



Healthwatch Gateshead

Annual Report 2013/14



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Introduction by Rob Buckley, Chair of Healthwatch Gateshead

Welcome to the first Annual Report of Healthwatch Gateshead.

In working with other members of the team to write this annual report I was reminded of the story from my childhood of the wise man who built his house on a rock. Much of our work this year has been about laying strong foundations from which Healthwatch Gateshead can grow in the coming years. So just like any building site where new houses are being constructed, there has been a lot of work going on under the surface this year. This work of laying firm foundations is essential, but it is also sometimes frustrating.

I would love to be able to point to finished projects and publications, our equivalent of finished houses. But this is a pleasure that I will have next year. For this year we have had to concentrate on making sure that we have firm foundations in the right place so that when we go on to build our houses, they will not be built on sand and easily washed away.

We have done a lot of work on getting ourselves properly organised, with the right staff and systems in place.

We have begun the work of getting out and about to meet with individuals, groups and communities in Gateshead. We have begun a project to look at the transition from children's services to adult services. We have redesigned and reorganised our newsletter. We have designed a project to get the views of ordinary people in Gateshead about their feelings, hopes and fears about health and social care both now and in the future.

All of these things will begin to blossom and show results during the year to come, built on the detailed behind the scenes work carried out in the year covered by this report.

I hope that you will find something to interest you in the pages which follow. I also hope that you will let us know if there are any issues that are important to you that you feel we are not yet addressing. Healthwatch Gateshead exists to help local people to have their say about present and future services in health and social care. This is an area which, at one time or another, will affect us all. It is right that ordinary people should have their say. People like you and me.

The future does not just come out of nowhere. It is made by people acting in the present. Ordinary people just like you and me.

Talk to us, join with us to help make the future of health and social care in Gateshead.

What is Healthwatch and what does it do?

Healthwatch Gateshead is an independent organisation - we are not part of the government, Gateshead Council or the NHS.

We listen to people's stories about their experience of health and social care so we can take up their concerns and try and bring about change. We can speak up for children, young people, adults, older people and people whose voices often do not get heard.

What we do

- Support local people to get involved in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services
- Monitor standards of care by recruiting, training and supporting volunteers to visit local services and gather information about care
- Listen to people's views and experiences of local services and make these views known
- Look at how local services could improve and make recommendations to people and organisations that make decisions
- Look into issues or services where local people or organisations have raised their concerns or suggested change is needed
- Help people find information about local care services so they can choose the right services for them
- Report what we find to local commissioners and providers of services; people responsible for managing or scrutinising local care services; Healthwatch England; and Care Quality Commission



Jan Pyrke

is our Healthwatch Development Officer and manages the staff team. Jan is a very experienced manager having worked most recently in Mental Health. Key elements of Jan's role are to lead the team in setting their work plans and attending partner meetings across the borough.

Kim Newton

is our Community Participation Engagement Worker. Kim worked on the previous Local Involvement Network - LINK, therefore her knowledge of the history of LINK is invaluable to our work and future. Kim has been working on a project evidencing people and families experiences of transition from children's to adult services.

Victoria Clark

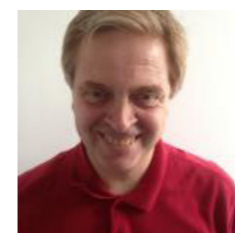
joined the team in February with responsibility for social media, communications and signposting. Victoria has a wealth of experience and knowledge in the voluntary sector of Gateshead and is looking forward to becoming an integral part of the team's success in the future.

Nicola Winship

is our administrator and worked previously at the Health Protection Agency. Nicola has a keen interest in health and wellbeing as well as social care issues and as a carer she is very aware of the challenges faced by carers. Nicola's role is to ensure the smooth running of the office.

Carrie Miller

is our Healthwatch Implementation Project Manager, Carers Federation and works two days a week with Healthwatch Gateshead to ensure we meet our contract requirements and that our service is delivered to a consistently high standard and to budget. Carrie also supports the Board in their plans to take full responsibility for Healthwatch Gateshead.



Robert Buckley

is the Chair of Healthwatch Gateshead and has experience in many relevant

areas and has a sound understanding of Health & Social Care. He has an excellent understanding of strategic direction and preparing now for the future. Robert is also a board member of The Gateshead Housing Company, Governor of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and Chair of North Star Health. Robert will ensure the Board will establish good working relationships with partner organisations, clear governance and good management. Robert is a resident of Gateshead and a member of several boards in Gateshead.



Andrew Moore

was the lead for the Gateshead Physical and Sensory Disability Partnership Board, (PDSI) one of the

most successful sub partnership boards in Gateshead and provides an excellent representation of the views of all people with a physical disability. Andrew has worked both voluntary and professionally within services for the visually impaired, including transition and services for children with disabilities. Andrew's role as an Executive Manager with Gateshead and South Tyneside Sight Service brings a knowledge of health and social care within the voluntary sector. Andrew lives and works in Gateshead.



Kay Parker

has many years health and social care experience specialising in Mental Health

social work. She has also helped set up and facilitated mental health carer support groups. Since retiring Kay has been active in related steering and working groups, including personalisation and independent living, mental health and residential care. Her network involvement has included Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group Involvement Forum, North East Ambulance Service Forum and Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly. Kay is also a board member of Waddington Street Mental Health Centre, Durham. She is a volunteer at Newcastle University Medical School. Her particular areas of interest are mental health, older people and volunteering. Kay lives and volunteers in Gateshead.



Marjorie Hunter

is the founding Director of North East Counselling Services (NECS), one

of Gateshead's flagship Social Enterprises, and her experience of setting up a Social Enterprise is invaluable to supporting Healthwatch Gateshead in achieving Social Enterprise status. Marjorie also brings added strengths in strategic planning. She believes in using local knowledge and experience to influence change from the ground up. Marjorie lives and works in Gateshead.



Steve Cowen

is the Chief Officer at Gateshead Carers Association who provide one to one support to over 1,400 local carers. Steve has particular

success in increasing funding and growth of the organisation and was short-listed for the Voluntary Organisation Network North East (VONNE) Outstanding Leader of the Year award 2012. Steve has particular skills and experience in building and developing good governance and strategic direction. Steve is also a member of the Gateshead CCG, Patient User Carer Public Involvement Group (PUCPI) and the Gateshead Information Network Business Group. Steve works in Gateshead and is a member of several local groups.



Jon Twelves

is an Assistant Director at ISOS, a major provider of social housing across the North East. As a member of the Regional

Board of the Chartered Institute of Housing, Jon provides a local perspective on national policy and encourages links between the housing and health sectors. Jon is also a Chartered Accountant with many years' experience of the commercial sector. Jon volunteers in his spare time for the Stroke Association and is a Gateshead resident.



Esther Ward

has been volunteering for over 27 years and has been instrumental in establishing several organisations including Arthritis

Care, Crossroads Care and Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly. Esther has held many positions over the years including Secretary, Chair, Non Executive Director with the former Primary Care Trust, NHS Trust Governor and a Non-Executive Director on the Housing Company Board. Esther sits on many Partnerships and Boards to help influence the best possible services available to Gateshead residents.



Hollie Pinder

is a Leukaemia Caseworker for Gateshead Advice Centre. The nature of this role gives her a good knowledge

of health and social care issues faced by Gateshead residents. Hollie has experience of liaising with a wide range of professional organisations and has in-depth knowledge of benefits, employment, family, housing and debt issues. Hollie has recently completed her Master's Degree in Law at Durham University and her legal knowledge brings added strengths to the Board. Her background in Citizens Advice means she has the experience and a passion for influencing change for the benefit of the community.



Jim Holmes

is a retired Primary School Headteacher who for the past 9 years has been a Public Governor at Gateshead Hospitals

Foundation Trust. Jim has been involved with several hospital committees including mental health, remuneration, infection control, human resources and has been involved in hospital inspections. Jim has a keen interest in rugby and bowls and is the treasurer of a local bowls club.

Lesley Hutchinson

resigned on 15th January 2014 and our thanks are extended to her for the time she spent on the Board.

We aim to ensure the activities of Healthwatch reflect the diverse communities of Gateshead, not just the views of majority groups or the most high profile issues.

We are therefore constantly ensuring we have a diverse range of skills, perspectives and experiences.



Since April 2013 we have engaged with people living in all areas of the borough - in the East, Central, South, Inner and Outer West areas. We have achieved this through Community Engagement activities and Signposting and Information Access Points. We have engaged with people across age groups from children and young people through to those of working age and older people. We have engaged with those who are seldom heard, those with learning disabilities, autism, mental health issues, the deaf community, people with sight impairment and physical disabilities.

In addition to our on-going activities the Board of Healthwatch Gateshead decided to pursue specific project work. Our project explores the experiences of young disabled people using Health & Social Care services moving into adulthood. Young disabled people access a range of services from education, social care to therapies etc as children. In the process of moving to adult services the support disabled people received as a child is no longer available to them as an adult.

As part of this process we have developed a questionnaire with a view to gathering people's experiences. The questions are broad in order to encourage people to provide as much information as possible. The questionnaire contains 5 questions and has been widely circulated to all stakeholders in Gateshead working with the appropriate group of people. The stakeholders include both local authority & voluntary sector partners. The questionnaire has been developed into an on-line survey and distributed through our networks including social media, our e-newsletter and targeted groups.

We will compile a report based on our findings and share the information with service providers and agencies who manage Transition in Gateshead.

Having completed some of the work mentioned in the introduction we now have a more focussed and strategic approach to marketing and engaging with people who are seldom heard going forward into 2015.

Are you following us at #HWG? We are increasing our Twitter and web presence at a rapid pace. Find out about Healthwatch on our website and on Our Gateshead - a community specific website for Gateshead voluntary organisations incorporating all health and well-being services available in Gateshead.

12 e-newsletters a year are produced and circulated to all our key partners and contacts. Partners include Public Health, Gateshead Council, Clinical Commissioning Group, GP's hospitals, and various voluntary sector organisations to name a few.

Part of our role at Healthwatch is to provide information that residents of Gateshead need, on Health and Social Care, but may not know where to find.

Our staff team has arranged information access points across the Borough in order to be able to signpost people to the services which are relevant to them.

Thanks to our excellent working relationship with the Queen Elizabeth hospital we have established a fortnightly access point in the Quinellie's restaurant. This enables us to assist many people with a range of different issues.

We also have Access Points at Leam Lane Library (in the East of the Borough) and Birtley Hub (in the South of the Borough).

The team are constantly assessing where we should be and the most effective way to reach local people therefore these access points are under review.

We are soon to establish Access Points at Teams Medical Centre and Blaydon Primary Care Centre (West of the Borough).

If you have any ideas about how we can best reach local residents through these access points, please let us know.

Access Point	Day	Time
Leam Lane Library	Mondays	10.30am-12pm
Birtley Hub	Fridays	11am-1pm
Access Points established from April 2014		
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	Mondays	12.30pm-2.30pm
Blaydon GP Practice	In discussion	
Teams Medical Centre	In discussion	

Our information access points have been successful in getting people's views and experiences of care services. They also enable us to provide information regarding what is available to help people, which is illustrated in the following experience:

June - not her real name - is a 56 yr old lady who cares for her husband Steve. Steve has been a wheelchair user for last 6 years and they don't access any social care services. No carers assessment has ever been carried out.

"We are a very proud and independent family therefore we don't want to bother anyone or need anything. This is our lives, we took our vows in sickness and in health, therefore it is my responsibility to look after my husband. However, when I became poorly myself and needed an operation (which meant at least 1 overnight stay) I knew my husband will not have been able to manage without me so I refused the operation. Now, thanks to talking to you, I know I can go to hospital safe in the knowledge that my husband will be looked after through social services care assessment"

The family now have received assessments, have been given a personal financial budget, receive assisted hydrotherapy twice weekly and swimming. This has resulted in increased financial and personal benefits to both husband and wife. June has a couple of hours respite per week while Steve is swimming.



Talk to Healthwatch

We have promoted our freephone number, **0808 801 0382**, for information and signposting enquiries. The freephone is answered five days a week during office hours by the staff team or by a central hub.

We are finding that callers seeking information or who have signposting enquiries prefer to use our local number or speak to us direct at events and Healthwatch information access points.

Enter and View

In the Health and Social Care Act 2012 Healthwatch is given “Enter and View” powers. This means that Healthwatch Gateshead can use this power to visit any care services in their local area, including those we have received concerns about, talk to the people using them, and make recommendations back to the providers and local authority commissioners. Healthwatch Gateshead can also make reports and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Care Quality Commission or to Healthwatch England if we have concerns about services.

Volunteers are key to our enter and view function, Healthwatch Gateshead has thirteen volunteers, seven of whom originally volunteered for LINKs; some of whom have attended enter and view training in the past. We are in the process of arranging refresher training for those volunteers who want to be part of Healthwatch Gateshead enter and view team.

Apart from Enter and View we also get involved in PLACE (Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment) visits and have attended Commissioner Led Visits with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (Newcastle and Gateshead CCG Alliance).

Healthwatch Gateshead has a small staff team and a very wide remit to fulfil. We will increasingly rely on our volunteers. We recognise the added value that volunteers offer us and hope to expand the numbers of people who volunteer for us to encompass all sectors of our community. Healthwatch Gateshead staff members have undertaken training to ensure that all volunteers are supported within their role and that their legal rights are met.

Kay Parker, Healthwatch Gateshead Board Member, is our Volunteer Lead. Kay leads on volunteer recruitment and on-going support, Kay adds a plethora of personal experience in volunteering and much appreciated capacity to the team.

Healthwatch Gateshead has thirteen volunteers, seven of whom originally volunteered for LINKs. Healthwatch Gateshead has developed three specific volunteer roles: Enter and View, Signposting and Information Support and Ambassador.

Since April 2013 we have had two volunteer events one at Gateshead Civic Centre in June and one in January at the Trinity Community Centre. Kay holds regular volunteer catch ups at Bewick’s Cafe.

Volunteers supported our World Mental Health Week stall in October 2013 and our week long awareness raising stall this January at the Gateshead Civic Centre.

If you are interested in getting involved and becoming a Healthwatch Gateshead Volunteer, please get in touch with any member of staff who will be happy to give you more details of the volunteer roles we have on offer.





Healthwatch Gateshead's Chair and some Board Members attend the Voluntary and Community Sector Health and Well-being Forum which is chaired by Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council. This forum, together with the voluntary sector more generally, has its own representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Development Officer attends the monthly Patient User Carer Participation Involvement meeting and provides an update about Healthwatch Gateshead. Either Board Members or paid staff attend the regular Local Engagement Board. Both of these meetings are led by the Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group, and provide an additional opportunity to influence commissioning and gather intelligence to influence our work plan.

Among other meetings and partnerships Healthwatch Gateshead has had representation at or contact with: the Mental Health and Well-being Partnership, Hearty Lives, Gateshead Alzheimer's Society, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Gateshead Carer's Association, North East Together (Mental Health Network), Gateshead Volunteer Centre, Adult Safeguarding Board and the Personalisation Partnership Board.

During the course of our first year we have inevitably placed a strong emphasis on establishing relationships with a wide range of other organisations that provide services to the people of Gateshead. Some are commissioners, some providers of services and some regulators. All of these organisations are, of course, much bigger than Healthwatch Gateshead. But by developing good relations with these organisations we can ensure that we are in a position to make sure that the people of Gateshead can have their voices heard when there are difficult decisions to be made in the future.

Commissioners

Commissioners are an important part of the new health and social care system. These are the people who have the responsibility for designing services, and then finding organisations who can, for a fee, provide those services. Social Care services are mostly commissioned by the Local Authority. Health services are much more complicated. Some Public Health programmes are commissioned by Gateshead Council, but the bulk of health services are commissioned either by the Local Area Team at NHS England or by the Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group.

We meet regularly with a variety of officials from the Local Area Team to discuss the areas of the health service that they are responsible for commissioning: anything from pharmacy and dentistry, on the one hand, to very specialist services for people with rare conditions on the other. One of the ways in which we maintain contact with NHS England is through being able to attend their regular Quality Surveillance Groups where professionals, and local Healthwatch, get to review the performance of services delivered in the area.

Normal hospital services, the non-specialist kind, are commissioned and monitored by Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. Here again we have built good relationships and meet with representatives of the Clinical Commissioning Group both at Local Engagement Board events which are open to anyone and at regular meetings of Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board.



Providers

Once Commissioners have arranged for a particular service to be delivered, then the delivery of that service is up to a Provider. In Gateshead we have five main providers of services in addition to primary care services provided by the GP practices in the area. Two of these are more specialised in nature. We have regular contact with the North East Ambulance Service through their public involvement meetings. Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, is our specialist provider of mental health and learning disability services. This Trust has big plans for redesigning services for the people of Gateshead. Although any changes are still some way off in the future we have had several meetings with the Trust to talk about the changes in general and about how we can try, with a shrinking amount of money, to provide better services for people with mental health problems so that more of these people, our friends and neighbours, can get better quicker and stay well for longer.

In terms of physical health, the people of Gateshead may get services from three different Foundation Trusts. We have our own Gateshead health, based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital which provides a range of hospital based medical and surgical services. Staff of Healthwatch Gateshead have regular contact with senior staff from the Trust and can easily raise any issues or make any suggestions that you bring to our attention. Community based services in Gateshead are provided by South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust. Our Chair has had an introductory meeting with the Chair and Chief Executive of the Trust to discuss how we can work together on issues effecting the people of Gateshead. Finally, some patients in Gateshead will be treated at the main teaching hospital in Newcastle. We are lucky to have such a great facility so close at hand which means that even for very specialist care people from Gateshead will usually not have far to travel.



Regulators

You will read elsewhere about our developing relationships with some of the national regulators, such as the Care Quality Commission, and other national bodies such as Healthwatch England. But there is another local group active in health and social care regulation and that is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Gateshead Council. This committee consists of elected Councillors who take an interest in health and social care and who regularly hold enquiries in to the delivery of services locally.

At Healthwatch Gateshead we have been lucky enough to be welcomed and encouraged by the Chair of this Committee. We are invited to attend their meetings and have an open invitation to contact the Chair if we need any assistance or if we come across an issue that is too big for us to tackle on our own. A strong working relationship between Healthwatch Gateshead and the members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee can only help us to do our job more effectively.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Part of the new way in which health and social care is organised is for each local government area to establish a Health and Wellbeing Board. This Board is an official committee of the local authority, but unlike most such committees it does not just consist of elected Members. It also consists of officers of the Local Authority, representatives from Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group, a representative from NHS England, officials from the various providers and a representative of Healthwatch Gateshead.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is where commissioners, providers, Healthwatch Gateshead and senior elected politicians from Gateshead Council can discuss some of the major health and social care issues facing the borough. Healthwatch Gateshead participates fully in these discussions, helping to focus on getting the right services to the right people, in the right place and at the right time.





We have not had reason to use our statutory powers to:

- Make any recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to undertake reviews or investigations;
- Ask the CQC to undertake any reviews or investigations; or
- Make formal requests to providers for information.

Our main task for the coming year is to increase our opportunities to get out and about and to talk, and listen, to the people of Gateshead.

One way in which we will do this is through our “Vital Signs” initiative. “Vital Signs” will run through the summer and early autumn 2014. This work features eight Healthwatch Gateshead postcards asking open ended questions. People will be invited to complete these to enable Healthwatch Gateshead to take the temperature of local service provision and identify ideas from the community about current services. We will be encouraging people to fill these in at the events that we are attending throughout the summer.

The questions we are asking are:

- My ideal social care would...
- As a carer I want...
- It would be a good idea if...
- If I could change anything it would be...
- My ideal Healthcare would...
- As a young person accessing services I want...
- As a patient/service user I want...
- What worries me is...

We will use the views we get from the Vital Signs initiative to help shape our work plan for the rest of 2014-15 and subsequent years.

Moving to independence in 2015

As an independent organisation Healthwatch Gateshead will be wholly responsible for all aspects of its work and accountable to funders and to the public of Gateshead.

We are committed to taking these steps over the next twelve months.

In deciding the preferred legal structure for Healthwatch Gateshead it has been important to work out what sort of organisation Healthwatch Gateshead is, what it intends to do and how, and how it aims to be sustainable and fund its work if current income reduces or ends.

The Board has taken legal advice and reviewed a range of possible models for social enterprise, and decided to register as a Community Interest Company.

We are now working with a social enterprise consultancy as we move into year two to further develop our business plan and ensure we are a sustainable organisation, well placed to influence the design and delivery of services.



Gateshead Borough Council awarded a 2 year contract from April 2013 to establish Healthwatch Gateshead. This contract was won by Carers Federation.

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

Registered office:

1 Beech Avenue
Sherwood Rise
Nottingham
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Registered number 3123142,
Registered charity number 1050779.

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



Trademark Information

Healthwatch Gateshead uses the Healthwatch trademark when working on our statutory activities. The trademark covers the logo and Healthwatch brand as covered by the licence agreement.

Financial Summary

Financial Year 2013-2014

Financial Activities	£ GBP	£ GBP
Income		
Funding recieved from Gateshead Council	150,000	
Carried foward budget - Healthwatch transition from Gateshead LINK	12,591	
Total Income		162,591
Expenditure		
Management and Staff salaries	100,367	
Training and other expenses - Staff, Board and Volunteers	953	
Operational Costs - Accommodation, ICT, Telephony, Printing, Stationary, Insurance	27,936	
Marketing and Publicity	3,831	
Activites - Signposting and Information, Engagement, Meetings	3,424	
Total Expenditure		136,511
Balance carried forward to 2014/15		26,080





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