Press Release

For immediate release:

Do you care for a friend or a loved one?

Healthwatch Shropshire would like to hear from carers of all ages about their experience of accessing and using health and social care services in the county. Some people do not think of themselves as a carer and yet it includes anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member with long-term physical or mental ill health, a disability or problems related to old age.

There are currently estimated to be over 54,000 people in Shropshire providing unpaid care for a family member or friend on a daily basis. These people would be unable to cope without that carer's support. That support in turn saves the NHS and social care services millions of pounds every year.

However, the impact of this role on both the carer's physical and mental health is often overlooked.

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: "Making sure you look after yourself is vitally important and knowing where to get the help and support you need to maintain your own health and wellbeing is crucial. We would like to hear if you know where to find help and what you think about the support you get."

People can let Healthwatch Shropshire know what they think about local services by phone 01743 237884, by email enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk , online www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk or by writing to Healthwatch Shropshire, 4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 6LG.

The more comments received the more influence Healthwatch Shropshire has to improve services for local people.

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, service users, carers, and the general public about services including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children's services. It also has statutory powers that it can use to influence service provision by encouraging improvements.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

Healthwatch Shropshire is one of a network of 148 Local Healthwatch in England. It is supported by a national organisation, Healthwatch England.

It has a team working in community engagement, plus a volunteer programme, a visit programme to health and social care premises, an advocacy service and an associate membership scheme to involve the public in its work. It also has a signposting service to help people access health and social care services and support.

Contact

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Healthwatch Shropshire

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