

## Press Release

For immediate release:

### **Have you used an Optician or Ophthalmology Services in Shropshire?**

Healthwatch Shropshire would like to hear from people about their experience of using eye care services across the county. This includes hospital based treatments, outpatient clinics at community hospitals and opticians.

The watchdog organisation would also like to know about the referral process by GPs and optometrists. What are people's experiences of the appointment booking process, waiting times and the accessibility of services across the county?

Are people aware of the Primary Eye-care Assessment & Referral Service (PEARS)? This is a new, free service offered by local accredited opticians for people needing advice or treatment for a recent eye condition. Anyone registered with a Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin GP can use PEARS. For more details go to <http://www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk/pears>

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: "With an ageing population a higher proportion of people will be at risk of eye problems. We want to know if eye-related services are working for people.

"Are people happy with the service they have received or do they feel that things could have been done better?"

People can let Healthwatch Shropshire know what they think about local services by phone 01743 237884, by email [enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk) or online [www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk). The more comments received the more influence Healthwatch Shropshire has to improve services for local people.

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion for people in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, 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 then make reports and recommendations about how these services could or ought to be improved based on the information received from members of the public. This is shared with providers and commissioners of services who have a statutory duty to listen to Healthwatch and act on the information it shares with them.

**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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