

April - September 2014



Recent months has seen a substantial increase in the number of comments we've received and consequently the amount of work we have done to take forward people's experiences and opinions to influence services. Therefore we are pleased to provide a mid-year report of our work.

social care which you can do in different ways. The more comments that we receive, the stronger the case we can make to influence change.

Janet Randall-Smith

Chief Officer

Healthwatch Shropshire

Please continue to tell us about your experiences of health and

Primary Care

You Said

You told us your experiences of using *Shropdoc* out of hours GP service, both positive and negative.

You raised concerns about the future of *Riverside Medical Practice* and lack of information for patients about this.

We Did

We passed these to the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group to inform a Best Value Review they carried out into the service.

We asked NHS England about the Practice's future. They said that it is on the 'legacy list' for replacement but the current premises meet all the required minimum standards. They are awaiting a business case from the Practice which, subject to approval, will be considered for funding. The Practice is currently working with their developer and Shropshire Council to find a suitable site.

You Said

You raised concerns about *Wellington Medical Practice's* new policy of not allowing electric wheelchairs into the Practice.

You raised concerns about the out of hours GP service *Shropdoc* going to answerphone on a bank holiday with a message giving their opening hours and saying to ring your GP Practice.

You raised questions about the annual health checks for people with learning disabilities.

You raised concerns about not being accepted at *GP Practices* due to falling outside the practice boundary.

We Did

We liaised with Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin to ensure that they were in a position to take this forward on behalf of their residents.

We contacted Shropdoc who said that they were aware of the issue which was caused by a telephone problem with their provider which lasted approximately 30 minutes. They had not encountered it before and have now put in place a thorough programme of rigorous testing (in addition to routine testing) to ensure it doesn't happen again. They extended their apologies to those patients who were inconvenienced.

We investigated and found that it is up to each GP Practice whether they offer this service and when they send out the reminders. We have passed on the suggestion Dr Paul Gardner, Clinical Lead for Learning Disabilities about doing the checks during the person's birthday month, which it was agreed was a good idea.

We raised this with NHS England who said that there are plans to allow GPs to register patients who live outside their current practice boundary without the responsibility for home visiting. This would be a voluntary agreement by individual GP practices. NHS England would be responsible for ensuring patients had access to a home visiting service. The scheme is due to begin in January 2015.

You Said

You raised concerns about the lack of *NHS dentists* in Shropshire.

You contacted us with positive and negative comments about a number of *GP Practices*.

We Did

We raised this with NHS England who said they are aware that there are access issues . Our feedback contributed towards NHS England's decision to pay for an extra two full time equivalent dentists in Shropshire spread over 10 Practices. Anyone who does not have a regular dentist and is in urgent need can call one of the dental access centres (Shrewsbury, Telford or Oswestry).

We worked with the Care Quality Commission prior to their inspection of GP Practices from October to December 2014. We passed the comments (anonymised) to them to be used alongside the CQC's other intelligence.

We also passed the comments (anonymised) to the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who are now responsible for the quality of primary care services (although commissioning of these services is currently still the responsibility of NHS England).

Secondary Care

You Said

You raised a concern about the 'Place of Safety' capacity for people detained under a Section 136 of the Mental Health Act in Shropshire.

We Did

We raised this with South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SSSFT) who explained the operational considerations and constraints of running a Place of Safety and said that the Trust is in discussion with Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group about this issue.

You Said

We were aware of national and local concerns regarding attendance rates at *Accident & Emergency departments* and awareness of alternatives.

You raised concerns regarding the potential closure of the Spruce Unit detoxification facility run by *South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust* and the commissioning future of detoxification services.

You gave us comments about the departments of Cardiology (positive and negative), Gastroenterology (negative) and Urology (negative) at *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust*.

You told us your positive and negative experiences of *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust* at patient listening events run jointly by the Trust and Healthwatch Shropshire.

You raised concerns about the proposal by *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust* to only have children's assessment services in RSH for five days a week rather than seven.

We Did

We carried out a survey to determine A&E attendees' reasons for use of the service and awareness and usage of other local urgent care services. We carried out the survey at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin carried it out at Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. The survey report can be found [here](#) and included recommendations for improvement.

We raised this with SSSFT who confirmed that the Unit will close as it can no longer continue on its present site, and that discussion is ongoing about the commissioning of inpatient detox. It has since been confirmed that the service is now being provided in Birmingham.

We passed these (anonymised) comments to the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group so that they can be used alongside the CCG's other intelligence to monitor these areas.

We passed these experiences to the Trust so that they could be analysed and acted upon. A report will be produced by the Trust which addresses the themes raised at the events.

Through our participation on the Health and Wellbeing Board, as well as direct liaison with the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust, we were instrumental in securing a change in the Trust's plans so that children's assessment services will be provided seven days a week at RSH.

You Said

You raised various concerns about the Ophthalmology department at *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust*.

You told us your concerns about the lack of waiting time information available from the *Referral Assessment Service*.

You raised a concern about whether *Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group* has any plans to withdraw funding for mild to moderate hearing loss as has been discussed elsewhere in England.

You contacted us with negative comments about arrangements for *pain management*.

Our volunteers were interested in taking part in Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment (PLACE) which involve making observations on NHS hospital wards, following requests for participation from NHS providers.

We Did

We passed these (anonymised) comments to the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who said that they echo concerns previously raised with them. The CCG said they have triangulated the information and escalated the issues with the Trust.

We contacted Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who run this service. They explained why it is not feasible for them to have information on waiting times: the hospitals don't have or don't distribute this information, and waiting times can change from day to day.

We contacted Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who said that they are not aware of any discussions at this stage in relation to withdrawing funding for mild to moderate hearing loss.

We passed the comments (anonymised) to Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who had recently commissioned a new pain management service in response to the publication of a new clinical pathway.

We made arrangements for them to take part in 9 visits. These were to *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust*, *Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust*, *South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust*, and *Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust*.

You Said

You contacted us with positive and negative comments about *Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust*.

You contacted us with positive and negative comments about hospital and community appointments and referrals for a range of providers.

We Did

We worked with the Care Quality Commission prior to their inspection of the Trust in October 2014. We passed the comments (anonymised) to them to be used alongside the CQC's other intelligence.

We passed the comments (anonymised) to Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group who were investigating the issues with appointments and referrals.

Ambulance Services

You Said

You made positive and negative comments about *West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust*.

We Did

We passed these (anonymised) comments to the Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group so that they could be used alongside the CCG's other intelligence to monitor the service.

Social Care

You Said

You contacted us with concerns about *Isle Court Nursing Home*.

You contacted us with concerns about *New Fairholme Care Home*.

We Did

We arranged an Enter & View visit and produced a report, including recommendations, based on the experiences of those we spoke to and our observations. The report, including the home's response, is available on our website [here](#).

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You Said

You raised concern about 15 minute appointments for home care allegedly being used by *Shropshire Council* in Church Stretton through *Bluebird Care*. You felt this was not sufficient time.

You told us your concern about *Shropshire Council's* Blue Badge scheme where the physical assessment invitation letter says that the claimant must answer any questions themselves. However, some claimants may be unable to answer questions themselves e.g. dementia sufferers.

You told us what issues and concerns you had as carers, including long waits to receive a Carers' Assessment and hear the outcome, a general lack of support, and *People2People* repeatedly cancelling appointments.

You said that delays in paying care home providers for Continuing Healthcare funded services is leading to some providers declining to take on these clients which would impact on the quality of patient care.

We Did

We contacted Bluebird Care who said that they are very much opposed to 15 minute home care appointments, voiced their opinion against them often and refuse to take on any through Shropshire Council. They have a very small number of these calls for private customers only which are limited to safety checks and medication.

We raised the issue with Shropshire Council who said that anybody lacking mental capacity would not be expected to answer the questions and that they would investigate the process further.

We provided this information to inform the Carers Research Project being carried out by Shropshire Council. They said "Thank you so much - this feedback is really essential and I will ensure it is fed into the work."

We raised this with Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group, who promptly followed up and arranged for the providers to be paid by the Clinical Support Unit.

General

You Said

You gave us your opinions of the proposed move of the Walk-In Centre from Monkmoor to Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

You contacted us with 44 requests for information.

You contacted us with 377 comments about your experience of health and social care services.

You said *POhWER's* [NHS Complaints Advocacy & Direct Payment support] electronic telephone system was difficult, needing to know the extension you want or the named person and being repeatedly cut off.

You gave us negative feedback on a draft leaflet for the public about NHS FutureFit, the programme looking at the future of acute and community hospitals locally which is being run by *Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group*.

We Did

We shared completed questionnaires with Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We also raised concerns in a letter to them including about the engagement process. We have been reassured that the service will retain the name Walk-In Centre in its new location.

We signposted these requesters to a range of health and social care services and support organisations.

We have recorded the details of all your correspondence as part of our collation and analysing of data and have taken this forward anonymously as part of our regular engagement with local service providers and commissioners. Where relevant, we have given information about how to proceed with a complaint and signposted to the NHS Complaints Advocacy service *POhWER*.

We raised the issue with *POhWER* who said that they do not have an extension system and ensure that all callers get straight through to someone or, if they get the answerphone that they are rung back promptly.

We passed this feedback on to the NHS FutureFit team, who agreed to drop that leaflet and write a new one taking on board the feedback.

Get in Touch!

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