

		THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

Open Report on behalf of Sarah Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer, and Dr Brian Wookey, Board Member, Healthwatch Lincolnshire

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	22 October 2014
Subject:	Healthwatch Lincolnshire

Summary:

On 19 March Healthwatch Lincolnshire presented to the Health Scrutiny Committee an update of their engagement work, enter and view visits, policy and strategic priorities and explanation of the new systems in place which capture patient, service user and carer experiences. Healthwatch Lincolnshire was invited to return to update the committee in October 2014 with an outline of what key themes have emerged from patient, service user and carer voices.

Actions Required:

1. To consider the current research work completed by Healthwatch Lincolnshire and provide any additional guidance or advice on 4 areas (GP Did Not Attend, Young People concerns, mental health services and Pharmacy services).
2. To consider the invitation by Healthwatch Lincolnshire to all members of the Health Scrutiny Committee to attend presentation (on 1st December) of the 4 reports linked to action 1.
3. To consider the emerging and continued themes Healthwatch Lincolnshire has identified and provide any additional guidance, support and advice as to next steps for these areas.

1. Background

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has now been gathering patient, service user and carer experiences of health and care services for 18 months. During this period the systems we have put in place has enabled us to collate and report patient, service user and carer experiences on a monthly basis. Our increased engagement activities have resulted in a steady rise each month of individual formally reported health and care experiences. We are also one of the only organisations that share patient, service user and carer voices on a 'real time' basis with the wider health and care economy. Our monthly summary report is distributed to the NHS England Area Team, Healthwatch England, the four Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Lincolnshire Community Services NHS Trust, the Care Quality Commission, Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit and the County Council.

In addition to sharing of individual comments we are now also able to identify what the largest patient themes are each month. This enables us to draw down overall trends and confidently report which health and care services are causing the greatest concern.

- The overall number of reported items Healthwatch Lincolnshire has received to date (April 2013 – September 2014) is 927.
- The overall number of monthly reports produced and circulated is 159.
- Individual service providers are required to acknowledge escalated items we send to them. In some incidences we also ask them to provide further information as to why situations have occurred and what actions are being put in place to improve services. Whilst many of the responses are purely an acknowledgement where there has been identified actions we have started to pull these together in an impact document (see attached).

During the past year the two largest areas that have raised the most comments include mental health and GP services (in particular difficulties with GP appointments). Other partnership work led to focusing our activities and includes a request from the Pharmacy LPN who asked if we could help them with a national initiative and following the CQC Looked After Children Inspection in Lincolnshire there was a request for Healthwatch Lincolnshire to learn more about young people's experiences. As a result between May to November we have been carrying out 4 specific projects which include:

1. GP - Did Not Attend – whilst we recognise there are a number of reasons why patients experience difficulties getting an appointment with their GP, we were drawn to the number of people failing to attend their GP appointment. This issue was raised by many comments from both GP Practices and Patient Participation Groups. Failing to attend statutory service appointments seems to be a growing problem. Through our research work we have estimated the cost in Lincolnshire of patients failing to attend their GP appointment is over £6 m.
2. Mental Health – we are looking into the views of patients and service users currently accessing the system and those that have yet to enter the system. We are also

linking in to the Public Health work including the Mental Health Needs Analysis and Mental Health Strategy to ensure there correlation between the 2 pieces of work.

3. Young People – over 1300 young people were surveyed as part of our research gathering. From this we have identified self-harm, smoking, drug use, access to information and support services, alcohol consumption and bullying as issues for young people in Lincolnshire.
4. Pharmacy – with increasing demands on GP's, A & E and Walk in Centre services the pharmacy network would like more patients to use the range of additional services (not just collecting medications) available at pharmacies e.g. diabetes & cholesterol checks, weight management, minor injury treatments and wanted to find out what the current awareness is of these additional services. We have been asking our members and the wider population in what ways they currently use their local pharmacy to get an initial picture.

Reports for all of the above work are being produced, the findings and reports will be presented to key representatives of Lincolnshire health and care economy on the 1 December 2014. Members of the Health Scrutiny Committee are invited to attend the event on 1 December 2014.

Emerging issues and continued themes – Healthwatch Lincolnshire has now put an action plan in place which currently has over 30 potential areas of research or involvement work. But, it is important that we focus on quality and as a result must prioritise our work accordingly, the following areas are high up on our agenda for the next period:

- a. Cancer services – we have received information from both patients and partners that suggests there is a serious problem with the delivery of cancer services in Lincolnshire.
- b. Patient and carer complaints – in particular how ULHT are tackling unresolved complaints.
- c. Men's health – we have identified that a significant number more women than men share their health and care experiences. We would like to help to redress the balance and at the same time raise some awareness of the need for men to present earlier when they think something is going wrong.
- d. Enter & View revisit to ULHT A & E – following our 3 week assessment of the 3 A & E sites in January 2014, in our role as a watchdog we are working with ULHT to assess their action plan and check implementation of change.
- e. Enter & View visits to care homes & hospitals re discharge and care planning – Discharge from hospital into a care home is a major issue: the national cost to the NHS of readmission within hours or days due to lack of a care plan is into the £ billions. For instance Healthwatch Lincolnshire has received a number of stories of older patients being sent back to care homes or their own homes (they live alone) in the middle of the night, in their nightclothes with no consideration what impact this has on them.

2. Conclusion

Healthwatch Lincolnshire is keen to receive comments, advice and guidance from Health Scrutiny Committee for our current work. We would particularly like to support any areas of concern your committee may have if the situation arises complete any research on behalf of your committee.

3. Consultation

This is not a direct consultation item. However, liaison and co-operation between Healthwatch Lincolnshire and the Health Scrutiny Committee is likely to develop further, leading to the continued exchange of information on key health issues over the coming years.

4. Appendices – Healthwatch Lincolnshire Impact Document

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Sarah Fletcher, who can be contacted on 01205 820892 or sarah.fletcher@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk

Impact of Patient and Carer Voice

One of the most important roles of Healthwatch Lincolnshire is to ask health and care service providers what changes they are putting in place as a result of patient and carer feedback. This document provides a summary of key responses received up to July 2014.

Healthwatch Lincolnshire always advise patients and carers to use the PALS and POWhER complaints services, or to contact the provider direct to discuss their individual issues. As a result many of the responses we receive are dealt with directly by the provider and therefore have not been listed in this document.

Summary: April 2013 – July 2014

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust – patients could not locate a Friends and Family Test leaflet in A&E; no contact details on leaflet to send completed leaflet back. Healthwatch Lincolnshire Enter & View visits also highlight leaflet concerns.

Hospital have updated leaflet with contact details and taken part in free trial of text message response.

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust – Carer raised concerns about understanding of mental health needs for patients.

The Trust recognises the concerns and have put in place Mental Capacity Act training for both nurses and medical teams to include junior doctors as part of their training (including power of attorney).

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust – Patient raised concerns with regards to medical records missing from their file on more than one occasion.

Hospital recognised this issue and raised it at one of their Listening in Action events. As a result they have introduced better systems, training and reviews. This has not only led to better maintenance of patient records but cost saving to the trust.

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) – large number of concerns raised by patients and carers with regards to support for people with mental health conditions.

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has continued to raise concerns with LPFT and South West Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group and have escalated on five occasions information that we considered serious because the patient required immediate support. In September we will be meeting with all relevant organisations to consider next steps in improving mental health services.

“ Hereward Medical Practice in Bourne – patient contacted us as they were having problems over the last three years getting an appointment with GP.

Practice responded that they have an on-call doctor for patients that need to be seen urgently and a ring-back system. They have also put in place an open access clinic every Monday.

“ Residents raised concerns about the cessation of the Warden Control Schemes as they felt “abandoned and left to fend for themselves”.

Healthwatch Lincolnshire contacted Lincolnshire County Council to ask how the transition of the Wellbeing Service has been implemented across the county. Lincolnshire County Council visited residents to ensure services were in place and assured us they were overseeing a 3-month plan.

“ United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust – concerns raised by visually impaired people as they felt a majority of staff have little idea of how to support people with a visual impairment. In addition, there has been a request for better signage in the Ophthalmology Department.

The Trust acknowledged this issue and will arrange awareness sessions across all three sites and invite the person raising the issue to be involved in helping raise better awareness. The Trust will also arrange to meet with the Blind Society to discuss better signage for the department.

“ Patients and carers have continued to raise concerns about the waiting times for responses to their complaints at United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust.

The Trust acknowledge their complaints process has not been satisfactory and are currently implementing new policies, complaints teams (across all three sites) and prioritising the backlog of complaints (July 2014).

“ Patients at Sutterton GP Surgery had concerns about the parking provision at the surgery and requested better ground marking would help.

The practice staff and PPG have discussed this and have agreed to put up car parking notices in the surgery and on their website (July 2014). The Surgery has requested a quote to have yellow lines marked near disabled ramp.

Feedback has been received from a number of GP surgeries across Lincolnshire as a result of the items we have shared with them. They have shared the actions they have put in place. These include raising concerns at their practice and PPG

meetings; setting up new confidential reception areas; better appointment systems and improved signage.

“ United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust had items raised concerning cancelled appointments and admission for surgery as the patient was left to wait several hours before surgery.

The Trust are in the process of reviewing the times for admission by staggering arrival times as they recognise that everyone arriving at the same time can result in unnecessary longer waits.

“ Healthwatch Lincolnshire has received a number of concerns raised by patients with regard to availability of medicines at pharmacies.

The response received from the Cooperative Pharmacy in Lincoln agreed this is a concern as pharmacies across the county are all struggling with medicine supply issues. This issue has been raised via representative bodies i.e. Pharmacy Service Negotiating Committee with the Government but (July 2014) they do not appear to perceive there is a problem. Change in Government policies has led to problems with the supply of medication and as a result patients have suffered.

“ GP Appointments – significant numbers of patients have raised concerns about their ability to access timely appointments with their GP.

Healthwatch Lincolnshire as a result of continued patient feedback is (July 2014) assessing the problem and will be working with CCGs, NHS England and GP practices to assess the situation and agree possible actions to improve service.

“ In December 2013, Healthwatch Lincolnshire raised serious concerns with United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust with regard to the significant number (1,200) of patients on the deferred to provider list for Dermatology. We asked what impact this may have on patient safety and care.

United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust provided a detailed response explaining the reasons behind the problem and assured us that patient referrals were graded as urgent or routine. In future, patients would be placed on the waiting list and a capacity plan put in place. In addition, resources would be made to enable the expansion of the GP with a special interest-led community dermatology service. All of this led to significant improvement in the dermatology waiting list.

Summary: August 2014 –



Significant number of residents/patients from Woodhall Spa area contacted Healthwatch Lincolnshire with a number of concerns about the pharmacy service provided by Boots Chemist in the town. Healthwatch Lincolnshire contacted Boots to highlight the concerns being raised.

Boots acknowledged the problems their pharmacy was experiencing and as a result have implemented an improvement plan including improved queuing time for prescriptions, increased working hours and appointment of a new pharmacist store Manager. Local residents have already contacted Healthwatch Lincolnshire to say the service has significantly improved.

