



Contents

1 Summary

2 Foreword

3 Executive summary

4 Introduction

5 Our Work

6 Gathering and representing your views and experiences

7 Offering a free, confidential and independent advocacy service

8 Creating and developing an effective partnership approach

9 Providing advice and information about access to services

10 Enabling people to monitor the standard of local care services

11 The involvement of people in Commissioning and Scrutiny of local services

12 Making reports and recommendations about local care services

13 Working with The Care Quality Commission and escalations of good practice

14 Sharing views with Healthwatch England



15 Working with the people of Swindon

16 Engagement Methods & Activities

17 Who we talk to

18 Our Volunteers

19 Our Board & Governance

20 Enter and View

21 Volunteer Activity

22 The Health and Wellbeing Board

23 Financial Accounts

24 About this report

25 The Healthwatch Brand



"I hope you agree that the contents of this report are generally positive in nature however there is still much to be done. A task that the board, staff and volunteers are looking forward to undertaking" – Ben Curtis

Foreword

Healthwatch Swindon came into being during a time of considerable change to the way health and social care services are planned, purchased and delivered.

"If we are going to crack these really big challenges, the only way to do it is to think about the issue from the patient's point of view and not the needs of the institution, the hospital or the system". Jeremy Hunt (Secretary of State for Health).

To some extent the need for local Healthwatch has arisen out of seminal national reports that contain key phrases such as "no culture of listening to patients", "complaints made but nothing done about it", "limited understanding of how important and simple it can be to genuinely listen to the views of the public and engage them in how to improve services", "the patient voice should be heard and heeded at all times", "ensure patients using services are routinely involved and 'own' their care planning and activities".

Whilst these reflect a national view, all communities to a greater or lesser degree, including Swindon, have to take on board these comments. We are under no illusion about the challenges we face in overcoming the culture of not being 'listened to' or 'nothing is being done about it'.

Healthwatch Swindon will continue to develop how it listens to the users of health and social care services in a way that will encourage people to come forward with issues and problems.

As services continually change, the impact on the user changes and this has to be fed back into the learning loop. This also means that Healthwatch Swindon will have to continuously create opportunities for people to seek service improvements.

We will continue working in partnership with the commissioners and providers as their 'critical friend' and encourage them to use a variety of ways to engage with patients, carers and service users – particularly for those who suffer most disadvantage.

Although Healthwatch Swindon had a tough time establishing itself initially, I believe we have come a long way in developing a solid relationship with our stakeholders. The positive feedback we have had about Healthwatch Swindon leads us to believe that we are heading in the right direction.

For this I have to thank the Board, the staff and the volunteers of Healthwatch Swindon for the effort and dedication they have displayed on this journey to making Healthwatch Swindon an organisation that can be approached with a 'can do' reputation for resolving issues and challenging commissioners in the way services are delivered.

Executive Summary

Pete Rowe, Manager of Healthwatch Swindon

The first year of Healthwatch has been challenging as we look to establish ourselves, define our roles and develop strong working partnerships in order to deliver the full potential of what Healthwatch Swindon can do to serve the community of Swindon in an effective way.

We have been involved in some really good work, particularly the **NHS England project**, which showcases the impact of local people becoming involved in influencing the design and delivery of health & social care services in Swindon.

Working alongside NHS England in the development of a framework to be rolled out across the country is a huge opportunity for Healthwatch Swindon. ***It also recognises the previous success achieved by involving local people through established Patient Participation Groups.***

There is always concern about the standard of health and social care services and that's why Healthwatch Swindon has such an important role, particularly offering an ***independent and confidential Advocacy service***. The NHS complaint procedure is a very complex process and we have supported over 60 people to complain regarding the following areas:

- ***Treatment***
- ***Diagnosis***
- ***Communication***
- ***Delays in appointments***
- ***Attitude of staff***
- ***Safety***

Being involved in the ***Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection at the Great Western Hospital*** also highlighted the role of Healthwatch Swindon as the champion of local voices and the potential it can have to monitor and influence local health and social care services.

The other success has been the small pool of committed volunteers of Healthwatch

Swindon who have dedicated over 200 hours of their time to support us.

Whether it has been ***providing administration support, attending meetings on our behalf, undertaking patient led audits or helping us engage with the people of Swindon***, we recognise and appreciate your valuable time and input.

Steps are already underway to grow our board of directors and group of volunteers and the development of the Volunteer Action Programme will also explore opportunities to utilise their skills further.

These are just some of the positive impacts we have achieved in our first year and by listening to feedback and experiences – good or bad, we can continue to use this information to challenge people and hold those in charge accountable.

The next 12 months....

It is fair to say that although we have taken steps in the right direction, this is a journey and Healthwatch Swindon is committed to working and supporting the local people to ensure they have their say on health and social care in Swindon.

I took the role as Manager in March 2014 and already acknowledge that there is still much to be done to develop the full potential of Healthwatch Swindon.

“Our success is going to be based on how well the community know WHAT Healthwatch Swindon is, WHAT we do and HOW we can give them a voice and support them to influence or make a change”



Introduction

Healthwatch Swindon gives local people a powerful voice locally and nationally through Healthwatch England. We work to help local people get the best out of their local health and social care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow. Healthwatch Swindon is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local services. Not just for people who use them now, but anyone who might need to in future.

As well as taking on the work of the Local Involvement Networks (LINK) our work includes:

- **Gathering and representing the views and experiences** of people who use Health and Social Care services in Swindon, carers and the general public.
- **Offering a free, confidential and independent advocacy service**, which includes supporting people to make a complaint about NHS services.
- **Creating and developing an effective partnership approach** to work with commissioning organisations, community groups, service user groups and service providers to raise awareness, identify opportunities to champion the voice of the people and publicise the latest News and Events regarding health and social care in Swindon.
- **Signposting** people to appropriate Health & Social Care Service(s) to help them make an informed choice.
- **Reporting information and making recommendations** to commissioning groups, committees, quality monitoring bodies and organisations using the evidence we gather.

OUR VALUES

Healthwatch Swindon's success will be built on public trust and confidence. This will be sustained by being independent, transparent, accessible and inclusive.

OUR MISSION

Healthwatch Swindon will strive to promote and continually improve the following for the people of Swindon.

- ✓ **The right to essential services**
- ✓ **The right of access**
- ✓ **The right to a safe, dignified and quality service**
- ✓ **The right to information and education**
- ✓ **The right to choose**
- ✓ **The right to be listened to**
- ✓ **The right to be involved**
- ✓ **The right to live in a healthy environment that promotes well being**

OUR VISION

1. **THROUGH CHAMPIONING THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE, MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO THEIR OWN HEALTH AND WELL BEING.**
2. **TO HAVE LOCAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES REVIEWED, DESIGNED AND DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PEOPLE OF SWINDON.**
3. **THROUGH NETWORKING AND BUILDING SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIPS, DEVELOP A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE ISSUES AFFECTING PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN SWINDON.**



Our Work

Gathering and representing your views and experiences

Your voice counts. We received over 300 service views, comments, compliments and complaints from March 2013 to April 2014. Here are some of the changes we have seen.

Following a patient experience programme, the environment and service of a local NHS Walk-in Centre was enhanced as it highlighted areas to improve including the standard of the waiting room, out of date posters and the reception processes.

A local GP surgery was still using a 0845 number, which was brought to the attention of Healthwatch Swindon. From April 1st 2014 this was removed and replaced with a local number, much to the pleasure of practice staff and patients.

After receiving comments from frustrated patients at Healthwatch Swindon to book non emergency patient transport, Arriva Transport Solutions have now changed their leaflet to clearly identify the correct number to call.

Following confusion on how to raise an NHS complaint, we have worked with various PALS teams, including Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GWH) to ensure they all have Healthwatch Swindon leaflets to signpost patients.

After visiting the MS Therapy Centre, two people told us that it was difficult for them to park their car and get into Great Western Hospital for an outpatient appointment because of their physical impairment. We presented this as a problem – not a complaint – to the GWH customer service team who responded positively with options for helping.

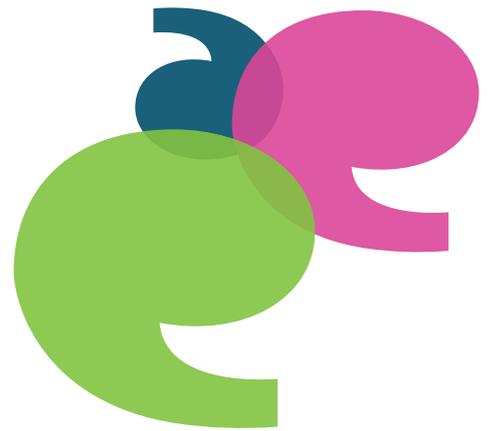
Due to personal experiences raised through Healthwatch Swindon, service users have also been invited to and involved in:

- Patient and public involvement forums
- Nutrition and hydration steering group at Great Western Hospital
- Regional research projects
- Health Services redesigns

It should also be considered that due to the diverse nature of enquiries received, there will be changes that have taken place as a result of the feedback that we may not be necessarily involved in or aware of.

It is important that as we continue to gather experiences and views, that we take the opportunity to view the bigger picture as opposed to just resolving the case in hand.

As we came to the end of the first year, the process to capture, action and conclude became more effective and Healthwatch Swindon looks forward to increasing and reporting positive changes that have taken place as the result of a local voice or voices.



Offering a free, confidential and independent advocacy service

Healthwatch Swindon provides people with an advocacy service to help people make complaints, including NHS complaints.

The advocacy service has helped support over 60 people to make a complaint during our first year. From August 2013 we have worked closely with Swan Advocacy to deal with NHS complaints based on the complexity of the complaint.

The complexity of complaints has ranged from treatment at the GP surgery to an identified service failure that resulted in the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) investigating the complaint and finding in favour of the client including financial compensation.

In all cases we will try and get a resolution locally. We have also been involved in referring clients when an Independent Mental Health advocacy needed to be instructed.

So how have we helped?

A client had been struggling for over a year with a condition that had forced them to stop work. Being concerned that the treatment was not effective, they were further distraught to learn that it could take over 6 months to be seen for further consultation. *With our help and intervention we were able to get an appointment within a month.*

Following a breakdown in communication and relationship between our client and their surgery, *we continue to support them through the complaint process locally with positive effect that has also seen an improvement in their health.*

“Healthwatch Swindon came to my rescue. I received a phone call from the department making the appointment within hours of you speaking with the PALS office.”

– Mr B, December 2013

When the actions of a consultant had caused our client to believe detrimental effect had been caused through medication, *by coming to us we identified the severity of the case and worked with Swan Advocacy, which has seen the case submitted to the PHSO.*

Creating and developing an effective partnership approach

During the year, Healthwatch Swindon has looked to create and develop relationships with the community as a whole, whether it is service providers, commissioning bodies, service user groups or third sector/ voluntary organisations.

Examples of the work include:

Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Healthwatch Swindon was involved in the development of the CCG Patient and Public Involvement strategy. As well as attending meetings regularly, we help to promote attendance. We also discuss and give feedback to items raised in the meetings.

We have also supported and publicised the Commissioning Intentions Seminars that have taken place during 2014, again raising concerns on behalf of the people of Swindon.

It is important to identify any overlaps in the work that Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Swindon do to ensure that there is both public involvement and the opportunity to influence delivery and design of services.

Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GWH)

As the biggest provider of secondary health care services within Swindon, it is key that we develop a working relationship as an **Independent** and **Critical Friend**.

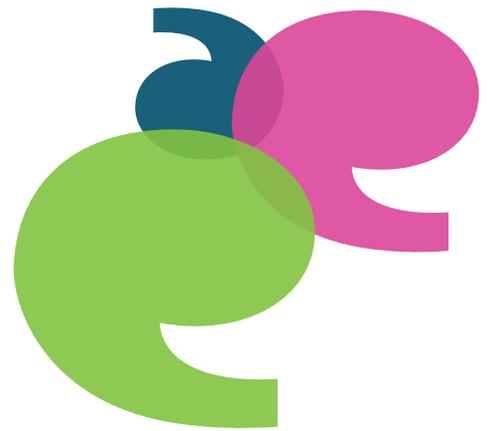
We work closely with the Patient Advice Liaison Service and have established various points of contact including with the GWH Governors.

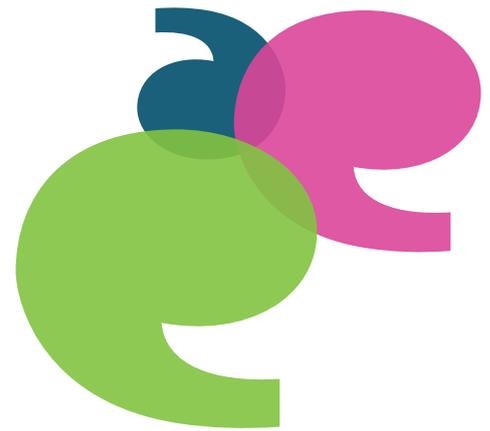
Healthwatch Swindon have also been involved and supported:

- Nutrition and Hydration Steering Group.
- Cancer User Forum
- Adult and Children Safeguarding Forum.
- Learning Disability Partnership Board.

In addition to this, with nearly 25% (69) of all contacts received by Healthwatch Swindon relating to GWH, it is clear that we need to continue to develop an effective communication channel.

We are already working on a programme of events for 2014/15, where Healthwatch Swindon can represent an independent perspective.





Swindon Health Observatory

As part of our role of working with key providers, organisations and voluntary groups, Healthwatch Swindon will develop the Swindon Health Observatory. The objective is to build a clear understanding of the issues affecting people living and working in Swindon, to support and inform policy and decision makers.

Through networking and building successful partner relationships, the Swindon Health Observatory will:

- **Ensure better liaison** between commissioners and providers of data to bring more data into consideration when planning and monitoring services
- **Encourage joint working** on intelligence and research therefore adding value to existing data
- **Deliver effective and accurate centralisation** of the best available evidence made available on bespoke web pages.
- **Identify the opportunity** for specifically commissioned work, where a need or gaps are identified.

A series of meetings have been held during the first part of 2014 with key stakeholders and providers to establish opportunities and objectives. It continues to be a high priority to establish Version 1 by the end of Summer 2014.

Health & Social Care Forum

Swindon is fortunate to have some established forums such as the Swindon Older People's Forum, which represent groups and service users effectively.

Our idea behind the Health and Social Care Forum is to allow Healthwatch Swindon to interact and engage effectively with as many Third Sector Organisations and Self Help Groups as possible.

In particular, we want to ensure that the smaller self help groups have a platform to voice their feedback and have their say on health and social care services in Swindon.

The first forum in March 2014 was supported well and we look to build on this with further forums booked throughout the rest of 2014.



Case Study:

Working in partnership with NHS England

Encouraging patients, carers and the public to be involved in the decision care services has been a priority of the NHS since the early seventies.

Healthwatch Swindon has been instrumental in this area by supporting Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) throughout Swindon. PPGs are organisations that work in partnership with their local GP surgery by reviewing the comments and feedback that they receive from patients, carers and the public to identify and work towards suitable solutions that will improve service quality.

We have been hosting a PPG Forum which met six times during the year. It was attended by up to 25 representatives from different surgeries and PPGs. As a result of these meetings, the PPG community in Swindon is both vibrant and effective in improving the quality of the services provided by GP Surgeries.

Our work with the PPGs and our successes with the PPG Forum drew the attention of NHS England, and at the end of 2013 we embarked on a project together to develop a framework that could be used across the country to help guide PPGs and ensure that they have a positive impact on the surgery that they work alongside.

The NHS is committed to ensuring that PPGs continue to grow and play an increasingly important role in how surgeries address patient and carer feedback. In particular, the NHS is keen to ensure that seldom heard groups that are often hindered in providing

feedback to the surgery through traditional means due to issues such as language barriers or disability have the opportunity to play their part in voicing their concerns.

The project was funded by NHS England and consisted of three key phases: An extensive research period that gathered and analysed the different forms of guidance that are currently available to PPGs; a development period that built up the framework by taking on feedback from patients, PPG members and practice managers; and, finally, a trial test period across three GP Surgeries who supported the study.

“Working with Healthwatch Swindon and their PPG forum members has provided a brilliant opportunity to undertake this work through the development of the framework to help and guide PPG’s gather and use the experiences to make a real difference to their GP practices. Thank you to all of you who are making this a reality”.

Gill Brook, NHS England.

Working alongside NHS England in the development of a framework that will be rolled out across the country is a huge opportunity for Healthwatch Swindon and a real chance for us to have a significant impact on how the voice of the people is heard by healthcare service providers.

As at the end of April 2014, the project was entering its final testing phase with 3 pilot surgeries after which the framework will be reviewed and revised before being published by NHS England.



Providing advice and information about access to services

As part of our service, Healthwatch Swindon provides people with information and advice to help them access the right services and make informed decisions about their care.

We have signposted 99 people to services. The most frequently asked about was:

- Arriva Non Emergency Transport Service (NEPTS)
- NHS Health Check



Arriva NEPTS

This service started on the 1st December 2013. From December 2013 to March 2014 we had 23 contacts, 11 of which were regarding booking or amending transport arrangements due to an unclear leaflet regarding contact numbers. At the start of March 2014 we helped review and address this, which has seen a reduction in contacts. We also took the opportunity to highlight how to claim help for travel costs for those not eligible for NEPTS.

NHS Health Checks

Prior to January 2014, we received a number of contacts regarding the availability of NHS Health Checks locally. We therefore decided to team up with SEQOL to offer the service on a weekly basis at our Brunel Plaza shop front. As a result over 50 people have booked a Health Check through Healthwatch Swindon.

In addition to the Health Check we also have a community based Health Ambassador on hand to offer 1-2-1 support and advice on how to improve your health your way.

We have a large selection of information leaflets and posters in our shop unit, plus our website, facebook and twitter accounts are updated daily.

Enabling people to monitor the standard of local care services

Each year, Great Western Hospital (GWH), Avon, Wiltshire and Mental Health Partnership Trust (AWP), South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWAFT) and SEQOL, all produce Quality Accounts, which Healthwatch Swindon are invited to comment on.

Quality Accounts tell the public what areas of quality the organisation has worked on over the last year and what they plan to work on in the coming year. We use this as an opportunity to review any views and comments we have received from the people of Swindon to feed into organisations' Quality Accounts.

Healthwatch Swindon also monitors services through our data reports, which highlight when we hear about an issue more than once in a short space of time.

An example of this has been the confusion and concerns raised regarding the Ophthalmology Department at GWH not taking any new referrals since January 2014. Over a short period we spoke to 3 people who were upset with its "apparent" closure. We were able to work with GWH and the Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group who were able to clarify the situation and the steps taken to address the issue, including providing information on satellite clinics at a primary care practice.

Healthwatch Swindon were also invited by the Carfax Health Enterprise (CHE) to conduct patient experience research at the Swindon Health Centre where CHE provides primary care services for registered patients and, as a Walk-in Centre, for unregistered patients. The report highlighted areas such as waiting times, the reception process, poor signage and the environment in general.

The full report and actions taken can be viewed on our website at : http://www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk/sites/default/files/carfax_health_enterprise_report_juneaugust_2013.pdf

People in Swindon are keen to see that the environment in which people receive care is of a good standard and seen as an important part of monitoring standards. Healthwatch Swindon has further supported volunteers to conduct Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) assessments.

During the work on PLACE, the volunteers see the environment from the public's eyes and identify the possible need for environmental changes. This helps the service provider to spot changes early and aims to improve the environment for all patients.

Volunteers have received training to conduct PLACE assessments with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust.

Contact has also been made with the Great Western Hospital for Healthwatch Swindon to be involved in the PLACE Assessments for 2015.



The involvement of people in Commissioning and Scrutiny of local services

Healthwatch Swindon has made strong links with the organisations which commission health and social care services in Swindon.

We have escalated the experiences and concerns regarding the Non Emergency Patient Transport contracted to Arriva Transport Solutions since December 2013. As well as making the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) aware of the feedback raised by patients, from April 2014, through collaboration with neighbouring Healthwatch, we will work directly with Arriva to encourage patient engagement and involvement.

As well as reporting to HOSC, we are a member of the sub-regional Quality Surveillance Group (QSG) chaired by NHS England.

Apart from the Arriva Non Emergency Transport Services, other topics raised include the backlog in continuing health care assessments, Ophthalmology services in Swindon and GP related enquiries.

Our attendance at meetings with commissioners and quality monitoring bodies gives us the opportunity to raise the issues and comments the people of Swindon give to us.

Healthwatch Swindon uses the views and comments of the public to report to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Comments from local people regarding the Ophthalmology services in Swindon were reported at a time that HOSC were reviewing the latest update regarding Ophthalmology Department at Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

We highlighted the concerns raised by the people of Swindon regarding the lack of general communication. For example it had not been made clear what arrangements were in place for people to be provided with transport to reach outpatient appointments out of Swindon.

We also reported the unclear process of establishing GP surgeries that were registering new patients following comments received regarding the closure of a local surgery. Raising the issue with NHS England, we were able to promote awareness for patients affected through the NHS Choices website.



Making reports and recommendations about local services

Healthwatch Swindon has reported issues and comments to the providers and commissioners of health and social care services. We have done this through direct contact, service user forums and through our statutory involvement with local committees and steering groups.

Our challenge is to address how we can establish a more structured and seamless procedure to ensure that we escalate all relevant comments, both positive and negative, to the relevant commissioner or service provider.

Part of our role is to also identify work and projects that highlight barriers that affect the quality and accessibility of local health and social care services.

Through developing and strengthening relationships, we will look to identify opportunities to ensure that not only are the voices of local people heard, but that their views are represented and have maximum impact.

As we start the second year we have already highlighted key areas we would like to explore further:

- Through regular attendance at service redesign opportunities, working with both service users and service user groups to discuss their experiences and how it impacts and influences their lives.
- Working with relevant organisations to identify and address perceptions and concerns of health and social care services from a young person's perspective.
- Working closer with the Health and Wellbeing Board and HOSC to support and advise as required.



Working with the Care Quality Commission and escalations of good practice

When we identify significant concerns or a member of the public requests it, we can share information with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC monitor services' performance against national standards. They regulate:

- Treatment, care and support provided by hospitals, GPs, dentists, ambulances and mental health services.
- Treatment, care and support services for adults in care homes and in people's own homes (both personal and nursing care).
- Services for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

They have the power to enforce change and in some cases closure of services, which do not meet the standards of good quality and safe practices.

During 2013/14 we did not pass any concerns to the CQC but we have assisted with relevant information to aid their visits to service providers.

CQC Inspection at GHW

In October 2013, Healthwatch Swindon accompanied the CQC as they carried out their inspection at Great Western Hospital.

As well as offering a layperson's perspective, we also took the opportunity to speak to patients and their families with regards to:

- Care and Welfare
- Assessing and Monitoring
- Respecting and Involving People
- Staffing

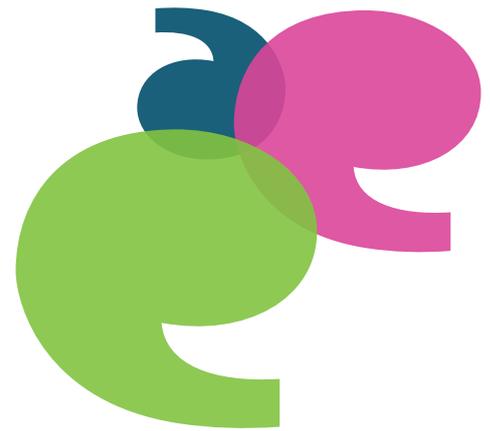
Escalations

In total we received 288 service views regarding all health and social care services during April 2013 to March 2014. 78% of these views were negative about the service or care experienced so it is imperative that we identify effective processes to escalate feedback to providers and for reporting to commissioning bodies.

However we also receive positive comments and a survey conducted from January to April 2014 regarding meeting health needs in Swindon produced some very positive insights:

- As well as GPs, 39% of respondents go elsewhere, such as the internet to meet their health needs.
- 75% of respondents stated that it was either easy or ok to make their last appointment at a time convenient for them with the GP.
- 65% of respondents felt they were listened to well, with 63% stating they felt that they received the care and attention they expected.

Full results of the 258 respondents surveyed are available on our website at www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk



Sharing views with Healthwatch England

Healthwatch England is the national centre of our network. We feed in local issues and they send us national issues which we may want to further investigate to raise awareness locally.

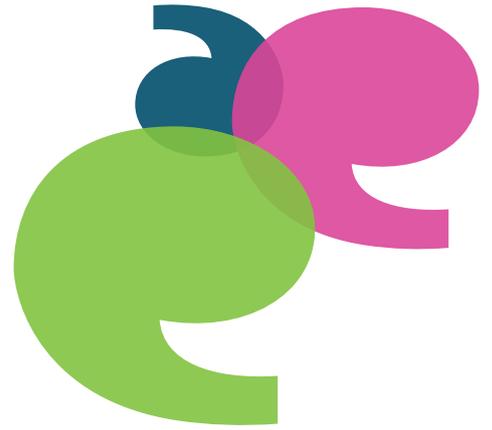
We have fed into national issues:

- Streamlining the system for complaints regarding the NHS and social care.
- Data.com where the Department of Health asked the public to agree to having information about them shared or to opt out. Initial feedback nationally led to the data.com project being delayed by six months.
- Special inquiry following concerns that people are being discharged from hospital, nursing or care homes unsafely without adequate assessment of their on-going needs or arrangement of sufficient support in their own home, temporary accommodation or community.

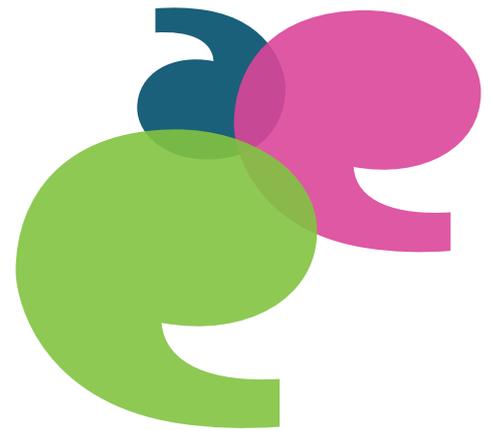
We also investigated an issue that was raised locally regarding the varying charges made by GPs for letters to be produced as evidence for benefits and other claims. Our summary was submitted to the Healthwatch Hub.

All 152 Healthwatch in England which make up the Healthwatch network are working together to identify national trends. The future development of this process through compatible data collection will mean that Healthwatch England will have easier access to determine national issues.

Part of Healthwatch England's mission is leading the Healthwatch network to ensure our local insight has national impact and their national insight has local impact.



Working with the people of Swindon



Engagement Methods & Activities

A vital key to our success is the number of people we interact with. To ensure this, we have to make Healthwatch Swindon as accessible as possible. We use many methods to engage with people as follows.

Method	Quantity
Website (unique visitors)	4,760
Facebook (friends)	71
Twitter (followers)	1,429
Meeting Health Needs survey	258
Meeting/Engagement events	93
Telephone	56
Email	30
In person	156

We know some groups and communities find it hard to get their voice heard. Although initial work has been developed, we will continue to focus on:

- Seldom heard groups including People from black minority ethnic groups; refugees and asylum seekers.
- Children and young people.
- Older people.
- People who rely on care at home to maintain their independence.
- People with learning disabilities.

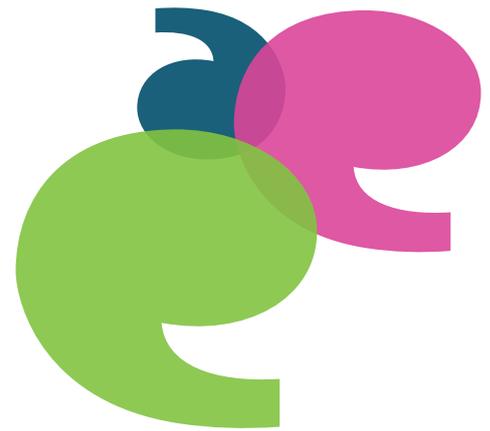
As part of our commitment to develop partnerships with other third sector / voluntary organisations, we will also be identifying opportunities to work closely to those that specifically represent these groups.

In order to increase networking with groups we also promote Healthwatch Swindon by attending, publicising and supporting local groups and events such as:

- Swindon Borough Council Locality Drop-in
- Swindon Older People's Forum
- Diabetes UK
- Epilepsy Support Group
- Parent Carer Advisory Group
- Harbour Project Health Day
- Swindon Equality Coalition
- Retired Railway Workers
- Phoenix Rotary Group
- MS Therapy Centre
- Cancer Service User Group
- World Health Awareness Day

As we look to identify further opportunities to engage, Healthwatch Swindon will look to utilise volunteers to develop an outreach team, which will offer engagement centres at locations for those who cannot access the town centre.

From April 2014 the shop at the Brunel Plaza will also extend the opening hours from 10:00am to 16:00pm to 09:00 am to 17:00 pm.



Information Technology

A website and social media are used by Healthwatch Swindon as major platforms to interact and publicise the latest news and events regarding health and social care in Swindon.

Although we acknowledge that there are still people who do not have access to the internet, we recognise that this form of information technology is widely used as a source of information and for contacting services. With an active Facebook page and Twitter account, as with our website, we have seen usage increase.

With regards to our website, during our first year, we received over 7,000 visits to our website accessing a total of 26,756 page views.

A focus on digital activity from January to March 2014 saw website traffic nearly double from April to December 2013.

Feedback

Key to any form of engagement is feedback. Informing people what we are doing or what we plan to do as a result of engagement is essential to keeping people involved.

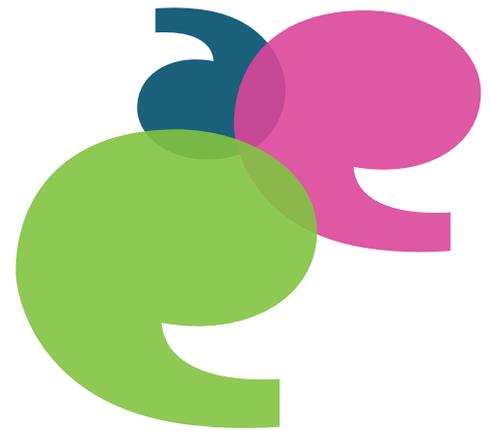
We do this through:

- Monthly e-bulletins
- Quarterly newsletters
- Website and social media updates

Engagement with the public is a priority, but we also need to be in the right places to ensure that the views of the public are taken to the organisations, boards and groups to inform decision makers.

Throughout the year, as well as reporting to the Health and Well Being Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, we have also fed into the regional Quality Surveillance Group and worked in collaboration with bordering Healthwatch.

In 2014/2015 we will investigate opportunities to promote Healthwatch Swindon including media opportunities, working with service providers such as the Great Western Hospital and raising our profile through networking. A survey of those who have contacted Healthwatch Swindon from January to March 2014 showed that the majority (73%) of people have heard of our services through word of mouth or passing by our shop.



Who we talk to

As detailed below, we have registered over 3000 individuals and organisations interested in Healthwatch Swindon and our work.

- Individuals (3167)
- Organisations (151)

The majority of individuals were carried over from the LINk partnership.

Once registered with Healthwatch Swindon, we send out our monthly e-bulletin via email and from July 2014 will be sending quarterly newsletters through the post. Upon request, a large print and an audio version of the newsletter can be made available.

We are keen to make sure that the e-bulletin is clear and not too long. We always tell people what changes have happened or are happening as well as letting everyone know about the latest health and social care news and events in Swindon.

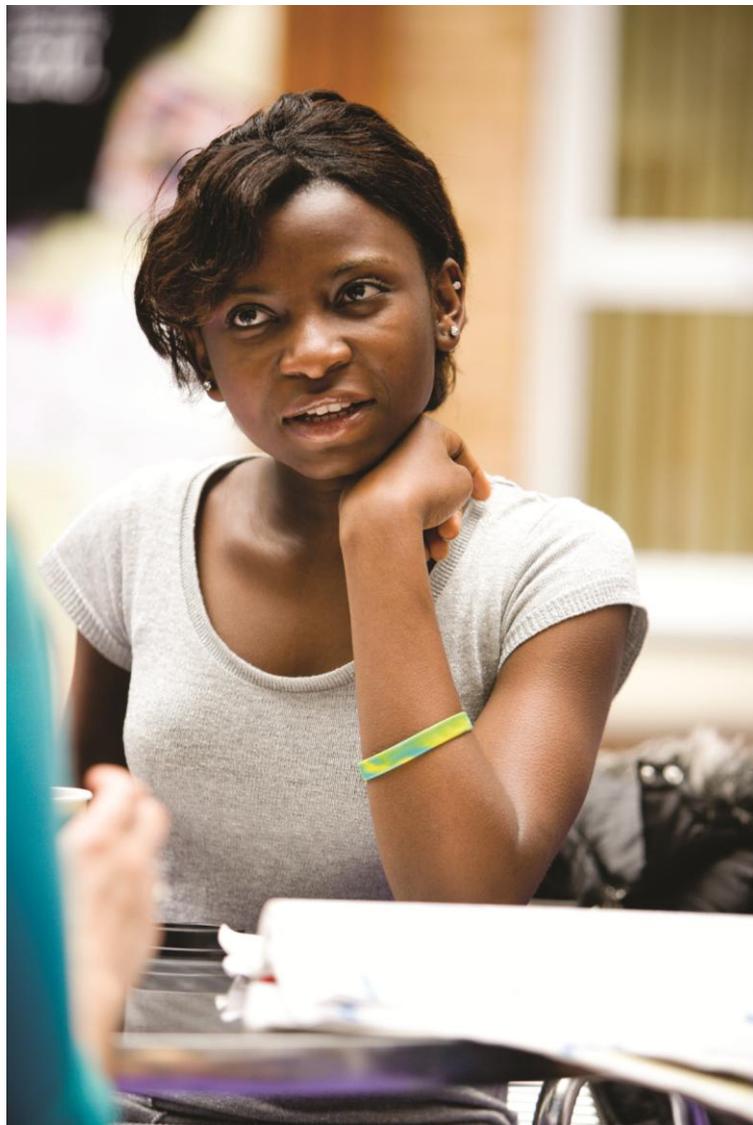
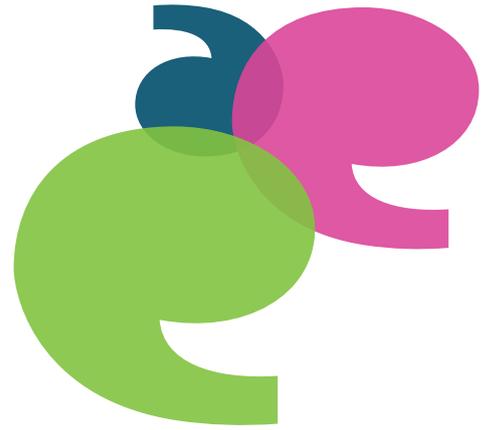
Breakdown of Individuals

Level	Number
Directors	3
Volunteers	12
Participants	3152

Ethnicity	Number
British	1650
African	93
Asian	66
Caribbean	26
Indian	463
Unknown/not recorded	869

Age	Number
24 and under	46
25 to 49	861
50 to 64	994
65 to 79	433
80+	2
Unknown/not recorded	831

Gender	Number
Female	1819
Male	1298
Preferred not to say	0
Unknown/not recorded	50



Our Volunteers

Our Board & Governance

The board is made up of volunteers who were selected due to their skills and experience.

- Chair (vacant)
- Director (Ben Curtis)
- Director (Iain Watts)
- Director (Tony Hewitt)

The Board make key decisions in our organisation and set the direction of the work we do.

Through 2014, Healthwatch Swindon will continue to actively recruit a Chair and further board members as a priority.

Decision Making

Key decisions and work plans are based on the evidence that Healthwatch Swindon collects from local people.

In addition to this, Healthwatch Swindon work closely in an independent capacity with service providers, commissioners and service user groups to highlight and support areas of points raised and the local and national strategic relevance.

Escalation of issues and trends

The escalation of issues is determined by the operational staff and then fed into the Healthwatch Swindon Board.

The Board play an important part in gathering and feeding into the strategic relevance as they attend the:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Steering Group.



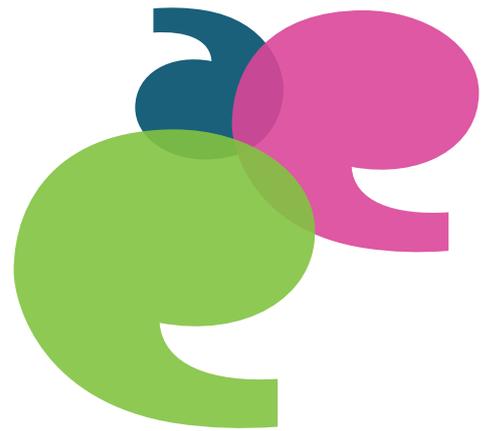
Enter and View

Healthwatch Swindon has the statutory power to Enter and View any health or social care service (excluding children's services) to access the people who receive care. We can ask people what their views are on the provision they are receiving.

The board have not had enough evidence to support the use of our statutory power to Enter and View a health or social care setting and therefore Healthwatch Swindon has not undertaken any Enter and View activities during 2013/2014.

Enter and View is a valuable tool for collecting evidence, especially capturing the voice of service users, carers and families. It is not an inspection but an opportunity to offer a layperson's perspective which can bring out improvements to the experience of health and social care consumers.

For this reason, Healthwatch Swindon will be looking at opportunities with service providers to access their service and service users, using the Enter and View process.



Volunteer Activity

Healthwatch Swindon has an active volunteers list, which have been involved in many aspects of supporting Healthwatch Swindon.

Our volunteers have helped out our staff in the day to day running of Healthwatch Swindon, attend meetings to represent or report back to Healthwatch Swindon and assist with ad-hoc projects.

Examples of activities include:

- Administration support at our shop unit.
- Attending various AGMs such as the Equality Coalition.
- Attending committee meetings such as the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Arranging opportunities for Healthwatch Swindon to attend their workplace.
- Attend training to participate in Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE)

Example of ad-hoc projects include:

- Reviewing the the design and readability of patient information leaflets.
- Conducting research in the delay of referral letters being written by GPs.

In the last year our volunteers have dedicated over 200 hours to Healthwatch Swindon.

In addition to our volunteers, we also have local people who may also participate in areas of our work or in health and social care activities within their community.

“We were very pleased to have the involvement of Healthwatch Swindon volunteers, for our annual PLACE assessments at Victoria centre and Sandalwood Court.

We found their input extremely helpful and supportive. We hope we will be able to build on observations and ideas from the assessments in order to build on the work we are doing and continue to improve our service users’ environment.”
- Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Trust (April 2014)

Utilising our volunteers further

We continue to be very pleased with the number of those who have enquired about volunteering and the potential that they bring.

As we enter our second year, Healthwatch Swindon has conducted volunteer workshops, which have not only increased our team of volunteers but also highlighted new opportunities that we can explore such as:

- Outreach engagement
- Research development
- “Enter and View”
- Advocacy support

The Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 established health and wellbeing boards as a forum where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities.

Healthwatch Swindon is a full member of the Swindon Health and Wellbeing Board. Both directors have attended and Ben Curtis also sits on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment steering group.

Healthwatch has a number of roles, which includes asking questions of the other members of the board with the relevant comments and issues that are reported to Healthwatch Swindon.

We also use this opportunity to identify any support or work that we may be able to undertake to address issues raised at the meetings.

As we work towards having a more positive involvement and influence with the Health and Wellbeing Board, we will be sharing our reports and workplans on a regular basis, ensuring that we provide representative and evidence based views of local patients, carers and the general public.

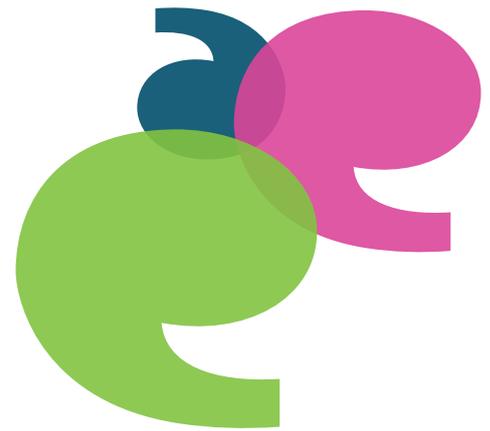


Financial Accounts Healthwatch Swindon Year 1 Summary

April 2013 – March 2014

	Year 1 Budget	vs.	Year 1 Actual	Variance	Commentary
Sales:	£ 151,000		£ 151,000	£ -	
			£ 39,853	-£ 39,853	Including funding for NHS England and Carfax Health Enterprise Projects
	<u>£ 151,000</u>		<u>£ 190,853</u>	<u>-£ 39,853</u>	
Expenses:					
Staffing Costs	£ 75,000		£ 105,052	-£ 30,052	Including advocacy service costs and project management costs for NHS England Project
Engagement Costs	£ 29,300		£ 11,589	£ 17,711	Including hosting, marketing and training costs
Support Services	£ 46,700		£ 36,652	£ 10,048	Including rent, rates, insurance, IT infrastructure,
Repayment	£ -		£ 10,267	-£ 10,267	Amount refunded to Swindon Borough Council
Provision for costs*	£ -		£ 27,293	-£ 27,293	Provision carried forward to year 2, including underspend on NHS England Project.
	<u>£ 151,000</u>		<u>£ 190,853</u>	<u>-£ 39,853</u>	

* Provision for costs (including Advocacy and future projects.)



About this report

This report will be made available to people on the Healthwatch Swindon website. Hard copies will be made available and posted out on request.

Should you require the report in a different format please contact

info@healthwatchswindon.org.uk

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Healthwatch Swindon

23 Brunel Plaza, Swindon SN1 1LF

T: 01793 497777

E: info@healthwatchswindon.org.uk

W: www.healthwatchswindon.org.uk

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No. 08429563

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