

Press Release

For immediate release: 19 September 2014

Report into reasons for A&E attendance

Healthwatch Shropshire has published a report that highlights the reasons people attend Accident and Emergency departments in the county and makes recommendations to local NHS service providers and commissioners in both Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

At a time when national and local A&E services are struggling to meet a growing demand from the public, the report is based on a survey that investigated why people decide to visit A&E and whether they are aware of and use other local urgent care services.

The report is wide-ranging and includes recommendations to improve awareness of alternatives to A&E, particularly of specific services and among specific groups of people; to improve online information about Minor Injuries Units, which many people have little knowledge of; and for GP practices to increase awareness of their opening times.

The survey was carried out in the A&E departments of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital by Healthwatch Shropshire and by Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin at the Princess Royal Hospital, Telford.

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, said:

“We are delighted to publish this report which highlights a number of opportunities to raise awareness of other available services that can take pressure off A&E and the most appropriate way for the people of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin to access them.”

The report is available on the organisation’s website <http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/documents> or by request from the office.

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.

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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 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.

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