



healthwatch

# Healthwatch East Sussex

## Annual Report 2016/17



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# *Message from our Chief Executive*

## ***Welcome to our Annual Report for 2016-17.***

During this year, people at all levels of our organisation have been responding to the challenges facing health and social care services and focussing on how the views of the public and their experiences can be brought to bear on service re-design for the future.

Our Board has been overseeing the preparations for and submission of our tender to provide Healthwatch services for the next three years, with a possible extension to five. As part of this process the Board reviewed all the services we commission to ensure that they were fit for purpose and assure themselves they are providing good value for the public money we are entrusted with. This included finance and audit support; information technology support and premises expenditure. This groundwork has served the organisation well and I am delighted to report that East Sussex Community Voice was successful in winning the contract for Healthwatch delivery in the county.

The staff team, supported by organisations we commission services from notably seAp and AIRS, have worked to intensively to raise the profile of Healthwatch East Sussex. Their reach into rural, coastal and urban communities has ensured that all sections of the population know how to contact us for non-clinical information & signposting, to feedback their experiences

of services and to contribute to service re-design and improvement across the county.

We continue to develop new tools and approaches in response to the public's preferences about how they wish to be communicated with, to ensure a growing richness of information and insight to share with our commissioners and providers.

We have a growing and diverse group of volunteers who bring specialist experience and knowledge alongside phenomenal commitment to our organisation. Their work this year has been truly innovative and large scale. Their visits to care homes in the county, talking to residents and observing environments, gives an added level of assurance about the quality of care for people looking for care for a loved one.

The truly innovative work of providing a range of inputs to East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust as the Trust has strived to improve their services, has been remarkable. From providing a visible presence in the hospital talking to patients and visitors, through reviewing complaints handling processes to delivering two 24 hour Enter and View activities, has indisputably demonstrated the value that lay contributions bring to our health and care systems.

At Healthwatch East Sussex we are excited about our plans for a programme of 'Listening Tours'. This is a new approach to locality engagement, which we have developed to make sure that we create a



depth of understanding about community needs and experiences in very local areas of the county. The evidence we collect will provide key information for our partners as they implement their place based plans: East Sussex Better Together and Connecting 4 You and we intend to link up with organisations already working in the localities to maximise the numbers of people we talk to, ensuring importantly that we reach all members of the community and can reflect everyone's needs.

I would like to thank you the public, our volunteers, staff, Board for contributing to the fantastic work Healthwatch East Sussex has delivered during 2016-17. I would also like to thank our partners, for welcoming and valuing the input of the people of East Sussex in future service plans.

***I hope you enjoy reading our report, if you have any questions please do contact us and if you would like to join us we would love to have you on board.***





# Highlights from our year

*This year  
we've reached over  
150,000 people on  
social media*



*Our volunteers help us with  
everything from engagement to  
enter and view*



*We've visited 106 local services*



*Our reports have tackled  
topics ranging from patient  
participation and care homes*



*We've spoken to 537 people  
about their hospital  
experiences*



*We've met hundreds of local  
people at our community  
events*



# Who we are

Healthwatch East Sussex is here to work with the public of East Sussex to ensure that health and social care services work for the people who use them.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people, our sole focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and to then speak out on their behalf.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work and decision making.

We believe that gathering people's experiences will identify issues that are important to them and when addressed, will make services better for everybody.

As part of a national network, there is a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England working alongside Healthwatch England, we are well placed to contribute local evidence and insight to national decision makers to assist them with evidence based decision making.

## ***Our vision***

Healthwatch East Sussex is delivered by East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV). We are a Community Interest Company (CIC), and we are commissioned by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to deliver the Healthwatch functions in the county.

The company is staffed by a small, professional team which works on operational issues and is governed by a board of five non-executive directors, who are accountable for setting and delivering

the strategic objectives of the company. ESCV's mission statement is:

"Independent but not self-serving; non-bureaucratic and non-political; focused around a small central team; professional in all that it does, focused on building partnerships with existing provision; able to expand if appropriate beyond core Healthwatch functions; sustainable into the future and easy for people to become involved".

During 2016-17, ESCV commissioned the NHS Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCA) for East Sussex, local Village Agents, and an Information and Enquiry service to grow public awareness of Healthwatch and to provide information and signposting across health and social care locally. These commissioned services are supported by the ESCV 'Partner Framework', which is a mechanism whereby we draw on the skills and knowledge of local organisations and specialist consultant services. This approach enhances our activity, particularly the delivery of projects around research and public engagement. We recognise the importance of utilising local skills and expertise and the added value that these organisations can bring to our work.

## ***Our strategic priorities***

We are here to gather the views and experiences of local people and to use these to improve health and social care for the people of East Sussex. We believe that the best way to do this is for commissioners to design local services around people's 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 your local watchdog, working across all publicly funded health and social care services, gathering feedback and experiences which is then made available to commissioners and providers as they design service change and improvement.

The county of East Sussex has an estimated population of over 536,000 people, (although a further 6000 people are from out of the county but registered with an East Sussex GP Practice\*), and has a mix of densely populated urban areas, coastal communities and large rural/semi-rural areas further in land. It is served by a two-tier local government system, with a county council and district and borough councils. The county has three Clinical Commissioning Groups and emergency response services covering the county via the NHS 111 and 999 services, provided by the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAMB). There are three healthcare trusts, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, providing acute, mental health services and community services in the county respectively.

We use the statutory powers Healthwatch East Sussex (HWES) has, to ensure that the voice and experience of consumers is amplified and listened to by organisations which commission, provide and regulate your health and social care services. We also provide non-clinical information and signposting services that matter to you, to help you to make informed choices about care and support.

## ***The Healthwatch East Sussex Team***

The work of Healthwatch East Sussex is delivered through a small staff team.

Our roles and responsibilities included for 2016/17:

- Director - strategic overview and statutory engagement locally and nationally, responsibility for all operations and regulatory/governance obligations.
- Information & Signposting - delivering signposting and information provision, including through the enquiries line.
- Volunteer & Community Liaison - co-ordination of volunteer and Enter & View activity, community engagement and outreach, liaison with providers, PLACE visits.
- Stakeholder & Relationship Management - growing awareness of the Healthwatch services, strategic development and influencing national policy issues, working with our strategic partners and growing our business.
- Evidence & Insight - analysing data on public views and evidence and feedback on providers of services, design of engagement tools and methodologies and monitoring of health and social care services.
- Marketing Executive - delivery of the social media plan, creation and dissemination of materials for the public and partners.
- Administrator - administration and support for ESCV CIC and its Board and operations.

The work of Healthwatch is supported and given additional value by the work of the following ESCV staff:

- Patient Participation Development Worker - provides development support to local Patient Participation Groups in GP surgeries across the county.
- Macmillan Cancer Support Information Officer - developing an information network for people living with cancer across the county.
- Information adviser Public Reference Forum - works with the public, particularly those who seldom engage with services, to inform them about East Sussex Better Together.

and link them into the local service change programme

**For more information about our team please visit our website:**

[www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-team](http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-team)

**\*Population figure source -**

<http://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/JsnaSiteAspx/media/jsna-media/documents/scorecards/2016/Area%20Summaries/East-Sussex-Area-Summary-2016.pdf>



*Our Healthwatch Team on the Red Bus Tour*







*Your views on  
health and care*

## ***Listening to local people's views***

During 2016/17 there has continued to be unprecedented challenges for the whole health and care economy locally and nationally. The impact of deepening financial reductions and gaps in critical workforce areas, has placed huge strain on providers of the services to ensure that quality of care and treatment remains high and that consumers are placed at the heart of delivery.

At the beginning of the year, the overall picture across the health and care landscape was one of concern. The acute trust for East Sussex was in special measures, there were developing concerns about the new contract for the provision of the local non-emergency Patient Transport Service, financial reductions within social care services were starting to impact and some GP services were strained.

Healthwatch East Sussex has continued to engage strategically at all levels with the partners in the local and regional health and care system to work on, working collaboratively on new initiatives designed to address some of these challenges. This includes the newly established “Sustainability Transformation Board”, continued work with the “East Sussex Better Together” programme and early involvement with the “Connecting for You” programme.

Throughout the year, we have continued to further develop our approaches to gathering consumer engagement and feedback, building upon the successes of previous years. Our Feedback Centre, Information and Enquiry Line service and increased social media activity have all

complimented our direct engagement activities out in local communities and have enabled us to target feedback from particular groups in the population.

### ***This year we have:***

- Toured the county in our Big Red Bus, visiting locations across East Sussex to talk to people where they live.
- Continued to develop the Feedback Centre as the central online resource for Healthwatch East Sussex, adding new providers and services that can be reviewed in real time.
- Continued to provide support for the development of Patient Participation Groups across East Sussex. These groups, based at local GP practices, provide direct opportunities for patients to be give their views about their local practice.
- Worked closely with our local hospital trust to ensure patient voice is at the heart of their plans for improving quality and following its placement in Special Measures. Healthwatch East Sussex initiated a wide-ranging review of the Trust processes and services throughout the year and liaised with both the Trust and CQC on its findings.
- Supported the East Sussex Better Together programme into its third year by delivering, via our ESCV, the Public Reference Forum in local communities and online.
- Worked strategically with the Sussex and Surrey East Sustainability and Transformation Board and its maturing programme. This programme is a forward plan of transformation and integration of health and care services, ensuring



both collaboration and cohesion in all health and care sectors.

- Refreshed our Equal Opportunities feedback mechanisms to develop our understanding of people who have carer responsibilities, current or previous involvement with the armed forces or are living with long term conditions.
- Expanded the Healthwatch East Sussex presence online, growing our social media work and increasing the number of online surveys.
- Worked jointly with our neighbouring Healthwatch and nationally with Healthwatch England, on issues that affect people on a wider landscape, for example the Patient Transport Service.

### ***The Big Red Bus***

Following the success of the previous Big Red Bus Tour in 2015/16, we decided to hit the road again! The Big Red Bus toured East Sussex during 22<sup>nd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and visited 9 locations across the county. Healthwatch staff and staff from partner organisations talked to residents and consumers about the services that they use and what they regard as important for their health and care provision locally.

### ***The highlights of our tour were:***

- Discussions with over 1100 members of the public about their experiences.
- Conversations with 150 people about East Sussex Better Together, the programme to integrate health and social care services in Hastings and Rother and Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford.
- Distributed over 6500 items of Healthwatch information including:

leaflets, feedback forms and information about volunteering opportunities.

- Spoke with Patient Participation Groups about their priorities.
- Reached over 50,000 people on social media over the period.

Throughout the week, we gathered feedback on services from the public and we continued to receive feedback after the tour was completed. It provided our staff and volunteers with approximately 1500 hours of engagement with local people.

### ***What we learned:***

During the week, we heard from many people about their experiences of health and care services. This feedback was analysed and the following broad themes emerged:

- Health services in general.
- Access to GPs, including appointments and waiting times.
- Hospital services; and
- Mental Health.

Where possible this evidence was shared with service providers and commissioners, highlighting areas where people felt their service was good or where they felt improvements could be made. You can find the final report, including Healthwatch recommendations and observations here:

<http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/red-bus-tour-2016/>

### ***Healthwatch East Sussex Online***

We continue to realise the benefits of using a wide range of engagement tools. This ensures that Healthwatch can engage with people in ways that appeal to them and which therefore encourages them to leave



feedback. 2016/17 has seen an increase in the numbers of people who contact us digitally, via our Feedback Centre, using social media channels such as Facebook or Twitter and bespoke online surveys. In contrast the numbers of people using more traditional methods of contact, such as paper based forms, has declined.

While Healthwatch East Sussex will continue to offer all methods of contact in the future, we will embrace digital approaches more widely as part of our day to day engagement practice and support the community to utilise these new and dynamic approaches.

- Facebook - Over 350 posts with 1734 people “liking” our page.
- Twitter - over 300 tweets and 1682 followers.
- Youtube - 700 views on our YouTube channel.
- E-bulletin - 1708 people subscribed.
- ESBT Public Reference Forum - 796 conversations with local people.

Through our Information and Signposting service and Feedback Centre we have received **540** direct contacts which we have logged and analysed and which contribute to our regular strategic liaison meetings with providers, commissioners and regulators of health and care services. The feedback we receive also informs our local work plan priorities. Healthwatch East Sussex evidence on collective themes, trends or services are identified and that often leads to the initiation of specific projects or Enter and View visits to be undertaken.

Our aim for 2017/18 is to continue to drive our engagement via our digital channels and ensure that we continue to reach all

communities, groups and demographics of people across the county.

We provided local PPGs with 2 social media workshops, in November 2016 and February 2017, with PPGs from all 3 CCG areas represented. If patient public involvement is to truly represent people of all ages and backgrounds, it is essential that GP practices and their PPGs develop some form of social media presence such as Facebook or Twitter as well as more traditional methods of notices in the GP waiting room.

We have learned that many staff and existing PPG volunteers are extremely wary about using this form of media, citing reasons such as risks of pages being trolled, or receiving very public negative feedback. Our PPG Development Worker could demonstrate positive examples of PPGs embracing social media as a tool to support their work via platforms such as Facebook, with successful pages, for example Rowe Avenue in Peacehaven and Meads surgery in Uckfield. We were also able to share good practice found in other parts of the UK.

Healthwatch East Sussex has also helped create an East Sussex PPGs Facebook page and shared health and social care content is placed there which individual PPGs can share to their own Facebook pages as these are developed.

### ***What we've learnt from visiting services:***

Healthwatch East Sussex strives to use the statutory tools it has at its disposal in positive ways and looks to ensure that, wherever possible, providers of services are fully engaged with our programmes of activity.

The health and care economy has seen unprecedented pressure services, locally

and nationally and consumer voice occupies a critical role in the shaping and modelling of new ways of working. Healthwatch East Sussex has utilised its Enter and View functions to proactively seek views and observe services at the point of delivery across health and social care, while developing a programme of visits to enable real time experiences to be gathered, with full support from providers.

We describe Enter and View as follows;

“Visits aim to provide an informed view of the quality and scope of health and adult social care services provided for the residents of East Sussex ..... An individual Visit may develop from another area of research such as a when a task group is looking at a specific area of health and social care. However, a Visit does not have to be part of other work. It could, for example, be prompted by feedback from local service users, patients, their carers’ and families which suggest common concerns about performance, or aspects of provision, on a single ward or care home” - source: *Healthwatch East Sussex Website*.

During 2016/17 two major pieces of Enter and View activity were delivered for both East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust and across local residential care services.

A total of **106** enter and view visits were undertaken from our resource of 60 trained authorised representatives.

Information was drawn from a variety of sources, including direct consumer feedback, contact and requests for help received by Healthwatch East Sussex,

provider reporting and information from the regulator - the Care Quality Commission. These sources were then analysed and formed the methodologies for two major pieces of rolling Enter and View activity throughout the year. These were:

- planned visits to 85 care homes looking at how people using the services are supported to make choices.
- two ‘Round the Clock Care ‘ - 24 hour enter and view activity over both acute hospitals in East Sussex, combining direct patient engagement, observation and strategic provider input.
- Observations of Care programme - involved **14** unplanned enter and view sessions covering one ward at each acute hospital; and
- Intermediate Care Services - a user’s perspective, five planned visits to social care services in East Sussex providing intermediate care and rehabilitation services.

These activities required significant planning of volunteer resources, with activity directly shaped by the feedback and contacts received directly by Healthwatch East Sussex. Following the recognised Healthwatch ‘Enter and View’ model, we successfully delivered the visits and gathered a wealth of insight and feedback to inform providers, commissioners and regulators with a current snapshot for many areas within these services.

You can find summary information about these activities later in this report, and the full details of these visits, including the observations and recommendations here:

## 24 hour “Round the Clock Care” -

<http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/esht/>

## “Care Home Enter and View activity” (wave 1) -

<http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports/>

Please note we will be publishing further reports as these become available for the second wave of care home visits.

Healthwatch East Sussex staff have also met with Sussex Police colleagues, with a view to HWES joining the ‘Sussex Police Independent Strategic Advisory Network’. This group includes a range of members in the community who advise the police on policy and local matters, which we feel would provide an ideal opportunity to share updates and gather feedback from a diverse cross section of the community.

Representative within the network include refugee and migrant communities, LGBT organisations, faith groups, carers, people with disabilities and several diverse ethnic groups. HWES is planning to fully integrate itself with this network and share updates and gather feedback from the membership on issues including mental health, health and access to information.

Earlier in the year we were approached by Adult Social Care to assist with a review of its Intermediate Care Services, specifically to use our volunteer resource to talk to users of their services, to gather independent feedback. Our volunteers spent three days at the five intermediate care rehabilitation centres, provided by social care and spoke to 31 service users and three relatives or carers. Our report was then presented at a wider strategic meeting with social care partners and other health providers. It was well received and

formed an important part of their wider review and further opportunities to be involved were discussed.

This year has also seen Healthwatch East Sussex commission the county Youth Cabinet, to deliver engagement work with younger people across the county on the mental health issues that affect them.

## *Engaging rurally*

Between July and October 2016, our Community Interest Company, East Sussex Community Voice, commissioned Action in Rural Sussex (Airs), to deliver an awareness raising programme to ensure that the Healthwatch East Sussex brand, its services and the Feedback Centre, became better known to local people / groups / organisations in the rural areas of each borough and district.

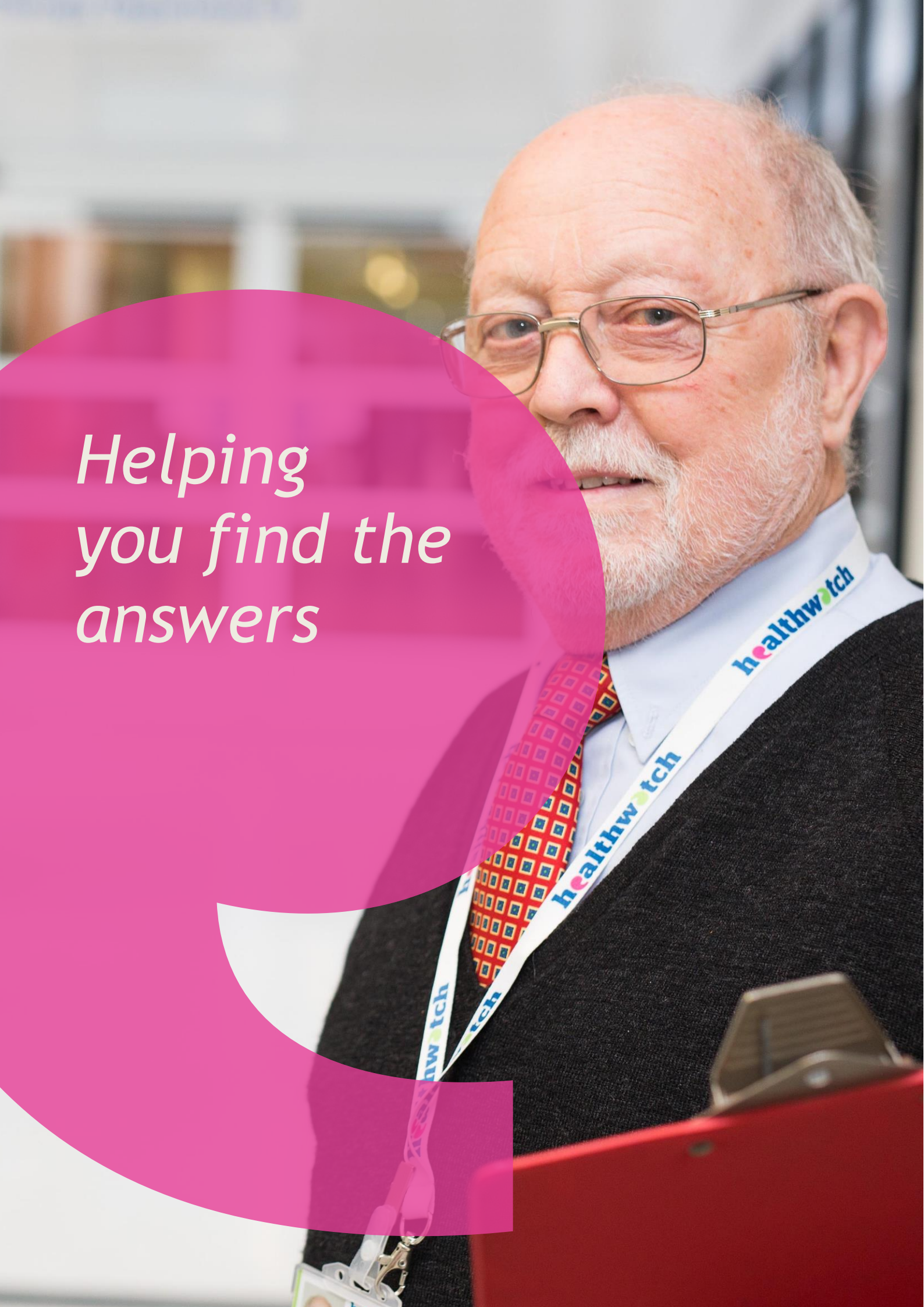
The extensive programme of outreach activity, delivered by the “Village Agents” included;

- Distribution of branded Healthwatch materials across rural venues including libraries, sports centres, shops and health and education centres.
- The generation of digital and paper based user experience for the feedback centre.
- Developing new contacts for the Healthwatch East Sussex newsletter and social media.
- Generating contacts in local organisation, to inform the Healthwatch East Sussex stakeholder network and;
- Increasing new volunteer contacts, people interested in becoming Healthwatch Champions.

AiRS achieved this by arranging and delivering activities which included:

- six pop up events in larger villages
- three pilot mobile library stop pop up events
- five Summer Fetes attended across the county
- Information sessions about Healthwatch at AiRS Parent and Toddler Network meetings and;
- Rural volunteer centres to hold stocks of information / display materials.





*Helping  
you find the  
answers*

## *How we have helped the community access the care they need*

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to embrace a variety of contact methods which enable people to access advice, simple, non-clinical help and signposting information - as well as leave feedback about the services they receive.

Our contact methods for 2016/17 were as follows;

- The Feedback Centre, integral to the Healthwatch East Sussex website.
- A dedicated low call rate telephone number, available 10:00-16:00 Monday to Friday.
- A dedicated email address and;
- A dedicated text option via a contact number.

**The Feedback Centre** - The Feedback Centre was launched in July 2015 and provides an online resource for information, signposting and the option for people to review the services they receive.

Information available from the Feedback Centre includes, where applicable, the latest CQC rating, directions and a map, contact details and details of previous reviews. This information helps people make informed choices about their care and support by giving access to information on services from members of the public and regulators. At present, there are **692** providers listed on the Feedback Centre and we are pleased to have added local Patient Participation Groups to these.

During 2016/17, there were **324** reviews left for **92** services on the Feedback Centre. Most reviews were about hospital

or GP services with limited number of reviews on Dentists, Social Care and Emergency care services.

Please submit a review, whenever you use a service, your thoughts and experience count! You can visit us here:

[www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk)

**Enquiry Line Service** - The Healthwatch East Sussex Enquiry Line Service continued to be delivered by seAp during 2016/17, including our dedicated telephone line and email contact service. People wishing to raise concerns, look for information or require support to leave feedback, can do so via this service. There is also support to access the independent NHS complaints service, should someone require support to complain about a health issue.

During 2016/17 there were **224** telephone contacts logged and **73** emails received, which required support from Healthwatch East Sussex. The enquiries team also made **35** onward referrals to the independent NHS complaints advocacy service for support with making a complaint.

## **Case Study**

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### **Working with Macmillan Cancer Information**

The Macmillan Cancer Information Network project is nearing the end of its two-year programme to establish a network of Macmillan cancer information hosts across East Sussex.

We have successfully created partnerships and established sites for Macmillan cancer information, working in collaboration with organisations of all different types, utilising their spaces, giving greater access to

people affected by cancer and the wider community.

The project has also prioritised working with partners to raise awareness of this project, through training and engagement sessions, enabling them to signpost people to the cancer information sites and to become advocates for the service.

The aim of the project has been to focus on providing two types of information:

- Information about cancer itself and,
- Risk factors and prevention; screening and diagnosis; treatments and therapies; treatment side effects; specific types of cancer and accessing cancer health services

We have then set about giving people access to information to help them to live well with cancer and in survivorship. Our focus has been providing advice about the following, which has included;

- Health and wellbeing.
- Physical activity.
- Emotional support.
- Relationship support.
- Welfare and benefits advice.
- Bereavement and;
- Information for carers.

The approach has been very much people centred - engaging with patients, their families and carers to understand where, when and how they would like to access information. Patient experience, the public and communities have been listened to and their feedback used to provide information services in the places and in ways they have highlighted.

In general, there is a need for the information network to target rural areas with poor transport links and areas with high levels of deprivation, as well as

communities situated a long way from acute health settings and or other support centres.

The Macmillan cancer information network continues to grow and expand; to create access to information for those affected by cancer in East Sussex. At the end of the two-year project we will have established 22 sites across East Sussex working in partnership with GP surgeries, hospitals, day care and community centres, information and signposting centres, libraries, and Lewes prison.

In July 2016, we opened a Macmillan information hub in partnership with Age Concern Eastbourne situated in the Venton Centre, Eastbourne. A similar information centre is due to be opened very soon at The Hub in Newhaven in partnership with Sussex Community Development Association.

The project has resulted in improvements to the current information provision in both the Conquest and Eastbourne General hospitals, as well as a new area of cancer information being placed in Bexhill hospital.

**“With your determination and organisation, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust has benefitted greatly from the project. Cancer patients will have access to better quality information, not only in the acute hospitals, but also in ‘satellite’ areas, including Bexhill Hospital.”**

**Claudia Dance - Cancer Services Development Manager. East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust**

.....



A woman with short dark hair, wearing a dark green top, is looking slightly to her right with a gentle smile. She is holding a white survey card in her left hand. The card has a pink speech bubble icon at the top right and contains the following text: 'Have you seen your GP recently', 'Have you visited Care Home', and 'What was it like?'. The word 'Tell' is partially visible at the bottom. A large, semi-transparent green circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, and a smaller, semi-transparent blue circle is overlaid on the bottom right. The background is blurred, showing other people in a social setting.

*Making a  
difference  
together*

Have you  
seen your  
GP recently

Have you  
visited  
Care Home

What was it like?

Tell



## *How your experiences are helping influence change*

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to produce regular reports featuring the feedback we receive through our information, enquiry and feedback services. These reports are routinely shared with commissioners and providers strategically and are also published on our website. They provide information on the themes and trends which emerge from our direct contact with the public.

We use all the information and experiences shared with us to inform, plan and deliver our work. This means that Healthwatch can focus its activity in the areas which matter to the public and ensures that consumer experience is an important part of strategic decision making and service provision.

During this year, we have produced **102** individual reports, covering;

- East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust.
- Local residential Care Homes.
- Independent review of Adult Social. Care Intermediate Care services and;
- Contact, Feedback and Enquiry Information reports.

### **ASC Care Homes**

There had been concerns raised, both locally and nationally, about the shortage of vacancies in care homes that provide nursing care. Healthwatch East Sussex was also aware of a high number of homes being rated as ‘inadequate’ or ‘requiring improvement’ across the county. We decided to initiate a programme of visits, which was planned in several waves, and provided a series of ‘soft’ enter and view observational activities. We contacted all

providers and sent them a short survey on their current vacancy levels and to advise them of the reasons for our visits. Most providers were positive about our visits and saw great value in the opportunity to share good practice and highlight the work they were doing, as well as provide feedback about the challenges they were facing within the care system.

Unfortunately, two homes declined our visits and it was necessary to set out the legal basis of our visits, as defined in ‘The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and Entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013. A letter was sent to these two providers setting out their responsibilities and that they were falling to meet the Regulations. We also followed our protocols and informed the Care Quality Commission and East Sussex Adult Social Care, that they had failed to work positively or cooperatively with us.

During the first two waves of visits during 2016-17 Healthwatch East Sussex visited 85 care homes and spoke to many residents, visitors and staff about their experiences and views.

A key finding from visits was that services have put great emphasis on providing activities and stimulation for residents. Nearly all employed someone specifically to organise and deliver activities, often more than one person. It was good to hear from residents how pleased they were with the range and extent of these and our volunteers were impressed by how care services were approaching this.

Some services offered a seven-day programme of activities and it was also good to see that there was an emphasis on one to one activities, which is particularly

important for care homes with nursing due to the high number of residents who tend to stay in their bedrooms. Many services produced colourful information informing residents of what is happening and when. These were also seen as a good idea.

A small number of residents reported that they wanted to move back to their own homes, following a short period of respite, but were unable to do so due to delays in having a care package put in place.

All care homes received a copy of the report for their individual service, as well as a copy of the overarching report produced, to enable examples of good practice to be shared.

You can view our reports here:

[www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports](http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports)

## 24 Hour ESHT visits

Our reports presented a snapshot of interactions between Healthwatch East Sussex Authorised Representatives and patients, relatives, carers and staff, including ambulance staff. This work was carried out over two 24-hour periods, in April and November 2016, in Eastbourne District General Hospital and the Conquest Hospital in Hastings and over 12 hours at Bexhill Community Hospital.

We decided to undertake this programme of visits because of information and evidence we had received which when analysed pointed to increases in demand for services stemming from:

- sicker patients, with more complex illnesses arriving in A & E departments.
- a primary care system struggling to meet demand and;

- delays in discharging patients who are fit to leave hospital but who are awaiting support packages to be put in place.

The experiences which patients, carers and relatives shared during the 24 hours were largely positive, and comments were complementary about the care received, with most respondents rating it as very good or excellent. This is consistent with the findings of earlier activity carried out in April 2016.

A total of **537 people** shared their views and experiences during this work, this included **174 people** who specifically answered questions regarding their attendance at the Accident and Emergency (A & E) departments, some of who would have been admitted to hospital.

We asked people to rate the care and treatment they received; whether their care met their expectations and how well they were communicated with during their stay. Some of the key findings were:

- HWES Authorised Representatives' observations of care during the 24 hours were largely positive and complementary; however, there were some areas identified to follow up. These included: the mental health pathways in A & E for patients, pathways for homeless people and cleanliness concerns.
- The number of inappropriate attendance of some patients in A & E departments remains high.
- There are some patients who bypass NHS 111 and go straight to A & E departments due to previous experiences.
- Proactive communication with patients around waiting times in A&E

remains a concern and needs to significantly improve.

- Greater public awareness raising and information is required to deter inappropriate attendance at A & E.
- Patients, carers and relatives, accepted that local NHS services are very busy and stretched, but they also recognised and commented on how hard the staff were working.
- High demand on in-patient beds and impacts on the system when timely discharges cannot be achieved.

The reports for these activities were received by the Trust, along with the conclusions and recommendations. The work of Healthwatch volunteers has contributed to the Trust moving from a CQC rating of 'inadequate' to 'requires improvement'. The Trust's most recent CQC inspection report stated: "The trust worked well with the local Healthwatch team and had engaged them in several initiatives to obtain public engagement and feedback." \*

Following our successful involvement with our local trust, we have also had early engagement with commissioners of services at Brighton Sussex University Hospital Trust, which was also placed in special measures, to discuss how local Healthwatch can support acute providers with their quality improvement, based on the learning we already have.

You can view our reports here:

[www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports](http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/our-work/our-reports)

### **Patient Participation Groups - Placing Patients at the heart of their practice**

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) Development Role has patient and public engagement at its core. PPG

representatives initially approached Healthwatch in 2014, requesting support to reach other groups. East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) responded by funding a 1 year pilot role in 2015-16. The outcomes of this were reported to East Sussex CCGS who then jointly commissioned work for a further year 2016-17.

Our PPG Development Worker continues to engage with individual practices per expressed need, as well as undertaking PPG awareness raising at public venues, events, and to health and social care professionals. Examples this year have been:

- Supporting the Healthwatch Red Bus Tour.
- Raising awareness of PPGs at local ESBT events.
- Presenting to Practice managers about the benefits of PPG's in the High Weald area.

These activities have resulted in;

- constructive communication with PPGs across all CCG areas and;
- an increase in PPGs communicating with and supporting each other.

The PPG Development worker has also facilitated contact both between individual groups and, through PPG Forums, representatives from several PPGs to meet, discuss and agree actions regarding issues common to all.

### **Supporting the Red Bus, July 2016**

We conducted a simple survey of members of public in red bus tour locations which found that on average three of those asked were not aware of patient participation groups or if there was one at their GP surgery. This indicated a need to raise public awareness of PPGs. Following this we could distribute information sheets about

PPGs to members of public together with HWES material.

Throughout 2016-17, This activity extended to engagement with senior representatives of existing services and new or re-designed services, providing patient feedback, insight and suggestions about how those services could be optimised and ensuring that patient voice was placed at the heart of delivery.

## ***Working with other organisations***

The challenges across the local and national health and social care system have continued to increase the pressure for services to be able to deliver consistent, good quality care which is both timely and effective. Locally, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) was placed in special measures following two CQC inspections, with the South-East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) also rated as ‘requires improvement’. The non-urgent Patient Transport system was also the subject of intense scrutiny, following a series of high profile contractual and service delivery issues and continued feedback about appointment availability at GP surgeries also featured throughout the year.

As well as these and many other challenges faced locally, there is a requirement for providers to work collaboratively across the health and care landscape, sharing resources and expertise to ensure that an integrated model of care which is both sustainable and of good quality. Locally, ‘East Sussex Better Together’ and ‘Connecting 4 You’ have started to put in place the mechanisms and structures to

support this change, across health and care providers, including Adult Social Care, Health Trusts, CCG’s, CQC and the voluntary sector. Nationally, Sustainability Transformation footprints, (STPs) , have been formed covering wider geographical areas.

Healthwatch East Sussex has engaged with these programmes and initiatives to ensure that consumer voice and experience is central to the design and improvement of services at every level.

Locally, we have worked with our CCGs and providers to advise and support them in delivering innovative approaches to ensuring that the whole population can contribute their views on service change.

At the STP level, covering Sussex and Surrey East, we have worked to ensure that the needs of the whole population and considered through the drafting of an early Equality Impact Assessment and that any future proposals to reconfigure services will be subject to consultation through local place based arrangements.

Healthwatch East Sussex continues to work closely with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the regulator of all Health and Social Care services. This is a key relationship for us and the strength of our relationship allows for the immediate escalation of concerns about safety or poor quality of service delivery. This is a crucial resource in ensuring regulators are aware of issues and good practice examples locally and that they inform any activity they may have planned. We meet with the CQC on a bi-monthly basis to share information and discuss our priorities and work activities. This relationship would also offer Healthwatch East Sussex a route to report any difficulties it experiences in



response to formal requests for information. To date we have not needed to call on this.

The two major pieces of work delivered by Healthwatch East Sussex, in ESHT and Care Homes, have involved the CQC as partners. The views and the evidence and insight we gather contributes towards the local regulatory activity already being undertaken contributing to positive improvements in quality and delivery.

We have also attended two provider Quality Summits, which form part of the CQC inspection and publication process, to provide further feedback and contribute to improvement action plans.

A Healthwatch East Sussex representative continues to chair the Client and Carer Safeguarding Advisory Network (CCSAN), which reports activity and issues around safeguarding to the Safeguarding Adults Board, the countywide safeguarding board for health and care services. Our role is to provide independent chairing and oversight of this network and share experience, learning and information with the wider board, to ensure that safeguarding vulnerable people remains at the forefront of service provider delivery.

## ***How we've worked with our community***

The contributions of members of the public across East Sussex have been positively received across several boards and forums this year. A key focus of our work has been around the drive to move East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust out of special measures and support the Trust in its improvement plan.

The 'ESHT Volunteer Task Group' has played a vital role in involving people from

across local communities, whether they are proactive users of services or keen to contribute to the improvement of local services and has provided the main volunteer resource to deliver the two 24 hour activities this year.

This group has been involved in the design and development of these activities, building on the learning from previous activities and experiences. When completed the reports from this group have been used as briefings for Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) members to inform them of our findings and proposals. These reports were also provided to the CCG Clinical Quality Review Board, with some of our recommendations for change for example on Maternity Services, being progressed by the operational groups across the county.

We have worked with Health Education England during the year. They approached us following our work with ESHT to help them identify outcomes and learning from our activity which could be included in training programmes for student midwives. This included using examples of patient experience stories gathered during our lay reviews of local maternity services to provide real-life examples for students.

Healthwatch East Sussex has also contributed to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, providing advice and guidance within the consultation for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy refresh. We are particularly pleased to have our "Every Comment Counts" feedback information presented on the cover of the strategy. Our work with HOSC this year has also seen several members train as Healthwatch Authorised Representatives, who can carry out Healthwatch volunteer activity. This

provides members with real opportunity to be involved and see services first hand and is an invaluable link for Healthwatch.

We are working in partnership with HMP Lewes and East Sussex Information and Library services, both in the prison library and community libraries - to give local people access to health information, as well as contributing to a 'virtual campus' which gives access to health information to prisoners.

Healthwatch East Sussex has participated in the refresh for the SpeakUp forum, a forum led by voluntary sector partners across the county which provides a platform for organisations to respond to the wider strategic needs of health and social care from a sector perspective. During the refresh, we contributed to the support and development of the vision, aims, objectives and operation for the future of this group. Strengthening the voice of voluntary sector organisations is a key area for development and Healthwatch remains committed to working with and supporting organisations.

\*Source:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/RXC/reports>



*It starts  
with you*

healthwatch

healthwatch.co.uk



## **#ItStartsWithYou**

### ***Spotlight on Patient Participation***

This year, we have seen a growth in the numbers of individual PPG's represented on countywide Healthwatch led forums, with an increased to 13 out of 20 practices in Eastbourne, Hailsham, Seaford CCG area and 12 out of 25 practices in Hastings Rother CCG.

These wider PPG forums have been constructively used to raise awareness among patients of other services which are commissioned by the CCG, for example:

- Mental health recovery programmes and;
- Social prescribing services.

In this way, the PPGs are equipped to make further contact with those services and to promote them within their practice community.

Continual development and distribution of a resources list to PPGs helps support them to engage and promote Health and Wellbeing resources to the rest of their practice population and provide opportunities to get involved with wider patient involvement activities such as academic research.

One example of work during the year, is the support provided to assist a newly appointed practice manager and newly engaged patients to set up a PPG, at the Bird in Eye surgery in Uckfield. This constructive and innovative group is proving to be extremely successful, and is fully supported by the practice GPs, one of whom enthusiastically takes part in all meetings. Two PPG representatives now attend and contribute to all High Weald PPG forums.

As well as the continual development, support and recruitment of local PPG's,

during 2016-17 our development worker has also:

- Taken part in eight HWLH PPG forum events, with topics ranging from data protection information, promoting National Association of Patient Participation (NAPP) resources, sharing information about new opportunities for patient engagement and introducing new PPG representatives to the wider Healthwatch PPG forum.
- Organised and serviced 8 PPG forum events in the two ESBT CCG areas (EHS & HR). PPG representatives learned first-hand from project managers about proposals for new or adapted services and were actively engaged in providing feedback and suggestions about topics including; Proactive Care, Medicines Waste Reduction Campaign, Falls Reduction project, as well as contributing to the creation of Outcomes Frameworks.

In addition, the PPG support worker supported events which PPGs themselves had organised.

This included:

- an open afternoon in the grounds of one Lewes surgery, supported by the other two PPGs in the town. Health and wellbeing awareness stands were on display to visitors, as well as Healthwatch feedback materials.
- a PPG in Polegate organised a Macmillan coffee morning in the local church hall, but also invited a range of other services hosting stalls of health and wellbeing information relevant to the local community. Each of those events attracted more than 100 visitors who could access information which could help them or someone close to them to stay well.

HWES feedback materials have been delivered to all GP practices in East Sussex, including most branch sites. All practices and their PPG contacts were informed of

this activity and invited to display and promote the materials in areas of the practice accessed by patients.

Facilitating engagement between patients and the providers has been extremely positive for both parties. Patients' ideas and feedback has been genuinely sought and valued, which has resulted in improved understanding from all viewpoints about service development and user involvement. The forums themselves have received positive feedback, and crucially this has resulted in a gradual increase in engagement from PPGs who had not engaged before. This demonstrates a gradual increase in desire of both practice staff and patient representatives to participate in the activities of a PPG network.





*Our plans  
for next  
year*



## ***What next?***

During 2017-18 and beyond, Healthwatch East Sussex will build on previous work and prioritise the ways we engage with all communities across the county, to ensure that consumer and user led voice continues to inform service redesign and improvement.

We will be launching a series of locality engagement programmes, part of a 3-year rolling plan, to take engagement activities to the heart of communities across East Sussex. We are calling this our 'Locality Engagement Model' and it will see Healthwatch staff, volunteers and partners spending up to three weeks in areas, being among communities and talking to people where they live about the services they use.

By engaging with communities in this way we will be able to;

- gather real time views.
- generate very local and deeper feedback to inform our themes and evidence.
- develop relationships with communities who may find it difficult to engage and;
- promote Healthwatch to local people.

This model has been developed following the positive feedback from our previous red bus tours and we hope to see as many people as possible over a longer period.

Healthwatch East Sussex is also planning some further 'around the clock' engagement, working with partners who support people throughout the night and vulnerable members of the community, including those who are homeless.

Strategically we will continue to work alongside our statutory colleagues, to help in the delivery of their activities and to provide appropriate challenge as required building upon the feedback we receive.

Some early work this year involves targeted engagement with users of Patient Transport Services throughout the county and beyond, working alongside Healthwatch colleagues in both Brighton & Hove and West Sussex. We are working with the new provider of this service, South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, to engage with users and to gather evidence around the performance of the service from the public's point of view and thereby establishing the extent to which public trust in this service has been restored. Our volunteers are talking to people using this service and encouraging them to comment on their experiences as well as offering the opportunity to complete a short online survey, the findings of the work will be presented later this year.

Healthwatch East Sussex is the independent consumer champion for health and social care service and is well placed to ensure that the consumer voice continues to be heard during a period of great change. Our staff and volunteers remain dedicated to ensuring that are there to listen and respond to the ever-changing needs and experiences of our population and continue to provide a successful local Healthwatch for all.



A portrait of a middle-aged Black male doctor with a friendly smile. He is wearing a black button-down shirt and a teal stethoscope. The image is overlaid with two large, semi-transparent circles: a red one on the left and a green one on the right, which partially obscure the doctor's face and torso. The text "Our people" is written in white, italicized font within the red circle.

*Our people*



## ***Decision making***

East Sussex Community Voice (CIC), the organisation which delivers Healthwatch in East Sussex, has a Board of five non-executive directors who are accountable for the delivery of the strategic objectives of the CIC. The Board meets four times a year and has three sub-committees: Finance, Human Resources and Business Development, which also meet during this quarterly cycle and report recommendations to the full Board.

Healthwatch East Sussex has a Priorities Framework process which prescribes how we analyse the evidence and feedback we receive and how this information along with other local and national criteria determines how we decide on our work priorities for any given period. The framework uses a simple process to analyse the information and evidence we collect and this determines where we focus our work, ensuring that our focus always remains on what consumers are telling us. This information is then used to help plan the most appropriate type of activity for engagement with the public and commissioners and providers.

During 2016-17 themes which emerged as priorities included:

- non-emergency Patient Transport Services.
- Hospital Discharge.
- Acute Hospital Services and;
- GP appointments - access.

These themes then shaped our work this year across the health and care system, such as the ESHT 24 Hour visits and our Care Home work. This enabled Healthwatch

to understand the challenges across health and care and how the public can contribute to solutions.

Our priorities framework can be found here:

<http://www.healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk/about-us/policies-priorities/>

Many of the priorities we have identified are long term pieces of work and these will continue into 2017/18 providing the opportunity to continue to work across a changing health and care landscape in innovative ways.

Internally we have begun to redesign our performance monitoring tool, streamlining this to better enable staff the opportunity to showcase their work and provide our Board and Commissioner with a quarterly account of progress against a defined set of outcome measures. This tool incorporates the Healthwatch Quality Statements and utilises Healthwatch aims and objectives, as set out within the “Local Healthwatch Outcomes and Impact Development Tool”.

## ***How we involve the public and volunteers***

The effort and dedicated commitment of our volunteers allows Healthwatch East Sussex to deliver the high levels of effective activity that it does. As a Healthwatch we place great value in the skills and expertise that the public and volunteers bring to our organisation. Once priorities are identified and activity has entered the planning phase, we invite volunteers to join us in shaping the work we will deliver. This may involve them in creating questions for surveys or engagement activity, contributing their specialist experience or in developing the logistics of activities, such as the ESHT 24-hour engagement.

We ensure that all volunteers taking part in any activity we deliver are fully briefed at the start of the work and that a full debrief is held at the end, thereby ensuring that we continue to build on the good practice and share lessons learned as part of our improvement. The skills and expertise of our volunteers, combined with their willingness to undertake a wide range of activity across health and social care, is a strong contributor to our strong reputation in the county.

Our 'Healthwatch Champions' attend, on behalf of Healthwatch East Sussex, various networks and boards, delivering key messages and feeding back to the staff team as appropriate. To date our champions have contributed to;

- Local Cancer networks.
- Local Professional Dental network.
- Stroke and Cardiology network.
- Local Pharmacy Networks and;
- Older Peoples Partnership Board.

### ***Growing our volunteer strength***

We continue to support and develop our volunteers through regular quarterly meetings and 1 to 1 support, which provide opportunities for active participation in the following;

- Review our Volunteer Handbook, including policy revision and process development.
- Sharing of updates as peers within their areas of involvement or speciality.
- Suggesting areas of activity for focus, subject to appropriate intelligence and feedback.
- Identifying any learning and training needs relevant to their development.

- Celebrating and sharing successes from volunteer involvement and activity and;
- Meeting newly recruited volunteers and identify mentoring opportunities.

Healthwatch East Sussex, working with colleagues in the Health Academic Science Network, Healthwatch Surrey and the Kings Fund have developed the 'Patient Safety Collaborative' project, focussing on the safety improvement agenda. Local people have been involved in the design of a role specification and training programme to develop 'Patient Leaders' in the safety improvement work of the science network, which is hosted by Healthwatch locally. The aim of this project is to disseminate learning and embed patient safety initiatives in the work of local Healthwatch, with citizen involvement key to the Patient Safety Improvement Agenda. 15 people attended a workshop to draft the role description and skills specification and following this, interviews for this collaborative resulted in five places being offered.

We have also worked with Sussex University to promote opportunities for student nurses and social science students to access Healthwatch volunteer roles as part of their community placement. This included Healthwatch East Sussex providing support to university tutors to understand the role and purpose of Healthwatch to help them advise their students.

There is still more we can do and we have started to develop initiatives to look at how we can continue to work towards a diverse volunteer cohort, particularly focussing on making volunteer roles attractive to people who may not feel that they fit a profile to help or volunteer. This year we have

started to identify underrepresented groups who would bring significant value and experience to our current volunteer force and we are looking at ways to involve people in activity that is of interest to them.

In planning our work with ESHT, we were keen to hear from women who had recently used maternity services to help shape this area of our activity. Following a call out to women through local and social media, we received seventy-six responses, and one mum also volunteered to take part in the visits accompanied by some of our experienced volunteers.

Healthwatch East Sussex provided support with childcare during this activity, to enable people to participate. This participation brought a richness of experience to our visits that would have been hard to gain otherwise.





# *Our finances*

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	515,080.14
Additional income *	113,815.24
Total income	628,895.38
Expenditure	
Operational costs	170,712.25
Staffing costs	291,526.65
Office costs	132,137.09
Total expenditure	594,375.99

\*Includes income from other ESCV contracts. Work-streams here can also contribute to wider Healthwatch activities



# Contact us

The name, address of registered or principle office, and contact details of the organisation holding the local Healthwatch contract with the local authority as of 31/3/2016.

East Sussex Community Voice - delivering Healthwatch East Sussex

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☎ 0333 101 4007

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💻 [www.healthwatcheastsex.co.uk](http://www.healthwatcheastsex.co.uk)

**The name, address of registered or principle office and contact details of any relevant local Healthwatch sub-contractors as of 31/3/2017.**

NHS Complaints Advocacy

seAp

P O Box 375,

Hastings,

TN34 9HU

0330 440 9000

We will be making this annual report publicly available on 30 June 2017 by publishing it on our website and sharing it with 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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