

Healthwatch is an independent organisation with statutory duties and responsibilities to listen to people, about their experiences and views, with the purpose of influencing how our health and care is provided.

Beside our powers of entering and viewing health and/or care services, we raise the public voice at the highest levels by being part of the strategic and operational structures within our health and care system; we also provide Free Independent Advocacy Support for people who want to make an NHS Complaint. The information that we share, with commissioners and providers, has no bias or politics and is representative, as much as possible, of Wirral residents. Tackling system inequalities runs through everything we do.

HW Wirral has a strong relationship with CQC and we raise issues with one another when inspections or visit are taking place.

Some examples of where we represent the public view locally:-

- Humanitarian Cell
- Health & Social Care Cell - Strategic Command
- Winter Planning Group
- Comms Cell
- Discharge Cell - and Patient Experience Sub-Group (daily at 3 or 4pm)
- Flu Vaccine Cell
- Covid Vaccination Cell
- Mass Testing Roll out to Care Homes Group (pilot)
- Partnership (3<sup>rd</sup> Sector) meeting, Link Forum and 'Community Of Practice' (COP) which is a grass roots community groups coming together to discuss and share ongoing activities, events and locally driven initiatives
- Healthy Wirral Partners Board
- Community Advisory Group (CAG) run by the Police
- Health Care Partnership Assembly (C&M)
- Primary Care Commissioning (operational and strategic committees)
- Health & Care Imp Group
- Winter Planning Group
- Out of Hospital Board
- Patient Quality Safety Board (WUTHFT)
- System Improvement Board (NHSE/I and CQC and all system leaders)
- Community Trust Governing Body
- Mental Health System Board
- Crisis Care Concordat
- Care Home Collaborative
- Pressure Ulcer Collaborative
- Quality Surveillance C&M
- Inequalities Board

- BAME Sub Group
- Treat Me Well Group- The campaign has been set up by the learning disability charity 'Mencap'- led by Wirral Mencap
- Discharge Cell (and Discharge sub-group\*)
- Winter Planning\*
- Urgent Care Development Group\*

\*all of these groups are working towards an 8 point plan which has been co-designed with the Commissioners and Providers on Wirral, and NHSI and ECIST. Healthwatch, AgeUK, NHSE and ECIST have worked together to produce the para below - we are asking all Boards, Groups and Committees to embrace this para, by adding to ToR, so that, through every step, the public are at the heart of all plans and actions:-

“Foundations of Quality Improvement should always have what patients tell us about their treatment and care at the heart of everything we plan and do, as a system. We must be able to evidence that all actions and decisions made come back to this, making certain that everyone feels respected, involved and valued at each and every part of the journey. We should all feel confident that we are either giving or receiving quality care.”

Our Annual report explains about what we have achieved so far and also lays out our plans for the coming year and you can view this by following this link:-

<https://healthwatchwirral.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HW-Annual-Report-20192020-Final.pdf>

Based on information gathered through our community outreach and the relationships with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector and public sector our priorities this year include:-

- Mental health
- Communications and Listening even more- Outreach where possible and safe to do so
- Work closer with CQC to ensure we receive quality care in our communities and in our hospitals
- Increase Public (street level) awareness of the role of Healthwatch- this has already gained traction over 2020.

Of course, it is vital that we work with our local public sector partners on the Healthy Wirral Programme the priorities being:-

- Alcohol Misuse
- Smoking
- Self care
- Health inequalities



And the transformation programmes that underpin these priorities are:

- planned care
- Unplanned care
- Mental health
- Learning disabilities and Autism
- Women and Children and families
- Medicine optimisation

Although Covid-19 has resulted in some deviation from the plans, Healthwatch is involved in all aspects of the Healthy Wirral priorities.

### Communications, Listening and Outreach

It has never been more important than now to Spare 5 for someone to help them feel less isolated. We have been working hard on making sure that we give authenticated clear information and to try to find new and better ways to communicate with people. For example; Virtual Bridge Forum, HWW Bulletin, fb/twitter and our new feedback centre (Speak Out Page).

<https://healthwatchwirral.co.uk/feedback-centre/>

People have felt fearful, anxious and lacking in confidence on what to do when they need help. Our aim is to provide a vehicle for people to freely give information and feedback on their experiences (our Speak Out page on our website) and also to be a “go to” for reliable sources of information.

We had a very “soft sell” survey on our website - asking people to tell us about their thoughts, feelings and experiences during Covid-19. We wanted to do this to see if we could follow what was happening to people during these difficult weeks. It was no surprise to discover that 85% of those who had responded told us that their mental health had, in some way, been affected.

### **New Feedback Centre**

The Feedback Centre is like a TripAdvisor. There are 52 Healthwatch already using this style to capture feedback and the beauty of this way of doing things is that we can capture trends and themes and produce reports at the touch of a button. Thus supporting, with real time information, the System Planning (including Winter plans).

We use twitter and facebook, daily, and circulate a full e-bulletin as widely as possible once per month and these can be found on this link :

<https://us7.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=9c71482cca3b44ae11b32bd67&id=6abb93330a>



## Virtual Bridge Forum- Bridging Resources Information and Direction for Everyone (BRIDGE) Forum

This is a Forum that used to meet physically. It was important that we adapted to the virtual world and look at how we engage more frequently. At BRIDGE all involved are encouraged to think about how services here on Wirral can learn lessons and lock in the benefits of things that have gone well in recent months. As well as updating on their own activities and offers- sharing good practice and how we can work together to improve outcomes for all.

### Enter and View

- Virtual tours using staff within the Trust, Home, GP practice etc. We have trialled this way of working with Autism Together - a report of the findings will be available on our website soon

<https://healthwatchwirral.co.uk/reports/>



### #Spare 5 Campaign

The Spare 5 campaign is exactly what it says on the tin. It is to encourage people in our communities to talk to each other and inspiring everyone to Spare 5 mins for themselves and the people they may come into contact with - either in work, at home or by coincidence.

The programme of work for Spare 5 was in full swing prior to CV19; and this included a lot of face to face activity. So, we will be driving the campaign through our Bridge Forum, online, fb, twitter (and face to face as soon as possible.) We have asked WUTHFT if we can have a slot on the Staff Inductions to tell them the value and importance of Sparing 5 as we believe we need to embed this into everyone's thinking at every opportunity.

WUTHFT have also included a Healthwatch Section within their staff bulletins and on in their intranet. There are several benefits to this including:-

- It encourages everyone to Spare 5
- It helps Healthwatch share information about the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector and the non-clinical support that can be accessed (supporting hospital avoidance)
- it prompts staff to engage with patients and encourages positive feedback about care

### Discharge from hospital

Its obvious that getting people successfully discharged from hospital is vital to getting our "normal" services back on track and also to ensure there is sufficient provision in the system.



The #BecauseWeAllCare Campaign (a partnership between CQC and Healthwatch England) encouraged the public to share experiences, both good and bad, to help improve services. Particularly focussing on Discharge from hospital. As well as promoting the benefits of giving feedback and why it's so important, the campaign is also an opportunity to collect people's views on key local issues, such as Dementia, Mental Health.

Healthwatch are also part of the Multi Agency Discharge Cell (which meets 7 days a week). During meetings, as well as challenging the blocks in the system, such as - swab delays, Packages of Care, care Home places, Healthwatch are phoning all patients discharged on pathway 0. Pathway 0 patients are people who do not appear to require any extra support on leaving hospital - apart from maybe a follow up appointment with their GP.

We are asking how the discharge process had worked for them - for example, were you given an Estimated Discharge Date (EDD)? Did you go home when you were supposed to? (If not - what happened?) and do you care for someone at home?

During the call we may find out that they do in fact need extra support. HWW has a good knowledge of the non-clinical and clinical support that is available across Wirral, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector non-clinical community support, we also #Spare5 to either signpost or support people to get that extra bit of help - to prevent re-admission and/or preventable attendances at GPs or A&E.

We have recorded what people told us and there are no real surprises eg. poor communication, waiting for meds, waiting for the consultant

However, new learning has shown that -

- patients didn't know if they had received a Discharge Pack,
- patients didn't know when they should expect to go home and there was a lack of recording this on patients records
- didn't know if they could contact their GP or even if their GP knew they were out of hospital,
- e-consult hasn't been the best experience for some patients.
- everyone appeared extremely grateful for the follow up call from Healthwatch

On the second day of carrying out this work we were able to prevent 3 people from going to A&E by sourcing community non-clinical support - but it was through our relationships rather than good processes

A quick example were the system could have done better:-

*A gentleman, who had been discharged 5 days previously, had been in extreme pain and trauma with a catheter following a stay in hospital - he had tried his*



*GP multiple times - but was in so much pain he ended up going to A&E and being re-admitted - and this may have been preventable.*

A Discharge Cell sub-group was set up to bring findings together from the Pathway 0 calls and the calls being undertaken by Wirral Community Health and Care Trust to patients on Pathways 1 and 2.

We also looked at the Discharge Pack for patients. On first viewing it was unclear who the intended recipient was - eg. the professional or the patient. We know that there are some legal requirements for the Discharge Pack but, we queried whether it was necessary to have information about DNAR or words like Trusted Assessor within it; which would be inappropriate for a lot of patients - and even alarming.

HWW raised this with WUTHFT and there are some plans in progress to have another look at the Discharge Pack -and maybe even rename it to “During my stay - and going home” and include Ward Phone Number as well as the SPA (Single Point of Access) number. Also, to give the discharge pack out much earlier in the stay - when the patient has been given an Estimated Date of Discharge. This would encourage staff to talk patients through the pack (#Spare 5 mins) so they know what the contents are and feel more supported; rather than feeling that they have just fallen off a cliff when they leave hospital!

Healthwatch have also worked with a small team to ensure WUTHFTs Discharge policy reflects that discharge is about a “person’ who is leaving hospital after being unwell”. This was a very successful piece of work and now includes the “Foundation of quality” para mentioned earlier.

Finally, as a result of an unprecedented year, people continued to talk to us about their individual concerns which we were able to signpost/support. However, the main points raised this year were:-

#### Primary Care

There appeared a lack of understanding whether GPs were open for business. Although HWW were aware of the contribution of some GPs through their presence at strategic meetings, it was not as transparent to the public who could not get to see their GP or access websites because of IT issues.

#### Acute care

During the height of Covid-19 patients appeared not to want to go to A&E or indeed any care setting. They did not understand whether they should attend appointments or if they could visit family members. Now, December 2020, patients and families appear to be flouting the rules eg. inpatient went for a cigarette and was observed meeting family outside in the car park.

#### Community Care



Screening and immunisations were on hold during Covid-19 but Breast and Cervical Screening has begun again and feedback has been good. Flu Vaccination feedback has also been good. Although there some supply issues early on.

#### Care Homes and Domiciliary Care

There has not been much feedback in relation to experiences of people using Dom Care but HWW observed that, in relation to other care workers, Dom Care staff appeared to be tested for Covid-19 the least.

Visits to Care Homes has been the primary concern for members of the public. Although the Council and a multi agency team worked hard to fulfil the brief from Government, to support care home visits, it was very difficult to impose. Some Care homes, within the pilot, appeared to work with the Council well whilst others were influenced by their Owners/Agencies who had multiple homes across the Country.

In general, the public were in a very grateful frame of mind during Covid-19, until September when we started to see an increase in concerns relating to Dentists, Cancer diagnosis and treatment and general support with prescriptions and supplies for those who were shielded.

Thank you for inviting me to share some of the work that Healthwatch are currently involved in, and supporting, and if you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me.

You can find our Annual Report at <https://healthwatchwirral.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/HW-Annual-Report-20192020-Final.pdf>

Stay well

Karen Prior

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End.

Karen Prior  
CEO, Healthwatch Wirral - 22 December 2020

