



**healthwatch**  
Northamptonshire

**Healthwatch  
Northamptonshire**  
Annual Report 2015/16



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# Message from our Chair

2015/16 was the third operational year for Healthwatch Northamptonshire, during which time we conducted our largest ever public engagement with over 1,000 responses to our Make Your Voice Count 3 campaign. This provided a great opportunity to relate your views back to health and social care commissioners, for them to understand the impact of their decisions and for Healthwatch to champion the case for improved health and care services and outcomes.

**We support the case for change and want to see evidence of clear progress**

I am pleased to see that the compelling case for radical and transformational change in how health and care services are delivered, which Healthwatch Northamptonshire made last year, is now beginning to be picked up through the Northamptonshire's Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) process. Our recent public engagement event on the STP again provided local system leaders with a clear and unequivocal message from Healthwatch Northamptonshire - that we support the case for change and want to see evidence of clear progress. We want to continue to work with you, the public of Northamptonshire, to champion your views and make sure that the voice of local people is heard, and is at the heart of that transformation.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire has been through a tough year, with significant staffing changes and indeed staff losses as the organisation prepared itself for the inevitable budget cuts of 2016/17. Having said that, we

have much to be proud of in the past year as this report sets out, including winning several awards. This external recognition is gratefully received, and I congratulate and place on record my thanks to the hard working staff team and look forward to delivery in 2016/17 under your new Interim General Manager, Kate Holt. I also want to extend the thanks of the Healthwatch Board and Advisory Council, the CIC Board and our two shareholders - the University of Northampton and Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire, and especially to our tremendous volunteer community who have delivered an impressive twelve months of activity in challenging circumstances.

This 2015/16 annual report not only demonstrates the work of the past year, but also illustrates the challenges for 2016/17, during which time Healthwatch itself will also be resource challenged. The necessary restructuring which is in process will be aimed at continuing to provide a Healthwatch to champion local needs and views of the people of Northamptonshire and I look forward to seeing how the year progresses.



**Professor William Pope**  
Chair

# Message from our General Manager

2015/16 has been a year of change and challenge for Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN). This report covers the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 and highlights our key achievements throughout the year.

This year we have continued to make efficiencies and work smarter, and with the support, dedication and hard work of our volunteers and partners put service user engagement at the top of our list. As this report shows, we continued to consult and engage with as many people in Northamptonshire as possible, particularly with our Make Your Voice Count 3 campaign with over 1,000 responses.

HWN was the overall winner of the Healthwatch England Network Choice Award 2015 for “moving, thought provoking and dedicated [work]”, and also received three certificates for ‘highly commended’ at the Healthwatch England Awards 2015 including for ‘Making a difference to social care’ and ‘Making a difference across the system’.

HWN was also a finalist in the East Midlands Academic Health Science Network Awards 2015 for ‘Patient Identified Innovations’ and received a ‘highly commended’ in the Healthwatch England Awards 2015 for ‘Making a difference in diversity and inclusion’. Both awards relating to the engagement work with children, young people and families.



I hope you agree that we have consistently worked to make your voice count with the commissioners and providers of health and social care services.

**We have continued to make efficiencies and work smarter**

Going forward into 2016/17 there is still a lot to do. Our core funding has continued to be reduced and we have cut staff numbers and working groups to absorb this, whilst still trying to remain as active in the community as possible.

We will continue to look at innovative ways that we can work with other organisations to ensure that your views are paramount when designing and commissioning health and social care services.



**Kate Holt**  
Interim General Manager HWN CIC

# The year at a glance

This year our website has been viewed 27,303 times. We have 1,498 Twitter followers and 622 Facebook 'likes'. Our e-newsletter is received by 1,312 people



The top 3 priorities we have heard from people are:

- mental health services
- getting timely appointments
- communication between medical professionals and service users



Over 300 people are registered with our volunteer community



We have conducted:

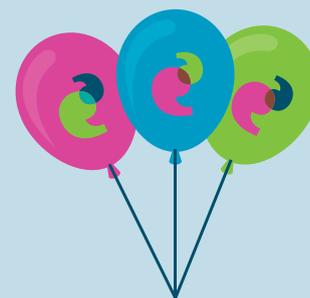
- 64 ward visits at KGH
- 69 visits to NGH and KGH A&E departments and Corby Urgent Care Centre
- And spent 24 hours in NGH A&E!



1,098 people participated in our annual Make Your Voice Count survey and 2,024 young people completed our Eating Disorder survey



We attended 48 events as part of our MYVC3 campaign and have been out and about ever since!



# Who we are

We exist to make health and social care services work for the people who use them.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people. Our sole focus is on understanding the needs, experiences and concerns of people of all ages who use services and to speak out on their behalf.

We are uniquely placed as a national network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of people at the heart of their work.

We believe that asking people more about their experiences can identify issues that, if addressed, will make services better.

## Our vision

Healthwatch Northamptonshire will be a strong, resolute and independent community champion. We give local people a voice and work in partnership to influence the design and quality of health and social care provision so that all local people have an opportunity to an improved quality of life.

## Our values

- We will be accessible and visible
- We will be independent and objective
- We will be open, honest and transparent in all that we do
- We will be inclusive and embrace diversity and equality, reflecting the diverse needs of local people
- We will listen to and hear the views of local people
- We will speak up for local people and enable people to speak for themselves
- We will be fair and credible.
- We will seek out and use evidence, including from the public, to inform our work
- We will strive to make a positive difference and campaign for the best possible health and social care for local people



## Our priorities

- Find out the views, needs and experience of local people through a wide range of methods to get the broadest view possible, representative of all our diverse communities
- Make these views known to health and social care decision makers
- Promote and support the involvement of local people in decision making about health and social care services
- Enable local people to monitor the quality of provision of local health and social care services
- Report on the quality of local health and social care service and make recommendations about how they could and should be improved
- Provide advice and information about local health and care services
- Provide Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to form a national picture of the quality of services
- When necessary, escalate concerns using our rights to refer matters to the County Council's Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee locally and to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission at national level

## Our team for 2016/17



### **Kate Holt**

**Interim General Manager  
HWN CIC**

Kate manages the Healthwatch Northamptonshire service and is responsible for the day to day operation and delivery.



### **Jo Spenceley**

**Lead Officer for Research,  
Reporting and Intelligence  
HWN CIC**

Jo leads Healthwatch Northamptonshire's research into patient, service user, carer and general public experiences and views of the health and social care sector in the county and ensures that this research is reported so that it contributes to improving health and social care.



### **Nathan Street**

**Research, Reporting and  
Intelligence Assistant,  
HWN CIC**

Nathan assists the team in collecting, analysing and reporting experiences of health and care services.



### **Hannah Fairweather**

**Administrative Assistant  
HWN CIC**

Hannah works closely with the Healthwatch Northamptonshire team helping with organising events, working with the volunteers and our Young Healthwatch in addition to everyday office and finance administration.



### **Sonia Bray**

**Healthwatch Officer,  
Adult Services Lead**

Sonia coordinates our work on adult services and the Adult Services Strategic Planning Group of volunteers.



### **Mark Symmonds**

**Healthwatch Officer,  
Signposting, Outreach,  
Information and  
Community Engagement  
Lead**

Mark has responsibility for signposting, outreach, information and community engagement activities carried out by Healthwatch Northamptonshire.



### **To be appointed**

**Healthwatch Officer -  
Children, Young People  
and Families Lead**



### **Naomi Vibrati**

**Healthwatch  
Communications Assistant**

Naomi produces the Healthwatch newsletter and manages our website and social media accounts.

# Listening to people who use health and care services



## Gathering experiences and understanding people's needs

Healthwatch Northamptonshire has undertaken a variety of engagement activities this year ranging from 'SENDSation Day' with children with special educational needs to Diwali with black and ethnic minority communities (BME) communities.

- **SENDSation Day** focused on support for children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and their families. At the event we undertook an engagement exercise that got over 70 children and young people, from as young as 2 years old, drawing around their hands on a tablecloth and giving us their opinion of their last visit to a doctor, hospital or dentist. We also used 'smiley faces' so children and young people with communication difficulties could still take part by pointing to the smiley face that applied to their experience.
- **Diwali Festival of Light** saw Healthwatch join other organisations on the market square in Northampton to talk to and hear the voice of people from the BME communities and other seldom heard groups.
- **Northampton Interfaith Forum** enabled us to engage with the wider public with many faith groups coming together to showcase their work with communities.
- **Rockin Road Runner**, an event designed for people with a learning difficulty and their families, was attended as part of our Make Your Voice Count 3.
- **'It's All About You' workshop** was a great opportunity to talk to many people with a learning difficulty who were able to tell us about their experiences of using health and social care services.

## Community Engagement - Listening to you

During the year we visited and built links with the Northampton Jesus Centre, which enabled us to speak to a number of people who may not have normally engaged with us. They were very vocal about the services they receive and we were able to collect some very good feedback from some very vulnerable people, via comment cards and surveys.

Healthwatch Northamptonshire also attended an event organised by Deaf Hub where we gave a talk using sign language interpreters. This enabled us to speak to approximately 50 deaf or hearing impaired people and get their views.



Children giving feedback at SENDsation Day 2015

We visited lots of other community cafés and local groups to promote Healthwatch Northamptonshire and to listen to people's experience of using health and social care, such as:

- The Good Loaf bakery and community café in Northampton

- Johnny’s Happy Place (a welcoming café space for those with mental health concerns)
- Elsie’s Café (Northampton’s Real Junk Food Project)
- Reachout Community Church Café in Irchester
- Open Café at No.1 in Oundle

The community cafés provided a great range of people from diverse backgrounds and age ranges to talk to.

We also spoke to a number of people from outside Northamptonshire who used services such as Kettering General Hospital and Corby Urgent Care Centre. At the Open Café in Oundle we were able to talk to people who live in Northamptonshire but use health services in the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire areas.

March 2016 saw the start of us partnering the Rural Wellbeing Service operated by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). This service provides information and contacts around the villages in North and East Northamptonshire. This service is in its infancy and is a key service that we can support and work with in the future to get information out into rural communities and vice versa.

## What we’ve learnt from visiting services

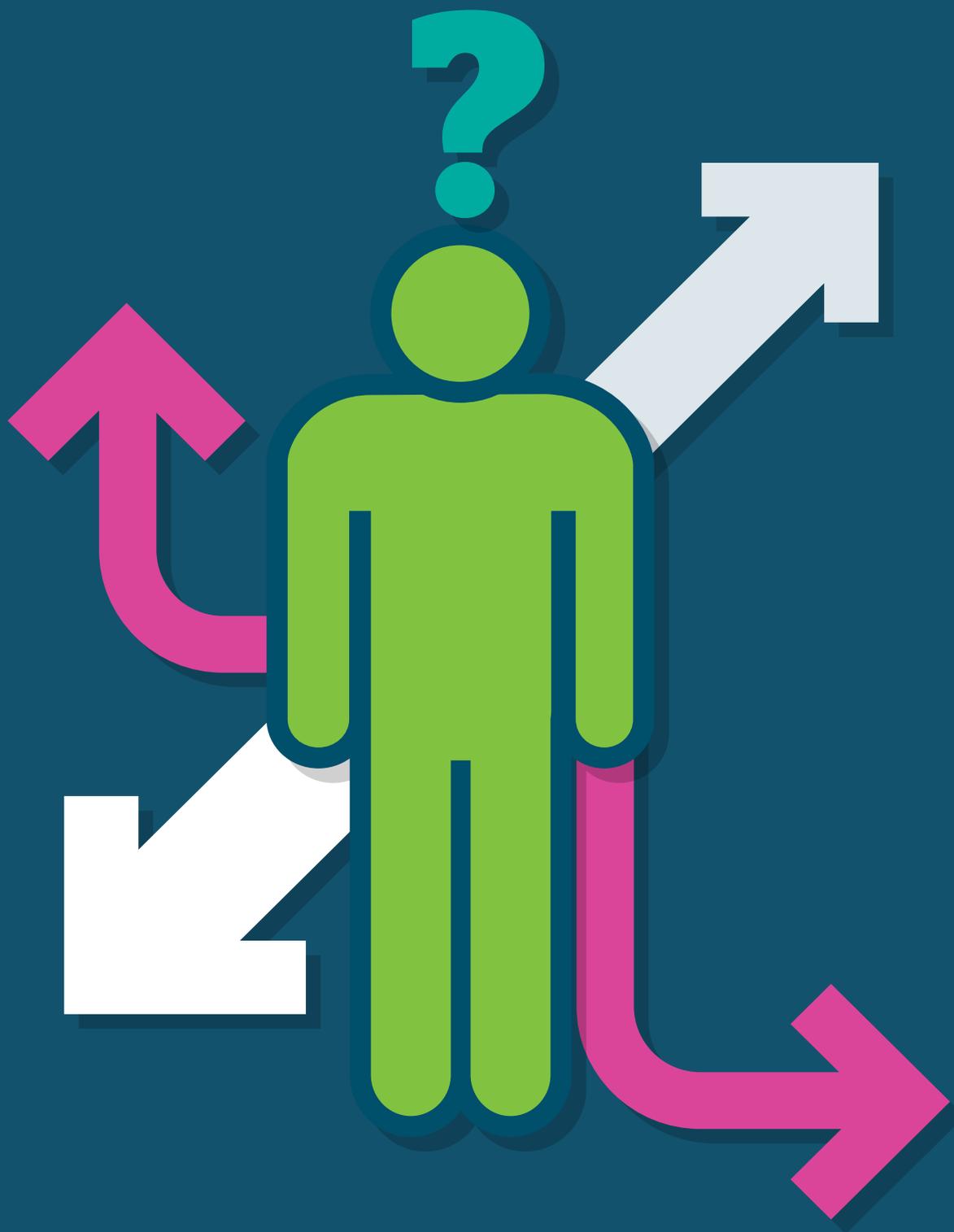
During the year, 14 of our authorised representatives visited 20 residential and/or nursing care homes using our Enter and View powers. A report with feedback and specific recommendations was produced for each visit. Common areas we recommended for improvement were the provision of activities, particularly for people with dementia, and staffing levels.

**The community cafés provided a great range of people from diverse backgrounds and age ranges to talk to.**

Visit reports were shared with the homes, commissioners and inspectors of residential care in the county, e.g. Northamptonshire County Council, NHS Nene Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

**During the year, 14 of our authorised representatives visited 20 residential and/or nursing care homes using our Enter and View powers.**

# Giving people advice and information



## Helping people get what they need from local health and social care services

With a fast moving and constantly changing health and social care landscape, the delivery of an efficient and quality signposting service, focused on health and social care, is an essential element of the work that Healthwatch Northamptonshire provides to the local community.

This year has seen a steady flow of enquiries for information and feedback on services coming through the information and signposting route. We disseminate this information from the public back to key stakeholders via our 'Every Contact Counts' report each month.

Overall, we dealt with 294 enquiries, which included information and signposting, issues/complaints and positive feedback. Some enquiries also resulted in us making safeguarding referrals.

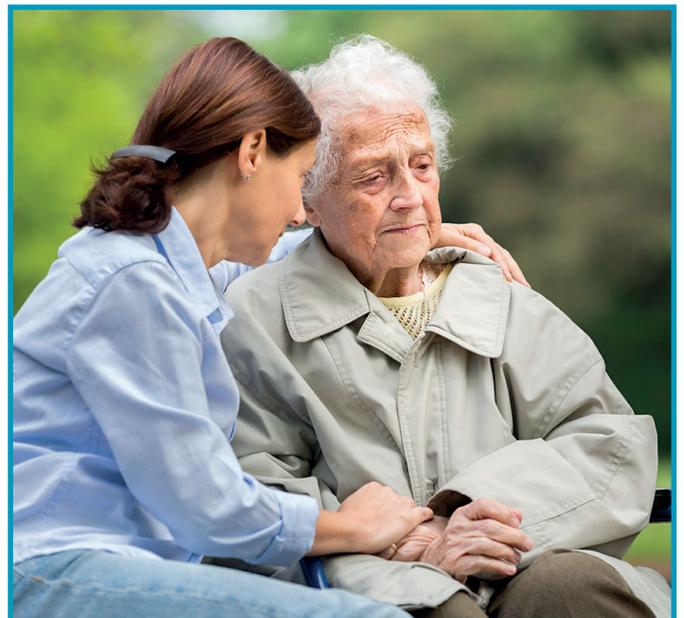
### Take a look at some of the advice we have given:

One member of the public contacted us when they were concerned about the treatment their elderly and vulnerable relative was receiving from their home care service. They had tried to speak to the care manager and to the home care service but this did not resolve the situation. In light of the information we were given we advised the caller that they could alert the county council's safeguarding team under the protection of vulnerable adults process, and that we would also alert them under this process. We also gave advice about the complaints procedure and where they could get advocacy support.

Another person phoned us for advice when they were not happy with the bridge their dentist had fitted. We advised them about their options for getting this problem addressed, including speaking to the dentist or writing to the practice manager, and then signposting the person to the complaints information on our website and also to the NHS complaints advocacy service.

### Overall, we dealt with 294 enquiries

One caller was concerned about not being able to be seen for surgery at an out of county hospital. After making further enquiries with both the local Healthwatch covering that area and our local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) we were able to tell the caller the reasons why this was happening and advise them on the best route to get specialist surgery. We also raised the issue of whether GPs knew this hospital was not taking out of county patients.



# How we have made a difference



## Our reports and recommendations

Healthwatch Northamptonshire published six reports during 2015/16 to inform decision makers of the views of local people and service users (in addition to Enter and View reports).

### GP practices

In May 2015 we published our report of the experiences of 234 people we spoke to at 25 GP practices across the county. We made a number of recommendations and highlighted the difficulty some people had in making an appointment, systems used by practices that worked well, and how the needs of deaf and hearing impaired patients were not well met.

### Health visiting services

May also saw the publishing of our report on 221 parents' experiences of health visiting services. We were concerned that there was variation across the county and our recommendation included asking for a full review of the service, with further involvement of local parents, before the service moved to being commissioned by Northamptonshire County Council from October 2015.

### Domiciliary (home) care

In July we published a report which gathered the views and experience of people receiving domiciliary (home) care. After interviewing 50 service users about their experiences we recommended that Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) adopt core standards for the recruitment, retention and working conditions of care staff, communication of care arrangements and plans, and reiterated our recommendation that care staff should be paid travel costs so they were not pressurised to rush the care they gave, which unfortunately did happen over the winter.

### Hospitals

In September we published our survey summarising the experiences of 565 people

waiting to be seen at Northampton General Hospital A&E, Kettering General Hospital A&E and Corby Urgent Care Centre. We found out about people's experiences of A&E and urgent care and whether they had tried to get help elsewhere before arriving. We made a number of recommendations and the responses from the providers are summarised in the 'Our work in focus' section of this report.

### Services for under 5s

In October we reported on the views of parents/carers, staff and volunteers of services for under 5s delivered by Children's Centres and Library Plus. We conducted a consultation and engagement exercise with 161 individuals (94 parents/carers and 67 staff/volunteers) at 17 Library Plus sites and 14 Children's Centres across the county about their views and experiences and highlighted a number of issues. In December we submitted our findings to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Children's Centres in a response to their call for evidence.

## Working with other organisations

In 2015/16 Healthwatch Northamptonshire had more opportunities to work in a collaborative way with other organisations with the shared aim of improving the patient and service user experience, and improving the coordination and integration of services across the county.

In November 2015 we ran a workshop in collaboration with the Healthier Northamptonshire integrated care closer to home programme to discuss the service user and carer experience of health and social care. The session was well attended by a wide range of stakeholders, which included patient and carer representatives, NHS and social care staff, local GP representatives, NHS trust governor representatives, local providers and volunteers. It generated a lot of valuable discussion about what was working well, made recommendations about what could be improved from the perspective of people's experiences, and developed new partnerships.

In March 2016 Healthwatch Northamptonshire was asked to conduct a survey of patients in A&E over a 24 hour period on behalf of Northampton General Hospital. The findings from this survey reflected those of the survey we had conducted previously and are being acted upon by the hospital.

During the year we have developed our relationships with the health and social care providers in the county and have regularly fed back the experiences of members of the public and attended provider patient experience groups. We also responded to five provider quality accounts, pointing out which patient experience priorities we support and what we felt were missing.

We also responded to a number of requests from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for feedback on services to inform their inspections, including care homes and GP practices. We sent the CQC a summary of people's experiences of a range of services provided by Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) to inform their inspection of the Trust in February and published this in July.

At a national level, we have shared experiences with Healthwatch England to contribute to national reports, including the experience of homeless people of hospital discharge for the Safely Home report<sup>1</sup>, and experience of primary care<sup>2</sup>.

In September we shared feedback on the development of the Local Transformation Plan for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing with Healthwatch England, who shared the national picture with the Department of Health, NHS England and other national stakeholders.

### Involving local people in our work

In May 2015 Healthwatch Northamptonshire hosted a workshop on the future of health and social care in Northamptonshire, which was very well attended by members of the public and local organisations. During the

workshop we heard from representatives from all the local NHS and social care organisations on recent and future developments and plans including, a joined up health and social care plan, joint working between Northampton General Hospital and Kettering General Hospital, and how local people will be involved in shaping the plans and future development.



May 2015 workshop

*The time and commitment of Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteers has enabled us to represent the public at many meetings with health and social care providers over the course of the year, from safeguarding committees to hospital patient experience groups. Additionally, groups of volunteers from the north of the county have enabled us to have a strong presence at Kettering General Hospital (KGH). During the year they conducted 64 patient experience ward audit and attended numerous meetings to ensure that patient experience remained at the forefront of operations at KGH.*

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/resource/safely-home>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/What\\_do\\_people\\_want\\_from\\_primary\\_care](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/What_do_people_want_from_primary_care)

# Our work in focus



# Make Your Voice Count 2015/16



Hannah collecting young people's views.

Between October 2015 and January 2016 Healthwatch Northamptonshire carried out our third annual 'Make Your Voice Count' campaign to find out peoples' experiences of health and social care in Northamptonshire, and what they thought the top health and social care issues to take action on were. Part of the survey was commissioned by Nene Clinical Commissioning Group (Nene CCG) to find out about experiences of diabetes, cancer and dementia services, as well as what people thought would improve their experience of health and social care, help support people with long term conditions, and help people to be better informed.

The 2015/16 survey was our widest reaching yet and after attending 48 events and locations across the county we received 1,098 responses from a wide demographic.

The 2015/16 survey was our widest reaching yet and after attending 48 events and locations across the county we received 1,098 responses from a wide demographic.

Places we visited include:

- Northampton and Tresham colleges
- Retinal screening clinics
- Diwali festival in Northampton
- Trilogy Leisure Centres
- International Older Persons Day event
- Northampton General Hospital
- Carers support groups
- Mental health support groups
- Community cafés
- Dementia cafés

As well as letting lots more people know about Healthwatch Northamptonshire, we were able to collect lots of detailed and insightful feedback to inform both Nene CCG and our future work.

Key findings included:

- Being able to get an appointment in a reasonable timeframe was the most common suggestion for improving the user experience of health and care services.
- Improving the support offered to patients and carers and improving communication were the most common suggestions for supporting those with long term conditions.
- Improvements to communication was also suggested by many, most of whom mentioned that services and staff should listen to people better or talk to each other better.

# Young Healthwatch Northamptonshire

Alistair Bassett, who chaired the first Healthwatch Northamptonshire Youth Conference in February 2015, became chair of Young Healthwatch. We held two workshops in May with the young people to plan their work, which was followed by Young Healthwatch meetings to set up a new Facebook page and Twitter account and design a new leaflet to recruit more young people.

In January 2016 another workshop was held to design a questionnaire for other young people to ask them their views about eating disorders, followed by a fun afternoon climbing at Rock UK.

Young Healthwatch has since gathered over 2,000 responses to the eating disorder questionnaire and the full report will be available July 2016.



“I just wanted to drop you a line to extend a compliment to Kate Holt, Mark and Hannah for an excellent engagement event on eating disorders affecting children and young people. The team brought together a very mixed group from 9 to 16 from across the county, young people with different needs working very well together to develop a questionnaire on eating disorders. The environment was very relaxed, and once the ice was broken, it was a lot of fun too. Most of all, the young people worked to develop the questionnaire and I look forward to seeing this work progress”.

David Loyd-Hearn, Children and Young People Commissioning Manager Emotional Health and Wellbeing, NHS Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups



# Survey of people waiting in A&E

In response to both national and local concerns about hospital accident and emergency departments, and the unprecedented demand on them, one of our priorities was to undertake a survey of patients' views and experiences of these services in Northamptonshire.

During two weeks in May 2015, Healthwatch Northamptonshire staff and volunteers made 69 visits to the county's A&E departments and the Corby Urgent Care Centre at different times of the day and evening. In total we engaged with 565 people - patients, carers and/or family members.



## Survey of People Waiting in Accident and Emergency at Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospital and Corby Urgent Care Centre

### Reason for coming to A&E or Urgent Care Centre

- 54% had unsuccessfully tried to get help from their GP Practice.
- 15% had contacted the NHS 111 Service.
- 7% had contacted the Ambulance Service.

### Of those who had tried their GP first

- 24 people (12%) were sent to A&E/UCC because they needed an x-ray, tests, or had chest pains or a head injury
- 35 people (18%) mentioned being unable to get a timely appointment at their GP practices as the reason for coming to A&E/UCC

### Comments made about trying elsewhere

- Some people had phoned their surgery but couldn't get through, and others who went to their surgery were told that there were no slots until tomorrow, so they came to UCC.
- One person said "I feel bad about coming here, but I cannot get a GP appointment."

### Number of times people had visited the A&E or UCC in the last year

- 14% said they had used A&E three or more times
- One person visited Corby UCC 60 times
- One person visited NGH 40 times



A Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteer collecting experiences at Kettering General Hospital

**What issues did patients identify as needing improvements?**

- Length of waiting times
- Amenities such as availability of free drinking water, and better signage to toilets at all three sites
- Improvements to the waiting areas, to better keep people occupied, especially children (e.g. provision of TVs, magazines, toys, etc.)
- Communication barriers such as glass at reception desk, which also impacted on privacy and confidentiality, and more effective ways of calling people for treatment
- Better access to food and drink when café closed. Also comments about lack of healthy options in vending machines and the price of food and drinks.

## What were the results of our survey?

A report was produced giving details of the responses to our survey from patients/carers/family members, together with recommendations for change and improvements. Copies were sent to each of the three provider organisations, and responses giving details of actions for improvement have been received. These include:

### Kettering General Hospital

- Provision of water cooler giving access to free water
- Children's waiting room reconfigured to open up area and improvement in signage
- Glass barrier on reception desk removed to improve communication with patients and help with privacy/confidentiality
- Ways of improving communication investigated to ensure people can hear their name being called out and avoid longer waiting time to be seen
- Rapid Assessment Team/Ambulance Streaming System introduced to improve time taken to triage patients

### Northampton General Hospital

- Help and support for patients to access drinks and refreshments, provided by Age UK volunteers. Staff were also reminded to ensure drinks were available in waiting areas.
- Children's waiting room was decorated and new toys and activities were made available.
- NGH are now exploring sources of funding for a TV in the waiting area.

- Discussions with staff reminding them of the importance of communication and ensuring privacy and dignity is respected, particularly when discussing sensitive issues.

### Corby Urgent Care Centre

- Working with Corby CCG to promote the UCC as a place for those requiring immediate and necessary treatment.
- Liaising with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) to ensure appropriate ambulance transfers to and from the unit.
- Working with the 111 Service to help improve their Directory of Services to reduce inappropriate signposting to UCC.

### Next Steps

Overall the findings of this survey were similar to those we found at NGH last September, e.g. 65% of patients had spoken to a healthcare professional prior to attending A&E. However, 10% of patients believed A&E was not the right place, and the majority felt their issue could have been dealt with by a GP. In addition, difficulty in getting a GP appointed was noted in both surveys.

It is evident that there are a number of concerning factors relating to patients attendance, which if improved, could reduce the numbers presenting at A&E inappropriately.

# Our plans for next year



### Healthwatch Northamptonshire Pop Up Shops

We are currently putting together a series of 'Pop Up Shops' throughout the county. These will be the face of Healthwatch Northamptonshire out in the community. They will enable people to access information and signposting and to give us feedback on the health and social care services they use.

We aim to deliver a minimum of fifteen 'Pop Up Shops' per month around the county with some being static and the same day every month and others moving around the area popping up at events, groups and coffee mornings.

There will also be themed pop ups run during certain months and we aim to work with other partners to deliver this service.

### Northamptonshire's Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)

The NHS and social care services continue to face some tough challenges and following on from a very successful community engagement workshop we will continue to work with Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups, partners and other key stakeholders to ensure that engagement with the wider population of Northamptonshire is an inherent part of the STP.

### Northamptonshire Local Transformation Plan

In March 2015 NHS England published 'Future in Mind' setting out the strategy and direction for children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing over the next 5 years. The Transformation Plan is required to involve children and young people in its development and HWN has been

commissioned by Nene CCG to deliver meaningful consultation and engagement with children, young people and their families to influence continued service improvement and delivery. The coming year will see HWN continue to focus on engaging with seldom heard communities, e.g. Gypsies and Travellers, to influence the Plan.

### HWN Adult Services Strategic Planning Group (ASSPG) - Discharge Project

The new HWN working group has set as its first priority a review of discharge processes from both acute and community settings. A small HWN task and finish project group will identify and look at all aspects of the process from admission into hospital to discharge back home or into a care setting, identifying barriers and areas for improvement locally.

### HWN Children, Young People and Families Working Group - Children's Services

This working group will continue with its review of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) on behalf of Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) identifying areas for improvement and also with Northamptonshire County Council as it sets up its new Children's Trust to deliver future services.



# Our people



## Healthwatch Northamptonshire Community Interest Company (HWN CIC) Board

The CIC Board is the legal entity of Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) and is the governing body for all activity. Its remit includes:

- Contract compliance
- Legal requirements
- Financial and risk management
- Sustainability and growth
- Agreeing strategy and operations
- Agreeing policies and procedures

The CIC is required to have up to two directors from each shareholder, University of Northamptonshire (UN) and Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire (VIN). Professor William Pope, the Chair of HWN is nominated by Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and there is also one independent director, Susan Hills.



Board members and Volunteers at the HWN Annual Meeting.

## Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board

The Healthwatch Northamptonshire Board is the public face of HWN CIC and the mechanism by which HWN CIC communicates and engages with local people, stakeholders and decision makers. The HWN Board of volunteers ensures that the CIC meaningfully engages with the population of Northamptonshire on health and social care issues.

The HWN Board:

- Ensures effective delivery of the contract with NCC
- Proactively gathers, listens and represents the views and experiences of local people
- Empowers local people to influence the quality of health and social care in the county

To further strengthen the capacity of the HWN Board there has also been an Advisory Council and working groups of other Healthwatch volunteers to make recommendations to the Board. In practice this has not worked as well as it could, and staff and volunteers are reviewing the structure in 2016/17 to reflect the local health and social care economy to become more streamlined.

## The HWN Volunteer Community

HWN could not carry out its work without the expertise, time and commitment of its volunteers. They are the eyes and ears of the organisation out in the community often representing Healthwatch Northamptonshire at meetings and events.

Thank you Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteers, you do a fantastic job!

## Helen Statham - HWN Volunteer

Becoming a Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteer seemed an obvious step between retirement and oblivion. My research career had focused on children and families with an interest in how the delivery of care by health professionals affected psychological and social outcomes for families. Becoming Chair of the Children, Young People and Families Working Group is a great privilege.

It has been tremendously exciting to find myself with so many new people, so varied in their backgrounds and experiences but who share a passion to give local people a voice about the health and social care services that affect them and their loved ones. These are people who don't just want to talk about what's needed. They give their time and energies to listen to and understand the views of local people and relay those views to providers of health and social care.

### So what has the Children, Young People and Families (CYP) Working Group done this year?

We have been very fortunate this year to have Kate Holt as the lead officer for the group and latterly she and we have been supported by Hannah Fairweather, an intern from the University of Northampton. Our small team of feisty women (yes, the group is all woman at present but it doesn't have to be like that in the future) have worked across a range of areas. We talked with parents of under-5s and staff in libraries and Children's Centres delivering services to them in the context of the new contracts for Children's Centres and published a detailed report on the services. As part of the Young Healthy Mind Partnership, HWN has been commissioned to undertake direct engagement with young people in the county around emotional wellbeing and mental

health. So far this has included: surveying young people and their parents after referral to CAMHS; asking young people about their knowledge of eating disorders and where to go for help; surveying new parents to understand their experiences of pregnancy and the early months of being parents in this county. The eating disorders survey was particularly innovative as it was designed by Young Healthwatch - a survey of young people's views designed by young people. The role of the members of the CYP group was to go into schools talking to assemblies and encourage pupils to fill in the questionnaire, as well as to think about becoming a member of Young Healthwatch.

As a group we have worked hard to understand the challenges that are facing those delivering health and social care services to children and young people when budgets for those services are being cut. We have invited a range of speakers to our quarterly meetings including from the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board; we've engaged in consultations about further reconfiguring children's centres; and we have responded to the consultation on the health care offer for 0-19 year olds. Individual members of the CYP attend meetings of external bodies wherever possible, including the Young Healthy Minds Partnership Board.

We have liaised with statutory and voluntary groups e.g. Service Six, to support the provision of necessary services for children, young people and families and will continue to do this in the coming year.



**Helen Statham**  
Chair HWN Children,  
Young People and  
Families Working Group

## John Rawlings - HWN Volunteer

Anyone joining Northamptonshire Healthwatch as a volunteer will find themselves amidst a wide variety of individuals. I found myself in the company of professionals, carers and patients/consumers of various health disciplines.

Irrespective of background all prospective volunteers are required to take part in a number of seminars to ensure they have a good knowledge of the philosophy and working practices of Healthwatch.

Meetings take place to:

- Update volunteers on the progress of projects currently in operation.
- Consider new projects.
- Receive presentations from health service/social care/voluntary organisation staff.

Since volunteering with Healthwatch I have been involved in enter and view visits to various wards in Northampton General Hospital, including the accident and emergency centre which involved talking to staff and patients.

My experience has given me the chance to visit a number of doctors' surgeries in Northampton, talking to practice managers and patients about their experiences, and I have visited a number of care and nursing homes talking with residents, carers, family, managers and staff.

I was also involved in a survey regarding health visitors which involved meeting mothers and children in shopping centres and in the street (not to be recommended in winter!) as well as mums and tots groups in local libraries.

All the above activities took place after careful planning and preparation of survey sheets.

The important thing is to remember the purpose of Healthwatch. It is NOT an inspectorate. Its function it is to seek the views and experiences of the general public and be 'the voice of the people' representing their views to health and social care providers.

My experience with Healthwatch has been most rewarding and informative, as well as, at times, frustrating!

At this time Healthwatch Northamptonshire is undergoing a review and restructuring process as well as moving to new premises. Now is a good time to offer your services and be part of one of the working groups helping our health and social care services receive informed feedback on their work.

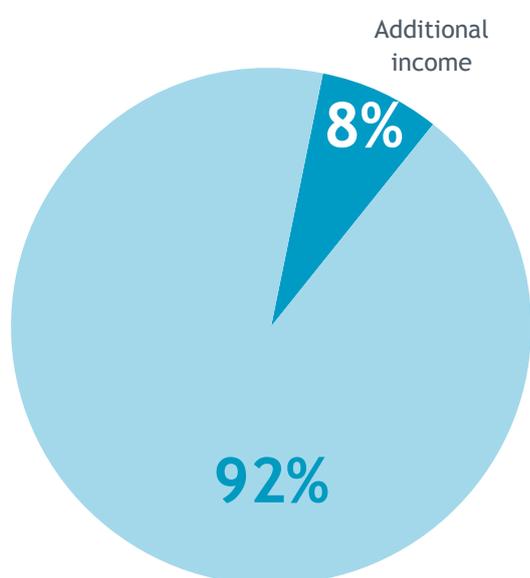


**John Rawlings**  
Healthwatch  
Northamptonshire  
Volunteer

# Our finances

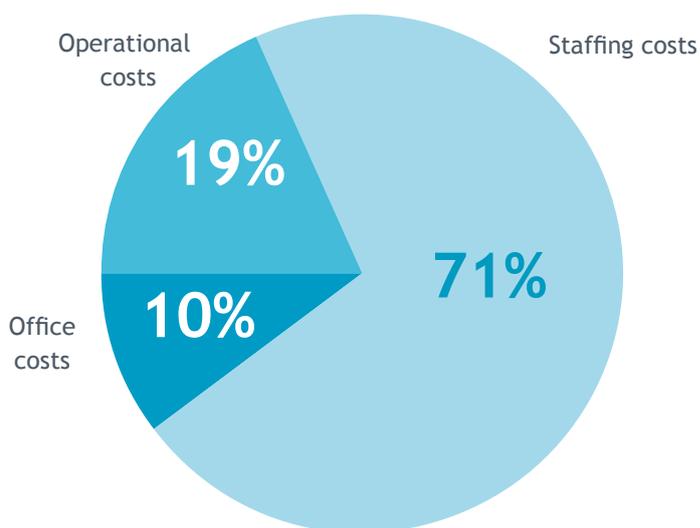


INCOME		£
Funding received from local authority to deliver local Healthwatch statutory activities		372,761
Additional income		30,900
Total income		403,661
EXPENDITURE		
Operational costs		71,786
Staffing costs		276,548
Office costs		39,125
Total expenditure		387,459
Balance brought forward		16,202



Funding received from local authority

2015/16 Income



2015/16 Expenditure

# Contact us



## Get in touch

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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Healthwatchnorthamptonshire](http://www.facebook.com/Healthwatchnorthamptonshire)

Twitter: [twitter.com/HWatchNorthants](https://twitter.com/HWatchNorthants)



We will be making this annual report publically available by publishing it on our website and circulating to Healthwatch England, CQC, NHS England, NHS Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Groups, the local Overview and Scrutiny Committee and our local authority, Northamptonshire County Council.

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

If you require this report in an alternate format please contact us at the address above.

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