

April 2015–March 2016

Healthwatch Shropshire gives a voice to the key issues that affect people who use health and care services in the county. We use evidence based on real experiences to highlight local issues and trends and raise these at the highest level.

Below are details of some of the actions we have taken in response to feedback received from members of the public.

## You Said

## We Did

### GP Practices

You told us that army reservists were experiencing difficulties obtaining their inoculations when mobilised to deploy.

The call out pack, given by the Ministry of Defence stated that 'TA personnel are encouraged to obtain routine vaccinations through general practitioners (GPs) or travel clinics'. In practice reservists were receiving contradictory information from their practices

According to the GP, because the inoculations were needed for the job it comes under Occupational Necessity and was the responsibility of the forces, not the local health authority.

You told us you were unhappy with the appointment system at Bridgnorth Medical Practice and that you couldn't get appointments.

We took your concerns to the Head of Armed Forces Health at NHS England. She confirmed that the MoD paperwork doesn't mandate the use of the reservists GP and GPs are not obliged to provide vaccinations. However, she agreed to review the NHS Choices text to see if more clarification is needed and also to look at ways to further support reservists, such as by highlighting where travel clinics are.

We met with the practice manager to discuss this and contributed to their implementation of a new appointment system. We will monitor its effectiveness going forward.

## You Said

Media coverage over the past few years has reported increasing pressures on GP services and long waits for the public to access appointments.

You told us that you were unhappy about the length of time it was taking for prescription requests at Radbrook Green Surgery to reach the chemist next door.

## Hospitals

You contacted us with comments about the vending machines at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH). You told us that they have a lot of high sugar content items available.

## We Did

In response to this and comments we received from the public, HWS took part in a collaborative piece of research with three other local Healthwatch.

The research considered the experiences of patients in booking and accessing their GPs. The full [report](#) is available on our website

The individual reports were circulated to the relevant practices and the whole report circulated to each Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Shropshire CCG responded by saying "...The information it includes about patient experience will help us to develop our local primary care strategy".

This information was passed on (anonymised) to the practice manager. We will continue to monitor your feedback around this issue.

Your comments were passed on (anonymised) to Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals NHS Trust (SaTH), who commission services at the hospitals.

This has contributed to a review of snacks and a removal of all sugared drinks from the vending machines. They are planning to change all the branded drinks machines into plain ones and to have at least 40% of the items in the machines be healthy.

## You Said

You told us about cancellations of clinics at the community hospitals and that people were not being informed of these cancellations.

You told us about negative experiences of the booking process at RSH.

You took part in a HWS-funded research project which focused on the experiences of NHS eye care services for patients with visual impairment

The full [report](#) is now available on our website

In September 2015 we focussed on Orthopaedic Services as our Hot Topic. We had a good response from people, both positive and negative.

## We Did

We met with the Director of Nursing to share these issues. They have now put in a monitoring system and are looking at the way they communicate with patients when a clinic has been cancelled. They are also looking at their staff arrangements for the reception at Bishops castle hospital.

With the support of SaTH we undertook a survey in outpatients to gather patient experience information on the 'booking and scheduling' process. This has fed into a larger piece of work in the trust and has resulted in the development of an improvement plan. A full report will be available on our website this summer.

The research, carried out by Shropshire Rural Community Council was passed on to the Ophthalmology ward at RSH. As a result, we have been told that they are planning a move to a new site at RSH in the summer, with a better waiting area and more treatment rooms. They are also planning to use more volunteers to call patients and to give MyGuide training to all staff and volunteers. They are also holding discussions about changing the font size on letters to make them easier to read.

These comments were passed (anonymised) to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to contribute to their inspection of Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic NHS Foundation Trust (RJAH).

They were also used to contribute to discussions around hip and knee pathways.

## You Said

### Other Issues

You took part in a HWS-funded 'Mind the Gap' survey carried out by Autonomy. Their research focussed on whether people with Asperger's syndrome and high ability autism suffer from health and social care inequalities? If so then why does this happen and how can we support them to gain better access to health and social care support.

You contacted us with negative comments about the new arrangements for pain management services in Shropshire, which are now being provided by *Pain Management Solutions*.

You told us about the issues you are facing with obtaining care at home and about care packages that are not meeting your needs.

We promoted the national consultation on the future of community pharmacies to raise awareness of proposed changes. You said how much you valued the services of your local community pharmacies.

## We Did

The ground-breaking survey was sent to over 40 interested groups and organisations who support people with learning disabilities and who aim to improve access to healthcare for vulnerable people.

The survey is now being used at Government level to influence change.

We shared your feedback (anonymised) with Shropshire CCG in advance of their plans to recommission the pain management service for Shropshire. Our patient experience was considered with their own patient intelligence to inform the service design.

Your comments have led to a sharing of feedback (anonymised) on domiciliary care with Shropshire Council. A new brokerage system has been established for domiciliary care and a new project is exploring the costs of providing care across a large rural county.

Your feedback was used (anonymised) to inform HWS response to the Department of Health, highlighting the importance of community pharmacies in a large rural county like Shropshire. Our response was also escalated to NHS England and Healthwatch England.

## You Said

You expressed frustration at the amount of jargon and complicated writing that often make public documents and official letters hard to read.

You told us your experiences, good and bad, of mental health services and community health services.

## We Did

HWS has been working hard to make its reports 'easier to read' by following NHS Accessible Information standards. A lot of effort has gone in to making our reports more accessible to wider groups of people.

We have also assisted Shropshire CCG in their work to improve the information they give out to patients to explain the discharge from hospital process.

We supported the Commissioning Manager of Complex Discharge in a redesign of discharge letters to make them clearer and

These comments were passed on (anonymised) to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to contribute to their inspections of South Staffordshire & Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SSSFT), and Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust (SCHT).

Your comments allow us to contribute to the debate about services. They are raised directly with the different trusts to ensure that the patient voice is at the

## Get in Touch!

**01743 237884**

[enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk)

### Healthwatch Shropshire

4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park,  
Shrewsbury, Shropshire. SY2 6LG



Follow us on Twitter @HWSHropshire



Search on Facebook for: HealthwatchShropshire