

## **Promising practice:**

### **how Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships are engaging with local Healthwatch**

#### **Introduction and background**

This briefing is to share practical ideas on how Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) can work in partnership with local Healthwatch organisations.

The recently published 'Next Steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View' outlines the main national service improvement priorities for the NHS over the next two years, which it sets out within the constraints of what is necessary to achieve financial balance across the health service.

In setting national priorities and strategic direction, the Next Steps document has drawn on numerous sources, including the annual priorities list of the top five issues citizens want to see improved that Healthwatch England compiles each year.<sup>i</sup>

Referring to the future development of STPs, the document highlights the importance of working with patients and the public to identify innovative, effective and efficient ways of designing, delivering and joining up services. It references the five steps set out by Healthwatch England to ensure local people have their say:

1. Set out the case for change, so people understand the current situation and why things may need to be done differently.
2. Involve people from the start in coming up with potential solutions.
3. Understand who in your community will be affected by your proposals, and find out what they think.
4. Give people enough time to consider your plans and provide feedback.
5. Explain how you used people's feedback, the difference it made to the plans, and how the impact of the changes will be monitored.<sup>ii</sup>

At national level, NHS England and Healthwatch England have also worked together on the guidance to STPs on engaging local people. At more local level, the examples below show how STPs and local Healthwatch are working together in a range of different ways.

#### **How are STPs and local Healthwatch organisations working together?**

##### ***Devon STP***

Building on existing positive relationships with health and social care organisations in the area, the three local Healthwatch organisations within the Devon STP footprint have been invited to participate in the STP at all levels and are collaborating in a consistent and co-ordinated way across Healthwatch geographical boundaries.



Nominated Healthwatch representatives meet regularly with the STP system leaders and are part of system-wide meetings. Healthwatch Devon recently produced a post consultation independent observation report in relation to a major local consultation. ([Your Future Care post-consultation report](#)). Leaders of the

three Healthwatch organisations also recently acted as independent chairs at a series of public engagement meetings in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay to ensure that local people affected by changes are being brought into the conversation with planners and decision makers.

Healthwatch Devon has produced a document to help the public better understand local consultations: [What to expect from an NHS Public Consultation](#). This is being made available at local public meetings and is helping inform and support patient and public representatives attending local STP related groups.

Find out more: [Olly.Grice@healthwatch.co.uk](mailto:Olly.Grice@healthwatch.co.uk)

### **South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw STP**

Healthwatch and the voluntary sector umbrella organisations within South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw have been partners in Sustainability and Transformation Plans since conversations started last year and are represented formally on the Collaborative Partnership Board, alongside chief executives from NHS commissioners, providers and local authorities.

The Sustainability and Transformation Partnership was keen to take account of the public's views and feed these back into plans before any further work takes place and so asked the five Healthwatch and voluntary sector umbrella organisations to lead conversations with the public. They took a place-based outreach approach, making use of local networks and working with groups with protected characteristics.



Conversations included a good cross section of the local population, identifying and involving local communities of interest at particular risk of exclusion; such as BME communities, faith groups and groups reaching disabled people.

Social media activity using #SYBSTP reached more than 50,000 accounts

9 and 102,000 timeline impressions made via Twitter and there were more than 3,000 web-page views. The findings of the conversations – of which more than 1,000

people took part – is being collated into a report which will be shared with the Partnership Board in May.

Contacts for local Healthwatch in the region are:

[healthwatch@vabarnsley.org.uk](mailto:healthwatch@vabarnsley.org.uk)

[info@healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdoncaster.org.uk)

[info@healthwatchnottinghamshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchnottinghamshire.co.uk)

[info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchrotherham.org.uk)

[info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk)

### ***South West London STP***

Each of the six local Healthwatch in the STP area was funded to do grassroots outreach activity with local communities, with a focus on equalities protected characteristics and reaching communities that might otherwise be excluded from engagement. Healthwatch in turn funded local organisations to run enjoyable activities for their client group, and the NHS came along to talk to people about local health services.

88 events were held in total over the year and examples of activities are coffee mornings for older LGBT people; service users of a homeless drop-in and Foodbank service; and a roller disco for 11-18s.



Feedback from the outreach sessions informs STP development and contact with the groups has been maintained to support ongoing engagement on specific workstreams. For example, following feedback, the south west London mental health network is amending its model of support for people in crisis, to include more peer support and developing more services aimed at supporting people experiencing homelessness.

The funding helped Healthwatch organisations build their relationships with local groups, and the initiative is being continued for a further year. Local

Healthwatch also benefited from the opportunity to supplement their community intelligence by attending the sessions and speaking to local people about their work priorities.

Find out more: [mike@healthwatchrichmond.co.uk](mailto:mike@healthwatchrichmond.co.uk)

### ***West Yorkshire and Harrogate STP***

Healthwatch organisations have worked in partnership across a number of the STP priorities in the last 12 months, keeping people's views at the heart of discussions on areas including urgent care, stroke and health optimisation. The six local Healthwatch helped deliver independent engagement at pace, reaching out into a range of communities.

For example, Healthwatch supported the development of the 'Hear See & Treat' model of emergency care in partnership with Yorkshire Ambulance Service in autumn 2016. Overall, 147 face to face sessions were held across West Yorkshire and the Harrogate District. In addition to the outreach sessions, Healthwatch used Facebook, Instagram and third party website advertising to promote an explainer animation that was developed to explain the proposal. Over 306,600 people saw the adverts and 137,437 people viewed the video.

Rory Deighton from Healthwatch Kirklees said: "The combination of scale and pace, alongside the independence that Healthwatch organisations bring to the engagement process has worked well for our whole partnership. We've used the same strategies to engage around [follow up appointments](#), [stroke services](#) and [NHS Dentistry](#)." Find out more: [roly.deighton@healthwatchkirklees.co.uk](mailto:roly.deighton@healthwatchkirklees.co.uk), 01924 450379 You can read more about the 'Hear See and Treat' work [here](#)

### ***North-East Essex and Suffolk STP***



If you can explain a Sustainability and Transformation Plan to a 10-year-old, you can explain it to anyone. That's the thinking behind Healthwatch Essex's film on STPs. Healthwatch Harriet grills NHS bosses, cutting to the chase and getting answers to the questions that people aren't ask. The film aims to cut through all the management speak, providing a clear picture of what the STP will mean and how the changes will affect people.

Tom Nutt, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Essex said: "Unsurprisingly when you say 'Sustainability and Transformation Plan' to someone they generally glaze over.

"So, we felt there was a real need to help explain just how important they are and why people should have their say about what they want to achieve. Healthwatch Harriet has proved an innovative way to not only get health bosses to talk about STPs, but to do so in a way people can understand."

Take a look at [The Film](#).

## **Dorset Clinical Services Review**

“Healthwatch Dorset sees its role in relation to the CCG as being a consumer champion, recognisably and robustly standing up for the rights of patients and the public (including the right to be involved and consulted) while remaining determinedly neutral when it comes to expressing an opinion on any of the particular options in the proposals. We are committed to doing whatever we can to make sure that everybody knows and understands what's being proposed, and that everybody who has an opinion gets the chance to express it, to have it heard, to have it counted and to have it responded to.”

Martyn Webster, Healthwatch Dorset

Since late 2014, Dorset CCG has been running a county wide Clinical Services Review (CSR) – looking at the need to change and designing proposals for future provision of healthcare within both acute hospitals and the community. A 12-week public consultation on these proposals finished at the end of February 2017.

Healthwatch Dorset helped the CCG to review approaches and ensure effective, timely and accessible opportunities for local people to be informed and get involved.

They met regularly to explore and develop solutions to the challenges to meaningful engagement, such as:

- Involve people from the beginning – harnessing their local knowledge
- Reach out widely across the county
- Getting the communication right and communicating in language people understand
- Getting more involvement than usual from the general public (the silent majority)
- Making it real for people - what would the proposals mean in practice for particular people?
- Acknowledging that the presentation of data and research evidence (e.g. better clinical outcomes) on its own does not necessarily result in acceptance. People's actions and decisions are often driven more by experience and perception
- The importance of not being defensive or having an "us and them" attitude - but rather welcoming and listening to different views and opinions.

Throughout the engagement and public consultation, Healthwatch Dorset encouraged local people to take part. This included working closely with the NHS on social media, and passing on information that enabled the programme to regularly update its Frequently Asked Questions and evolve its approach to consultation events and documentation.

Frances Aviss, engagement and consultation lead, Dorset CCG, commented: “We were able to take a step back, reflect on Healthwatch advice and combine this with suggestions from local people and our own knowledge and experience to develop approaches to address these challenges. We strongly encourage others to foster a

regular, open and honest relationship with their local Healthwatch – their candid, independent advice is of huge value. Our working relationship is based on:

- trust and honesty
- a common aim to achieve the best outcomes for local people
- a recognition that we have different perspectives and will not always agree
- an acknowledgement that each perspective is valid and contributes to the whole picture.”

Dorset CCG and Healthwatch Dorset continue to have a constructively challenging relationship, most recently demonstrated in Healthwatch Dorset’s publication of a report into the public consultation process, to which the CCG has responded.

### **Key pointers for STPs and Healthwatch working together**

- Local Healthwatch knowledge of previous engagement, community needs and networks, and potential engagement approaches, is a valuable asset for STPs to draw on. Healthwatch can facilitate involvement via existing activities and can be commissioned to support dialogue in identified priority areas, as in the example from South West London.
- Healthwatch organisations will benefit from networking together across the STP area and coordinating approaches on representation in STP governance and workstreams. Many Healthwatch have found it helpful to review STP published proposals and identify priorities to work on, in partnership with other local Healthwatch in the STP area.
- As STPs begin to implement their plans, Healthwatch can play a valuable role in bringing service user insights to inform implementation.
- STPs and Healthwatch should build their relationship, considering how Healthwatch can be systematically involved in emerging governance structures – for example, through a stakeholder board.

### **Want to know more?**

- For a discussion or advice on how your STP can work with local Healthwatch, contact [england.stpengagement@nhs.net](mailto:england.stpengagement@nhs.net)
- The full Next Steps on the NHS Five Year Forward View document : <https://www.england.nhs.uk/five-year-forward-view/>
- More information on STPs: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/stps/>

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<sup>i</sup> [www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/healthwatch-network-reveals-public’s-health-and-care-priorities-2017](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/healthwatch-network-reveals-public’s-health-and-care-priorities-2017)

<sup>ii</sup> [www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/201702\\_five\\_principles\\_of\\_good\\_engagement.pdf](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/201702_five_principles_of_good_engagement.pdf)