

**Annual
report**

2014/15



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Note from the Board

It has been a year of significant change for Healthwatch Gateshead for both the board and the staff team.

We say goodbye and thank you for the support and contribution of Jim Holmes, Andrew Moore, Jon Twelves and Steve Cowen who stepped down from our board in 2014/15. We also say goodbye and thank you to Jan Pyrke and Carrie Miller from our staff team who moved onto new roles in 2014/15. We also welcome Carole Gourdie to the team.

At the end of this year our Chair Robert Buckley unfortunately became very ill and has taken a leave of absence from Healthwatch duties to recover. We wish to thank him for his leadership and his support in developing Healthwatch Gateshead. We sincerely hope that he makes a full and speedy recovery.

We have recently appointed a new Interim Chair, Sharon Stuart. Sharon has a wealth of experience of working with many organisations in Gateshead and has worked in senior management roles within local charities, supporting them to deliver a range of services to residents and communities across Gateshead.

The board, along with the local staff team, are looking forward to working with Sharon to continue to shape the way Healthwatch Gateshead supports local residents to have a voice in shaping and improving their local health and social care services

Change, however welcomed, brings with it challenges, and this year has brought many challenges for Healthwatch Gateshead. A recent borough wide survey of stakeholders and local residents showed that we still have some work to do to cement Healthwatch's place locally as the people's champion for health and social care services.

We as a board and the staff team acknowledge the opinion of local stakeholders and residents and have made significant progress to meet the challenges represented within this survey and are confident we will make more good progress throughout this year.

Amongst all these changes and challenges, though, Healthwatch Gateshead has still been getting out and about, talking to and learning from local people (through our regular 'drop ins', Vital Signs programme and a variety of engagement activities) about their experiences of health and social care services and has responded to what people have been telling us.

'You Said We Did'

From what local people are saying to us, we are focusing some of our activities in four key areas:

- Experiences of patient discharge from hospital services.
- Experiences of GP services.
- Understanding the complexities of social care services and the impact of the Social Care Act.
- Understanding health and social care services for children and young people.

We also have spent a good deal of 2014/15 building solid foundations of our governance and organisational capacity so that we can independently run the Healthwatch contract as a social enterprise before March 2016. We are now a registered company 'Healthwatch Gateshead CIC'.

In summary, it has been a challenging year for Healthwatch Gateshead; a year that has seen a number of changes which we have managed, a number of challenges which we have risen to, a review of how we engage which has increased our partnership working opportunities, and a real focus on activities which reflect what local people are telling us.

As former US president Bill Clinton said: "The price of doing the same old thing is far higher than the price of change."

We, Healthwatch Gateshead, with this philosophy in mind, are committed to investing in and embracing the changes and challenges we need to so that we can continue to grow as a strong, independent and credible local voice for local people.

We are making significant progress and the board and staff team are confident that 2015/16 will see yet more growth in the impact of Healthwatch Gateshead locally.

About Healthwatch Gateshead

Our vision, mission and values

Our aim is to work with residents and service providers to improve local health and social care services across Gateshead. As a statutory watchdog, our role is to ensure that local health and social care services and the local decision makers put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

We achieve this by:

- Seeking to influence the improvement, development, delivery and implementation of local health and social care services.
- Reaching out to more people and communities in Gateshead.
- Gathering evidence from what local people are telling us and work to improve local services.
- Providing comprehensive, accurate information and advice to the public to enable them to make effective choices and decisions when accessing local health and social care services.

Your feedback

Pamela Rutter's mother, 90, has dementia and lives with her daughter. Pamela contacted Healthwatch Gateshead to see if she was claiming the right benefits and entitlements. We signposted her to Citizens Advice, Alzheimers Society and the Carers Association, and she is now in contact with Carers Association and Adult Social Care.

“You are the only person to ever ring us back to see if we're even dead or alive. No one else has ever bothered. Thank you so much Healthwatch.”

Vision

Healthwatch Gateshead will enable the views of the people of Gateshead to influence the commissioners and providers in the development, provision, monitoring and improvement of health and social care services both locally and nationally.

Mission

Healthwatch Gateshead will work collaboratively with partners, stakeholders and the Gateshead community to improve the quality of local health and social care services.

Our Values

Independence

Healthwatch Gateshead will be a strong, independent voice and champion for the citizens of Gateshead.

Innovation

Healthwatch Gateshead will strive to be creative and original in its work.

Quality

Healthwatch Gateshead is committed to promoting best practice and ensuring quality in all areas of performance.

Diversity

Healthwatch Gateshead embraces, encourages and celebrates diversity and strives to be inclusive in all aspects of its work.

People

Healthwatch Gateshead will support its staff and volunteers to help them develop and grow.

Our strategic priorities

As set out in the legislation of the Health and Social Care Act of 2012, Healthwatch Gateshead has six core functions:

- Gather views and understand the experience of people who use services, carers and the wider community.
- Make people's views known.
- Promote and support the involvement of people in the commissioning cycle and scrutiny of local care services.
- Recommend investigation or special review of services via Healthwatch England or directly to the Care Quality Commission.
- Provide information, signposting and support to help people access health and social care services and make informed choices.
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England (and other Healthwatch organisations) and provide a steer to help it carry out its role as the national champion.

These functions are supported by a framework of indicators that inform how we work strategically, our organisational development, the delivery programme and development of the management information framework that collects data to demonstrate the outcomes and impact of our work.

We have identified the following strategic priorities for 2014-17:

Strategic development

- Work proactively with Clinical Commissioning Groups, the local authority and all health and social care providers, other organisations and the general public to develop and maintain strong working relationships.
- Widen access and involvement.
- Create an organisation which is representative of and influenced by the local population.

Operational development

- Develop our volunteer programme to establish volunteers who will engage with a range of communities across Gateshead.
- Implement reporting mechanisms which enable us to gather the views of a wide range of diverse communities.
- Build an effective evidence base so that we can influence local service delivery and development on behalf of local people.

Delivery

- Develop engagement with hard to reach groups.
- Develop a programme of innovative and creative engagement activities.
- Develop our local 'drop in' sessions so that we have an effective presence across the borough.
- Widen access.

Your Healthwatch team



Andrew Moore
Development Officer

Andrew is responsible for the operational effectiveness of Healthwatch and implementing the board's strategies and direction. Andrew has over 10 years'

experience in the voluntary sector. He has lived in Gateshead for the last 15 years.



Carole Gourdie
Community Participation and Engagement Worker

Carole's role involves working with local voluntary groups and residents who want to engage on health and social

care services. She has 24 years' experience of work in various roles in the voluntary community sector and recently worked with Age UK Gateshead managing the Age UK North East regional 'fit as a fiddle' Big Lottery funded National Health and Wellbeing programme.



Kim Newton
Community Participation and Engagement Worker

Kim works with local voluntary groups and residents who want to engage on health and social care services. She was

previously Gateshead LINK's engagement and involvement worker, so has a wealth of information and contacts. Kim lives in Gateshead with her husband and autistic son Daniel.



Victoria Clark
Signposting and Information Officer

Victoria is Healthwatch's Signposting and Information Officer and is responsible for communications and information. Victoria has

worked in Gateshead all her working life and has many contacts in the voluntary and public sectors. Victoria is also a trustee of a local children's charity.



Nicola Winship
Administrator

Nicola is our Administrator and is responsible for providing essential administrative support to the team and our board. Nicola has previously

worked in public health and has been a Gateshead resident all her life.

Your feedback

Mrs McKenzie has a mental health condition and felt intimidated when attending meetings with schools and social services. Healthwatch Gateshead signposted her to a local advocacy service and she now feels much more in control.

"Excellent signposting information from Healthwatch. Thank you. I now have an advocate, who is great. I now feel I have support and someone is on my side, supporting me all the way. I don't go to any meetings now unless my advocate is with me. I didn't know where to go until Healthwatch told me where. Thanks again."

Providing information and signposting for people who use health and social care services

Helping people get what they need from local health and social care services

We have given a variety of advice to members of the public who have contacted Healthwatch Gateshead by phone, email, via our website or in person at drop-in events held weekly across the borough at community venues.

Examples of questions asked and help given include:

- Carer for elderly parents not aware of any support services – given contact details for the Carers’ Association.
- Man whose wife had been admitted into a care home with dementia and needed financial assistance – signposted to the Alzheimer’s Society.
- Lady diagnosed with dyslexia wanting a statement of special educational needs – signposted to Dyslexia NE and education provider.
- Pensioner who lives with her mother who is in her 90s and has dementia enquired about benefit entitlement – signposted to CAB, Adaptations Team, Alzheimers’ Society, Carers’ Association and respite care team.
- Man telephoned after council withdrew care home funding support following new Care Act – signposted to Social Care Direct and CAB.
- Lady whose friend, a single parent with three dependent children, was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given two months to live – signposted to Macmillan Cancer Care, NE Counselling Services, CAB, Hospital Pathways programme, Happy to Help.

- Lady who is deaf, new to area and does not use email needed information on health checks which could be offered without need to visit a GP – texted details on her local pharmacy, Northern Sign, Wellness Hub and OurGateshead.

For online advice, we have developed a comprehensive service directory on the Healthwatch Gateshead website which also has a feature enabling a postcode search for GP surgeries, dentists, hospitals, pharmacies, and social care.

“Teams Medical Practice has worked with Healthwatch Gateshead for more than 12 months now and we have developed an excellent working relationship. The staff from Healthwatch deliver a drop-in at the practice every month and have also been involved in a health event that the practice organised. We very much appreciate the work that Healthwatch Gateshead have done and will do over the next year.”

Sue Jennings
Practice Manager

Teams Medical Practice

Engaging with people who use health and social care services

Understanding people's experiences

The Healthwatch Gateshead team has been out across the borough throughout the year meeting users of health and social care services to find out about their experiences.

We have held monthly drop-in sessions at five community venues, attended 11 community festivals, visited community groups, and had our first annual event in November 2014 at Gateshead Civic Centre.

Feedback received about a wide range of services has helped us identify issues which are of concern to patients to focus our work on.



Healthwatch Gateshead's first annual event in November 2014.

Annual event

Our first annual event attracted 59 delegates, a mix of members of the public and representatives of patient organisations.

A series of workshops were held where groups were asked to discuss different aspects of health and social care provision they had experienced over the previous year.

Issues raised included access to patient transport, the complex care pathways in community health provision, difficulty in making GP appointments, hospital waiting times, lack of privacy in pharmacies and a lack of funding and information for social care services.

Drop-in events

We held monthly drop-in events at the following community venues, the first held in September 2014:

- Teams Medical Centre
- Leam Lane Library
- QE Outpatients Department
- South Birtley HUB
- West Blaydon Primary Care Centre.

A six month review was undertaken in March 2015 which found the events had led to engagement with more than 150 health and social care service users.

This has given us useful intelligence on a number of issues residents have faced which we have been able to feed back to commissioners of services. However, footfall was mixed and it was agreed to coincide future drop-in events with existing activities at the venues to maximise engagement.

Community events

Healthwatch Gateshead staff attended a number of events during the year to raise awareness to hundreds of local residents of the services we provide.

They included community festivals at Saltwell Park, Teams Park, St Mary's Heritage Centre, Birtley Young People's Club, Deckham Children's Centre, and at Bensham and Low Fell, as well as Crawcrook Fair.

Monthly e-news

We circulate a monthly newsletter by email to around 450 subscribers.

They include Gateshead residents we have had contact with who wish to be included as well as representatives of statutory services in health and social care and community and voluntary services.

Enter & View

During the year we have recruited volunteers and developed an Enter & View training programme which three volunteers have completed.

We are currently working with the local authority contract monitoring team to give the volunteers the required experience and skills to carry out Enter & View visits. Recruitment of E & V volunteers is continuing.

"As chair of Gateshead's Health & Wellbeing Board, I am pleased that HealthWatch Gateshead has continued to play a role on the Board over the last year. Healthwatch Gateshead was represented at all Board meetings during 2014/15 and brought its annual report for 2013/14 and Forward Plan for 2014/15 to the Board in July of last year. The Health & Wellbeing Board will continue to work with Healthwatch Gateshead in developing priority areas for 2015/16 and I look forward to its continued involvement in the work of the Board."

Councillor Lynne Caffrey
Chair of Gateshead Health
& Wellbeing Board

"We've worked very closely with Healthwatch Gateshead and other regional groups over the last 12 months. HW Gateshead are an active and influential member of our HealthWatch Ambulance Forum. We've built excellent relationships up over the last 12 months that have allowed both NEAS and HW Gateshead ensure patients views, needs and experiences are represented and heard."

Mark Johns
Engagement Manager
North East Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust

Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people

Producing reports and recommendations to effect change

Other work during the year has included involvement in two primary care consultations and running a workshop for Healthwatch England's special inquiry into hospital discharge.

Information sharing protocol

Following the merger of Newcastle and Gateshead CCGs to create the new CCG Alliance we are developing an information sharing protocol with NGCCG.

This will enable us to feedback evidence we collect from Gateshead residents on their experiences of health and social care services.

North East Ambulance Service escalation process

Healthwatch Gateshead played a lead role in the development of a new procedure by North East Ambulance Service for handling requests for information from regional Healthwatch groups.

This gives Healthwatch groups a formal protocol for feeding back issues raised by ambulance patients. The NEAS Healthwatch Request For Information Procedure also sets out the process and timescales for investigating any complaints.

Hospital discharge special inquiry

We held a workshop with the Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment Partnership to feed back information to Healthwatch England's special inquiry on hospital discharge.

The partnership's membership comprises a range of stakeholders including representatives of statutory providers and the voluntary sector as well as service users with both a hearing and visual impairment. Focus groups were held to gather comments from participants for our submission to HWE.

“NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Gateshead are in the process of developing an information sharing protocol. We believe having an effective shared process in place will improve the experience and quality of services patients and the public receive. Working in collaboration will help us identify themes and trends raised by the public and through partnership working we hope to develop shared and positive solutions.”

Norah Stevens,
Patient and Public Involvement
and Community Development Lead
NHS Newcastle Gateshead CCG

Teams Medical Practice survey

Healthwatch Gateshead was approached by Teams Medical Practice to carry out an independent survey on the patient experience.

The survey was designed in collaboration with practice staff and we ran a two hour session in the practice where we assisted patients in the completion of the form.

The survey results were discussed at the patient forum and with the practice partners. Patients appeared happy with the service provided and the only change suggested in the survey responses was extended opening hours.

This was considered by the patient forum and by the partners but it was agreed that because the majority of patients surveyed were happy with the opening hours they would not be changed.

Blaydon and Ryton GP services review

We assisted the North of England Commissioning Support Unit (NECS) with its review of GP services at Blaydon Health Centre and Grange Road Medical Practice in Ryton.

The contract for both practices was due to end and NECS was seeking patient feedback on the current services prior to agreeing new contracts.

Healthwatch Gateshead staff ran two sessions in each practice, assisting 60 patients to complete the consultation forms which were sent to NHS England. We were also involved in the assessment and scoring process.

Putting local people at the heart of improving services

Our chair, during his tenure, has been fully active and involved in the Health and Wellbeing Board meetings and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Reports on activity are regularly presented at Healthwatch Gateshead's Board.

Other activity has included:

Alternative Provider Medical Services Consultation in partnership with NHS England Regional Team covering Blaydon Health Centre and Grange Road Medical Practice.

- Used social media feeds to promote consultation.
- Supporting local patients to understand and respond to the consultation.
- Supported over 60 patients to respond to the survey.

Pharmaceutical needs assessment working alongside Public Health and Pharmacists from local professional network.

- Reviewed content, terminology and accessibility of questionnaire as a member of working group.
- Supported local people to understand and respond to questionnaire.

'Deciding Together' transformation of local mental health services steering group.

- Encouraged wider membership to be involved in steering group and consultations.

Working with others to improve local services

Healthwatch Gateshead works closely with a number of organisations which commission and deliver health and social care services. They include:

- North of England Commissioning Support Unit.
- Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.
- North East Ambulance Service.
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital.
- Gateshead Council.
- Gateshead Adult Social Care.
- Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- North East Healthwatch networks.
- NHS Newcastle and Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Alliance.

We also work with:

- Gateshead Wellness Hub.
- Patient Experience Teams.
- The voluntary and community sector.
- Local professional networks.

We attend the following partnership meetings:

- Learning Disabled Partnership.
- Local Engagement Board.
- Safeguarding Board.
- Patient, User, Carer Partnership (PUCPI).
- Physical, disability, sensory impairment (PDSI).
- Older Persons Partnership.
- Diversity Forum.
- Mental Health Partnership.

Chair Robert Buckley also attended a wide range of events during the year, including:

- Age UK Annual Event.
- Health Inequalities Conference - Durham University.
- Shared Decision Making in Dementia Care - Newcastle University.
- Integrating Care - the Gateshead Way.
- The Dyslexia Debate - Dance City.
- NHS North East Leadership Academy Annual Conference and Awards.
- Challenging Our Taboos, Talking About Death - Newcastle.
- Suicide Prevention Among LGBT - Newcastle.
- Managing public health spend - Newcastle University.

Your feedback

Henry Attrill wanted to complain about the process/system of booking patient transport after having an upsetting experience with pick up and appointment times. Healthwatch Gateshead gave Mr Attrill information on how to complain and after speaking to several people his complaint was actioned.

“As a direct result of my complaint, I am led to believe that systems have now been changed for all who use it, not just my wife and I. Thank you Healthwatch.”

Our plans for 2015/16

Opportunities and challenges for the future

The Heathwatch Gateshead Board has agreed a three year plan from 2014 to 2017 which sets out our strategic priorities under the following themes: strategic development; operational development; and delivery

Key priorities include:

- In partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group we will produce, disseminate and report on a survey aimed at gaining a clear understanding of residents' views on access to GP practices across the borough.
- Working closely with the Patient Experience Team at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital we will consult with patients, carers and members of the public on their views concerning hospital discharge processes.
- Working with specialist organisations to establish links and develop activities that engage with hard to reach communities.

Our governance and decision-making

Our board

Our board is made up of local people who live or work in Gateshead who want to help further our work. Each member has a keen interest, understanding or specialist skills in the health and social care sector.

The board is responsible for making sure Healthwatch does what it's supposed to do by setting our work, targets and goals. Each member serves for a limited period of time to ensure we don't become stagnant.

Throughout 2014/15 the board has invested a significant amount of time developing the necessary internal governance systems/process and policies to enable it to self-govern and manage the Healthwatch Gateshead contract directly with Gateshead Metropolitan Council. Healthwatch Gateshead CIC is now set up and registered with Companies House.

The board has agreed a structure but will be reviewing this along with policies and procedures as part of the work to become independent throughout 2015/16.

How we involve lay people and volunteers

We have two key volunteer roles, aside from board membership.

The first is 'Healthwatcher', an important position for volunteers able to offer a few hours per week to raise awareness and positively promote Healthwatch within Gateshead.

Healthwatchers attend our events and encourage members of the public to participate, giving their views and experiences. They also provide feedback to community groups and individuals in relation to Healthwatch activities, and support staff and board members in other projects.

Enter and View volunteers visit and report on any premises where health and social care services are being used by Gateshead residents. The recommendations from these reports are then used to inform commissioners and influence service improvements for Gateshead residents.

The role includes engaging with service users, patients, relatives, carers and health care professionals to gather views to inform reports and findings, and presenting reports and giving feedback.

Our board



Sharon Stuart - Interim Chair

Sharon Stuart joins the board of Healthwatch Gateshead as Interim Chair on June 22nd 2015, replacing Chair Robert

Buckley during his leave of absence due to ill health. Sharon has a wealth of experience of working with many organisations in Gateshead and has worked in senior management roles within local charities, supporting them to deliver a range of services to residents and communities across Gateshead.



Kay Parker

Kay has over 30 years health and social care experience as a social worker specialising in mental health. She has set up and facilitated various

mental health and carer support groups. Since retiring Kay has been involved in many related steering and working groups. Kay's more recent involvements include Gateshead CCG Involvement Forum, Healthwatch Ambulance Forum, Newcastle Medical School volunteer and as a NTW PLACE assessor. She is also a trustee and volunteer of a mental health charity in Durham. Her particular interests are mental health, older people and volunteering. Kay lives in Gateshead.



Esther Ward

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

Arthritis Care, Crossroads Care and Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly. She 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 a housing company board. Esther sits on many partnerships and boards to help influence the best possible services available to Gateshead residents.



Marjorie Hunter

Marjorie is the founding Director of North East Counselling Services, one of Gateshead's flagship social enterprises, and her valued experience of

setting up a social enterprise is invaluable to supporting Healthwatch Gateshead also achieve 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.



Hollie Pinder

Hollie 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.

Financial Information

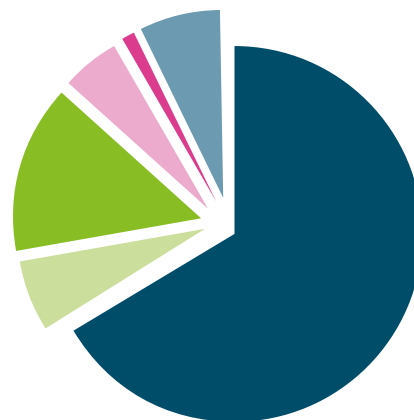
Financial Activities

Income

Funding from Gateshead Council	£150,000
Funding from CCG	£10,000
Carried forward from 2013/14	£26,081
Total Income	£186,081

Expenditure

Management and staff salaries	£96,058
Training and other expenses	£8,775
Operational costs	£20,826
Marketing and publicity	£7,552
Outreach activities	£1,315
CCG project activities	£10,000
Total expenditure	£144,526
Balance carried forward	£41,555



- Management and staff salaries
- Training and other expenses
- Operational costs
- Marketing and publicity
- Outreach activities
- CCG project activities

“During 2014-15 it has been very pleasing to see how Healthwatch Gateshead has actively engaged with our Care, Health and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee to keep us informed of its work, and how we have been able to complement each other’s work on some important issues for local people. Specifically, we have shared information and provided complementary responses to NHS partners on the Quality Accounts for specific NHS Foundation Trusts covering our area and an NHS England consultation on proposals for the Blaydon Health Centre with the aim of ensuring the provision of efficient, effective, quality local services which meet the needs of Gateshead residents. I very much look forward to a continuation of this positive relationship going forward.”

Councillor Stuart Green
Chairman, Care, Health
and Wellbeing OSC

Your feedback

Healthwatch Gateshead staff met Terence Grimes at a drop-in event at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Due to health problems he could not get in and out of his bath and was therefore forced to use friends’ and family members’ showers. We referred Mr Grimes to Adult Social Care and he is now looking forward to a shower/wet room being installed and regaining some of his independence.

“If it wasn’t for (Healthwatch Gateshead) I wouldn’t have a shower or my quality of life back. My thanks go to you.”



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