

Healthwatch Cheshire East

Progress Report to Cheshire East Health and Well Being Board

Report by Mike O Regan Healthwatch Representative Cheshire East HWBB

25th November 2013

Purpose of Report

To give members of Cheshire East Health and Well Being Board a short progress report on the first nine months of Healthwatch Cheshire East. We use the “Local Healthwatch Outcome and Impact Development Tool”, published jointly by the Local Government Association and Healthwatch England, as a framework for this report. This tool is designed to support local Healthwatch’s to identify outcomes and impacts and ultimately demonstrate that they are meeting their objectives and are fit for purpose.

What is Healthwatch Cheshire East?

We aim to be the “Customer Champion” for Health and Social Care for everybody who lives and or receives services in Cheshire East. We will work with our partners and the local community to ensure we get the best possible Health and Social Care for the Cheshire East Community. We will do this by providing opportunities for local people to tell us their experience of services and ensuring that their “Voice” is heard by decision makers and providers of service.

Governance

Healthwatch Cheshire East advertised and recruited board members from across the community during March 2013. Over April and May the members meet with Directors from the Voluntary Sector Consortium, who hold the Healthwatch contract and underwent an induction programme and agreed how they would work together. From June board members have been meeting on a six weekly cycle agreeing their working practice, policies and work plan. We have also established a number of Task and Finish Groups who have developed policy and helped to form action plans around key work streams. These include Vision, Scrutiny, Partnership Working, Community Engagement, and Youth Engagement. The first agreed action of the board was to invite representatives from key partners to attend a Stakeholder Event in early July. At this event the board shared it’s “Vision” and held detailed workshops to share and get feedback on the approach it would take.

In October 2013 the board held a progress review using the LGA and Healthwatch Development Tool outlined above. In this self-assessment progress was judged to be as expected at this stage of development. A plan to meet all expected outcomes for the short term is being put in place over November. The following focuses for action were also

identified as part of this work shop. These include; Access to GP's / Service, Response to Mental Health Crisis, Community Responders, Personalisation Budgets, Quality of life in Residential Homes. Task and finish Groups to push this work forward have been established.

Relationship Building

Healthwatch Cheshire East Board has recognised the importance of developing effective partnerships and understands that our ability to deliver will depend largely on the quality of the relationships we can build with both commissioners and service providers. To ensure that we build effective relationships the board has organised a half day workshop, attended partner events, consultations, and invited presentation to the board.

Mike O'Regan our Health and Wellbeing Board representative has attended the Health and Wellbeing Board since April and the wider board have agreed to become "Healthwatch Champions" linking into partner organisations including, Cheshire East Council, Eastern and South NHS Clinical Commission Groups, our three NHS Trust's. These Champions will attend and actively participate in the governing bodies of our partners. They will both raise Healthwatch's profile and better understand the challenges and opportunities that face these organisations. We are developing excellent working relationships between Healthwatch staff and our partners for example we have worked closely with our commissioners at CEC to raise our profile within the council and other partners. This approach will underpin and inform the development of Healthwatch's work plan and foster a collaborative style that will result in a stronger Healthwatch and better outcomes for the Consumer.

Operational

Community Engagement: Healthwatch Cheshire East is a new organisation and in part our success will depend on our ability to reach into the community of Cheshire East and enable local people to have a "Voice" in how their health and social care is developed and delivered. We will work with partners in the health and social care economy, and a wide range of groups and residents across Cheshire East. We have 645 individuals on our contact list. Since April we have attended 38 community / partner event, launched our press campaign across all local papers, and launched our E bulletin.

Youth engagement: A key priority for Healthwatch is to ensure that all of the community has an effective "Voice" in the way that services are delivered and developed with and for them. Both nationally and at the local level young people have been identified as a group within our community who's "Voice" is seldom heard by decision makers in the Health and Social Care Economy. We want to have a clear understanding of what organisations are working with young people with respect to Health and Social Care. Identify key issues and priorities these issues with young people involvement. Identify routes and pathways for

young people to feed their views into decision makers. A desk top study was completed by Youth Fed in October 2013. We have undertaken a workshop with youth professionals with 20 attending. Professionals signed up to ask the views of young people they work with. A wider survey of the youth community is currently being undertaken and we will share our findings from this at HWCE celebration event in February 2014.

Scrutiny: As the Health and Social Care Costumer Champion Healthwatch CE needs to build its capacity to identify areas of community concern around Health and Social Care. To work constructively with partners and the community to ensure the best possible solutions are found to issues that concern the public with respect to the Health and Social Care they receive. We are attending QSG for CEC and the sub region. Currently we are training 7 volunteers to undertake our scrutiny role. We have developed our policy and we will publish our approach to scrutiny at the end of November. Volunteers will undertake a scrutiny review as part of the above training.

Information and Sign Posting Service: Health and Social Care provision is complex and changing. National evaluation and local consultation both indicated that people often need help to ensure that they get the services they need when they need them. Healthwatch CE has been commissioned to establish a sign posting service by Cheshire East Council. Healthwatch CE will develop an attractive and user friendly Web Site. We have launched this service in October 2013 and we are currently recruiting volunteers to help with service delivery.

Advocacy Service: Healthwatch CE has not been commissioned to provide an advocacy service for Cheshire East resident but it is building a working relationship with Healthwatch Merseyside and Cheshire Independent Complaints Advocacy who have been given this role. The Advocacy Service co-locates an outreach worker in our Macclesfield office one day a week. They provide us with monthly reports as to their case work. We refer individuals who wish to pursue a complaint in the NHS.

Conclusion

We would wish the HWBB to note progress to date and to continue to support Healthwatch Cheshire East in it work as “Consumer Champion for the Health and Social Care Economy of Cheshire East”