect the context of their work. These will be developed in the next few weeks.

Revised guidance was published in September 2019, with updated web-based resources including case studies and FAQs.

7. Patient Transport (full briefing in appendix ii)

As part of work on the implementation of the Long Term Plan, between March and May this year, the Healthwatch network carried out a nationwide conversation asking communities how they want the NHS to improve locally, engaging with over 30,000 people across the country.

We found that travel was a key issue, with nine out of every ten people telling us that convenient ways of getting to and from health services as either important or very important.

In early October we published a briefing (**appendix ii**), developed in partnership with Age UK and Kidney Care UK, highlighting what the public are saying about issues they face when it comes to travelling to and from NHS services, including issues with public transport, parking and Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services.

It also shows what we found when we wrote to all 191 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and asked them for data on how many people were using Non-Emergency Transport Services and how many people had been refused help between 2015/16 and 2018/19.

In partnership with Age UK and Kidney Care UK, we have been working with the NHS to take action. This briefing highlights our collective evidence in our call for change.

NHS England has announced they will carry out a national review. We will be working with them on this to ensure that people's views and experiences inform their plans, from better commissioning of NHS patient transport services to working more closely with transport authorities and providers to ensure the NHS is connected in practical and affordable ways with the wider world.

8. Healthwatch Conference

On 1 and 2 October we held our annual Healthwatch Conference at the ICC, Birmingham. Over 400 staff and volunteers from the network attended and played a key part in running workshops aimed at sharing best practice. An awards dinner was held giving recognition to the innovation and impact across the network.

Over the two days there were inspiring talks from speakers such as Simon Stephens, the Rt Hon Paul Burstow, Councillor Ian Ward, Birmingham City Council, Donna Hall CBE, Liz Sargeant OBE, and Ewan Devine-Kennedy, Principal Researcher with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

9. Network Effectiveness and Impact

We are currently testing and rolling out a new Quality Framework and Making a Difference toolkit (impact toolkit) with Healthwatch. They enable Healthwatch to demonstrate their effectiveness and how they make a difference respectively. The quality framework is being well received in the network. We are also revisiting the agreement between Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch.

10. Reports Library

All local Healthwatch reports from 2019 are now loaded onto the Reports Library. We have seconded staff from the network to work through the archive and expect all reports prior to 2019 to be available on the Library by the end of December 2019.

11. Communications Support

We have supported local Healthwatch to produce and then communicate their annual reports. As well as providing an annual report template, new graphics and photography, we also held webinar training on and produced on-line guides for (a) How to plan your communications (b) How to tell a story and (c) How to sell your story. Over 60 local Healthwatch staff have signed up for our training to date and the annual report template has been used by 85% of local Healthwatch.

Next steps, we have a programme of further communication guides and webinar training which will run until Christmas.

12. Digital Support

The rollout of the new website to local Healthwatch continues. We currently have over 30 websites which are either live, or in the process of going live. Because some local Healthwatch have had other commitments or contracts have changed, six have either withdrawn or postponed their involvement. We have also held our first website user group to look at the performance of the sites to date, as well as future development needs for our national and local websites. Our data indicates that the local Healthwatch websites have experienced more website visitors, who are staying for longer when compared to their old websites. We have also seen a jump in traffic using mobile devices or accessed via social media.

13. Campaigns Support

We have continued to support local Healthwatch in their communication of their NHS Long Term Plan engagement findings. This support has included a communications toolkit, as well as 1-2-1 support to help local Healthwatch launch their findings. We have also provided support on a number of awareness days, this included extensive support for Volunteers Week. Our PR, content and social media support resulted in six items of media coverage, a social media reach of 40K and an increase in visitors to our updated volunteers landing page.

We continue to support local Healthwatch to engage in specific awareness days (such as Student Volunteer Week, Self Care Week, Suicide Prevention Day, Sexual Health Week and World Patient Safety Day). We will also start to engage local Healthwatch and our partners in developing our Q4 awareness campaign to encourage more people to share their experiences of care.

14. Young People

We held two very successful events to help support the network in engaging more young people. In July, we held a CommsCamp for 30 Healthwatch staff. The workshop looked at best practice, internally and externally on engaging young people and aims to develop an approach to future communications which all Healthwatch can use. This was followed by an event in September where we looked at the approaches that can involve young people more deeply in our work, for example by becoming a volunteer.

The outcomes of both sessions will be fed back to the Committee at its Workshop in October.

15. Advice and Information Content

We have consulted with the network on our advice and information content for the public and now have a content plan in place for 2019-20. To-date we have published new advice content on end of life care, oral health in care homes, dementia and patient transport. We have also started to develop advice content for professionals based on our evidence. We have to date developed content on supporting the health of people who are homeless, how to improve the waiting environment for patients, how to make services more accessible.

In terms of next steps, we are planning advice and information content on moving between hospital and a care home, how to plan for future care and what people can do to look after themselves.

16. Insight report – what people have told us

Attached appendix iii: Overview of what we heard April to June 2019