

# Healthwatch St Helens

Annual Report 2017/18





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# Message from our Chair

## I'm very pleased to introduce the Healthwatch St Helens Annual Report, for 2017-2018.

This year has seen a lot of excellent work, including listening events and reports that have addressed the areas of concern that local people have highlighted.

It's been particularly rewarding to see the work around mental health that's been carried out and we plan to continue focusing on this issue. With suicide rates being a worry and some people still struggling to access the right mental health services to meet their needs, we are committed to giving more of our attention to this important area of work.

Another focus will be helping local people to understand the services that are out there so they make good choices when they need treatment and advice.

Our work with 'St Helens Cares' has meant that the public's views and experiences have been considered in the design of the new integrated health and care system that the Local Authority and CCG have been working hard to develop.



I would like to thank the Support Team for their continued hard work, a lot of which goes on behind the scenes.

Thanks and recognition must also go to our Volunteer Representatives, who have given up so much of their time to support the work of Healthwatch St Helens.

I urge you once again to keep sending your views and experiences to our team so that we can carry on supporting commissioners and providers to design and deliver quality services.

# Message from our Manager

It gives me great pleasure to write the introduction to this year's Annual Report. I was pleased to be appointed as Manager in 2017, following on from my previous role as Engagement and Development Lead. It's a privilege to work with such a hard-working Support Team and to have the opportunity to develop Healthwatch St Helens and how we operate.

In these challenging times the Support Team, Volunteers and Directors have continued to give their time to support the work we do and to ensure that local voices are heard. Our positive reputation as a 'critical friend' continues to grow and our relationships with local providers and commissioners are strong.

The hundreds of patient experiences we have collected this year have been fed through to commissioners and providers and have helped to bring about changes in services, encourage service reviews and highlight good practice.

We are particularly proud of how our work has been able to contribute to, and complement, the work being done by our local CCG and Council in bringing the service user voice to the forefront of how services are reshaped and redesigned. Our involvement with the development of our local integrated health and care system, 'St Helens Cares' has been vital in making sure that the communities who use services are engaged in a meaningful way around how they are designed and delivered in the future.

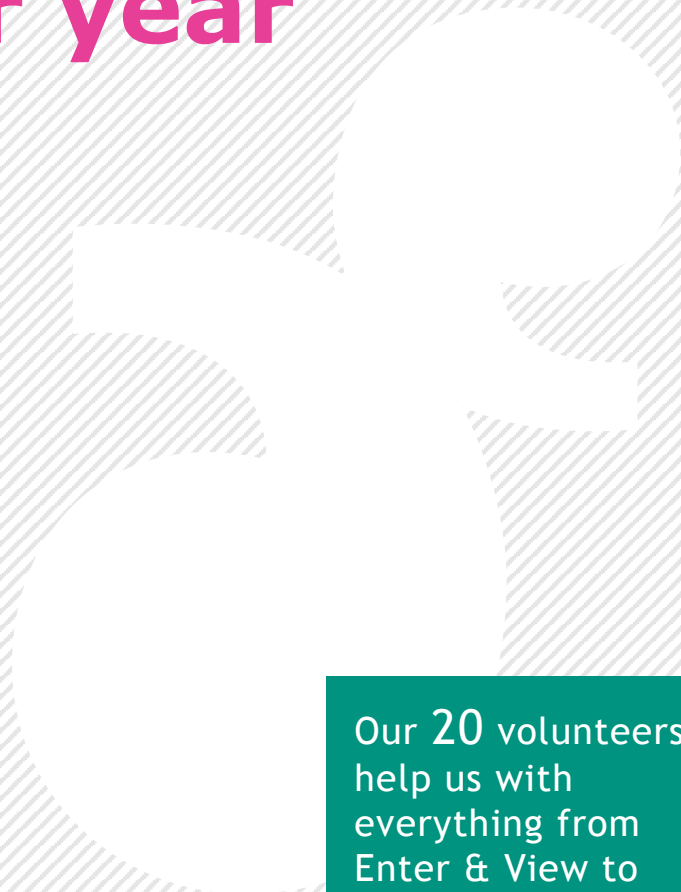


A lot of work has been done this year to strengthen the processes around volunteering and a brand new 'Healthwatch Representative Forum' has been introduced to replace the Management Committee. We'll talk more about these developments later on in this Annual Report.

Our commitment to helping local people get the best experience possible from services as well as supporting the local CCG to balance rising cost and demand has led to work around 'Making the Right Choices for Your Healthcare Needs'. This is work we will continue in the next financial year.

I look forward to another exciting year with Healthwatch St Helens and all the challenges and achievements it brings.

# Highlights from our year



This year we've reached over 62,000 people on social media



Our 20 volunteers help us with everything from Enter & View to deciding on our areas of work



We've visited 45 local services



Our reports have tackled issues ranging from accessing mental health services to community nursing



We've spoken to 100+ people on why they choose the services they use when they need treatment or advice

We've given 897 people information and advice





# Who we are



**We know that people in St Helens want services that meet their needs and the needs of their families, now and in the future.**

We want you to continue to share your experiences of using health and care services with us - both good and bad. By passing on what you tell us, we can influence the design and delivery of services, by letting providers and commissioners know what matters to you.

As well as making sure that your views are heard locally, we also share your views with Healthwatch England who make sure that the Government put people at the heart of care, nationally.

## **Health and care that works for you**

Local people want health and social care support that works for them - helping them to stay well, manage health conditions and have the best possible experience they can have from the services they use.

## **Our purpose**

To find out what matters most to you and to help make sure your views shape the support and care you receive.

By working collaboratively with statutory sector partners we aim to identify areas that need to be improved so that you get the best possible treatment and care.

# Meet the team



**Jayne Parkinson-Loftus**  
Manager



**Debbie East**  
Admin & Volunteer Support Officer



**Gail Hughes**  
Communication & Engagement Officer



**Janet Roberts**  
Outreach & Intelligence Officer



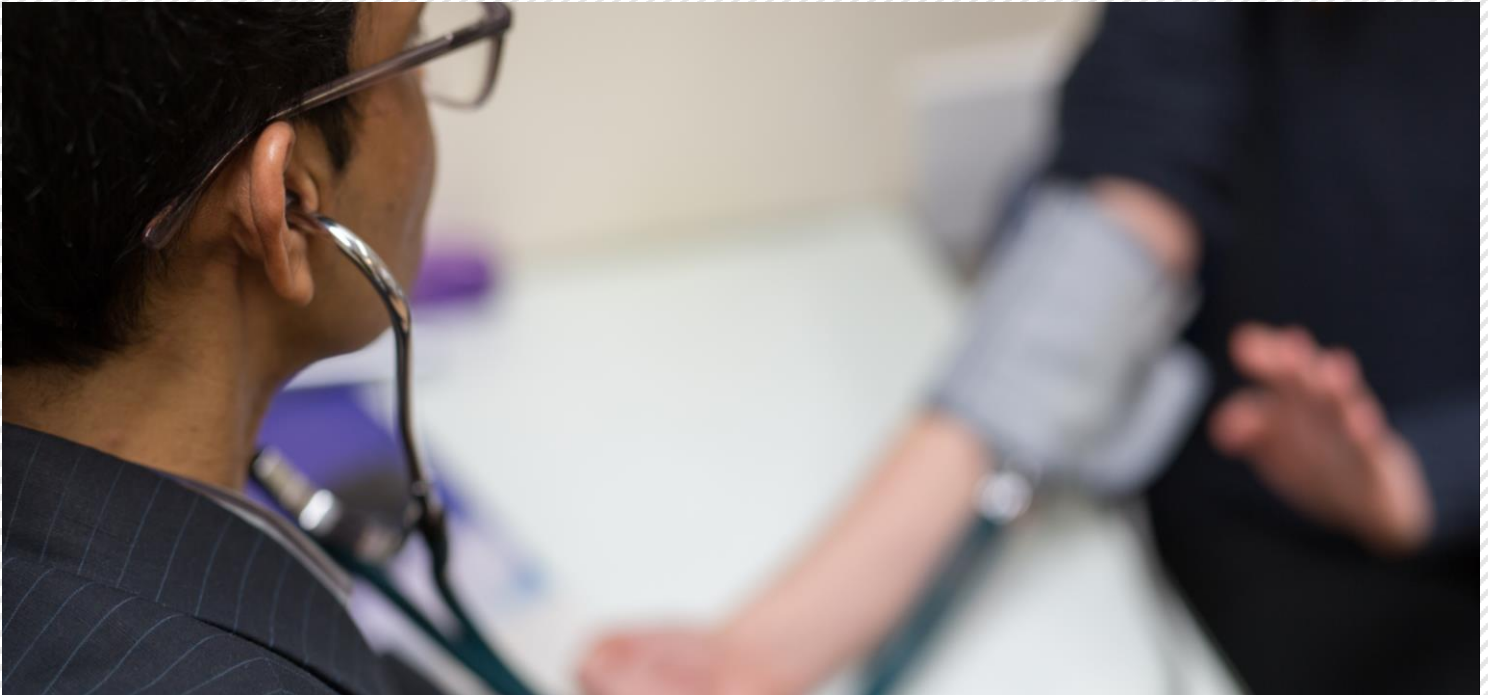
**Lynne Daffern**  
IT Support Officer





# Your views on health and care





### Listening to people's views

Some of the ways we collect patient experiences are by attending community events, sending out questionnaires, holding listening events and targeting local community groups to make sure that all people in our communities can share their views with us.

- ❖ Our CCG's 'Talkfest' event gave us the chance to talk to young people at our local colleges.
- ❖ Our local older people's group 'Senior Voice' invite us to attend all of their events to gather experiences from older people across our borough.
- ❖ Our regular presence at a local asylum-seekers' drop-in helps us to gain the confidence of people who have made St Helens their home, so that these vulnerable families have their say in the health and care services they use.
- ❖ We support our local Hospital Trust in making sure that people from our LGBT community have a good standard of care and treatment.
- ❖ Our newsletter goes out to all members of St Helens Carers Centre, encouraging local carers to share their views and experiences with us.

### Making sure services work for you

Following our new arrangements last year with the Local Authority's Quality Monitoring Team, we carried out our Enter & View visit so that they complemented their Quality visits.

- ❖ We arranged to visit care homes that *weren't* on the Quality Monitoring Team's schedule for the year, to avoid duplication.
- ❖ We share our findings with the Quality Monitoring Team, CQC and providers, among others.
- ❖ We follow up to see what actions have happened from our recommendations.

#### Our authorised representatives are:

- ❖ Pam Davies
- ❖ Joanne Heron
- ❖ Kath Inkpen
- ❖ Jimmy Jackson
- ❖ Jane Lowton
- ❖ Judi Lunt
- ❖ Rose McNamara
- ❖ Brenda Smith
- ❖ Rosie Woods
- ❖ Joan Young



# Helping you find the answers





## How we have helped the community get the information they need

This year :

- ❖ We set up a lay reader panel, including a representative from St Helens Deafness Support Centre, to enable us to make sure that the information that we, the CCG and Public Health send out, is accessible to people in the local D/deaf community.
- ❖ Clinics at our local hospital started to display waiting times for all the clinics they have running, in waiting rooms, after we told them that patients don't feel informed.
- ❖ We held listening events to inform people and hear what they have to say, when changes to services have been made or when people have told us they don't know how to access them.
- ❖ We supported a man with Morgellons Disease and OCD to access information to help him to understand and manage his condition.

## Big changes to our website

This year, we made changes to our website so that it's easier to:

- Register as a member.
- Volunteer with us.
- Access information that helps people find the right support and treatment.
- Leave us a patient story about your experiences of using services.
- Find out about local events and groups that help people to manage their own health and wellbeing.

*“The event was good, well attended and the questions facilitated a constructive discussion. I was pleased to hear some good feedback. Thank you for all your work on this.”*

Sarah O'Brien, Chief Accountable Officer for St Helens CCG, on our community nursing listening event.



# Making a difference together





## How your experiences are helping to influence change

- ❖ Our recommendations about how local providers could communicate more effectively with people with autism and their families, has influenced how the Neurodevelopment Pathway is being delivered.
- ❖ Our 'Access to Mental Health Services' listening event and report were recognised by our Local Authority's Scrutiny Committee and mental health Commissioner as a valuable source of local views that supported their reviews into local mental health services.

*"Thank you for all the hard work that went into the mental health event and for the skilled facilitation on the day. It was good to be able to share anonymously and I think there was a lot of listening as well as talking."*

## Working with other organisations

We're proud of the relationships we have with local service providers, commissioners and other partners and how those relationships help us to work together to bring about change.

- ❖ Our working relationship with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) allows us to share information and evidence that informs the work they do.
- ❖ Our evidence and insight has been shared with Healthwatch England, with information from one of our Enter & View visits included in a national report about care homes.
- ❖ A joint piece of work with 4 other local Healthwatch organisations helped us to build a picture of why people present at A&E, sometimes inappropriately.

"Working with Healthwatch St Helens has proved extremely valuable in better understanding patients' experiences of our services. They play a key role, making sure that the patient voice is always considered. The work that Healthwatch do, both independently and in support of our CCG engagement work, has informed our plans and enabled us to provide the best possible experiences in the services we commission."

(Angela Delea, Director of Corporate Governance, St Helens CCG)

## How we've worked with our community

- ❖ Our members comment on consultations, draft policies and redesign of services, so that local voices are heard by providers and commissioners.
- ❖ Information that local people have given us help to influence the work of our local People's Board, in particular around the development of 'St Helens Cares'.
- ❖ Our lay readers make sure documents that our local partners send to us for comment are clear and easy to understand, so that more local people can be engaged in shaping service delivery and design.

Our requests for feedback from local people are spread far and wide. Questionnaires, consultations and invitations to take part in service reviews are distributed on our behalf by many local partners, making our reach into local communities even wider. Vulnerable people and those who often go unheard can still have their say around local services via the organisations and support groups they belong to.



it starts with  
**YOU**



“I would be very proud if my story encourages other women to check for lumps”.

### Helping to get the message across

Our colleagues at Public Health were promoting awareness in older ladies, aged 75+ about the importance of still checking for breast lumps, regardless of their age.

Our Public Health colleagues know how many people we reach through our newsletters and our presence in the community, so they asked if we could identify a lady who might be prepared to be involved in a newspaper article to help raise awareness.

One of our Healthwatch members was a 99-year-old lady who was diagnosed with breast cancer the year before. She had always been very proactive about her health and had routinely checked for lumps throughout her life. After finding a lump she promptly made an appointment to see her GP and was referred to Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology. She has since received the all-clear, after having treatment.

This lady appeared in our local newspaper, where her story helped to stress the importance of checking for lumps, regardless of age, as well as seeking medical advice quickly.

She told us that she would be very proud if her story makes a difference to other women of her age by encouraging them to check for lumps regularly.

### Helping to address concerns

Mrs S contacted us after receiving a letter regarding various aspects of her adult son's care within mental health services, which gave her cause for concern.

After a lengthy conversation with Mrs S, we contacted the Matron for Quality at our local mental health provider who in turn contacted Mrs S to come in and have a chat about her concerns.

It turned out that Mrs S needed to feel like someone was really listening to her. The Matron arranged for the practitioner involved in the young man's treatment and care to address Mrs S' concerns and answer her questions.

Mrs S was very happy with the outcome and thanked the Healthwatch Support Team for our intervention. She also now attends the Mental Health Carers' group meetings regularly at the local hospital.

“I needed to feel that someone was listening to my concerns about my son's mental health and treatment”



# Our plans for next year





## What next?

This coming year will see us continuing with some of the important areas of work we're focused on over the last year.

In addition, we will be looking at other issues that local people have brought to us and holding listening events, sending out questionnaires and attending local community groups to hear people's views.

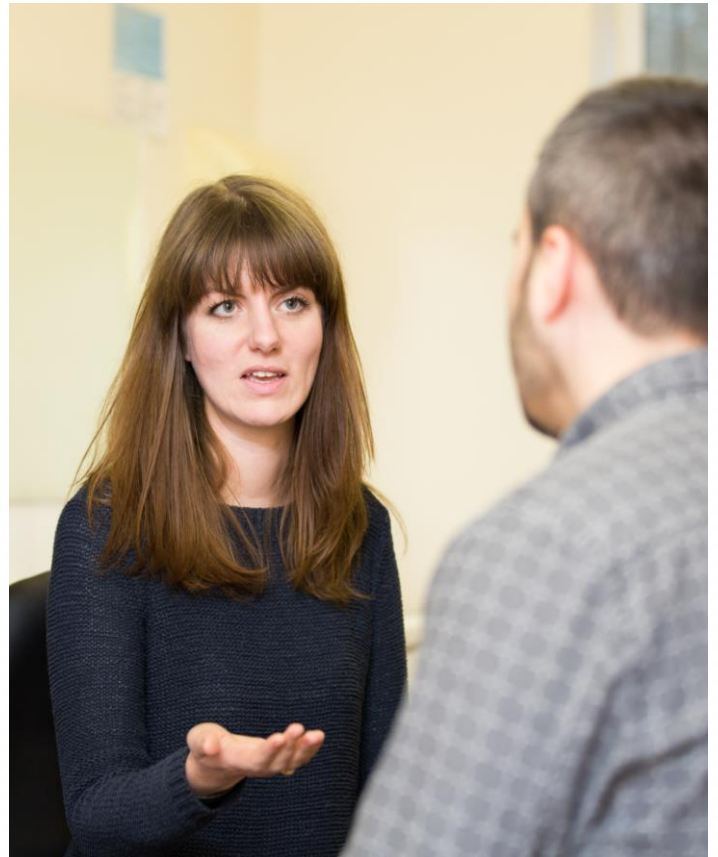
Looking at the issues that people in our communities have told us are important to them and working with local providers to help people to get the best possible experience from the services they use.

Some of our work this year will be the second phase of work we've previously carried out. These were such important and complex subjects that we wanted to address various issues separately.

By breaking them down into smaller task and finish groups we can give them closer scrutiny and involve a wider range of people.

## Our top priorities for next year

1. We will continue to promote the message around making appropriate choices for healthcare needs
2. Advance Care Planning
3. Services for adults with autism
4. Support for young people around mental health concerns.
5. Quality service for vulnerable people.



# Our people





## Decision making

Our Directors and Volunteer Representatives make sure that the work we do reflects what is important to the people of St Helens.

## How we involve the public and volunteers

This year we rebranded our Management Committee as a Representative Forum. Our Directors still look after our finances and contractual obligations but our wider group of volunteers now have more opportunity to be included in decisions about our work.

Many of our valued volunteers weren't able to join our Management Committee because of other commitments and for some, it just wasn't for them. The creation of the Representative Forum gave us the opportunity to reshape how we consult on the work we do and involve more people in the process. People who can't get to our meetings can still

influence and get involved with the work we do, making it a more inclusive approach.

For some people, being a 'virtual Forum member' works best for them and they use email to share their views and be involved in decision-making.

Before we decide on a new area of work we consult with Forums members to make sure that it has the agreement and support of the people who represent our local communities.

## Our Volunteer Roles

The development of a 'Healthwatch Representative' role and a 'Healthwatch Champion' role in addition to the Enter & View Authorised Representative role means that more of our local people can get involved in the work we do in a way that works best for them.





# Our finances



Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities	149,164
Additional income	
Total income	149,164
Expenditure	£
Operational costs	30,571.67
Staffing costs	86,315.35
Office costs	32,726.98
Total expenditure	149,614.00
Balance brought forward	0





# Contact us

## Get in touch

Address: Healthwatch St Helens, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor The Beacon, College Street, St Helens, WA10 1TF

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Website: [www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchsthelens.co.uk)

Twitter: @HWStHelens

## Support Team – (2017 – 2018)

Jayne Parkinson-Loftus - Support Team Manager

Janet Roberts - Outreach & Intelligence Officer

Gail Hughes - Communication & Engagement Officer

Debbie East - Administration & Volunteer Support Officer

Lynne Daffern - IT Support Officer

## Address of contractors:

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Tel: 01744 676789

Healthwatch St Helens Limited

Company No. 8567187

Healthwatch St Helens is a Company Limited by Guarantee and part of the Healthwatch network (and part of Healthwatch England).

Our annual report will be publicly available on our website by 30 June 2018. We will also be 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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