

Healthwatch Shropshire Chief Officers Report to the Board September 2020 - November 2020

Introduction

Gathering and understanding people's experiences of using local services is fundamental to informing the activities of Healthwatch Shropshire (HWS).

As well as continuing to deliver on our statutory functions, our priorities for 2020-21 are:

- Mental Health (all age mental health)
- Community and Place Based Care (including Primary Care, Care Homes, Home Care and prevention)
- Acute Care (including Acute Hospital Reconfiguration, Transforming Midwifery Care)
- Workforce (including recruitment, training and support - such as access to PPE)
- Digital (how technology is being used across health and social care, particularly during the pandemic)

Our Annual Report for Healthwatch England for 2019-20 was published in June:

<https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/sites/healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/files/Healthwatc%20Shropshire%20Annual%20Report%202019-20.pdf>

For our activity in **Quarter 2 (July-September)**, please see the KPI document.

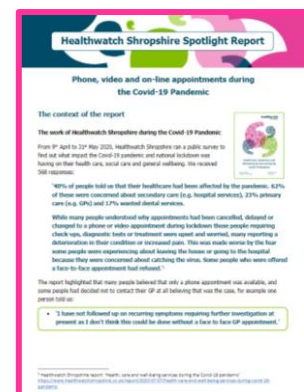
Report

1. Intelligence

1.1 Hot Topic

- July – September: Telephone and online appointments

Background: The 'Health, care and well-being services during the Covid-19 pandemic' report was published at the beginning of July. In some of the responses we received people commented on their experience of phone appointments. At STP meetings there had been discussions about the accelerated move to phone, video and online appointments as recommended by the NHS Long Term Plan due to Covid-19. Through HWS attendance at meetings, we knew that providers were being encouraged to gather feedback on remote appointments, including 'Attend Anywhere' and so we decided to run a hot topic.



Due to our Engagement Officer being off sick we were not able to directly contact groups representing people with disabilities, including learning disabilities, and carers as planned. We will consider arranging focus group/s in the future to hear the views of these groups and ensure their voice is heard as the use of online appointments expands and becomes embedded.

The Independent Chair of Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership has asked for a discussion with the CO around the implications of our findings for the very vulnerable adults

and children in the county, e.g. the potential impact of not being seen face-to-face by services.

For the Clinical Commissioning Group response to the report please see the report:

<https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2020-10-20/phone-video-and-on-line-appointments-during-covid-19-pandemic>

- September – December: Winter Messaging

Each year Healthwatch Shropshire has used our engagement channels to promote winter messaging to support the local health and social care system. This usually runs from December – January but this year the NHS brought this forward to prepare for the expected second surge.

We have a weekly Communication and Engagement Meeting with the STP Comms Team where we are updated on system messaging, campaigns and public engagement activity.

Phlebotomy: We have been attending weekly meetings regarding the CCGs Phlebotomy Engagement Plan and given feedback into the survey. They are hoping to get public views to inform the review and redesign of phlebotomy across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. We will promote the survey as required. We have arranged for our volunteers/Board to join a focus group on 18/11/20 with the Head of Primary Care for the CCG.

Our social media messaging will also continue to include changing Public Health / NHS/ Government messaging around the pandemic.

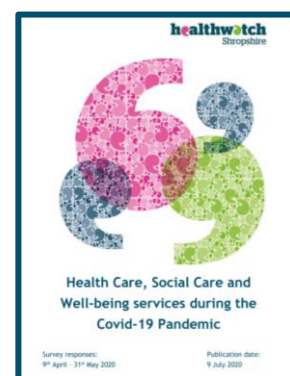
1.2 Surveys and hearing from seldom heard groups

We are very conscious that our priority remains hearing from the vulnerable and seldom-heard so we continue to work to ensure that our hot-topics and surveys are widely publicized and people are given our phone number so that the team can complete surveys with them over the phone if necessary. We ask partners from across the STP and our stakeholders to help us promote our work and support people to contact us if necessary.

Our survey into **Health, care and well-being services during the Covid-19 pandemic** was commended at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 10th September 2020:

'The Director of Public Health for Shropshire thanked the Chief Officer, Healthwatch for her really useful presentation and recognised the need for clear information and guidelines which was something that they had continued to try and support as the guidelines had changed throughout the pandemic. It continued to be a challenge but was absolutely crucial to the work being done. She recognised the work ongoing on this and with the communications teams to ensure that the messages got out.' (For more detail please see slide 35 of the KPI document.)

The CO continues to highlight our findings in meetings across the STP.



- Current surveys

Out of hours palliative care survey

This is a follow-up to the Experiences of End of Life and Palliative Care Services Report we published in January 2020.

Report: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2020-01-14/experiences-end-life-and-palliative-care-services-shropshire>

At the beginning of the pandemic everyone was being advised to use 111 as a route to accessing services. The CCG commissioned ShropDoc to provide a Palliative Care Helpline so people had a direct-line to palliative care services and easier access to medication. Simon Chapple from ShropDoc approached us due to the previous report and asked us to run a survey.

We are asking people to tell us their experiences of using 'out of hours' palliative care since the beginning of March 2020. This survey includes Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin patients, HWT&W agreed to us hosting it and we will give them access to all Telford & Wrekin responses.

Survey link: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/out-hours-palliative-care-survey>

UPDATE:

As predicted, we have had a low number of responses to this survey to-date so decided to extend the closing date from the end of October to the end of November.

Hospital Discharge during Covid-19

Healthwatch England, working with NHSE/I, launched a national survey to gather people's experience of discharge during the pandemic. It was due to finish late August. Rather than promote this survey we decided to run our own survey, which would allow us to work with our providers to develop the questions to make sure they would result in the most relevant and useful feedback and agree a timescale that would suit the local system. Not only has this given us the opportunity to work with colleagues across the system and raise our profile, but it has also enabled us to garner their support in promoting the survey explaining that we will need their staff to help people to fill-in the survey as many are likely to be unable to do it on their own. We hope that people who are discharged without on-going support will complete it themselves or phone either HW and a member of staff will complete it with them over the phone.

The survey has been designed so it can be completed by the patient, a family member or informal carer, and staff supporting the patient (e.g. Care Home Managers)

Again, this covers the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin STP so we have worked with HWT&W to develop the survey. It is being hosted on the HWS website but all Telford & Wrekin responses will be sent to HWT&W so they can produce their own report. We have agreed to co-ordinate our reporting so both reports are similar and data can be easily compared.

Survey link: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/tell-us-about-your-experience-leaving-hospital-during-covid-19>

UPDATE: As predicted we have had a low number of responses to-date so decided to extend the closing date from the end of October to the end of November.

The Interim Director Adult Social care and Housing at Shropshire Council has asked for a meeting to discuss interim findings on 19/11/20 with the CO.

- Future surveys

Following discussions at the ICS Shadow Board, SCCG Governing Body meeting and other STP meetings the CO offered to run a system wide Staff Survey. This would enable us to follow-up responses to our 'Health, care and well-being' survey and delve further into the experiences of people working during covid-19, in particular front-line workers. The aim would be to give all staff a voice and safe place to be honest about the challenges they have faced and tell the system what on-going support they need.

UPDATE: The CO spoke to the STP Senior Responsible Officer for Workforce on 05/11/20 and it was agreed to pause this survey while the NHS Staff Survey is being promoted and due to the fact a number of providers have recently done their own staff surveys (e.g. Shropshire Council and MPFT). The NHS staff survey includes 122 questions, so the Workforce lead suggested the Healthwatch Survey includes 5-6 questions to ensure it is not an onerous task, with some optional questions to add detail.

CO to speak to HWT&W re the questions with a view to launching before Christmas and completing the report by the end of March 2021.

2 Communications and engagement

2.1 Engagement activities

Since the last report the guidance from HWE has remained the same regarding face-to-face engagement. We are currently in the second lockdown and it is not clear when this will be lifted or if another one will be necessary.

The impact of this has been limited as our Community Engagement and Communications Officer (CECO) has been off sick. However, she is due to return from 7th December and will then continue to:

- Build links with groups and individuals through social media and by phone and use this to increase our social media reach/following
- Attend meetings with groups where these have moved online via MS Teams or Zoom
- Facilitate on-line focus group over MS Teams with the volunteers (and members of the public where possible), e.g. Integrated Care Record focus group and Phlebotomy focus group. Both of these focus groups have been arranged and facilitated by the Enter & View Officer in the CECO's absence
- Speak to the agencies currently involved in engaging with schools and colleges to hear from students about their experience of Covid-19 and its impact on their health, wellbeing and education to find out if there is a role for us and what contribution we can make.

2.2 Engagement & Marketing Committee

The proposal to add engagement to the remit of the Marketing Committee was approved at the last Board meeting. The first meeting has not taken place due to the CECO's absence. However, the committee has been asked to approve a Hot Topic which has now been launched to hear people's experiences of visiting (and not visiting) wards and care homes during the pandemic. We are using this to capture what initiatives have worked, good practice (e.g. the use of iPads to facilitate communication) and give the public the chance to share their ideas about what could help.

If any Board members or volunteers are also interested in joining this committee, please speak to the CO.

2.3 Social prescribing report

Following the publication of our engagement report 'Social Prescribing: Exploring Barriers' in March 2019, Shropshire Council's Healthy Lives asked us to complete a second piece of work to understand what Social Prescribing should look like for 16-25 year olds, including their views on volunteering (their motivations for volunteering and what the barriers to engagement might be for this age group).

The report was published in July.

Report: <https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2020-07-16/social-prescribing-16-25-year-olds>



UPDATE: We have received a very positive response to this report from the partners that make up Healthy Lives and as a result we are involved in the meetings about developing social prescribing for this age group and able to feed ideas into public facing messaging to promote the service.

2.4 Partnership working

At the beginning of lock down all system meetings were immediately cancelled or put on hold. The slowest to restart were NHS meetings and STP meetings. (We continued to attend the ICS Shadow Board, Community Response Meetings led by Shropshire Council/Public Health, and CQC Information Sharing meetings.)

From the end of August/beginning of September the STP Cluster meetings began to restart as Programme Boards and the CO has now attended these. Some of the work stream meetings have also restarted, e.g. Shropshire Care Closer to Home. The CO continue to speak to the STP to make sure we are invited to meetings.

UPDATE: As the number of external meetings increases and timing/frequency becomes clear the CO will contact the Board to ask for deputies.

2.5 MLU Review and Consultation

Prior to the pandemic, we gave feedback on consultation documents and offered our support at events to give the public an opportunity to share their thoughts with an independent organisation and support them to approach the professionals present and ask questions.

UPDATE: The consultation remains on hold and we are awaiting notification of when the consultation will start. Due to this a number of meetings have been cancelled as there has been nothing to report. If any Board member is interested in joining meetings with the Local Maternity System for HWS please let the CO know.

3 Enter & View

3.1 Current status

As for public engagement, Enter & View visits remain on hold for the foreseeable future.

3.2 Reports

Before Covid-19 the Enter & View Officer started a project to gather feedback on Domiciliary Care Services. We had planned to follow-up the user survey with a staff survey but this was put on hold due to the pandemic and is likely to be included in our next Dom Care project.



UPDATE: The press release for this report was delayed due to the need to prioritise the promotion of hot topics and public surveys. The press release went out 16/11/20 and was used as an opportunity to promote the current Discharge survey.

Report link:

<https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/sites/healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/files/HWS%20Home%20Care%20in%20Shropshire%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

4. Information Requests

4.1 Maternity Services at SaTH

On 10th January 2020 the CO attended a meeting at SaTH chaired by the CCG to discuss engagement about maternity as a result of the CQC report and Ockenden Review. Part of the discussion was about how SaTH would involve families in open conversations about maternity services, hear their concerns and experiences and involve them in service development and improvement. The CCG representative then left the CCG and nothing had happened when Covid-19 struck. Following the leak of the draft Ockenden Report and announcement of criminal investigations by the Police, HWS became increasingly concerned about the level of support being offered to people whose cases were being considered by the review and those people using maternity services now who might be concerned about the safety of the service. The CO had been asking questions but senior staff at the Trust had moved on and no one was responding. The CO contacted HWE for advice early in the year but had no response. After chasing HWE, HWS and HWT&W spoke to Jacob Lant at HWE and our Regional Lead and it was agreed that both HW would send a joint letter using our statutory powers to formally ask questions. The draft letter was shared with Dave Evans Accountable Officer for the CCGs for information.

The Trust response was received three days after the deadline (the CO chased it up). The response was shared with the CCG to get their perspective on it and the CO is planning to speak to the HWT&W and the CCG Accountable Officer on 8th September to discuss the content and consider next steps.

The letter and response have been shared with the Board.

UPDATE:

HWS and HWT&W to agree short statement to go on our websites re SaTH's response to share the information given about the support that is available to families and staff

5. Staffing and IT

5.1 Staff update

The Company Administrator (Fixed Term) covering maternity leave left on 16th September. The CECO has been off sick since the beginning of September but is due to return 7th December 2020. In the meantime, the rest of the team have been working hard to provide cover.

On 5th November the Secretary to the Board/Volunteer Officer formally informed HWS that she will not be returning to HWS after maternity leave.

The team have agreed to wait until the CECO returns to start discussing our staffing needs going forward, taking into account the current restrictions to our activity and if/when these might be lifted.

5.2 IT update

All staff are now using their work laptop to support home working. All HWS files/documents have now moved from Azure to SharePoint and work is underway to make sure files are easy to find and can be accessed by relevant members of staff. This will help any new members of staff navigate the system easily.