

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest

Annual
Report

2014/2015





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Notes from the Operational Lead



Mark Sanders, Operational Lead

Welcome to the second annual report from Healthwatch Bracknell Forest. 2014/15 has been a challenging year for Healthwatch Bracknell Forest with a number of national and local changes in health and social care.

The approach of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has been to try and influence service design before implementation leading to more patient friendly services. We also take this proactive and collaborative approach with NHS trusts and other providers when dealing with issues and concerns raised by the public which means we are less likely to use our statutory powers which reduces tensions which can arise from formal visits.

We have formed some very positive relationships with key management staff within Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust, who now run not only Frimley Park Hospital, but also Wexham Park and Heatherwood Hospitals following the acquisition in October 2014. During the year we have introduced a monthly meeting with the patient and public

experience team which allows us to share the public's feedback about services leading to small but significant changes across all sites.

As the Operational Lead it is my responsibility to represent the patients and public on the Health and Wellbeing Board and other strategic decision making bodies. Having this consistent representation ensures no gaps in information or delays in reporting urgent issues to the management board and the wider public. Having the resource of local feedback and the knowledge and experiences of the consortium members to refer to is invaluable to me to fulfil this function.

Although our community and engagement strategy has led to a significant increase in our website, social media and digital communications, the importance of face-to-face community engagement cannot be over emphasised.

Volunteers are essential to the delivery of local Healthwatch. Along with some of our fellow network members, we found recruitment challenging. Direct access to the national Do-It website, facilitated by Healthwatch England after we raised the issue, along with our increased community presence has led to an increase in the number of volunteers recruited in the last year.

During 2015/16 we will continue to collaborate as well as maintaining an independent stance on what people want in the ever changing world of health and social care.



About Healthwatch Bracknell Forest

We are here to make health and social care better for ordinary people. We believe that the best way to do this is by designing local services around their needs and experiences.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care.

We are uniquely placed as a network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

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.

Our Aims

- To give local people a voice in the design, commissioning, evaluating and improvement of local health and social care services
- To provide information so that local people can make informed choices about health and social care services
- To signpost local people to other organisations that can help them, including those that will support them to make a complaint about health and social care services or to help them access support and services.

The organisations that make up the consortium



How we operate

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is a consortium of local community and voluntary organisations whose representatives, alongside public members, form a management board.

The Ark Trust Ltd is the lead consortium organisation and also hosts Healthwatch Bracknell Forest.

The consortium has successfully had their contract to provide Healthwatch extended by a further year until 2016.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has 3 permanent staff positions.



Engaging with people who use health and social care services

Understanding people's experiences

Engagement with the public is the most significant element of our work; without it we cannot truly represent the patient and public voice.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has successfully implemented a balanced communications and engagement strategy - raising awareness of local Healthwatch, local services and local health and social care issues. Website and digital communications have increased four-fold over the last year which has freed up the local team to do a lot more community engagement events and talk to people face-to-face.

This steady increase in the number of people engaging with the service has allowed us to gather, over time, a clearer picture of the public's experiences.

In 2014/2015 we received **2125** comments from individuals about local health and social care services

In addition to these pieces of feedback from the public we are able to understand people's experiences by:

- Monthly feedback from consortium members
- Attending events in the community
- Supporting and working with the Patient Assembly

- Healthwatch Voices; events for the local community and voluntary sector
- Fortnightly bulletins
- Social media discussions
- On-line polls
- Attending patient involvement groups (hospital trusts), community partnership forums (CCGs) and partnership boards (local authority)

The Department of Health and Healthwatch England have identified groups of people that local Healthwatch must seek to engage with.

Young people (under 21) and older people (over 65).

Three of the consortium organisations work with children and families including young carers. They are able to provide us with monthly feedback on the key issues they are facing.

During the multi-agency delivery of self-care week initial contacts were made with the local college. Healthwatch staff have been able to present to students and get them involved with promoting Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and collecting feedback on services from their peers.

In January 2015, Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group entered into a contract with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest to support and promote the engagement of 14-21 year olds.



Bracknell & Wokingham College Students promoting Healthwatch during Rag Week

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is a member of the local dementia action alliance, attends the older people forum and has visited community groups such as the local chapter of the National Pensioners Convention. We also had a stand at Ascot Retirement Fair which attracted over 2000 visitors.

The consortium is actively looking to recruit a local group that represents older people.

People volunteering or working in Bracknell Forest but who may not live in the area

Community events such as self-care week held in locations such as the shopping centre promoted engagement with the area's working population.

Healthwatch Voices engages with those who work for and volunteer for local community and voluntary sector organisations.

We will be attending the Business in the Community events in 2015/2016.

Disadvantaged people and those believed to be vulnerable

The groups that make up the consortium work with local people who have disabilities or long-term conditions and their carers. They are able to provide us with monthly feedback on the key issues they are facing.

The Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website has accessibility functions and information can be provided in alternative formats including easy read.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is able to deliver accessible presentations, briefings and engagement events utilising the experience of consortium members as well as its own staff and volunteers.

“Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (BACCG) have worked closely with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest during the year and value the contribution they have made. They have particularly supported the engagement of local patients and public through their facilitation of the Patient Assembly, participation in Self Care week and other local activities, supporting recruitment of HealthMakers, participation in developing future plans for primary care and their participation in the Community Partnership Forum. Their proactive and constructive approach to raising issues relating to the quality of local services has also been welcome and helps to ensure improving patient experience is a top priority across the local NHS.”

Ally Green, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement, BACCG

People who are seldom heard

In addition to those groups already identified, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest wants to engage with others who are seldom heard. These include people of disadvantaged socio-economic status, ethnic minority groups, patients in our local high-security hospital and members of the community who currently do not have regular contact with health and social care services; particularly men.

The area of Bracknell Forest is not considered, by national standards, to be an area of deprivation however it has identified pockets such as Great Hollands. This is also an area that has a high level of multiple occupancy housing which puts additional strain on local health and social care resources.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has continued its community engagement work in the area and developed its relationship with key members of the community such as local councillors.

Healthwatch has met with the local Citizen's Advice Bureau to promote sign-posting between the two organisations.

Historically, Bracknell Forest has not had a large ethnic minority population but recent statistics suggest this is changing. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has promoted self-care week and health checks to a local Thai community group and encouraged engagement with local Healthwatch.

People who do not have regular contact with health and social care services continue to be a challenge to engage. We have run targeted social media campaigns and attended community events that do not have a health and social care focus - such as residents associations and school fetes.

Enter & View

Enter and View powers can be used as a corrective action to sort out problems but the emphasis for Healthwatch Bracknell Forest during 2014/2015 is on promoting Enter and View as a way of engaging with providers to explore issues collaboratively before they become problems; as part of an ongoing conversation and process of continuous improvement.

This preventative approach to Enter and View sits alongside our approach and engagement with providers detailed later in the report.

In addition to Healthwatch staff, 17 people have been/are in the process of training to become Enter & View reps at the end of the year 2014/15. Training is delivered in a variety of ways - to suit all accessibility needs.

7 Enter and View visits were conducted during the year. Of these 5 were "invited" by providers. In addition the team has assisted with PLACE (Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment) assessments.

The outcomes from these visits include:

- Consistent and safer working practices on wards where obtaining patient consent was difficult; including use of appropriate restraint and the importance of documentation
- Improved hospital food options for people after abdominal surgery
- Provision of free water in accident and emergency department
- Cleaner children's accident and emergency environment
- Clearer identification of staff through ID badges and uniform
- Improved external areas in high-secure hospital



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 provide people with information about local services and help them to navigate the health and social care system by:

Information

- Fortnightly bulletins
- Publish news stories on our website and social media channels
- A calendar of health and social events available on the website
- Disseminate time sensitive alerts through all channels and to all contacts
- Agenda items at community meetings and the Patient Assembly

“Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has been a key partner in promoting the monthly Joint Prevention and Self-Care Board’s health and social care campaigns. Members of Healthwatch have also contributed a significant amount of time and effort in organising, promoting and running Self-Care Week 2014.”

Matthew Clift, Self-Care Project Manager

Signposting

In addition to the links to NHS Choices, Bracknell Forest social care information, independent advocacy, localised self-help (CCG website) and other relevant services on our website, the Healthwatch team are able to draw upon the resources available locally to provide signposting and guidance. People can contact us by email, telephone or drop in to the office. Many of our consortium organisations have staff and volunteers that work with families and individuals and are also able to provide this information.

202 individuals have been provided with signposting, advice and guidance

No two (or three!) requests for signposting are the same:

Case 1

A gentleman contacted us by telephone. His wife had been discharged from hospital and the commode he had been supplied with had broken and he was unsure how to get this replaced as he was not sure who had arranged it.

A few telephone calls established that it was the OT department of Farnham Hospital who had provided the equipment and a replacement was arranged.

Feedback on our service - *“Doing a great job!”*



Case 2

Contact was made with Healthwatch through one of the consortium organisations. A severely disabled lady was seeking advice about her personal budget from social care. She had specific support needs to form and maintain an intimate relationship but did not want this to be discussed with or provided by her existing support workers.

The Healthwatch team researched the issues raised and discovered there was no specific universal guidance available. This led to an information request being generated to the local adult social care team. This response and details of a specialist advocacy service were given to the lady to help inform her of her options.

Case 3

Healthwatch were contacted by a patient who could not find how to make a complaint on their GP's website. They declined offers of advocacy signposting. The Practice Manager was contacted and, with the patient's consent, contact details were given.

“The Healthwatch team has taken up several requests for me on behalf of local residents and always returned very useful information to support their concerns. It is good to have a resource that can delve into health issues and that suggests solutions and signposts further support.”

Cllr Mary Temperton, Great Hollands North

Advocacy

When providing advice and guidance we will also, where relevant, signpost people to independent advocacy. The two main local providers, SEAP (who provide NHS complaint advocacy) and Just Advocacy (who provide their service to local people in receipt of social care services) also sit on the consortium.





Influencing decision makers with evidence from local people

Producing reports and recommendations to effect change

In addition to the outcomes achieved from reports and recommendations made following Enter and View visits (Page 9) Healthwatch Bracknell Forest issued a report following the analysis of feedback received on local services collected during Self-Care Week (November 2014)

Although no recommendations were made in the report, the evidence has been used to support Healthwatch Bracknell Forest's work - particularly with access to out-patients, GPs and promotion of alternative choices to the Accident and Emergency department.

Due to the approach that Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has taken and its collaborative work with commissioners and providers of health and social care services, the voice of the patients, service users and the public is included in the process of continuous improvement. The feedback we receive is communicated directly to commissioners and providers at different meetings, providing anecdotal evidence to support data such as quality statistics.

This approach does mean that much of our work is not visible to the wider community and one of our tasks for 2015/2016 is to communicate to the community how their feedback has been utilised and the positive outcomes it has made.

“Mark and his team are always there to remind us of what the patients and public require of us, his comments are valued by Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (BACCG). They are both challenging and supportive.”

Jennie Ford, Practice Manager and BACCG Board Member

Putting local people at the heart of improving services

The operational lead represents patients and public at a strategic level, including on the Health and Wellbeing Board. This approach to representation by an individual with extensive knowledge of the local health and social care landscape ensures consistency of approach and knowledge between the inter-linking boards, forums and committees and high quality information and intelligence sharing between the public, the commissioners and the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest management board.

This does not mean that local people are excluded from direct representation. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest are able to mobilise their resources and contact over 750 people on its database to ask for consultation and feedback. This can also be used to seek patient representation on



both local and national commissioning and monitoring panels.

Volunteer community champions are also used to seek input into these processes.

“Healthwatch in Bracknell Forest are an effective conduit for our residents’ opinions, concerns and ideas. As such, they have helped us improve quality and deliver better outcomes.”

Dr Lisa McNally, Consultant in Public Health, Member of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Working with others to improve local services

CQC

We have escalated two issues to the national health and social care regulator; the CQC

- Serious concerns with patient care on a specific ward at an acute trust
- Concerns about patient re-registration at dentists

We did not recommend that the CQC conduct any special reviews (themed investigations) or investigations (responsive inspections) however they did follow up the concerns about patient re-registration at dentists and confirmed that patients were actually being asked to sign consent for treatment forms rather than re-registration forms and issued a reminder to all local dentists to explain to patients the reasons for the forms and the procedures.

Due to the internal re-structuring of the CQC we have not been able to meet or make contact with all local teams

Healthwatch England

We share intelligence with Healthwatch England through regular contact with our regional Development Officer. We also share reports on Yammer. We have not used the formal escalation policy and procedures.

Bracknell Forest Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest attends the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel as a formal observer which means we are invited to speak. Together we both raised concerns about the reception area of the local Urgent Care Centre and continue to monitor the situation.

We need to develop this relationship in 2015/2016 and also become involved in the Adult Social Care & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Panel and Children, Young People & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

“Bracknell Forest Council’s Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel values the work of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest, and having their representative join us at each of our Panel meetings has been helpful. Going forward, the Panel sees its relationship growing with Healthwatch, as we aim to build our understanding of the service users’ perspective and therefore enhance our representation of their interests.”

Richard Beaumont, Head of Overview & Scrutiny, Bracknell Forest Council



Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest attends the monthly Bracknell and Ascot GP council as representatives of the public and we encourage the wider community to attend. From February 2015 Patient and Public Involvement is a regular agenda item (we alternate this slot with the CCG lay member of the governing body)

East Berks CCG Quality Committee meets monthly. This is a key and informative meeting where intelligence is disseminated from all parties, discussed and the impact of national policies on local implementation.

“Healthwatch Bracknell Forest have been an active member of the CCG Quality Committee during the last year and have made an invaluable contributions to the important areas discussed on patient safety, quality of care and patient experience. They have also brought a different perspective to the discussions. The CCG applauds all the valuable work that Healthwatch do and at each committee meeting Healthwatch are able to share the work they have been doing. They also share any themes or trends with the CCG from concerns raised to them.”

Jo Greengrass, Deputy Director of Nursing - Quality and Safety, Slough CCG, Bracknell & Ascot CCG and Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead CCG

Bracknell and Ascot CCG have re-commissioned Healthwatch to provide independent support and facilitation of the Patient Assembly and development of the Patient Participation Groups that make up its membership.

GP Surgeries

In addition to the support given to the development of Patient Participation Groups and following the first CQC inspection reports on local GP surgeries, an offer has been made to all local practice managers to assist with improvement of patient experience.

Non-clinical issues at GP Surgeries - such as access and staff attitude - continue to be the most frequent concern fed back to us.

“A necessary and efficient service that is paramount for the safety of our patients in an ever changing National Health Service. Bracknell Healthwatch has been very successful in coordinating the Patient Assembly that ensures the patient voice is heard locally and nationally.”

Roland Cundy, Business Manager, Binfield Surgery

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

In addition to our reports and recommendations made through Enter and View, we engage with the trust at the quarterly Patient Involvement Group. Following the acquisition of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals by Frimley Park, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest also co-ordinates and collates intelligence and issues from 7 other local Healthwatch and



meets monthly with the Head of Patient Involvement.

“Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has actively engaged with Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust. They make a positive and invaluable contribution to helping us improve patient experience together in partnership with the local population.”

Claire Marshall, Head of Patient Involvement, Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

Bracknell Social Care Teams

The consortium groups represent their members and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest on relevant boards and forums such as the Learning Disability Partnership Board. (Wokingham, Bracknell and District Mencap)

Multi-agency strategic groups

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest is an active member of groups such as Better Futures for All, Collaboration for Improvement, Better Care Fund and the Primary Care Steering Group. These meetings allow us to feed back the concerns of patients and the public and ensure these influence strategy and the commissioning of services. On average 35-40 such meetings are attended a quarter.

West London Mental Health NHS Trust

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has worked with trust staff and patients to complete PLACE assessments in areas that have restricted patient movement due to security reasons. Links have been developed with the Independent Mental Health Advocacy Service, service leaflets

are now available in visitor areas of Broadmoor Hospital and we have attended a carers forum.

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest continues to work towards providing a full accessible service to the patients.

Quality Accounts

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest were given the opportunity to have oversight and comment before publication on the Quality Accounts from:

- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
- South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust
- West London Mental Health NHS Trust

The responses we provided to these Quality Accounts were based on the feedback and intelligence on services gathered from the public during the year.

Responses to information requests

All providers and commissioners that were asked for information responded.



Healthwatch Bracknell Forest Bugs



Our plans for 2015/16

Opportunities and challenges for the future

Although these are the current priorities for the next year, the board recognises that the health and social care landscape is ever-changing, so priorities may change in response to issues and consumer voice.

- **To continue to raise awareness of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest.**

To continue to evaluate, develop and implement the communication and engagement strategy.

- **Improve access to Primary Care Services.**

To work with stakeholders on developing extended hours that meet patients' needs and that all services are designed, commissioned and improved with the involvement of the local community.

- **Improve access to local out-patient appointments and clinics.**

To work with acute trusts to deliver appointments in local health facilities of the patients' choice and at times that suit the patient.

- **To increase representation from older people in Healthwatch Bracknell Forest management board and decision making processes.**

To identify a local older peoples community and voluntary group to join the consortium.

- **To increase the number of young people actively engaged with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and other health and social care commissioners and providers.**

To replicate engagement work carried out in 2014/15 with the local college in local secondary schools and to develop a youth patient forum.

- **To engage directly and regularly with the patients of Broadmoor Hospital.**

To develop a protocol of working without compromising patient care or security.

- **Raising the profile of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest with social care staff.**

Although consortium representatives are actively engaged with partnership boards and social care managers they are often unaware of their dual role; representing Healthwatch Bracknell Forest as well as their own group and membership.

- **To increase our activity within social care settings.**

To change public perception that Healthwatch is not just about health concerns!



Our governance and decision-making

Our board

Representatives from the organisations that make up the consortium sit on the management board. In April 2014 they were joined by two members of the public selected through a democratic election process. In April 2015 three public representatives will be elected at the annual public meeting. The two existing members have expressed their wish to stand again.

The Ark Trust Ltd is the charitable company (Reg. Charity No. 1098204) who gathered the consortium and powered the bid to the local authority. They are the organisation who holds the legal contract with Bracknell Forest Council to deliver Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and ultimately, the legal compliance of the contract lies with the directors of The Ark Trust Ltd.

All activity within the scope of the contract is governed by the management board. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has its own policies and procedures which can be viewed on the website.

<http://www.healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk/policies-and-procedures>

Management board meetings are held monthly and are open to members of the public to attend (excluding confidential agenda items) and all minutes are published on the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website. Staff from Healthwatch Bracknell Forest also attend to report and advise but do not have a vote in decision making. The lay member for Patient and Public Involvement for the Bracknell and

Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group is also invited as a contributor and observer.

An annual public meeting is held in a large community venue at the start of each financial year to give an overview of the previous year's activity, seek consultation on the forward work programme and to elect public representatives to sit on the management board.

How we involve lay people and volunteers in governance and decision making

- The Ark Trust Ltd has 10 Directors who are all volunteers
- There are 2/3 public representatives on the management board who are volunteers
- 2 of the consortium organisations have volunteer representatives on the management board



Financial information

INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		103340
Additional income		19960
Total income		123300

EXPENDITURE		
Office costs (includes rent, overheads, consumables)		9195
Staffing costs (includes consultancy and payments to consortium organisations for staff resource)		92465
Direct delivery costs (includes cost of CRM, volunteer expenses, venue hire, marketing materials)		17272
Total expenditure		118932
Balance brought forward		4368



Contact us

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We will be making this annual report publicly available by 30th June 2015 by publishing it on our website and circulating it to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group/s, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/s, and our local authority.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

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