

The year ahead

Our business plan 2017-2018



About us

We are the independent consumer champion for health and care. Our job is to make sure that those who run health and care services understand and act on what really matters to people.

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

How we work

A local Healthwatch exists in every area of England. We support them to find out what people want from health and care services and to advocate for services that work for local communities.

Local Healthwatch also act as our eyes and ears on the ground, telling us what people think about local health and social care services. They seek the opinions of their communities about particular types of care, and they are also there to listen to any concerns the public bring to them.

At Healthwatch England, we provide tools and training to the local Healthwatch network to enable them to have the most useful conversations with their communities.

Our values

We use the information the network shares with us and our statutory powers to ensure the voice of the public is strengthened and heard by those who design, commission, deliver and regulate health and care services.

Everything we do is informed by our values – **Collaborative, Credible, Inclusive, Independent, and Influential**. By following these values, we are able to work with local Healthwatch and our partners to address the issues that matter most to the public.

Foreword

Jane Mordue, Chair of Healthwatch England

Our purpose at Healthwatch England - and across the Healthwatch network - is to put people at the heart of decisions about health and social care services.

During the last year, we have done much to ensure that our organisations are best placed to do just that. We're now offering more targeted support to the Healthwatch network, helping them to access the tools and training they need to make people's voices heard. We've also developed a new way to bring together and analyse the vast range of intelligence local Healthwatch gather about their communities' experiences of services to help influence change.

Health and social care is going through a huge period of change, so it's more important than ever that people have a say. We know that the public wants to be involved and that

without incorporating their experiences, services cannot truly meet the needs of those who use them.

It has been encouraging to see that not only are individuals increasingly keen to share their views, but there is also a real appetite amongst those designing, running and regulating services to listen to them. This year we have made the most of the infrastructure support available from our colleagues at the Care Quality Commission (CQC), enabling us to share resources, expertise and, most importantly, information about people's views of health and social care.

We look forward to developing this relationship further in the year ahead for the benefit of the communities we all serve. We will also work with other partners across health and social care to share our findings and our expertise regarding how best to find out what people think.

Our network is becoming an increasingly powerful agent for change and improvement. In the year ahead we will continue to use our unique connection to every area of England to put the needs of people at the forefront of decisions regarding health and social care.

Introduction

Imelda Redmond, National Director

Our business plan for 2017/18 sets out how we, in partnership with local Healthwatch, will build on our work from last year, into the next 12 months and beyond.

We will continue to focus on three key priorities to:

1. Support local Healthwatch to be a powerful advocate

We will provide leadership, guidance and advice to local Healthwatch to help provide a high quality service to the public.

As well as supporting local Healthwatch to engage their communities, we will also encourage local services to make use of the views collected to improve services.

We will champion the continued investment in their work.

2. Bring the public's views to the heart of national decisions

Our second priority will be to bring the experiences people share with the Healthwatch network to those making national decisions about the NHS and social care.

This will involve continuing to build our expertise in analysing the public's views and sharing this evidence with our statutory partners, and service providers.

3. Develop an effective Healthwatch England

We will continue our work to build an effective learning and values based organisation.

As well as supporting our Committee to discharge its statutory functions, we will continue to work in ways that delivers both impact and value for money.

Budget

To deliver this plan, we have a total budget of £2.8 million available for 2017-18. We estimate that £1.9 million of this budget will be used to pay for staff and committee costs, while £900,000 will be spent on the other resources we need to help achieve our priorities.

Putting in place a long-term strategy

Our society faces big challenges when it comes to people's health and the services that support us all. There are significant opportunities for services to better meet public expectations.

To have the greatest impact, our priorities need to reflect this changing world. This is why, in 2017/18, we will consult with the public, local Healthwatch and care professionals to develop a strategy that guides our future work.

Priority one

Support local Healthwatch to be a powerful advocate

What are our objectives?

- To understand and respond to the network's support needs.
- To support the network to engage their communities and encourage greater use of the views people share to drive improvements to care.
- To help local Healthwatch comply with legislation.
- To support the network to be sustainable.

What do we plan to do?

- Share an analysis of the Healthwatch network's operating models and continue to monitor local Healthwatch funding.
- Deliver a programme of support to help local Healthwatch: Share best practice and learn from one another.
- Provide an effective information and signposting service to the public.
- Engage their communities, involve them in reforms such as Sustainability and Transformation Plans and communicate people's views of care.
- Improve the quality and use of the evidence they gather.
- Recruit and manage their volunteers.

- Comply with legislation covering the management of personal information, as well as equalities and human rights.
- Strengthen relationships with key partners, including local authorities, the third sector, the NHS and CQC.
- Build their capacity to carry out their work.
- Continue to develop the digital systems that enable local Healthwatch to engage the public and share information with us and each other.
- Establish a common way for the network to understand and demonstrate the impact of their work.

What will be the impact?

- We will know the strengths and capacity of the network and where further help is needed.
- Our support will enable local Healthwatch to improve the quality of their service.
- The public will better understand the role of local Healthwatch and engagement will increase.
- The relationship between local Healthwatch and health and care decision makers will be stronger.
- Awareness of the evidence that the network gathers and its impact on care services will increase.

Budget (excluding staff costs): £278,000

Priority two

Bringing the public's views to the heart of national decisions about care

What are our objectives?

- To improve the way we gather and understand the experiences the public share with local Healthwatch.
- To develop a clear system for ensuring that those with the power to change services hear people's views.

What do we plan to do?

- Develop the way we capture and analyse people's views of health and social care.
- Make the evidence we gather accessible to the public and professionals.
- Build relationships with key health and social care decision makers.
- Deliver a communications and influencing strategy to make sure that the public's voice is heard.
- Track and raise awareness of the impact people's views have had on care.

What will be the impact?

- We will be able to identify the public's health and care concerns.
- Those who make decisions about NHS and social care will be able to access the information they need.
- National health and social care policies will take into account the views of the public.

- There will be greater awareness of the impact that sharing experiences of care can have.

Budget (excluding staff costs): £434,000

Priority three

Develop an effective Healthwatch England

What are our objectives?

- To continue to develop ways of working that deliver value for money.
- To develop a new long-term strategy for Healthwatch England.
- To support our Committee to deliver its statutory functions.
- To continue to build and maximise the capacity of our organisation.

What do we plan to do?

- Continue to work closely and effectively with the CQC and to share resources.
- Create a strategy which takes into account the views of the public and other stakeholders.
- Provide our Committee with the information it needs to make decisions, measure its impact on health and social care services, and make the most of its expertise.
- Develop and test new ways of working that maximise the potential of our new organisational structure.
- Identify a way to ensure that equality, diversity and human rights underpin everything that we do.

- Ensure we develop staff skills to help deliver our business plan and ensure that organisational learning is captured and used.

What will be the impact?

- We will gain further efficiencies by sharing more resources and systems with the CQC.
- Our strategy will enable us to focus on the issues of greatest importance to people.
- The Committee will continue to make informed, transparent decisions, and to maximise its contribution to our cause.
- We will see the benefits of our organisational structure, work efficiently, and deliver value for money.
- We will deliver our Public Sector Equality Duties.
- Our staff team will have the skills it needs, and good opportunities for development.

Budget (excluding staff costs): £188,000

Contact us

Healthwatch England
National Customer Service Centre
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA

www.healthwatch.co.uk

t: 03000 683 000

e: <mailto:enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk>

[@HealthwatchE](#)

facebook.com/HealthwatchE
