



# Healthwatch Dudley Annual Report

## 2013 / 14



# Contents

## Welcome to Healthwatch Dudley

- 2 Contents
  - 3 Message from our Chair
  - 4 About Healthwatch Dudley
  - 5 Meet our Board
- 

## How we influence

- 6 Our key Healthwatch functions
  - 7 Working in partnerships
- 

## How we make a difference

- 8 Valuing volunteers
  - 9 Hearing lesser heard voices
  - 10 Urgent care research
  - 11 Supporting mental health services
  - 12 Dudley community information point network
  - 13 How we communicate
- 

## Money matters

- 14 Our finances
- 

## Our priorities

- 14 Looking forward & our plans for 2014 / 15
- 

## Get in touch!

- 16 How to contact us
- 





## Message from our Chair

### I am delighted to introduce the first Healthwatch Dudley annual report

Since the launch of Healthwatch Dudley in April 2013, our strategy has been to ensure the public get the best service from Dudley health and social care providers. This is why we have dedicated our efforts to finding out what people need and to taking their views to the people who buy and deliver the services.

We consider year one to be a successful start to our journey and with the help of 30 keen volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds, we have reached into the community to seek views and ideas of how improvements can be made to current hospital and community services.

The dedication and commitment of the team has been rewarded by the high demand for our opinion and involvement in local decision making. Our network is strengthening as word gets around that we are the voice of the people.

The biggest challenge we have faced and will continue to grapple with is, the limited resources we have available to oversee the vast array of services, so together with our Board of experienced committee members, we have been more focussed on what we hear are the important priorities for people who receive services in Dudley. These can be seen on page 15 of this report.

High energy levels and enthusiasm are core ingredients of our team and with the continued support of our host organisation, Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), our contractor Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and guidance from Healthwatch England, we are confident of becoming an even stronger force in the future and hopefully we will become the first place where people go when they have a view about health and social care in Dudley.



Pam Bradbury  
Healthwatch Dudley Chair

## Healthwatch England

the national consumer champion for health and social care was introduced as part of the 2012 Health and Social Care Act

A few  
Healthwatch  
facts!

There are **148** local  
Healthwatch organisations  
across England

Healthwatch is part of the government care watchdog the **Care Quality Commission** and the **Department of Health**

Healthwatch Dudley belongs to a **Black Country partnership** of local Healthwatch organisations to ensure that we know about health and social care issues and priorities across our Dudley borders

Voluntary sector support charity **Dudley CVS** holds the contract locally but Healthwatch Dudley has its own **independent board**

## Our staff team

The Healthwatch Dudley staff team is headed up by Chief Officer Jayne Emery and supported by Participatory Research Officer Rob Dalziel, Communications Officer Melissa Guest and up until recently, Administration Officer Ali Lampitt. The team is supported by an army of skilled and enthusiastic volunteers.

Plans for 2014 involve expanding the team to recruit a Community and Volunteer Engagement Officer and an Information and Administration Officer to help ensure that Healthwatch Dudley is able to listen to as many local voices as possible.



# Our board

Healthwatch Dudley has its own decision making board whose members are all passionate about health and social care services and our local community. Find out more about our board members at: [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/meet-the-board](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/meet-the-board)

**Pam Bradbury (Chair)** is a registered Nurse with a long career in NHS leadership, worked as a professional advisor in the Department of Health and is a non executive committee member of Healthwatch England. "I am passionate about ensuring that local services are the best they can be"

**Sally Huband** is the former Chief Officer of local charity, Age UK Dudley which supports older people and involves over 300 volunteers. "It is essential that older people have a clear voice that is listened to and taken seriously by local decision makers"

**Tom Hayden** "I am a Dudley resident and have a genuine passion for recovery, community health and wellbeing. I want to make sure that the needs of local people are fully taken into account as local services are planned and delivered"

**Maria Bailey** is especially passionate about supporting vulnerable people including those who are homeless or have mental ill health. "It feels good to be in a position to make a difference through being a board member"

**Karen Garry** is chair of a board of governors of a Stourbridge primary school. "Listening to people's voices, views and experiences are essential when shaping local services but it is what you do with them that really matters!"

**Bill Weston** "I think it is important for someone with a disability to be involved at board level at Healthwatch Dudley, to give a true reflection of the difficulties faced by disabled people so we can build a stronger and better community"

**Karen Bridgewater** works hard to ensure that older and vulnerable people are supported in their own homes. "I think it is essential for people to share their views of health and social care to help shape local services for everyone"

**Joseph Janjua** is a Dudley resident who is now retired. He is also a volunteer board member of St Thomas's Community Network. "My interests include education, health and local issues and I want to improve service delivery for future generations"



# Healthwatch Dudley is your health and social care champion.

These are some of the different ways that we support local people.

We gather and **share views and concerns** about local health and social care services, such as doctors, dentists, care homes, hospitals and day care.

We **share information about health and social care services** through our helpline and Community Information Points across Dudley borough.

We make sure that the views and **experiences** of people who access services, **are listened to** and taken into account when important decisions are being made.

We **raise awareness** of public health, health improvements and health inequality.

We provide people with **information about choices** of what to do when things go wrong.

We **involve people in decisions** about health and social care, to make sure that services really are designed to meet local needs.

**We have powers...** We have a seat on Dudley's Health and Wellbeing Board and we have the right to 'Enter and View' any publicly funded health or social care communal area to listen to people's experiences.

We **share information with Healthwatch England** and tell them about any concerns, so that they can ask the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to take further action if needed.

We provide strong, **evidence based feedback** to organisations responsible for planning or providing local services.

**We are fair and equal to all of our community.**

# Working in partnership...

Good relationships are important to Healthwatch Dudley which is why we have spent our first year raising our profile with local decision makers. We think that we are in a better position to influence local decisions if we are included in conversations that take place.

We wanted to be seen as a credible, trusted partner in health and social care in Dudley borough and were pleased to be nominated for an award for working in partnership by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group, we believe this demonstrates that we are becoming a reputable provider within the health and social care system.

The government has a view that all local Healthwatch should have a seat on their Health and Wellbeing Board and we were pleased to accept our position and receive a very warm welcome from existing board members.

## Some other decision making forums where we have a voice:

- Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group Board
- Dudley Health Scrutiny Committee
- Making it Real in Dudley Board
- Dudley Safeguarding Adults Board
- Local Dental Professional Network
- NHS England Quality Surveillance Group
- Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust Patient Experience Group



“With their help, we have been able to reach out to local communities across Dudley and ensure that the views and experiences of service users and carers are listened to and fed back to our Board. We look forward to continuing to work with Healthwatch Dudley to encourage more people to have their say so that we can continually improve our services.”

Marsha Ingram  
Director of People and Services  
Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

“Healthwatch Dudley plays a vital role in promoting and challenging the quality of adult social care. They are helping us to ensure that our reach into communities is deeper and more meaningful, enabling people to play a more active role in shaping the care and support they need. Our partnership with Healthwatch Dudley has an important role to play in all the key priorities for adult social care over the coming years. We look forward to strengthening our partnership approach and welcome the challenge and scrutiny this will provide.”

Andrea Pope-Smith  
Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

“We welcomed the newly formed Healthwatch Dudley and began to forge strong links with them. The Trust involved Healthwatch in our patient listening events, food tasting sessions and invited them to become a member of our Patient Experience Group. Healthwatch were welcomed into our Emergency Department to talk with patients as part of the consultation on urgent care services in Dudley. We look forward to continued working with Healthwatch Dudley to complement our work in listening to the views of local people in planning and improving our services.”

Paula Clark  
Chief Executive  
The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust

## We value our volunteers...



**“I signed up to be a volunteer with Healthwatch Dudley**

because I am passionate that local people should be involved in important decisions about local health and social care services.

Since I came on board, I have found the team to be skilled, professional and always willing to listen to the views and ideas of volunteers.

It is reassuring to know that the support we give is backed with good preparation and training. This results in us feeling useful and empowered when we are out in our community.

It feels good to know that I am supporting the Healthwatch team by collecting appropriate and relevant information, ultimately helping Dudley to deliver better health and social care services.”

Kate Coxon  
Healthwatch Dudley Volunteer

## We're a small team and need to make a massive difference...

...so we rely on our fantastic volunteers to give us the support that we need. Helping to promote what we do at events, influencing local partners by giving a patients' view, helping to give lesser heard voices a say, facilitating workshops, attending our enter and view training, helping us with paperwork, completing patient surveys, steering our organisation...

Volunteers provide essential support to Healthwatch Dudley and we want to say a massive thank you for the difference they make!





# Hearing lesser heard voices - challenging inequality

Healthwatch Dudley worked with the New Economics Foundation to hold a health inequalities workshop in July 2013.

It was an important event that involved us bringing together people from a wide range of different backgrounds. We invited representatives from organisations working with older people, people with experience of alcohol and substance misuse, people with mental ill health and people with learning disabilities. There was an in-depth conversation about the extent of health inequality across Dudley borough and action that could be taken to prevent it.

Find out more at: [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/research-report](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/research-report)



Have you had an experience that you would like to share?

Call us in confidence  
03000 111 001



## Sandra's story

When I was first diagnosed I felt very isolated and thought I was the only person in the area living with Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

I now know that there are over 100,000 people in the UK alone who have the neurological

disorder. Because of this, I think it is so important to bring people together so that they know that they are not alone. It is also important for people to be included in decision making about health and social care.

Personally I'm not happy to just sit at home watching the television. I might not be able to walk very far but I can listen and share my experiences to hopefully improve services for other people like me and make a real difference. Able bodied people making decisions about services for disabled people without consulting them is simply an accident waiting to happen. We need to be involved in all levels of decision making about our health and wellbeing.

I was delighted when Healthwatch Dudley asked me to be part of a group to review the Dudley Council Adult Social Care Annual Report, to make sure that it was fair and balanced. It felt fantastic to have the opportunity for my voice to be heard. Being involved in this way keeps my mind active and I feel stronger and more alive.

## Accident & Emergency & Walk in Centre research

As part of Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group's urgent care consultation, we carried out a survey in Russells Hall Hospital and Dudley Walk in Centre at the end of 2013. Supported by twenty fully trained volunteers we invited 1,074 people to complete a survey over a seven day period.

The questions were designed to find out how and why people access accident and emergency and walk-in-centre services. The survey also helped us gather information about availability of doctors appointments. The data was analysed and a full report of findings was presented to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Board in January 2014. The report can be downloaded at [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/research-reports](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/research-reports).

The findings highlighted the difficulties some local people face when trying to access GP services, in particular children, young people and vulnerable older people.

Following on from this piece of work, we now have a voice on an urgent care reference group and have also ensured there are seats for two patient representatives. We wanted to ensure that the voices of local people are heard and that any important decisions made are in the best interest of local people.

## So what is urgent care?

Urgent care includes the borough's accident & emergency, ambulance services and NHS 111 services. As change happens it is essential that the views and experiences of local people are taken into account. We continually create opportunities for people to get involved with public consultations and have their say.



1074 local  
people  
surveyed

Healthwatch Dudley is just one year old but is already having a positive impact on both health and social care on behalf of the people of Dudley.

At CCG Board meetings they consistently offer a challenging but constructive perspective on the work we do. In particular the Healthwatch team made an invaluable contribution to our recent public consultation on the future of urgent care services.

They provided a very clear voice for the patient, undertaking detailed questionnaires and analysis on how and why people use services, which ultimately resulted in changes to our proposals to better meet the future needs of patients.

The Healthwatch team are an asset and a credit to public service locally.

Paul Maubach  
Chief Accountable Officer  
Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group

# Dudley health providers have been scrutinised more than ever during the last 12 months...

Local hospitals have been inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust entered the spotlight as part of the Keogh review into mortality rates.

An important role for us has been to help local people to share their experiences with hospital inspectors.

We have promoted CQC listening events prior to their inspections of Russells Hall Hospital and Dudley and Walsall Mental Health NHS Partnership Trust.

We also organised a workshop for people who access mental health services to share their views. We asked, are local services safe, effective, caring, well led and responsive to your needs? The event was well attended and a wide range of views and personal experiences were shared, which we fed back to the CQC, Healthwatch England and the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust.

Following this workshop, Healthwatch Dudley was contacted with concerns about proposed changes to a local mental health drop in service from a local provider. We arranged a meeting with service commissioners to ensure that the views of people who access the service could be be listened to and taken into account. It was agreed that a wider consultation about the changes should have taken place and an extension in service was granted as a direct result of us getting involved.



Are local mental health services...

Safe?

Effective?

Caring?

Well led?

Responsive to your needs?

80 people shared their views



## A caller to our helpline shared...

It's hard to explain what the service means to me. I can walk in feeling drained and exhausted and not wanting to carry on.

By the time I leave I feel uplifted. I volunteer there too which makes me feel incredibly valued and am afraid that this will be taken away if our service goes. I am frightened that people will not know what to do or where to go and may self harm or worse without the support that we currently get. Lots of us want to fight to keep our facility but it is exhausting when you already have mental ill health. I am contacting you to see if Healthwatch Dudley can offer us some support.



Keeping local people informed...

# Dudley's new community information point network

One of our key functions is to provide easier access to health and social care information. We set up a telephone helpline and planned to introduce borough wide information hotspots. At the same time Dudley MBC was planning adult social care information points and Dudley Citizens Advice Bureau, a partner in Dudley Advice Web, had similar plans for to provide information about money management, benefits and debt.

80 Community Information Champions and counting...

Fantastic training! I feel much more confident to give information and support to my community

## It made perfect sense to all work together!

Working in partnership has meant that we can launch a much wider network of support, we have saved public money and by sharing expertise, we have been able to offer much better training to officers and volunteers from local organisations who have signed up as information champions.

In a nutshell... we want to prevent local people from getting into crisis situations, by giving easy and early access to information. Our training covers using key websites such as Dudley's Community Information Directory which has been developed by Dudley Library Service. We are also introducing our new Information Champions to people who provide essential services from community pharmacists and falls advisors, to health trainers and food bank volunteers.

Visit Dudley Community Information Directory at: [www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk)



community information point



## Karl's story

Following an industrial accident in 2009 Karl was diagnosed as severely sight impaired. With less than 3% vision Karl is registered blind. Karl met with Healthwatch Dudley to share his experience of visiting his mom in Russells Hall Hospital. He talked about his mom's treatment on the ward and shared the challenges he faced as a sight impaired person in a hospital environment.

Healthwatch Dudley supported Karl to set up a blog so that he can share his views and experiences with a far wider audience. Karl now regularly posts about his adventures with Quasia his guide dog in a world full of obstacles. Visit Karl's blog at: [karldenning.wordpress.com](http://karldenning.wordpress.com)



## We think it is really important to involve local people in everything that we do...

The information that we share has to be clear and presented in a way that is accessible to as many people as possible. We try to use clear language and avoid using jargon.

When we started to develop our website we talked to Dudley Centre for Inclusive Living to make sure that it worked with screen reading software for sight impaired people.

All of our promotional materials feature local, recognisable faces and we work with learning disability empowerment group Dudley Voices for Choice to ensure that our promotional materials are clear and easy to understand.

We are happy to produce our leaflets and reports in different formats.

Look out for our posters in your local doctors surgery, pharmacy, dentist, community centre, youth club, at the hospital and on Dudley bus routes!



Our website has had **21,000** visits and we have gained over **800** Twitter followers in the last year!  
Follow us @HWDudley

## Our finances...

Healthwatch Dudley takes its responsibility of managing public money very seriously.

We feel that being part of Dudley CVS helps us to make savings on equipment and overheads, so that more of the budget we have been allocated can go towards supporting local people and also gives us access to various resources.

To ensure we were fully operational from 1 April 2013 Dudley Council forwarded budget for a set up period. The total income figure below includes this amount.

Our **total income** to 31 March 2014 was **£238,510**, comprising of £226,540 from Dudley Council and £11,970 from Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group for the survey of urgent care services (see page 10).

We spent **£218,646** which was made up of; staff & Chair costs of £171,196 (including salaries, pensions, travel expenses, etc.), £730 for volunteer expenses, £2,111 for hosting events and providing consultations, running costs of £10,980 (including telephone, postage, equipment leasing, etc.), overheads of £23,096 (including accommodation costs, professional fees, etc.) and equipment of £10,533.

The resulting surplus of **£19,864** will be carried forward to support our on-going work.

Our income is reported fully in the audited accounts of Dudley CVS for the years ending 31 March 2013 and 2014. Our set up period is referred to as 'mobilisation'.

## Looking forward...

...Healthwatch Dudley has a core priority of listening to and representing local people wherever we can find an opportunity to do so.

This includes listening to local people's views about health and social care at meetings and events, through our dedicated helpline, through our Enter and View function, via our website, Twitter or through listening to local people's experiences in their own homes.

We will continue to champion the voice of local people with decision makers and find opportunities for patients and the public to represent themselves.

And in addition to this **we have listened to concerns that are of high importance to local people and have identified five key areas where we can make an even bigger difference.** The next page outlines our priority areas of work for the coming year.

# HEALTHWATCH DUDLEY - OUR PRIORITIES - OUR PLAN

## Carers

### OUR VISION

Carers' support & information needs are addressed by health & social care services in Dudley borough

### OUR PLAN

To raise awareness & understanding of the needs of carers' in our communities

- WE WILL**
- Provide access to reliable information through Community Information Points
  - Challenge partners to ensure information about their services is accurate & accessible
  - Listen to the experiences of carers' & present them to commissioners to influence service design & improvement
  - Seek out lesser heard voices & ensure that the views of informal carers are also taken into account in commissioning decisions

## Children & young people

### OUR VISION

Health & social care providers demonstrate that they deliver services effectively for all children & young people in Dudley borough

### OUR PLAN

To champion the voices of children & young people to ensure health & social care needs are met

- WE WILL**
- Develop relationships with Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Children's Services
  - Work with commissioners & decision makers to include children & young people in the design of services
  - Involve young people in carrying out Enter & View visits

## Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust

### OUR VISION

The care provided by The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust is the best it can be for everyone accessing services

### OUR PLAN

To capture and share local people's views & experiences to improve services

- WE WILL**
- Help to create a patient friendly and transparent complaints & compliments procedure
  - Be recognised as a valued & independent contributor to patient engagement & the design of services
  - Provide evidence to help with improved discharge procedures for vulnerable people

## Mental health

### OUR VISION

The most appropriate & accessible mental health services are available

### OUR PLAN

To listen to & report the voices of local people regarding their experiences of access & receiving local mental health services

- WE WILL**
- Help to ensure that local voices influence the development of a new mental health pathway
  - Help partners to put local people at the centre of service delivery so that personalisation really works
  - Inform the development of an efficient & effective crisis care service

## Urgent care

### OUR VISION

People are able to access urgent care services that meet their needs

### OUR PLAN

To create opportunities for the public & local organisations to be listened to & influence decision making & the redesign of urgent care services

- WE WILL**
- Contribute to the development of an effective & efficient urgent care system, & help with the development of a patient centred urgent care centre service
  - Help to ensure that people have access to a comfortable & friendly environment in urgent care settings
  - Support the new patient champion approach to involve the voluntary sector in service delivery

Please get in touch...

Call us: 03000 111001 Find us online: [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk) Tweet us: @HWDudley

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We are happy to produce this report in different formats, please let us know how we can help.



Healthwatch Dudley is part of Dudley CVS which is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Place of registration: England. Company Number: 1998105. Charity number: 517766.

# Healthwatch Dudley

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