



Grateful today, powerful tomorrow

What Healthwatch England did in 2012 – 2013



Easy Read version of Healthwatch England
Annual Report 2012-2013



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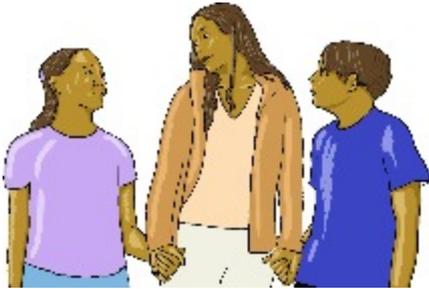
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About Healthwatch

Healthwatch England is the new independent organisation that helps people speak up about health and social care.



Independent means not part of the government so we can speak up for:

- children



- young people



- adults



- older people



- people who often get left out.



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



Health and social care services are not always good at listening and this could mean they give care that is not good.



We find out what health and social care services are like for people who use them. This report tells you some of the things they said.



We have only just started and have a lot to do but it will be exciting to make sure people who use health and social care services have more power to make them better.



About this report

This is our first report to tell Parliament what we did in the past year.



The report talks about:

- what is happening with health and social care in England and what people really think about the care they get

healthwatch

October 2012							March 2013						
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- what Healthwatch and local Healthwatch are for and what we did from October 2012 to March 2013.



Health and social care services are really important to people in England.



Healthwatch England and our 152 local Healthwatch groups working with other organisations to find out what is important to people. This is especially important when there are so many changes in health and social care.



We asked carers and people who use services about health and social care.



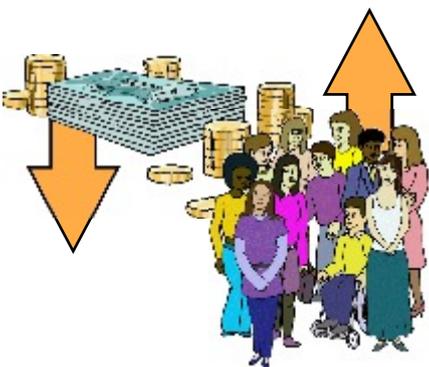
We found that things really need to change and people must understand their right to good safe care.



We will work on this with the public, people who use services and other people interested in health and social care.



This report is about the main things we found out and the work we will do next year.



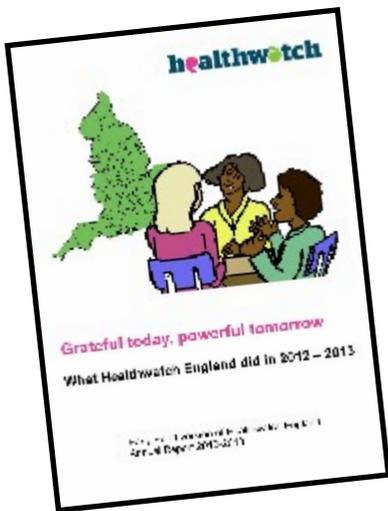
A lot of services have less money but have to support more people. This means they might have to work differently.



Some people are just **grateful** or pleased to get a service and say things are ok when they really think they need to change.



We want people who use health and social care services have more **power** to make them better.



That is why we called this report **Grateful today, powerful tomorrow**



Next year our report will say what rights people should expect when they use health and social care services.



Health and social care services

People are living longer and need more support to stay healthy and independent.



Most people will use health or social care services at some time.



For example:

- 17 out of every 100 people in England have a disability or a health problem that lasts for a long time.

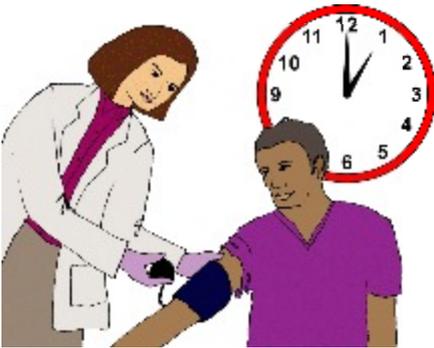


- 1 out of every 4 adults and 1 out of every 10 children and young people need support with their mental health.



Healthcare services

Most NHS services are free but some people have to pay for prescriptions, the dentist, eye checks or some other treatments.



The NHS sees about 27 thousand patients every hour.



The government spends £16 out of every £100 of its money each year on the NHS in England.

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People see their GP about 3 times a year.

Social care services



Social care services are only free for people who cannot afford to pay for them. The government has rules to work this out.



A lot of older people or their families pay for care at home or in the community.



Over a million disabled or older people get care and support from their local council.



The government spends £3 out of every £100 of its money each year on social care for adults, children and young people.



Over 27 thousand children and young people are in care that is organised by their local council.

Carers and unpaid care



Many people who cannot get health or social care services are supported by their family, friends or neighbours.



Over 5 million adults care for a friend or member of their family. Many of these carers are women.



More and more children care for someone from their family.



This care would cost millions of pounds if the government had to pay for it.



If carers do not get good support, they can get tired and ill and might not be able to care for the person.



Health and social care is changing

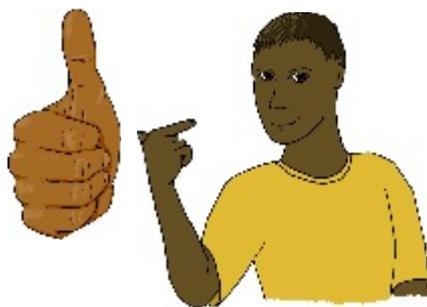
People are confused by changes to the way health and social care services are planned and paid for.



The government wants people to have more choice and get services and support that are right for them.



This includes having a personal budget or direct payment to pay for your own care.



This should make services better and help people do the things that are important to them.



But many people do not know how much services cost or understand their rights.



There are also lots of changes for people who run health and social care services.



They have less money but need to support more people. This means they have to change the way they give health and social care services.

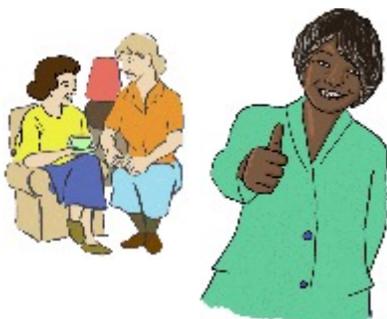


What people think about health and social care

When services are changing we need to know what is important to people.



We asked what people think about services now and what they would like them to be like in the future.



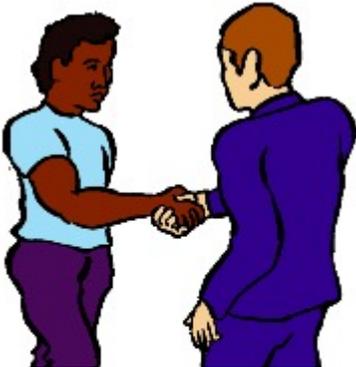
- 7 out of 10 people said they get good care.



- More than 9 out of 10 people think services could be better.



This is because 1 out of every 3 people worry that services are not safe or know things go wrong.



People also said:

- staff should treat them with more respect



- services should listen to and involve them



- they should be involved in decisions about their health



- they do not know how to complain or do not complain because the service will not deal with it properly.



We need a new way for health and social care services to understand what is important people who use them.



This will be based on **rights** or things you can expect to happen and no one can take away from you.

What we have done so far



Rights in health and social care

The government wants people to be involved in changes to health and social care.



But we know poor care and abuse are happening and services do not listen to worries from patients and carers.



Almost 1 in 4 people say professionals are not interested in what they say or do not listen to them.



The NHS is free for most people and they know services have less money and are trying to support more people.



People use health and social care services when things go wrong and they need lots of support.



This can make them grateful or pleased to get a service, even if they are not happy with their care or treatment.

Things need to change.



- Services must work with people, listen to what they say and use these ideas when they make difficult decisions or changes.



- People must have clear information to get involved in decisions about their care or treatment.



- People must understand their rights to know how and when to complain about poor services.



- Services must understand about rights and give people the care and treatment they expect.



We could not find out how well services are doing with complaints or listening to what is important to people who use services and carers.



This might be because they do not check the right things.



How we are working on rights

We have worked with the public to agree a list of rights for health and social care.



We already have 8 rights for **consumers** (people who buy things or use other services). These are used in England and in other countries too.



We wanted to find out if these rights would work for health and social care services.



This summer we:

- spoke to people who use services



- ran workshops



- spoke to organisations and people who know about rights.

This helped us find out what people want.



What rights do people want?

People found it difficult to talk about rights and ask for things when they know services have less money.



But they felt they should be involved because they pay for services through things like taxes.



People talked about:

- more choice about their care and who gives it



- help to understand their health and plan their support



- good safe care that is worth the money it costs



- services that work together instead of arguing about who should give the care or pay for it.



This helped them think about how to change the 8 rights and make them easier to understand.

We used these ideas for our new list of rights.



Our ideas for rights in health and social care

We asked people what it is like to use care services.



This helped us think about rights in health and social care.



1. The right to services you need

People think this is a really important right, especially if services have less money.



It means everyone has the right to some important treatment and care services.



Examples of how this could work:

- if your GP thinks you have cancer and asks a specialist to see you urgently, they must see you in 2 weeks



- if a child is in danger, health and social care services must work together carefully to give them the support they need



- if you live in a care home you have the right to enough food and help with eating if you need it.

2. The right to use services



It should not matter where people live or who they are. Everyone has the right to use the same care services when they need them and in a way that works for them and their family.



People said it is important to see a GP because they help you get other treatment or care.



Examples of how this could work:

- You should be able to go on the list for any GP near where you live and choose which doctor you see.



- You cannot be refused a health service you need or given a worse service than other people because you have a mental health illness.

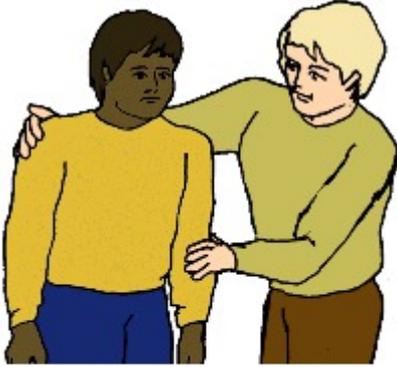


- Councils should work together so you keep getting the support you need if you move from one area to another.



3. The right to respect and a good safe service

Everyone should get good safe services that help them feel better or make life easier.



They should be looked after by people who care about them as a person.



Examples of how this could work:

- If you are in a care home and cannot get to the toilet on your own, staff should help you when you need it and not leave you to wait or wet the bed.



- If you have a learning disability and need an operation you have a right to information to help you understand what will happen and how it might affect you. The doctor should tell you everything you want in a way you understand.



- The place where you get social care should be clean and well looked after and have the equipment you need.



4. The right to have information and learn

Everyone should know about their rights and what they should get from health and social care services.



You also have the right to get information and learn how to take care of your own health problems.

Examples of how this could work:



- If you have diabetes health staff should tell you how different food affects your health so you can manage this for yourself.



- It should be easy to get information about different care homes, what they cost and how much you will have to pay.



- The NHS must tell you how they use information about you and you can say they must only use it for your care and treatment.



5. The right to choose

Everyone should have the right to choose, even if they decide they do not want to.

Information



This means having information to help choose how and where to get treatment or care.

Examples of how this could work:



- You should know about different ways to get support in your home so you can decide if you want to go into a care home or not.



- If you go to the dentist for a filling they should tell you about things you can pay extra for like white fillings.



- If you need treatment because you are anxious, you can choose the type of treatment and where you have it.



6. The right to be listened to

People do not like to complain or say things are wrong, but services should take it seriously when they do.



Services should have a plan to deal with anything you say and tell you what they are going to do about it.



Examples of how this could work:

- Your mum is in a care home and so you tell the manager she does not eat her food before it is taken away.



The manager should put things right and you should see that things have changed.



- If you report bad care in a home where someone from your family lives, this should not affect the care they get.



7. The right to be involved

You have the right to be involved in decisions about your own care and about health and social care services in your area.

Examples of how this could work:



- A young person with a mental health illness should expect their ideas to be treated equally when services plan their support for the future.



- If you are dying, you should get the care and support you need if you choose to die at home.



- If the council are closing a service in your area they should ask what you think and tell you how they use your ideas.

8. The right to live somewhere safe and healthy



Lots of different things can make us ill or keep us healthy.



Everyone has the right to live somewhere that keeps them healthy and safe.



Examples of how this could work:

- Health and social care services should make sure an older person's home is safe before they send them home from hospital.



- Local councils should make sure children get a break from caring and have fun with people the same age as them.

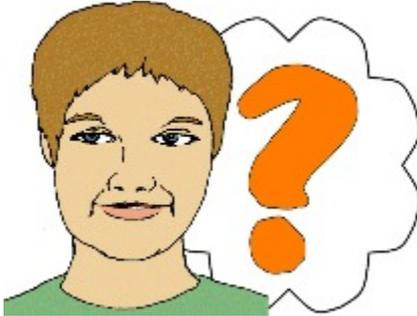


- You should get the support you need if you want to give up smoking.



Making this happen

Everyone must agree what these rights mean, especially when there are so many changes in health and social care.



People will know what to expect from services and services will use the rights to plan and check treatment and care.



We also have to think about **responsibilities** or the things people should do to look after themselves and stay healthy.



There are lots of links between these rights and other rules or ways of checking services and we need to decide how they work together.



This year we will:

- talk to people who use services about using these rights



- ask people to tell local Healthwatch if they get these rights when they use services



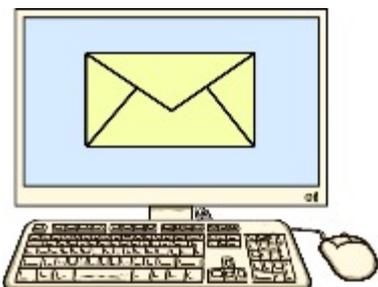
- check we have laws and rules to make sure people get their rights



- find out what these rights mean for people who use mental health services, children and young people



- find a way to check how well different services are doing with each right.



We would like to know what you think.
Please email us at:

rights@healthwatch.co.uk

About us



What makes Healthwatch England different?

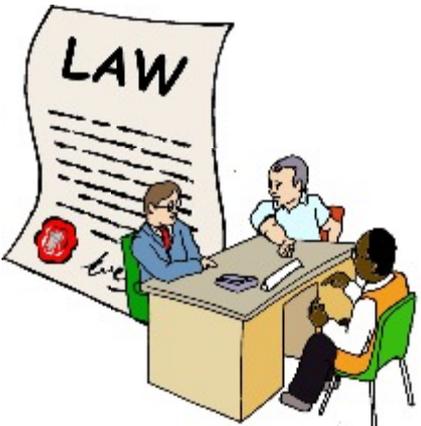
Health and social care services are changing.



They can be confusing and some people find it difficult to speak up.



We were set up to help services understand what is important to people who use them.



We are different from other organisation because the law gives us power to make sure services listen to people who use them.

We are still new and finding out what we need to do.



Because we are small we will look at the things where we can make changes because:

- it is our job to speak up for people who use services



- we can work with children, young people and adults



- we can look at health and social care



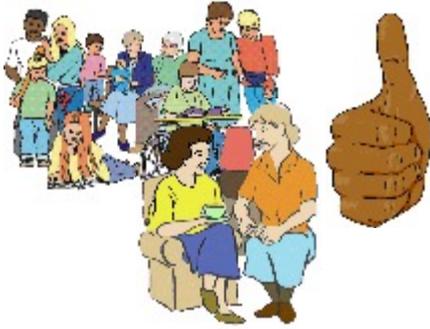
- we can work across the whole of England



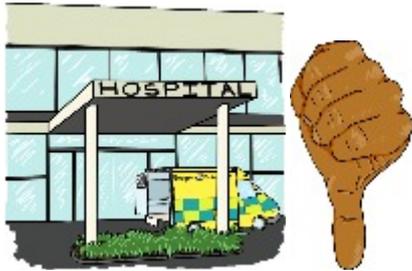
- the law gives us power to tell the government, NHS and local councils what they need to do.



We have agreed how to work with organisations like the Care Quality Commission, local councils, the Department of Health and local voluntary groups.



We have asked people who run health and social care how they will make sure services are right for people who use them.



We have been involved in finding out about really bad care in some hospitals.

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We have told people about Healthwatch and what we do.



We have set up our staff team and decided how to work.



We have asked the government to think about how the rights of people who use health services can also be used in social care services.



The Healthwatch Network

We already have local Healthwatch groups in 152 different parts of England.



They will tell us what is happening and what is important to people who use health and social care services:

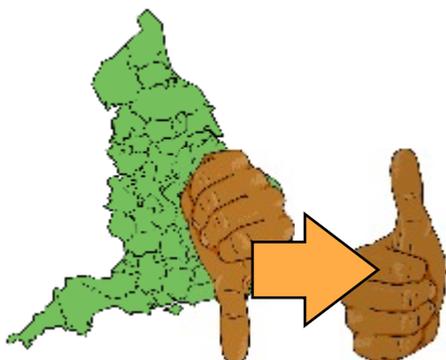
- make sure local people are involved in decisions about services



- tell us about problems with local services



- know when local services will be checked and can make sure local people have a chance to say what they think.



This means we can change things in local areas and for the whole of England.



We can also support people to understand their rights and get the best from services in their area.



It is expensive to get together for meetings and our internet Hub is a way for people in local Healthwatch to talk and share ideas.



We need to work with all organisations that want to make health and social care services better and know what is important to people who use them.



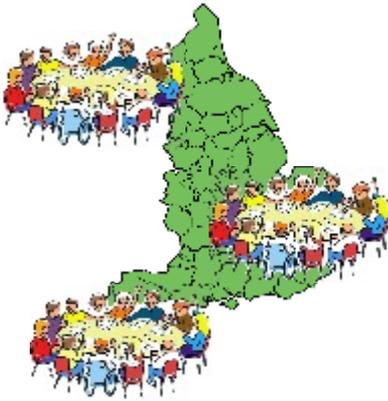
Local groups and charities can talk about our work to people who often get left out and help us understand what they want from services.



An independent committee or group helps us decide how Healthwatch can help people all over England.



Everyone on the committee wants people who use health and care services to have power to change things.



They meet all over the country so they can hear what services are like for people who use them. The meetings are put on the internet so anyone can see them.



This year they are looking at :

- making it easier to complain about health or social care



- making sure health and social care services listen to people who use them

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- supporting local Healthwatch and making sure our organisation works well.

Local Healthwatch

Local Healthwatch will make sure health and social care services involve local people.



April 2013

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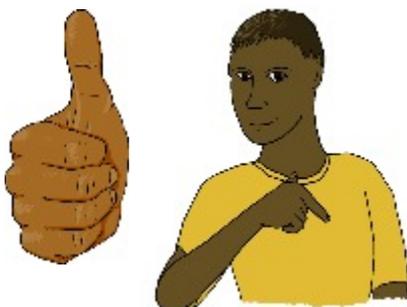
It started in April 2013 but many local councils tried things out before then.

Some local Healthwatch organisations are small and others are much larger.



They all had to set up quickly and start working with local people to:

- give them information, advice and support about local services



- find out what is important to them



- share information with Healthwatch England, other local Healthwatch groups and the Care Quality Commission.



In the first 6 months we gave local Healthwatch lots of support.



We agreed how to work together so we can:

- use what local people say to change things for everyone in England



- use what we learn from the government and groups all over England to help people in local areas.



We have a team to support local Healthwatch.



They offer training, information and a telephone helpline and can help local Healthwatch organisations link up with other groups and organisations.



One voice for people who use care services

We worked hard to plan Healthwatch and make sure people know who we are and what we do.

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We have a **logo** or symbol which all our organisations use to show that different groups are working together.



Each local Healthwatch has its own website and information they can use in their work and to tell people what they do.



Some things local Healthwatch groups have done

Local Healthwatch groups are working with local people and sharing information about what works well.



Here are some of the things they have done in different parts of England:

- Wrote a report to make stroke services better.



- Set up a caravan to go out and tell people about Healthwatch.



- Looked at how services can work together better.



- Found out about GP services.



- Looked at how Healthwatch can work with prisoners.



- Set up a better way to support parents of children with autism.



- Made care better for patients in hospital.



- Sent Community Champions to find out what local people think.



- Worked with the local football club to tell people about treating everyone fairly and equally.



- Helped people understand **dementia** (a disease in the brain that affects mostly older people).



- Set up a team to find out what services are like.



- Checked hospital care and made sure patients have all the information they need.



What happens next?

We have only just started speaking up for people who use health and social care services.



These are the things we will work on for the next year.



Being independent

The law gives us power to tell other organisations to make sure services are right for people who use them.



We will:

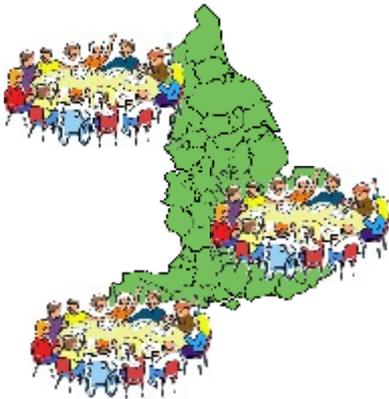
- ask services to make sure their plans for dealing with complaints are right for people who use them



- tell local services about good ways to deal with complaints

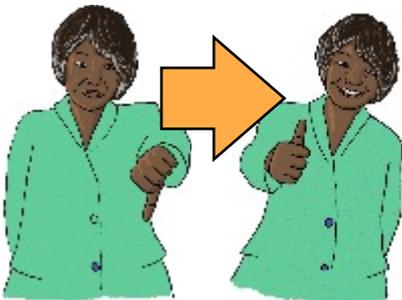


- help people understand what services they should get and how to complain if there are problems.



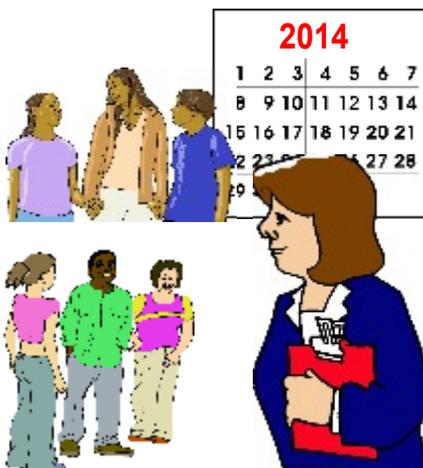
Being trusted

People need to know what we do and how we do it. Anyone will be able to come to committee meetings in different parts of the country.



We will make sure local Healthwatch know how to deal with problems in health and social care services.

We will check if they make things better.



Next year we will look at how to work with organisations that support children and young people.



Helping people speak up

People are often worried when they use health and social care services and find it difficult to speak up.



We will look at ways to involve people who often get left out. If we get it right for them, we can get it right for everyone.



It is not our job to ask people what they think about different services. Health and social care services must show us how they do this.

Being around for a long time



We will use our staff, time and money to work on things that are important to people who use services.

This will help people trust us and understand what we do.



Next year we will say how things are going with our work on rights.



Working together to change things

We will not do things that other organisations already do well.



This means we will work with local and national organisations that help people speak up about services.



Local Healthwatch will tell us what is happening in different parts of the country and we can use this information to tell services what needs to change.



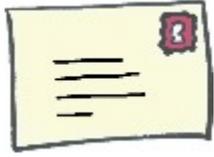
We must also get involved in planning services for the future and make sure they give people the care they need.



We will know if we have done a good job if people tell us health and social care services are getting better.



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