



healthwatch



People as partners

What Healthwatch England has done over the last year.
2014-2015



This is an easy read version of
People as Partners.
Healthwatch England
Annual Report 2014 - 2015



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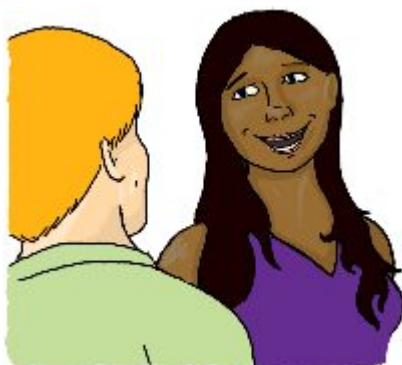
There are some words in this report that may be hard to understand. These are explained at the end of the report.



Healthwatch England is independent and helps people speak up about health and social care.



There is also a local Healthwatch in every area of England. They tell us what local people think about local health and social care services.



We make sure the government, NHS, health and social care services listen to the people who use them.



We are run by a group of people called a **committee**. They check we are working properly and talk to people to find out what they think.



What we want to see happen



We want people to have good health and social care services that listen to them and understand what they need.



This means people will be involved in planning services.



And people will have control over their care and support.



When services are not good enough, people will ask why and services will listen.



About this report



This is our third report to parliament.



This year we have been speaking up for people who use health and social care services.

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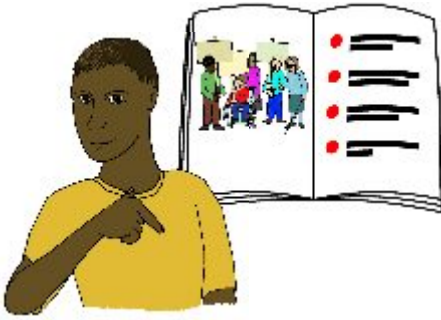
We have worked with local Healthwatch across England and talked with thousands of people.



They told us what we needed to tell the people who run health and social care services so they can make them better.

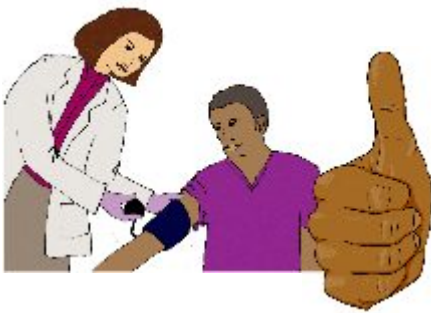


Our Consumer Principles



When we started in 2012 we asked people what they expected from health and care services.

From what you told us we wrote down the things that are most important.



We called these our 8 Consumer Principles:

1. You should get the important services you need



2. You should be able to use services



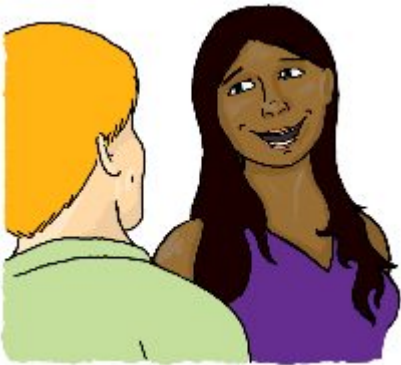
3. You should get respect and a good safe service



4. You should have information and learn



5. You should be able to choose



6. You should be listened to



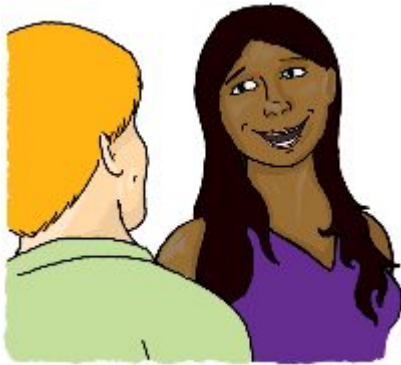
7. You should be involved



8. You should be able to live somewhere safe and healthy

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Over the last year we have worked on:



1. You should be listened to



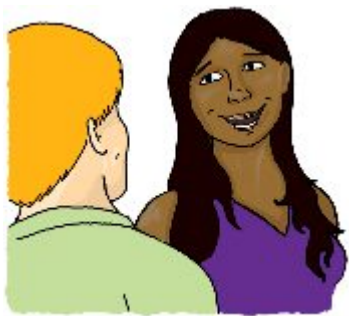
2. You should get respect and a good safe service



3. You should be able to use services



4. You should be involved



1. You should be listened to

Making the way complaints are dealt with better



It is important to be able to complain if you are unhappy with a health or social care service .



You need to be able to complain without worrying about what will happen to you. And know that something will be done to improve services.



People said they do not want others to go through what they have.



What we found out

People wanted:

- to be able to get information on how to complain



- complaining **not** to mean you get worse care



- to be listened to then something done to sort things out and someone to say they are sorry



- a way to complain that is easy to understand



- someone to support you to complain



- services to learn from what you say and improve.



What we did

We wrote a report about what we found out. Then talked with a lot of people and organisations about how to improve the way complaints are dealt with.



Parliament wrote a report that agreed with what we said on how to deal with complaints.



The Care Quality Commission will look more at complaints when they check services.



We worked with Citizens Advice to help them support people with complaints.



What next?

We will support local Healthwatch to check how well complaints are working.



They will work with local services to get better at dealing with complaints.

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We will support local Healthwatch that give advocacy services. And help all advocacy services to do well at speaking up about complaints.



2. You should get respect and a good safe service



Sending people home from hospital

Local Healthwatch told us hospitals and mental health services send people home without supporting them to feel ready.



Over 3 thousand people told us what had happened to them.



We looked most at :

- older people
- homeless people





- people with mental health problems.

What we found out



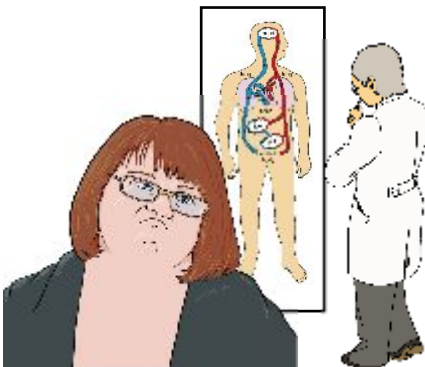
1. Services did not talk to each other. So some people had no lift home. Some did not have the medicine they needed.



2. People did not get the services they needed when they got home. So they often got ill again and went back in hospital.



3. Some people were not listened to and not given information about their illness.



4. Some people felt only their illness was looked at. Nobody listened to their worries about coping when they left hospital.



Story about getting a poor service

One woman told us that her father had to go to hospital for tests. He has **dementia**. He was in hospital for over 3 weeks.

While he was there:

- he fell and hit his head
- he was moved to 3 different wards
- they lost his teeth
- he was told different things were wrong with him.

He was confused and scared.

He was given no support when he went home. After 4 days he had to go back in hospital, he was ill.



What next?

This has been a problem for a long time. We have found some places that do this really well. We are working with the Department of Health to get services to work together on this.





3. You should be able to use services



Speaking up about local health services

We talked with over 11 thousand people about local health services like your GP and dentists.



What we found out

People who use local health services are very happy with them.



But a lot of people cannot get a local service.



There are 10 common problems:

1. Disabled people said they can have problems getting into buildings. And getting a time to see someone often does not fit with what a carer can do.



2. It can be hard to find an NHS dentist.



3. Sometimes people could not get a GP appointment. So they went to A and E at the hospital.



4. Deaf people and people who do not speak English well, can find it hard to talk with their GP. There is not always money for translators.



5. People could not always get an appointment with the GP they wanted to see. The NHS says you should be able to see the GP you want.



6. People did not always know which healthcare service to use. There is sometimes not enough information about pharmacists and walk-in centres.



7. People could feel rushed in appointments. There is not enough time to talk about everything you need to.



8. People did not know how to complain about their care.



9. Healthcare staff do not always treat people with respect. Sometimes staff can be nosy and rude.



10. People wanted clear and easy information to make the right decision about their care.



What we did

We wrote a report about all this. We showed it to the top people in health. We told them what we think needs to be done.



What next?

We will talk to more people. We want to know from certain groups what it is like for them.



We will make sure those planning health services for the future hear what we find out.



4. You should be involved

Speaking up about how your personal information is used



The NHS has a new programme called Care Data. They want to use your GP computer records to help them plan future services for the whole country.



Some people told us they did not understand how their information will be used because it was not explained clearly.



What we found out

People are happy for their personal information to be used when their name is kept private.



What we did

We talked with the NHS about how people felt.



We suggested a way to collect information that people say would make them trust how their information will be used.



This was things like:



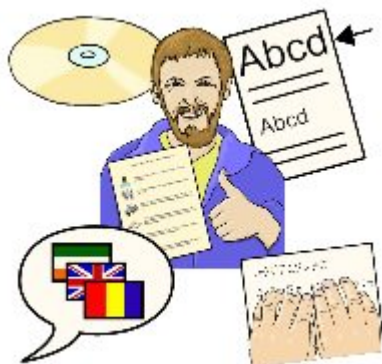
- you can see how your information is used



- your name is kept private



- you can decide not to have your personal information used

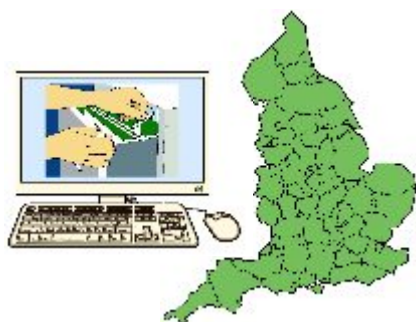


- good clear information about taking part.



What next

We will watch what happens.



Care Data information will now be tested in some areas.



We will support local Healthwatch to check if people understand how their Care Data information is used.



Speaking up in local areas



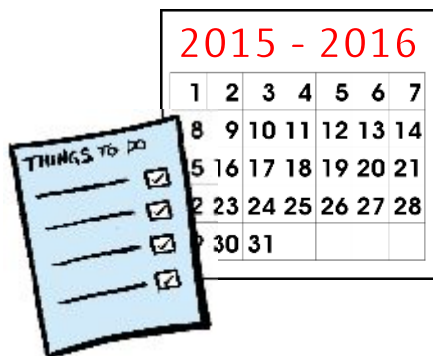
We have helped local Healthwatch be involved in big health care decisions in their area. This means local people have a stronger voice.



We have helped local Healthwatch have good relationships with organisations and important people in their area who make decisions about health and social care services.



We have had conferences and courses for local Healthwatch. This has helped them get to know each other and learn new skills.



The most important things for us to work on next year



In 2015 - 2016 Healthwatch England will:

Make sure your voices are heard

Our job is to make sure we speak up for people.



We want to make sure people get the health and social care they deserve.



Especially people whose voices may not be heard, like older people or people without a home.



Make sure people have a say in planning services

There are going to be changes in health and social care.



In the next year, we will be making sure the things people say they want from services are included in these changes.



Keep supporting and listening to local Healthwatch

We will make sure local Healthwatch get good training. So that they can give local people a strong voice to speak up.

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We will be a good value for money organisation

We are looking forward to planning for 2016 - 2021.



Thank you

Thank you to all the people and organisations that help us make sure people get the health and social care services they need.



How to contact us

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Hard words

Dementia - a serious illness that affects the memory and brain and makes people confused.

Transgender - people who feel that the body they were born into is not right for them.

This means they may want to change from being a man to a woman, or from a woman to a man.

Gender - being a man or a woman.

Credits



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