

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2018: THE FIRST FIVE YEARS**

**OUR VISION: HEALTHWATCH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
WILL BE A STRONG, RESOLUTE AND INDEPENDENT  
COMMUNITY CHAMPION. WE WILL GIVE LOCAL  
PEOPLE A VOICE AND WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO  
INFLUENCE THE DESIGN AND QUALITY OF HEALTH  
AND SOCIAL CARE PROVISION SO THAT ALL LOCAL  
PEOPLE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN IMPROVED  
QUALITY OF LIFE**

### **OUR VALUES:**

- We will be accessible and visible
- We will be independent and objective
- We will be open, honest and transparent in all that we do
- We will be inclusive and embrace diversity and equality, reflecting the diverse needs of local people
- We will listen to and hear the views of local people
- We will speak up for local people and enable people to speak for themselves
- We will be fair and credible.

- **We will seek out and use evidence, including from the public, to inform our work**
- **We will strive to make a positive difference and campaign for the best possible health and social care for local people**

## **1. Introduction:**

The pressures on the NHS and social care services have never been as intense. The demand for health and social care is increasing at a time when budgets are being squeezed and health inequalities are increasing. Northamptonshire is no exception. Over the next five years, the budget for health and social care in the county will be reduced by £275 million<sup>i</sup>. Northamptonshire has a fast growing population with a rapid increase in the number of older people. One in five people will be 65 or over by 2019 and the number of people aged over 85 is expected to increase by around 5,000 in the next ten years, which will put additional pressure on health and social care services<sup>ii</sup>. Over 14,000 people aged over 65 are predicted to be living with dementia by 2030, double the 2010 number<sup>ii</sup>. Most of those people will live at home and will require both health and social care support. Shockingly, 23,000 children in Northamptonshire live in poverty<sup>iii</sup>. People living in parts of Northampton, Corby and Wellingborough have a much lower life expectancy - 9 years lower for men - compared to people living in more affluent areas of the county<sup>iii</sup>. There is an even bigger gap in disability-free life expectancy of 15 years for men and 12 years for women between the richest and poorest areas<sup>iv</sup>.

Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses there was a recorded rise of 11% in the total number of unpaid carers nationally<sup>v</sup>. The increase for Northamptonshire was 18% with East Northants (27%) and Daventry (23%) reporting some of the fastest district rises in the country<sup>vi</sup>. Approximately 15,000 individuals in the county now provide over 50 hours of unpaid care per week for a loved one<sup>vi</sup>.

Added to these challenges are the high profile cases of service failure including at Mid Staffordshire and Morecombe Bay NHS Foundation Trusts and Winterbourne View. Some of the findings in the Francis enquiry into Mid Staffs<sup>vii</sup> highlighted the shortcomings of the local patient and public involvement structures to deliver effective scrutiny and voice for local people. A credible, resolute and independent consumer champion of health and social care will play an essential role in providing a voice for local people; holding health and social care decision makers to account and working collaboratively to influence the form and quality of local care ensuring everyone has access to achieve the best health and well-being outcomes.

Local Healthwatch organisations were established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to act as a local consumer voice for people using health and social care services. Local Healthwatch came into force from April 2013. There are 152 Healthwatch organisations in England and a national body, Healthwatch England, which provides advice, guidance and a national profile for Healthwatch.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire Community Interest Company (CIC) has been commissioned by Northamptonshire County Council to deliver the role and functions of Healthwatch in the County. Healthwatch Northamptonshire CIC is a social enterprise and a partnership between the University of Northampton and Northampton Volunteering Centre. Established in April 2013, Healthwatch Northamptonshire CIC has a board of 6 Directors and is the responsible body with legal, financial and contractual responsibility for the organisation. The Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board is the public face of the organisation and ensures that our delivery of the agreed vision, values and strategy involves and empowers the local community. The Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board, which currently has 10 members, is advised by an Advisory Council of local people, many of whom were involved in the former Northamptonshire Local Involvement Network. There are a number of Healthwatch Northamptonshire working/advisory groups of volunteers, supported by staff. There is a staff team of 5 and a growing Healthwatch Northamptonshire community of active volunteers who working together act as the eyes, ears and voice for the local community.

Our strategy will be kept under regular review and will need to respond to external developments and challenges. It should be regarded as a work in progress.

## **2. Healthwatch Northamptonshire's functions:**

To deliver our vision and realise our values, Healthwatch Northamptonshire will:

- Find out the views, needs and experience of local people through a wide range of methods to get the broadest view possible, representative of all our diverse communities. This will include working with existing community groups to make the best use of available resources to gather and deliver consistent messages
- Make these views known to health and social care decision makers
- Promote and support the involvement of local people in decision making about health and social care services
- Enable local people to monitor the quality of provision of local care services
- Report on the quality of local care services and make recommendations about how local care services could and should be improved
- Provide advice and information about local care services

- Provide Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to form a national picture of the quality of care
- When necessary, escalate concerns using our rights to refer matters to the County Council's Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee locally and to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission at national level.

### **3. Make Your Voice Count:**

We have identified our strategic priorities through a range of activities including:

- Talking to members of the public, patient, service user and carer organisations and community groups during our Make Your Voice Count campaign. During September and October, we spoke to over 1,100 people to find out what people thought of local health and social care services
- A survey which will be on-going and had 214 responses during our Make Your Voice Count campaign
- Analysis of complaints and concerns which have been raised with Healthwatch Northamptonshire
- Discussion within Healthwatch Northamptonshire - with our Healthwatch Advisory Council; Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board and Healthwatch Northamptonshire CIC board; staff team and our working groups - currently four groups which look at specific areas of care and services
- Understanding the priorities of the local health and social care decision makers through review of key documents such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; the Northamptonshire Health and Well Being Strategy; the plans for Healthier Northamptonshire and various quality reports. We have attended a number of key meetings and held discussions with key health and social care decision makers
- Understanding the national policy context for health and social care over the next decade.

#### **4. Healthwatch Northamptonshire's five strategic priorities:**

##### **i) To campaign for improved health and social care outcomes for children and young people by enabling the views and voices of children, young people and families to be heard:**

- There are approximately 172,500 children and young people in Northamptonshire (25% of the population) with a rapidly rising birth rate<sup>viii</sup>. 23,000 children live in poverty<sup>iii</sup>; an estimated 11,000 children have a severe disability<sup>ix</sup> and there were 5,000 referrals to children's social care services in 2010-2011<sup>iv</sup>. 4,700 have a role as a Young Carer<sup>x</sup>
- The Chief Medical Officer of England has challenged services to do much more to improve the health outcomes for children and young people highlighting higher mortality rates compared to other European countries<sup>xi</sup>
- Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups are re-designing children's community health services to ensure services are joined up, more accessible and improve health and wellbeing outcomes
- Northamptonshire County Council's child protection; looked after children and adoption services have been assessed as inadequate<sup>xii</sup>.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire needs to ensure that we are involved in all aspects of service improvement and that we have ways of enabling the views and voices of children and young people to be heard. We will deliver this strategic priority by:

- Developing ways to involve and mobilise children and young people so their views and voices are heard directly. We will work with schools, youth groups and children's centres. We will explore whether establishing a Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire, led by children and young people, could be a way of co-ordinating this work
- Ensuring we are effectively involved with the wide range of involvement activity throughout the county such as the Shadow Children and Young People's Board
- Ensuring Healthwatch Northamptonshire is effectively influencing decision making about services and actively empowering children and young people to influence
- Developing an evaluation framework to assess the quality of services for children and young people which is signed up to and implemented by all commissioners and providers of health and social care services in the County.

**ii) To champion the views and voices of local people in the Healthier Northamptonshire Programme to ensure all service improvements are driven by the needs of local people:**

The Healthier Northamptonshire Programme's vision is to deliver better health, better care and better value. The programme has a board which brings together the County Council and NHS in Northamptonshire. Aims include reducing health inequalities; improving access and quality of care; transforming primary care; reducing use of hospital care and integrating health and social care. We must be immersed in the full detail of this work and will deliver this priority by:

- Ensuring we have effective and significant influence on, and with, the Healthier Northamptonshire Programme Board; the 9 core work streams and 5 clinical working groups (cancer, urgent care, children's care, planned care and long term conditions). We will research and report on patient, service user and carer experiences to the board to help shape the redesign of services
- Holding the programme to account on key principles including person centred services; equity of access; transparency of decision making; consistency of quality; best use of resources; effective joint working
- In particular, we will develop ways of finding out more about people's use and experience of primary and community healthcare and identifying ways in which care can be improved
- Working with partner organisations representing users and carers, including Age UK and Northamptonshire Carers, to ensure there is robust monitoring from a service user, patient and carer perspective of the new programme being delivered to support older people to avoid crisis situations in health and social care
- We will ensure that there is close integration with the work delivered by our Social Care working group whose priorities are integration of health and social care, personal budgets, commissioning of social care and involvement of service users and carers
- We will work in partnership with patients and the public, the University of Northampton's Institute for Health & Well-Being, Northampton Volunteering Centre, the wider voluntary and community sector, the NHS and Social Care to test new ways of supporting people to manage their health more effectively and use services more effectively. We want a partnership approach to test innovative solutions which will improve health outcomes and ease the pressure on the NHS.

**iii) To champion the views and voices of local people, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable and least heard members of our community by effectively influencing the quality of care for adults and support for carers:**

There has been an increased spotlight on the care of vulnerable adults following the inquiry into the abuse of people with learning disabilities at Winterbourne View; the campaign to abolish 15 minute care visits; a recent report by mental health charity Rethink on the poor quality of health care for people with long term mental health problems and a report by leading charities earlier this year “The Other Care Crisis”. There are a number of policy initiatives which will change the way in which social care is planned, paid for and delivered. These include the increased move to personal budgets for people at high risk and the social care bill which proposes a lifetime cap of £72,000 (plus “hotel” costs) for people’s care costs.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire will deliver this strategic priority by:

- Ensuring that together with service users and carers, we are fully involved in the commissioning and monitoring of adult social care services. For example, we will be involved with the re-commissioning of community equipment services to ensure that service quality is of a high standard and that services are good value for money
- Continuing to support the county wide neurological alliance which monitors the quality of services from a user view including respite care
- Building on our fantastic Make Your Voice Count joint event in September with over 50 service users, we will work with the Learning Disability Partnership Board to improve services for people with learning disabilities
- Improving the way we involve mental health service users so they are engaged in all areas of our work ... “no health, without mental health”
- Researching and reporting on experiences of people who have personal budgets and making recommendations for improvement
- Promoting a model of user and carer engagement and involvement that represents best practice, so that all health and social care organisations in the County working within the model.

**iv) To use our knowledge of the patient, user and carer experience and our influence, to lobby for top quality, responsive and safe health and social care services which are patient, user and carer centred**

The NHS outcomes framework includes a requirement to improve patient experience and patient safety. Locally, there has been a focus on the quality of care at our two local general hospitals. The Care Quality Commission has included Northampton General in the first round of hospitals to be inspected because of concerns about quality and risk. Kettering General has been subject to enforcement action by the Commission in the last year. At a national level, there has been a spotlight on the quality of care in people's own homes - specifically 15 minute care visits. The quality of care in the County's residential and nursing homes is not consistently good. We will deliver this strategic priority by:

- Exercising our rights. Healthwatch Northamptonshire has the legal right to monitor, known as "enter and view" health and social care services where either the NHS or the County Council has commissioned the service. The only exception to this are places where looked after children are. Healthwatch Northamptonshire also attends a number of forums where information about quality of care is reviewed. We will use these rights to enter and view and representation to gather our evidence and make the case for improvements
- Ensure that our monitoring of the two acute hospitals has a clear focus on the concerns raised by the Care Quality Commission and through the information we receive from patients and relatives
- Working with the County council to pilot the monitoring of care provided in people's homes - i.e. domiciliary care. This will be a new area of activity for Healthwatch Northamptonshire and we will test out how this can be done and ensure we really learn from the views of service users and carers
- Building on the work done by the former LINK, we will develop a programme for monitoring local care homes. Our work will include collaborating with the Northamptonshire County Council and the University of Northampton to test a new method of finding out the views of residents in care homes
- Building our research and intelligence function making sure that the information we gather is matched to other information about quality.

**v) To build the capacity of Healthwatch Northamptonshire as a thriving, centre of excellence which has a permanent future as an independent consumer champion of health and social care delivering on our vision, values and strategy**

Our first four strategic goals focus on the work we will do externally. Our fifth goal will build the functions, capacity and reputation of Healthwatch Northamptonshire. To do this we will:

- Recruit and develop a top performing staff team which strives for excellence in all our work
- Building on the excellent volunteer base from the former LINK, recruit, train and develop a growing Healthwatch Northamptonshire community of volunteers reflecting the diversity of the local population
- Establish ourselves as the acknowledged Centre of Excellence in the County for patient, user, carer and public involvement with an appropriate high quality and effective volunteer and representative training and development programme
- Grow our membership numbers and improve our database so that we can identify which members may be interested in which aspects of health and social care services
- Move to an office base which is more visible and accessible for members of the public
- Build the Healthwatch management board to increase the numbers and diversity of the board
- Ensure that we have all the necessary policies and procedures to ensure we are fully compliant with contractual and legal requirements
- Manage our financial resources effectively working within our agreed budget
- Develop and deliver a communications plan so that local people know Healthwatch Northamptonshire exists; what we do and the impact we are having in making a positive difference to people's lives
- Develop our Information and Signposting function so that local people can easily access information and advice about health and social care. We will work closely with other information providers to share information and not duplicate
- We will develop our capacity to generate income from other sources. We will establish a joint committee with the University of Northampton and Northamptonshire Volunteering Centre (the two CIC partners) to develop

ideas, proposals and funding bids which promote user and patient centred care. We are unique among the Healthwatch organisations in the country in having this creative partnership. We will maximise the opportunities this offers to build our collective reputation as a local, national and international centre of excellence. This will in turn guarantee the permanent future of Healthwatch Northamptonshire.

## MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT

This is a draft strategy and sets out five clear strategic priorities for Healthwatch Northamptonshire. As well as having clear priorities to focus our work and activity, we will also be an organisation that is responsive and reactive to local issues so the strategy is not intended to exhaustively include all areas of work. We regard this document as living, breathing strategy which will require regular review and comment. We are ambitious. We believe that a robust, independent consumer champion which works positively and effectively will raise the quality of local health and social care. Where we find examples of great care and effective involvement we will celebrate those. We will be constructively critical when necessary - highlighting the problems but also being part of the solution. We are passionate about the right to great quality health and social care - we regard those rights as fundamental human rights. We hope you will want to get involved with Healthwatch Northamptonshire and support our work. We want to know what you think of our strategy. Have got it right for now? What's missing? Are we trying to do too much? Have we got the balance right? There are lots of ways to let us know:

- Send us your comments on Twitter, Facebook or by email to [enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk)
- Write to us at Lakeside House, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, The Lakes, Bedford Road, Northampton, NN4 7HD
- Phone us on 0300 002 0010 - talk to us!

Many thanks

Kate Holt

Healthwatch Northamptonshire Manager and  
Connected Together CIC General Manager

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## References

- <sup>i</sup> Towards a Healthier Northamptonshire 2014-2019 Our Plan, Nene Clinical Commissioning Group and Northamptonshire County Council, December 2013
- <sup>ii</sup> Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2013, Northamptonshire County Council, December 2013
- <sup>iii</sup> Northamptonshire Health Profile 2013, Public Health England, September 2013
- <sup>iv</sup> Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011, Northamptonshire County Council, October 2011
- <sup>v</sup> 2011 Census Analysis: Unpaid care in England and Wales, 2011 and comparison with 2001, Office of National Statistics, February 2013
- <sup>vi</sup> Census 2001 Key Statistics - Local Authorities KS08 Health and provision of unpaid care and 2011 Census QS301EW Provision of unpaid care, local authorities in England and Wales
- <sup>vii</sup> Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry, February 2013
- <sup>viii</sup> Northamptonshire Child Health Profile 2013, Child and Maternal Health Observatory (ChiMat), March 2013
- <sup>ix</sup> Northamptonshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011- Children and Young People 2.7 Disabilities, Northamptonshire Observatory, September 2011
- <sup>x</sup> 2011 Census, Office of National Statistics LC3304EW - Provision of unpaid care by age
- <sup>xi</sup> CMO's annual report 2012: Our Children Deserve Better, Department of Health, October 2013
- <sup>xii</sup> 'Making Children Safer': Northamptonshire County Council Children's Services Improvement Programme, Northamptonshire County Council, October 2013