



Healthwatch Warwickshire
Findings of the Standing Conference
25 November 2017



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Overview

On 25th November 2017, Healthwatch Warwickshire held our first Standing Conference on Consumer Voice.



We invited members and organisers of public participation groups from providers of health and social care in Warwickshire, to come together to discuss public engagement and some of the issues affecting the people they represent.

As well as a presentation from Paul Devlin, Chief Executive Officer of National Association for Patient Participation, attendees had the opportunity to discuss their concerns amongst themselves and report to the wider group. The aim was to identify common themes and concerns, directly from these public representatives.

This report details what we heard and how Healthwatch Warwickshire will respond.

What we did

More than 50 people, including members of patient participation groups from Warwickshire's 82 GP surgeries, met to look at priorities in the county and to discuss ideas on how to give patients, other recipients of care, and carers more power in influencing services in the future.



We initiated the Standing Conference as part of our remit as local consumer champion, to bring NHS patient participation groups and other service user representatives together to share ideas, to gather views and to communicate them to health and social care commissioners and providers across Warwickshire.

Attendees included representatives from:

- Castle Medical Centre PPG, Kenilworth
- Whitehall Medical Practice
- Revel (Brinklow) PPG
- Abbey Medical Centre PPG
- Warwick Hospital Patient Forum
- WNCCG PPG
- Trinity Court PPG
- A Warwickshire residential care home
- Parents of a child with significant care needs
- Clarendon Lodge Medical Centre PPG
- Whitnash PPG
- Central Surgery PPG
- Bridge House Medical Centre

Between them, attendees at the Standing Conference represented over 100,000 Warwickshire residents.

HWW staff and volunteers were also in attendance, to facilitate discussions and capture public views.

We were delighted that Paul Devlin, Chief Executive Officer of National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP), was able to attend and present to the meeting his very informed views on the importance of public participation in the health and social care system.

Phil Robson, former Chair of Healthwatch Warwickshire, chaired the meeting and said:

“The standing conference enables commissioners and providers to have a source of public feedback from across different services, and to hear how they are performing and the difference they are making.

This is part of our objective to promote a care system that is accountable to members of the public, and to improve the experience of everyone who moves through the system. By influencing services for the future, we are improving them together.”



Phil Robson, Chair of the Standing Conference, with Paul Devlin, Chief Executive Officer of National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP)

Robin Wensley, the current Chair of Healthwatch Warwickshire, was in attendance and stated that:

“It is all about bringing together a group of extremely important individuals, who otherwise would not have the opportunity to meet, to reinforce their messages from grass roots level. It is a way of obtaining the key messages of the public experience at county-wide level.”

What we learned

The Standing Conference was a very interactive event, with much discussion and debate.

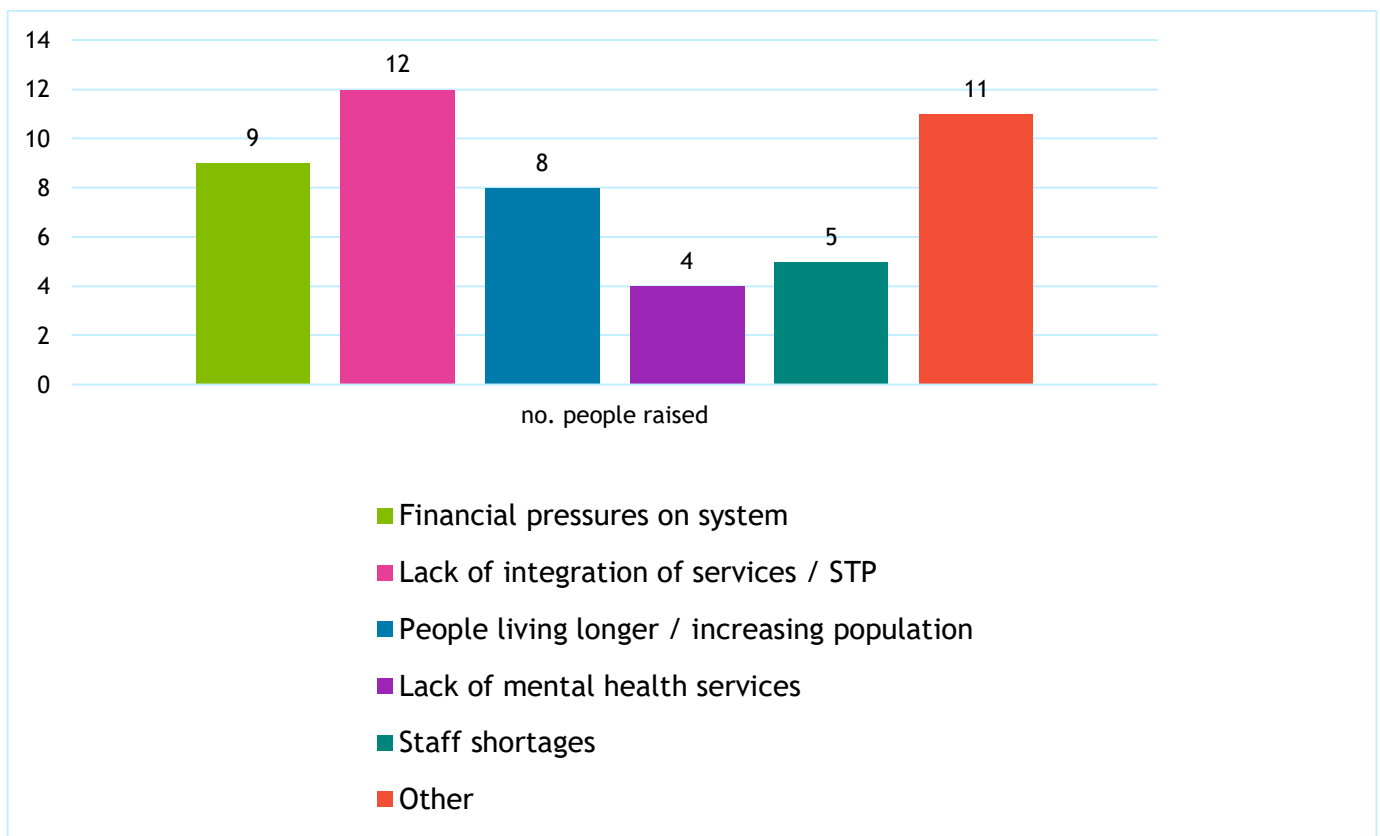
We also provided all attendees with paper forms, as below, to ensure we understand the key issues faced.

The most commonly stated concern was about the lack of integration of health and social care services, and as a related concern the implications of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs).

Other common concerns were regarding the financial pressures felt by services, and the consequences of increasing population size and longer lifespans of the population.

Insufficient services relating to mental health and a general lack of adequate staffing levels were also concerns for some attendees.

Summary of key issues raised by attendees:



Other concerns raised included:

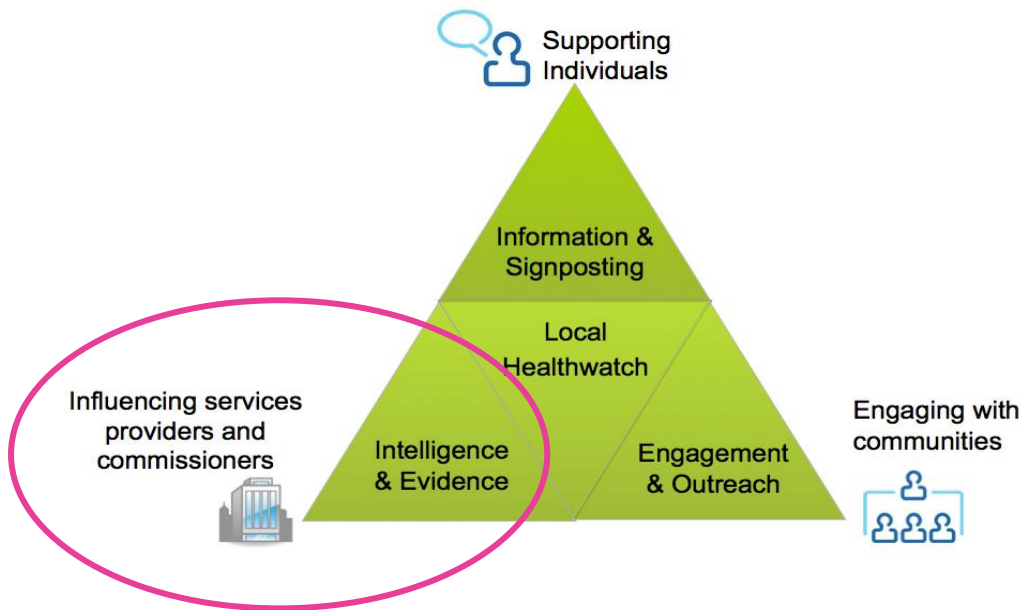
- An over-reliance on volunteers, and lack of appreciation
- Access to appointments and services
- Lack of social care leading to delays in discharge from hospital

- Disparity between urban and rural provision
 - Need to share best practice across disciplines
 - Continuity of care
 - Social isolation
 - Lack of communication between Hospitals and GP Practices and Children's and Adult Services / including access to patient notes
 - Need to improve links across PPG's
 - Lack of funding, provision and visibility of services for the learning disability community
 - Need for innovative approaches for protecting the most vulnerable
 - Impact on staff morale of constant changes
-



How will this help?

Having gathered representatives of patient groups and recipients of care services to hear their concerns, our job is to pass this on so that things can improve.



We will make this report available on our website, www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk and issue it to our email mailing list of over 1200 subscribers. (If you would like to subscribe to our newsletter, please visit the website or [subscribe here](#)).

We will present these findings to the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and to the Health and Wellbeing Board at the County Council. Representations based on these findings will be made to the Boards of Governors at the Clinical Commissioning Groups, to the Boards of acute service providers including hospitals, and to adult social care providers including the Care Homes Association. We will follow up on the actions that commissioners and providers have taken in response to the findings.

We also asked attendees how they would like their views to be shared, they said:

- Healthwatch England
- Public report
- Warwickshire Health & Wellbeing Board
- Warwickshire County Council, including Public Health Warwickshire
- Local MPs
- Providers and commissioners, including CCGs
- GP Federation

- STP Board
- Local media
- Leaflets in GP practices
- NAPP

Where practical, all of the above will receive a copy of this report.

Next steps

The attendees of the Standing Conference expressed that it had been extremely valuable and would like to meet regularly, and to share experiences and communicate as a group between meetings. The participants also agreed to the setting up of a steering group to manage the business of the Conference and six members volunteered to be part of the Group. The Steering Group is to be called together to set out the program for Standing Conference going forward.

The National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) has pledged continuing support for the Standing Conference, citing it as an example of good practice. The strong relationship between Healthwatch Warwickshire and NAPP will help in the continuing development and success of the Standing Conference.

The Standing Conference will now form an important part of Healthwatch Warwickshire's ongoing work with the representatives of patient groups and recipients of care services. It will facilitate a continuous sharing of experiences, enabling common issues to be communicated to the people and organisations that can make a real difference to services in Warwickshire.



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