

The year ahead

Our business plan 2016-2017

Large print



About us

Healthwatch England is a national, independent consumer champion for health and social care in England.

We provide leadership, support and advice to the wider Healthwatch network.

We have powers to ensure the consumer's voice is heard by those who make the decisions. We tell government bodies and local authorities in England about our findings, and report to Parliament every year.

We can also ask the health and social care regulator, the Care Quality Commission, to take action when we have special concerns.

Our vision and mission

Our vision

We are working towards a society in which people's health and social care needs are heard, understood and met.

Achieving this vision will mean that:

- People shape health and social care delivery
- People influence the services they receive personally
- People hold services to account

Our mission

We are the consumer champion for health and social care.

We achieve this by:

- Listening hard to people, especially the most vulnerable, to understand their experiences and what matters most to them
- Influencing those who have the power to change services so that they better meet people's needs now and into the future
- Empowering and informing people to get the most from their health and social care services and encouraging other organisations to do the same
- Working with the Healthwatch network to champion service improvement and to empower local people

Foreword

By Jane Mordue, Interim Chair

Last year, the Healthwatch network was busier than ever finding out what people want from health and care services and speaking out about their concerns.

Local Healthwatch engaged with over 300,000 people about their experiences, visited more than 3,300 services to find out if they are working for people, and published over 650 reports.

Together, Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch have developed an approach that works when it comes to finding out what people really think. We've also shown the difference that can be made when those who run health and care services act on what matters to the public.

The 'NHS Five Year Forward View' makes clear that our society faces big challenges when it comes to people's health and the services that support them. What is also clear from our experience is that human stories have the power to help solve these issues, as well as providing opportunities for services to improve.

However, if health and social care services are to make the most of the experiences the public share with Healthwatch, then we need to focus our efforts on areas that will make the biggest difference.

This year will be one of transition for Healthwatch England. We have helped establish local Healthwatch and proved that Healthwatch works. Now we need to maximise our impact.

With more support from the Care Quality Commission and new leadership in place, we aim to focus even more on strengthening local Healthwatch. With a growing bank of evidence about people's experience of care, we will also do more to enable those who plan and deliver services to access and act on this information.

The current reforms taking place in the NHS and social care aim to deliver the services people want to help them stay well and manage any conditions they face. The Healthwatch network is in a unique position to help support these changes and ensure that people's views are at the heart of health and care.

Introduction

By Susan Robinson, Acting National Director

The following plan sets out how we, in partnership with local Healthwatch, will work to help improve health and social care services.

In the year ahead, we will firstly strengthen our focus on supporting local Healthwatch to be as effective as they can be and more sustainable.

This will involve continuing to provide the help that local Healthwatch tell us they value, as well as developing new ways of working together nationally and regionally to achieve change.

A second priority will be continuing to ensure that people's voices are at the heart of decision-making about how care is delivered and services are designed.

To better enable Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch to capture and then use the experiences that people share, we will continue to roll out our Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) to local Healthwatch. We will also build our expertise when it comes to analysing the public's views and sharing this insight with those who make decisions about health and social care.

Our last priority will be to develop a way of working that is as effective and flexible as possible, delivers real value for money and provides a sound basis for a permanent Chair and National Director to lead Healthwatch England and the network forward.

Our priorities for 2016-17

1. To provide leadership, support and advice to local Healthwatch to enable them to deliver their statutory activities and be a powerful advocate for services that work for people.
2. To bring the public's views to the heart of national decisions about the NHS and social care.
3. To build and develop an effective learning and values based Healthwatch England.

How we will work

Our work is informed by our values.

In 2016-17, we aim to demonstrate our values in a number of ways:

Inclusive: We work for everyone, highlighting views from across our communities, not just from those who shout the loudest.

Influential: We'll work together with the Healthwatch network to increase the impact we achieve locally and nationally.

Independent: We'll work more in partnership with those who make decisions about services to address the issues people have raised, whilst maintaining our independent voice.

Credible: We will improve the way we gather data and intelligence from local Healthwatch about people's experiences. This evidence will determine the issues we focus on.

Collaborative: We will work with local Healthwatch from the start to plan, design and deliver the support they want to be effective.

Priority one: To provide leadership, support and advice to local Healthwatch to enable them to deliver their statutory activities and be a powerful advocate for services that work for people

What are our objectives?

To support local Healthwatch to:

- Understand their strategic context and develop strong relationships.
- Listen to every section of their community and influence the planning and delivery of services.
- Make a difference locally through the publication of reports and recommendations.
- Inform people through information and signposting services.
- Fulfil their statutory role in providing us with intelligence to influence national health and care policy.

What do we plan to do?

- Roll out the use of the local Healthwatch ['Quality Statements'](#)
- Deliver a programme of support to help local Healthwatch:
 - Strengthen relationships with key partners and commissioners.

- Build their leadership, governance and sustainability.
- Apply national data and policy to their local context and support how they prioritise their work.
- Engage the public in helping to shape local health and care services.
- Improve the quality and effective use of evidence in their reports and recommendations.
- Use effective approaches to influence local health and care services.
- Work to:
 - Highlight the role local Healthwatch are playing in increasing public engagement with service change and commissioning programmes.
 - Support the public to understand and access local Healthwatch information and signposting services.
- Develop mechanisms, including our CRM system, that enable local Healthwatch to share information with us.

What will be the result?

- Local Healthwatch learning continues to develop and collaboration increases.
- The relationship between local Healthwatch and health and care decision makers is stronger.

- The quality of work across the local Healthwatch network continues to improve.
- Local Healthwatch are supported to have effective governance structures.
- The public has a better understanding of local Healthwatch information and sign-posting services.
- Awareness of the evidence that the Healthwatch network gathers and its impact increases.

Priority two: To bring the public's views to the heart of national decisions about the NHS and social care

What are our objectives?

- To gather and use intelligence about people's experiences of services to influence the shape of health and social care.
- To develop more effective relationships with key stakeholders

What do we plan to do?

- Scope the information needs of stakeholders and establish better ways to sharing our evidence with them.
- Identify and test more efficient ways for the Healthwatch network to collaborate on key health and social care issues.
- Develop and implement a communications and influencing strategy to make sure people's voices are heard.
- Undertake a programme of work to build on and develop relationships with key health and social care decision makers.
- Identify opportunities for local Healthwatch to demonstrate where their local insight and influence has had national relevance.

What will be the result?

- Local Healthwatch are supported to better capture and share evidence about people's health and social care experiences.
- The quality of information gathered by local Healthwatch continues to improve.
- Healthwatch evidence is more accessible to national health and social care decision makers.
- More national health and social care policies and plans take into account the views of the public.

Priority three: To build and develop an effective learning and values based Healthwatch England

What are our objectives?

- To implement the organisational transition plan.
- To develop more effective and flexible ways of working that deliver value for money.
- To protect public trust in Healthwatch by maintaining a strong focus on our organisational values.

What do we plan to do?

- Move offices and successfully induct a permanent Chair and National Director for Healthwatch England.
- Undertake the work necessary to ensure that the Healthwatch England Committee is able to meet its reporting responsibilities.
- Identify efficiencies through the working relationship between the Care Quality Commission and Healthwatch England.
- Ensure that staff skills are developed to help deliver our business plan and continue to ensure that organisational learning is captured and used.
- Support the permanent Chair and National Director to develop a refreshed long-term strategy for Healthwatch England.

- Plan and deliver activity that is consistent with our values and maintains public trust in the Healthwatch brand.

What will be the result?

- We gain efficiencies by sharing more resources and systems with the Care Quality Commission.
- We develop a refreshed long-term strategy for Healthwatch England.
- Our Committee is supported to discharge its statutory functions.
- We make our insight and evidence more accessible.
- We develop more effective and flexible ways of working that deliver value for money.