

Press Release

For immediate release: 3 July 2018

New Chair appointed to Healthwatch Shropshire



Vanessa Barrett, incoming Chair (right) with outgoing Chair Daphne Lewis (Left)

Healthwatch Shropshire has appointed a new Chair to support its work as the county's independent health and social care champion.

Vanessa Barrett has been a Healthwatch Shropshire Board Member since 2013. For over 40 years, Vanessa worked as a clinician and in senior management roles in many different NHS organisations, as well as with the Department of Health. She has a passion for improving the quality of care experienced by patients. Vanessa has lived in Bridgnorth for the past 22 years.

Of her appointment to the position of Healthwatch Shropshire Chair Vanessa said: "It has been a pleasure to be involved with the very important work of representing the interests of Shropshire's patients for the last 5 years and I feel incredibly honoured therefore, to have

been asked to serve as Chair. I will continue to ensure that the Shropshire Voice is heard loud and clear by providers of health and social care services for the people of Shropshire.”

Jane Randall-Smith, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, said: “Healthwatch Shropshire has been really fortunate to have had continuity in its Board Membership and leadership by Daphne Lewis over the last two years. I would like to thank Daphne for her input to and support for HWS at the same time as welcoming Vanessa as our new chair. We are in challenging times in terms of local health and social care. I am sure that Vanessa will be kept very busy ensuring that HWS continues to be the voice of local people, using their experiences to influence change and improvement in services.”

Healthwatch Shropshire is an independent charity with a board which leads on governance and strategy. All board members are selected because of their skills, knowledge and experience. Board meetings in public are held every quarter. The next meeting will take place in September. Details will be available on our website nearer the time.

People can let Healthwatch Shropshire know what they think about local health and care services by phone 01743 237884, by post ‘freepost HEALTHWATCH SHROPSHIRE’, by email enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk or online at 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 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.

Healthwatch Shropshire also provides the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) for Shropshire. The IHCAS service provides information, advice and, if necessary, can support people through the NHS complaints process.

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