

# Healthwatch Dudley

## Annual report 2019/20

### Our purpose is to help make care better for people.

Healthwatch Dudley is here to listen to what people like about health and care services and what they think could be improved. We share what we hear with decision makers who have the power to make change happen and we help people to find clear information from reliable sources.

**We listen to what matters to you and work with others to find solutions to problems. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you and your healthcare.**

#### Supporting people

**Our 6 staff and 32 valued volunteers help us to hear your views. We received £209k funding to carry out our work.**

#### Making a difference

**160 people have taken part in our focus groups. We have met 1606 people resulting in 676 signposting interactions, at 51 community events and outreach activities, to understand people's experiences of health and care services.**

#### Reaching out

**Our website has received 7,246 visitors and our 2,636 Twitter followers have visited our profile 2058 times.**

**We hosted 14 Information Champion training sessions for 51 people.**

*I was delighted to rejoin the team in October to concentrate on supporting our host organisation Dudley CVS, with a partnership bid for a new Dudley Council commissioned service contract that included Healthwatch Dudley's statutory activities.*

*As the year has seen a period of uncertainty regarding our future delivery model, it has been necessary to pause our medium and long term priority setting. However the team has maintained their important day-to-day work of supporting local people to have a stronger voice in the health and care system and helping them to be better connected to local services and their communities.*

*This report provides a snapshot of our activities during the last year but we recognise that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there will be even greater change in how we reach out and involve people in future as a result of COVID-19. It has already impacted how we work, spend our leisure time and how we access vital services. As we establish what our new normal will look like, your views will be more important than ever to help shape how local services adapt.*

*Our overarching priority is to secure the future of a strong and influential local Healthwatch for people who access Dudley borough health and care services.*

Jayne Emery  
Healthwatch Dudley  
Chief Officer

### People's views come first - especially those who find it hardest to be heard.

#### In line with our statutory activities we...

- Listen to what people like and what could be improved and share their views with people with the power to make change happen.
- Share information with Healthwatch England, our national body, to help improve the quality of health and care services across the country.
- Work closely with health and care providers, regulators and inspectors, including the Care Quality Commission, to act on people's views and make recommendations on how services can be improved.
- Hear what people are saying locally and nationally as we're involved in a number of groups that work to help make care better for everyone.
- Connect with our network of other local Healthwatch organisations.
- Are funded by the Department of Health through Dudley Council and our contract is held by voluntary sector support charity, Dudley CVS.
- Have our own independent board, which sets our priorities based on what local people tell us, ensuring people in Dudley borough are listened to and have an influential voice.

Do health and care services know what you really think?



**138 people shared their views with us about General Practice Nurses**



**We completed 389 Long Term Plan surveys with local people, the 7<sup>th</sup> highest return across the Healthwatch Network!**



**In November, seven GP receptionists and a Health Care Assistant took part in our Information session at Lion Health in Stourbridge to enhance their social prescribing skills. These new Information Champions will join their 15 colleagues who had already signed up.**

## NHS General Practice Nurse engagement

In July we partnered up with Healthwatch teams from Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton, to listen to patients about their knowledge and experiences of the work of General Practice Nurses. This joint activity was commissioned by Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), on behalf of the Black Country and West Birmingham Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP). Our team visited nine surgeries from six Dudley borough Primary Care Networks to find out people's knowledge and experiences of General Practice nurses working in GP practices and the different types of appointments available. We also asked if people would be happier to see a Practice Nurse rather than a GP if more information was available about their roles and what they can help with. We also captured views around choice and how much say people feel they have about which medical professional the patient gets to see when appointments are made.

**Recommendations from this report will help inform decision making on several projects linked to the STP Primary Care Strategy.**

[www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/reports](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/reports)

## Keeping people informed...

Our refreshed Community Information training has proved to be a hit and in the last year 35 new Information Champions from a wide range of organisations have joined our network. Our informal sessions have been taking place at local park hubs where Information Champions have been connecting and practicing sharing useful web resources.



"Lloyds Bank has employee assistance programmes to help colleagues who are struggling so having a connection with Healthwatch will fit in really well as if people in our network want to share experiences of health and care with an independent body, I can now point them in the right direction."

I have been supporting colleagues as an Access Representative for ten years and finding the right information can still sometimes be difficult. Often people who see me have had a recent diagnosis and where I can, I put them in touch with support groups or other people within the organisation who are in a similar situation.

Joining the Information Champion Network will make such a difference. It's been great to meet new contacts and learn about where to find trusted health and wellbeing information on the net."



Lorna Wilson

Access Network Representative  
Lloyds Bank Centre of Excellence

## Involving people in the NHS Long Term Plan

In January 2019, the NHS published the 'Long Term Plan', following a commitment from the Government to increase investment in the NHS, setting out its' key ambitions over the next 10 years.

We joined the Healthwatch England countrywide campaign in April, to give people a say in how the plan should be implemented in our communities.

Our volunteers joined us in local parks and community spaces to ensure that as many people as possible were engaged in shaping delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan. We also took over an empty retail unit in Dudley Town Centre, a market stall in Stourbridge and set up an information stand in the Halesowen Cornbow Centre where we asked:

- How can people be supported to live healthier lives?
- What can services do to provide better support - particularly for specific conditions, such as cancer, mental ill health, dementia, heart and lung conditions, learning disabilities and autism?
- How can the NHS make it easier for people to have more control of their health and wellbeing?
- How can the NHS make it easier for people to access support closer to home and by using technology?

Our activity fed into a report for the Black Country and West Birmingham Sustainability and Transformation Partnership which can be viewed at [www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/reports](http://www.healthwatchdudley.co.uk/reports).



**"The network's collaborative effort around the NHS Long Term Plan shows the power of the Healthwatch network in giving people that find it hardest to be heard a chance to speak up. The #WhatWouldYouDo campaign saw national movement, engaging with people all over the country to see how the Long Term Plan should be implemented locally."**

Sir Robert Francis  
Healthwatch England Chair

## **Involving children & young people**

In November we teamed up with Dudley Young Health Champions to listen to the views of children at #MeFest, a Dudley CCG led annual celebration of wellbeing for local young people. Dudley Community Health Action Groups came together to talk about and find solutions to important issues where they live. #Mefest gave us a fantastic opportunity to get children and young people involved in the health and wellbeing conversation. We shared top issues identified by adults with 100 young festival goers aged between 9 & 11 who shared their views about issues ranging from community safety to physical and mental health.



## **Meeting the experts**

We joined our volunteers to take part in three behind the scenes events at Russells Hall Hospital and Dudley Guest Outpatients Centre and at Brierley Hill Health and Social Care Centre. The well-attended evening events gave us an opportunity to make new connections with healthcare staff, talk to hospital visitors about Healthwatch Dudley and to visit hospital areas not usually seen by members of the public.

**Our community reporters** were out and about in October interviewing Dudley Council service leads and local people who have accessed adult social care and support. Reporters also took part in editing sessions and now their subtitled and signed films can be viewed in the Dudley Council adult social care annual report: <https://www.dudleyadultsocialcare2019.org>

## **Finding out about physical activity**

We designed a survey for Black Country Together to capture public views on physical activity and what it means to them, as part of a larger Active Black Country project to tackle inequality.

**Our People's Network event** brought communities together with local organisations to share views and ideas about the future of adult social care. Following the event we met with Dudley Adult Social Care political leads to feed back the priorities shared by local people.

## **Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust**

asked us to support them with involving people in citizens' panels, to increase engagement levels across the Trust including getting communities involved in the Emergency Department redesign. Our February People's Network events kick-started these conversations at two public forums where 55 people shared their views and signed up to support the Trust with their engagement activity.

## **Helping to develop online community information**

Healthwatch Dudley has been helping to introduce a new local community information website and mobile app to connect local people with a wide range of community activities available across the borough. The online directory [www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk) will combine the existing Dudley Community Information Directory with the online Family Information Service and the Local Offer to provide information about local activities, family information and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) support. The existing information directories are instrumental to our Community Information Point Network and training and we have been ensuring that local people have been involved throughout the commissioning process for the new online directory. We took part in interviews to identify a new provider to ask how they will involve local people in their processes and have been leading focus groups to enable people to comment on the usability and accessibility of the new site as it is being developed. Dudley Council as commissioner, is leading the project and the directory is managed by Dudley Libraries.

**Listening to people with dementia** in May for Dementia Action Week, we partnered with the Alzheimer's Society and Dudley Dementia Assessment Service at the Russells Hall Hospital Health Hub. We listened to the views of visitors, patients and hospital staff and signposted to appropriate services, while sharing information about Healthwatch Dudley.

We also supported three **'Talk to us about Dementia'** sessions at the Brett Young Dementia Gateway in Halesowen where we listened to experiences and found out about support services available for people living with Dementia and those that care for them.

Following our engagement we met with the Dudley Council Access and Prevention team manager to ensure that people's views and experiences can be fed into the Dudley Dementia Pathway from diagnosis through to receiving appropriate help and support.

## **Including homeless people**

We enjoyed meeting residents at the Saltbrook Place Community Open Day in January after helping staff to become Information Champions. The centre provides housing for homeless people and we were invited to run easy to access 'Information Aware' sessions with residents. We looked at key websites including NHS.UK, Citizens Advice with their helpful sample letters and Dudley Community Information Directory [www.dudleyci.co.uk](http://www.dudleyci.co.uk) to help residents to feel better connected.

## **Supporting local carers**

We based ourselves in Dudley Guest Outpatient Centre, Corbett Outpatient Centre and Russells Hall Hospital for Carers Week in June, where we listened to patients, visitors and staff about carers issues and access to information. We were then able to signpost them to essential help and support. In November for Carers Rights Day, we once again teamed up with the hospital Carers Coordinator to visit hospital outpatient departments, clinics and therapy areas to deliver our Tea and Chat service. **We met over 100 people who were able to find out about local support services and talk about the impact of being a full time carer.**

**Our valued volunteers** joined us as patient assessors for PLACE (Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment) in November. They looked at how Russells Hall and West Midlands hospital environments support dignity and privacy, cleanliness, care of people with dementia, food provision and general building maintenance.



## Our vision

Is to be a strong, independent and effective champion for people who access health and care services.

## Our mission

Is to be the voice of Dudley borough for promoting outstanding health and care services, so that local people can influence how services are planned, purchased and provided.

## Our approach

People's views come first - especially those that find it hardest to be heard. We champion what matters to you and work with others to find solutions to problems. We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to your healthcare.

## Healthwatch Dudley Finances

Our reserves at 31st March 2020 total £21,629 and will be carried forward into 2020/21.

This figure includes our additional income, which will allow our team to be sustained beyond our grant allocation, so we can have an even greater reach into local communities to listen to and support local people about their health and wellbeing experiences.

Our income and expenditure is reported fully in the audited accounts of Dudley CVS for the year ending 31st March 2020.

Income	£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities:	206,000
Income generated for additional activities:	3,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>209,000</b>
Expenditure	£
Staff costs including salaries, pensions & travel expenses:	189,262
Chair/Vice Chair expenses including honorarium & travel expenses:	2,708
Overheads including accommodation costs and professional fees:	21,490
Running costs including telephone, printing, postage, office equipment leasing etc:	15,350
Hosting events & workshops:	2,118
Volunteer expenses:	172
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>231,100</b>

## Our Board

Healthwatch Dudley's committed staff and volunteer team are supported by an independent decision making board who set priorities based on what matters most to local people. Our Chair, Stephanie Pritchard stepped down in September and Board activity was paused to concentrate on helping to shape how the statutory functions of Healthwatch Dudley would be fully integrated into the emerging new contract.

"As the Dudley CVS Board member that also has a place on Healthwatch Dudley Board, I'm proud of the way the whole team continued to deliver this vital and statutory role in a professional and caring way during a very challenging time.

Healthwatch Dudley has a major role to play in ensuring that the voices of local people help to shape services in the future. Whilst our priorities remain the same, there are changing times ahead and I will ensure the Board reconvenes as soon as possible to maintain their support for the team." Sally Huband

### Our board Members:

- **Sally Huband**
- **Maria Bailey**
- **Karen Garry**
- **Bill Weston**
- **Joseph Atif Janjua**



## Plans for next year...

This financial year began with us supporting our host organisation Dudley CVS with a COVID-19 community response. Our team has been busy matching people who are shielding with volunteers to deliver essential food and medication supplies.

The impact of COVID-19 will not only see changes in how we engage, it will also impact on the stories we hear about access to services. We will make sure there are opportunities to learn from what we hear and as organisations make better use of technology, we will highlight and include people who are digitally excluded.

All organisations will need to be more creative in how they reach out to communities and Healthwatch Dudley will continue to challenge, support and learn from our partners so everyone has opportunities to be heard.

Uncertainty around the Healthwatch Dudley contract remains and some of our energies will focus on the tender process alongside building on our networks to influence decision makers as the health and wellbeing landscape evolves.

We look forward to working with the new Dudley Integrated Health & Care NHS and Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and to influencing through partnerships including our seat on Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board.

## Our Staff Team

### Jayne Emery

Chief Officer

### Deb Attwood

Community Information and Engagement Officer

### Chris Barron

Community and Volunteer Engagement Officer

### Dr Robert Dalziel

Participatory Research Officer

### Melissa Guest

Communications Development Officer

### Sarah Hill

Support Officer

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

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