

## Press Release

For immediate release: 31 March 2015

### **Make a difference to Health & Social Care services**

Shropshire residents will have the opportunity to tell health and social care bosses about their concerns and what changes they'd like to see as part of a new initiative introduced by a local health watchdog. Staff from Healthwatch Shropshire, the independent consumer champion for health and social care in the county, will be regularly visiting local hospitals to listen to patients' experiences. They will be available at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital on the last Friday of each month outside the League of Friends café in outpatients and at Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital on the first Monday of each month in main reception. They will also be visiting Shropshire Mind on the last Monday of the month and hope to arrange a regular slot at the Redwoods Centre as well as the Community Hospitals.

Healthwatch Shropshire is keen to gather as many comments as possible from people, which are then used to encourage improvements in local services. The organisation has already influenced NHS England's decision to fund additional dental provision in Shropshire following concerns about the shortage of NHS dentists, and has submitted recommendations for improvements to care homes across the county following visits by its authorised representatives.

Jane Randall-Smith, Healthwatch Shropshire Chief Executive, said:

"We are keen to hear from patients, carers, service users and the wider public about health and social care services across Shropshire. We use these views to improve services for everyone. We need everyone to tell us what they think about the services they receive – both good and poor experiences are useful in building up a picture of what is happening across the county. With people's comments we can make a difference."

If you would like a member of the team to speak to a local group about what Healthwatch Shropshire can offer your members or you would like Healthwatch to have a stand at an event you are running, please contact them on 01743 237884 or [enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk).

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 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**

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer      Tel: 01743 237884

Healthwatch Shropshire

4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6LG

Tel: 01743 237884      Email [enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk)

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