

Press Release

For immediate release: 21 October 2015

Healthwatch Shropshire Supports Lobbying of Government

Healthwatch Shropshire today welcomed plans by senior councillors and health chiefs to lobby the Government further over health and social care provision for Shropshire. This follows long term underfunding of local council and health services.

Healthwatch Shropshire supports the point made by Shropshire Council that the Rural Services Network study demonstrated clearly that rural NHS services and councils receive significantly less per capita funding than urban areas. This results in enormous pressures on local health and social care budgets.

Carole Hall, Chair of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: "We agree that long term underfunding has had a significant impact on the continued provision of two A&E departments for Shropshire. We acknowledge the Council's view that lack of access to national funding has led to a delay in the Future Fit programme. We remain very concerned that this delay will mean continued pressure on resources, and that it will lead to a watering down of the recommendations, which we believe provide the best possible solution for clinical services for the local population."

Ms Hall added: "We lend our support to the lobbying of the Government and we will continue to work to ensure that the local people who we represent receive the health and care services appropriate to their needs."

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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