

## **Press Release**

For immediate release: 5 October 2015

### **Healthwatch Shropshire's Response to NHS Future Fit delay**

Healthwatch Shropshire is disappointed that NHS Future Fit bosses have failed to produce a preferred option for a single Emergency Centre unit in the county following two years' work. However, the consumer champion recognises that it has taken courage to decide to stop to take stock and address the growing financial deficit across all health care services in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

Healthwatch Shropshire is pleased that NHS Future Fit is continuing, despite the delay, as it considers that the clinical vision developed by clinicians provides the best possible solution for clinical services for the local population. At the same time, it has serious concerns that last Thursday's decision could result in a watered down version of the clinical model.

Carole Hall, Chair of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: "Despite our concerns, we are pleased that the extended timetable provides an opportunity to look at the local health system as a whole and gives Community Fit, Local Planned Care provision, and Rural Urgent Care Centre work a chance to catch up. It will also allow time for proper dialogue with local communities."

In the meantime, Healthwatch Shropshire will continue to raise awareness of the complexities of modern healthcare and the implications of any changes and ensure that health bosses have a good understanding of the special health needs and characteristics of the Shropshire population.

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.

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