

REVIEW OF HEALTHWATCH WARWICKSHIRE

“Great advocates for people in their community”

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Review of Healthwatch Warwickshire

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1. Overview

This report is based on the review of Healthwatch Warwickshire which was commissioned by Warwickshire County Council. A summary of the methodology and of the Healthwatch England Quality Statements that provided the framework for the review are attached as appendices.

This report is based on a presentation of the findings and subsequent discussion at a workshop of stakeholders held in Leamington Spa on 13th June 2016.

2. Key Findings and Recommendations

Healthwatch Warwickshire is generally considered to be an effective local Healthwatch by most local stakeholders across all sectors in the County.

Areas where it is considered to be particularly effective include:

- Establishing and managing trusted strategic relationships at county and organisation level.
- Advocating effectively and appropriately for public voice and engagement in relevant committees and boards.
- Producing influential and credible reports based on the experience of the public.

There are a number of areas where further development and improvement may be possible. It is important to preface this by recognising that local services are working in a time of government austerity. This means that all recommendations for improvement need to be considered within a context of diminishing public sector resources.

Questions Healthwatch Warwickshire might consider include:

- does it have a balanced approach with regard to relationships across the County both with regard to the voluntary and community sector and district councils?
- could its current communication strategy be strengthened in order to ensure that it has a greater profile with the public?
- does it have a sufficient focus on seldom heard or easily ignored groups of people and is its current work in this area sufficiently understood within the health and care system?
- how might it engage with key strategic bodies to ensure that they understand the rationale for Healthwatch Warwickshire forward priorities and how these fit with their own?

Warwickshire County Council may wish to consider:

- whether it has a consistently collaborative relationship with Healthwatch Warwickshire across all of its health and care functions.
- how the Health Overview and Scrutiny function and the Cabinet responsibility for Health and Care could together help Healthwatch Warwickshire be more effective in its role.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board may wish to consider reviewing the current provision of health and care advice and information in the county and the specific responsibility of Healthwatch Warwickshire within this context.

3. How we conducted the review

Our approach to gathering a view on the effectiveness of Healthwatch Warwickshire is based on triangulating local perspectives using a framework (the Quality Statements - see Appendix B) that we developed for Healthwatch England. Our triangulation is as follows:

A. Ratings (both quantitative and qualitative) by a range of survey respondents from across the County including commissioners, providers, voluntary, private and statutory sectors. Respondents could rate the effectiveness of Healthwatch Warwickshire as follows:

- Agree - that it is effective
- Disagree - that it is effective
- Don't know - not in a position to comment
- Neither agree nor disagree - have a view but not convinced it is completely effective or completely ineffective

B. Interviews with a set of key decision makers within the health and care system

C. Workshop discussion of findings with a group of stakeholders from all sectors

This review does not claim to be a statistically valid piece of research - it is a temperature test - which is based on the views of key stakeholders who are responsible for the commissioning and delivery of health and care in Warwickshire.

A wide range of organisations were invited to contribute to the questionnaire - a list of these is attached at Appendix A.

- Over 90 questionnaires were sent out and 33 returned
- 11 key decision makers were invited to be interviewed and 6 were interviewed
- all the above stakeholders were invited to the workshop and 18 attended

This process did not seek to directly involve members of the public. The views and opinions of the public are already gathered by Healthwatch Warwickshire and other organisations in Warwickshire - these opinions inform the views of the stakeholders whose views we have sought in this exercise.

The approach we use (endorsed by Healthwatch England) is clear - we are seeking the views of organisations and individuals who are responsible for aspects of health and care in Warwickshire. It is these organisations that Healthwatch Warwickshire needs to work with and these organisations who need to be convinced that the experience of local people is strengthened by the work of this Healthwatch.

It is the case that the effectiveness of local Healthwatch is determined as much by the ambition, capability and commitment of key players in the local health and care system as by the practice of the local Healthwatch

4. Overall View of Healthwatch Warwickshire

Healthwatch Warwickshire is a small and comparatively new organisation, formally established in April 2013. It is responsible for bringing the lived experience and voice of the public to bear on a complex health system that consists of three Clinical Commissioning Groups, a county council, five district councils, a range of NHS trusts as well as a wide and diverse range of voluntary and private providers. This function is further complicated by cross boundary issues particularly with regard to the remit of Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group and

important providers such as Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust. Further, Warwickshire County Council is currently under no overall control - which brings further challenges.

Warwickshire has a population of over half a million people as a rough indication of scale, spend on health and care (based on CCG and Adult Social Care figures only) per annum is close to a billion pounds.

Making an impact

For HW Warwickshire to make an impact it has to be astute with regard to how it uses its comparatively small resources to bring added value to what is a large and complex health and care system. To do this it needs to ensure that it has a balanced approach that does the following:

- strengthens public voice
- focuses on the strategically relevant issues
- presents information powerfully
- has constructive relationships that ensure that its voice is heard and acted upon

5. Context

We suggest that consideration of the effectiveness of any local Healthwatch should always be framed by the following:

It depends where you sit

It is reasonable to assume that all of the respondents to this survey have done their best to be objective and constructive. Nonetheless it is important to understand how stakeholder's perceptions are to some degree influenced by the position and role that they occupy, for example:

Managers of services may have experienced local Healthwatch through being subject to an investigation or having sight of a report that may relate to their service. So, they will have a good and detailed knowledge of that specific interaction but may not be aware of the broader range of services that local Healthwatch provide or the other roles they perform at a more strategic level.

It is also the case that a service that has been investigated by local Healthwatch will have to account for any criticisms they may receive to senior figures in their own organisation - this may feel uncomfortable.

Leaders (the majority of the interviewees are in this category) such as Cabinet Members, Directors and members of Governing bodies generally have a different experience of local Healthwatch. They are more likely to be aware of the broader scope of Local Healthwatch activities and may have a more personal relationship with senior officers and board members through formal and informal strategic meetings.

It depends how you talk

There is good evidence¹ that the way that large organisations such as local authorities and NHS bodies are organised means that there is an emphasis on understanding the world through analysis of quantitative data and evidence from research. This is not the way in which citizens and communities operate where much more emphasis is placed on personal experience and the stories that describe them. Local Healthwatch operates in between these two constituencies, part of its added value is reflected in its ability to bring the public ‘into the room’ in a way that is understood and accepted by these large organisations.

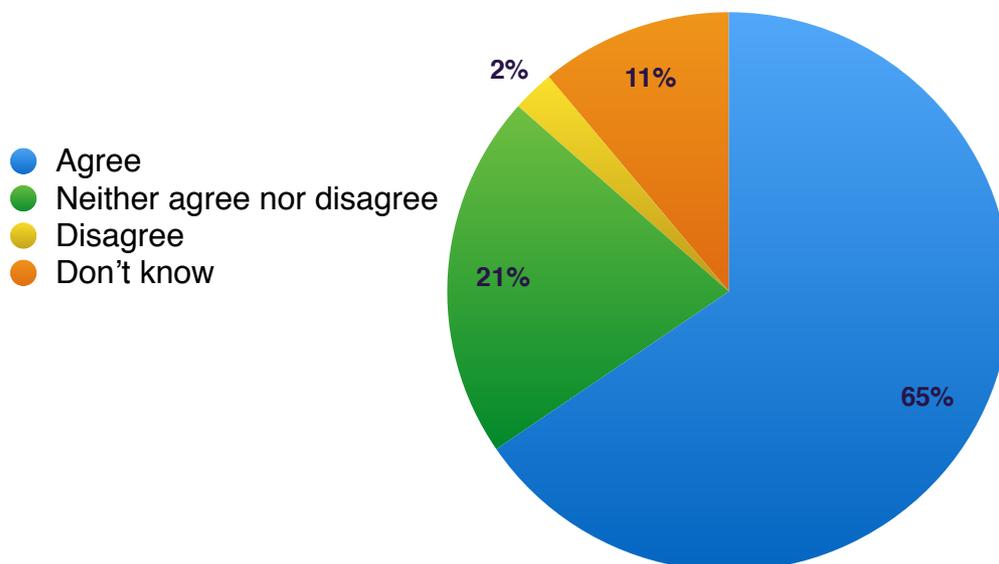
Don’t forget who you are talking to

Local Authorities and many health providers can often trace a continuous history going back over 100 years. It is very easy in the highly pressured environment of health and care to forget that local Healthwatch are actually very small and new organisations. Their effectiveness relies heavily on relationships, with the public and with stakeholder organisations. Local Healthwatch have been in existence for less than four years, they are still developing their expertise and their relationships.

6. Overall Rating

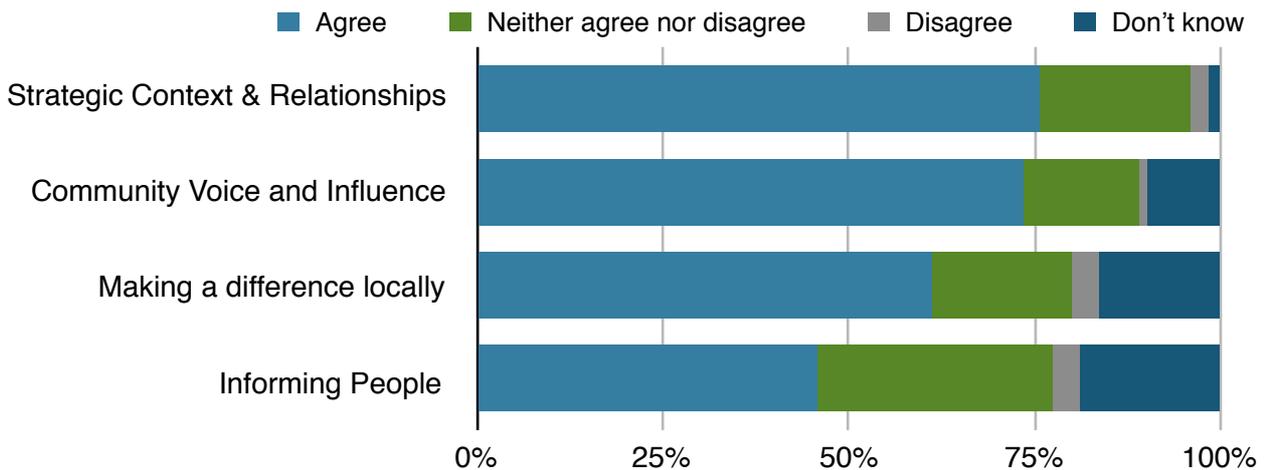
When we look at the survey results and the interviews we see that there is a clear view that Healthwatch Warwickshire is, on the whole, perceived to be effective. In our experience this rating compares well with other reviews we have conducted of local Healthwatch using a similar methodology.

Figure 1 Is Healthwatch Warwickshire Effective? Ratings from questionnaire returns



¹Community engagement in the social eco-system dance. Eileen Conn, TSRC 2011

Figure 2 - Effectiveness rating for all Quality Statements



The ratings by Quality Statement area show a similar trend to those for other local Healthwatch with Healthwatch Warwickshire being rated better with regard to strategic relationships and community voice and influence, and not quite as well for making an impact and information and advice.

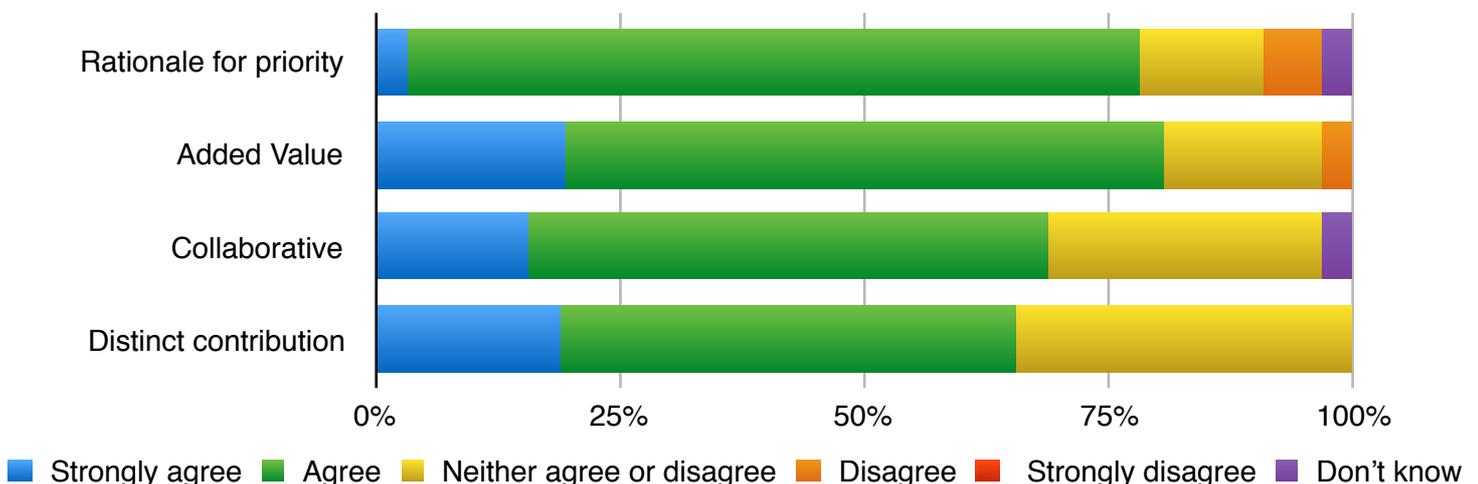
We believe that this is in part due to the challenge in making an impact on large and complex health systems - local Healthwatch is one agency seeking to influence this among many - and it is not the most powerful. We touch on this below. Again, ratings on signposting are the weakest (but still not poor!). We believe that this is in part due to the size of a local Healthwatch - they are a very small provider in the wider world of information, signposting and advice.

It is important to note that very few stakeholders considered Healthwatch Warwickshire to be ineffective. The minority of responses which gave a mixed response or did not know indicate plenty of room for improving understanding just through ensuring that there is better information and communication about activity and role.

We see that areas such as 'making a difference locally' and 'informing people' are rated less highly and a growing number of respondents say that they neither agree nor disagree that Healthwatch Warwickshire is effective here or they do not know how effective Healthwatch Warwickshire is. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness rating is still either over 50% or close to that.

7. Strategic Context and Relationships

Fig 3 Strategic Context and Relationships - How effective is Healthwatch Warwickshire?



We noted that figures 1 and 2 show that the majority of respondents felt that Healthwatch Warwickshire was effective with regard to how it works. This is particularly impressive given the complexity of the environment within Warwickshire which we highlight in our introduction. This position is confirmed by the more detailed data below in figure 3.

Themes that emerge from the quantitative and qualitative data include:

Trusted Independent Voice - Healthwatch Warwickshire has been successful at ensuring that it is represented at key decision making bodies such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Clinical Commissioning Group Governing bodies. There was a consistent view that their contributions at these meetings was effective, appropriate, independent and constructive. It was clear that many leaders (for example committee chairs, directors and chief executives) also find it helpful to have regular planned informal meetings to share concerns, insights and work plans.

“Independent perspective is helpful in informing service change”

“The voluntary transport review helped constructive discussions and joined up working”

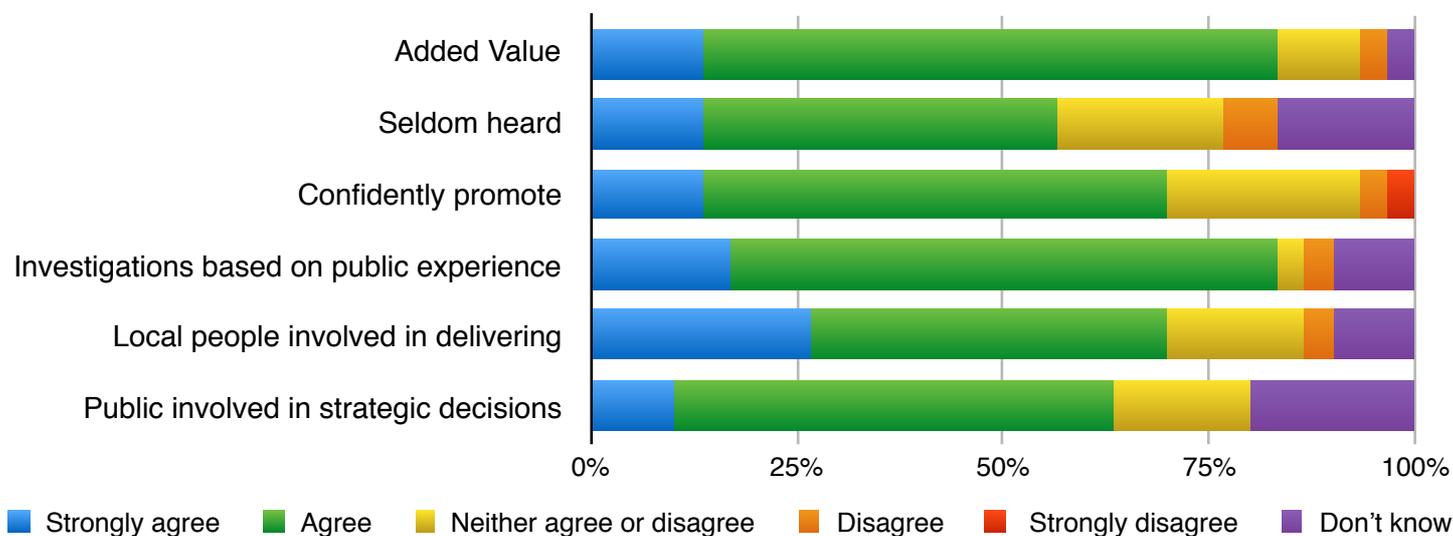
There was also a recognition by some, of the challenges that Healthwatch Warwickshire faced working with a local authority where there was no overall majority - there was a view expressed that this might make it more difficult for Healthwatch Warwickshire because it is in effect caught in between two functions led by different parties - the cabinet and scrutiny.

Areas for further consideration

- Priorities - some respondents did feel that they were not sufficiently aware of Healthwatch Warwickshire priorities and why these had been chosen.
- Variation across the county - there was a view that the relationships that Healthwatch Warwickshire have varies across the county. Some felt that relationships were stronger in the south and reflecting this some district councils had weaker connections - Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- Voluntary sector - there was a minority view that the Health and Social Care Forum which Healthwatch Warwickshire support was not as inclusive as it needed to be. This may reflect the above point with regard to variation across the county. However, it is important to note that other respondents noted the added value that this forum brings with regard to helping engagement between the statutory and voluntary sector.
- Adult Social Care - some key decision makers felt that while the relationship with the NHS providers and commissioners; the local authority as a whole; and public health specifically; was strong - the relationship that Healthwatch Warwickshire has with Adult Social Care in the County Council could be improved. We believe that responsibility for resolving this rests with the County Council AND Healthwatch Warwickshire.

8. Community Voice and Influence

Figure 4 Community Voice and Influence - how effective is Healthwatch Warwickshire?



This was another area where Healthwatch Warwickshire was rated as effective. Respondents clearly valued the role that Healthwatch Warwickshire has played in bringing the experience of the public into decision making; either directly through representation or indirectly through capturing people's views and representing these in investigations and reports.

"Healthwatch Warwickshire is a regular attendee at the Patient Group Forum and ensures a two-way flow of patient views"

"They play a significant role in advocating and signposting for people"

"They are great advocates for people in their community"

Areas for consideration.

There is a justifiable concern that many members of the public may not be sufficiently aware of the role of local Healthwatch and this is probably mirrored by a lack of knowledge at a grass roots level for example with Parish Councils.

We note that the issue of public presence and profile is a challenge experienced by all local Healthwatch. We touch on some of the reasons for this at the beginning of this report (size of organisation, relatively recent establishment). Healthwatch Warwickshire does have a relationship with Warwickshire Citizens Advice service and Age UK which helps reach across the county.

The area which was most poorly rated was that concerned with ensuring that the voice of people from 'seldom heard' was sufficiently powerful. We would expect this group might include people who are at risk of exclusion such as those with a learning disability, mental health problem or those from a minority ethnic community.

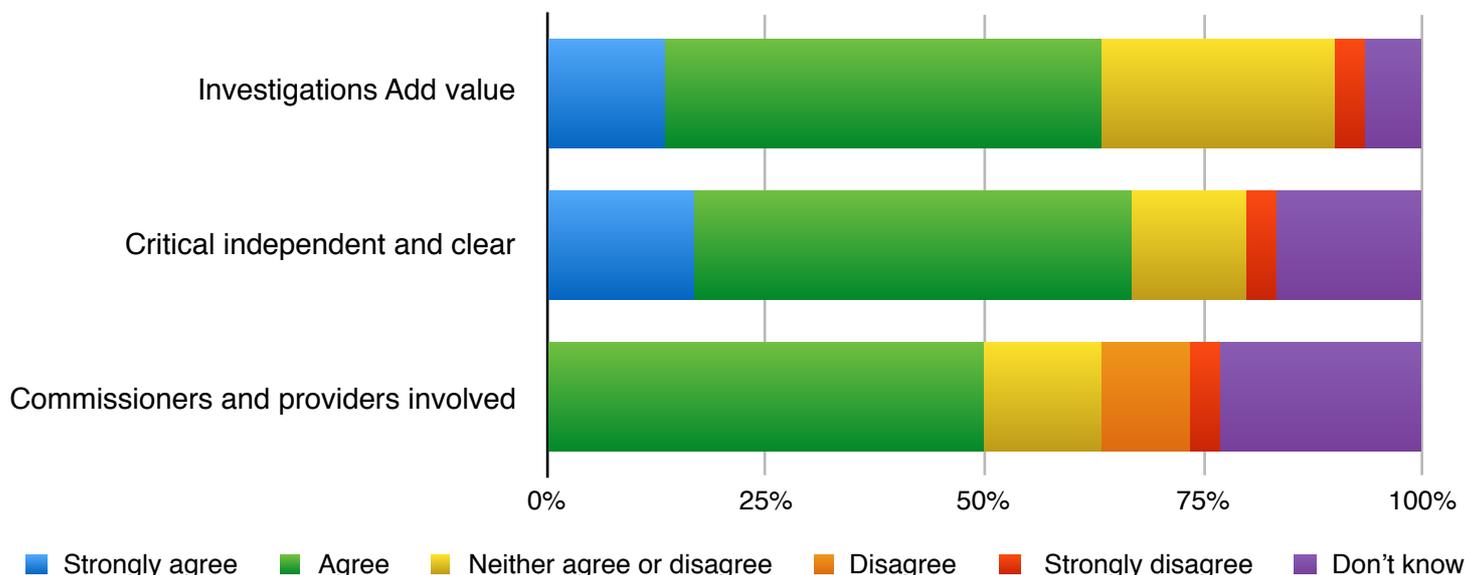
"I would like to see the hard to reach agenda to be campaigned a bit more - key groups not using primary care Roma, South East Asian etc"

It is important to be cautious here, by definition these groups are often not a sufficient priority in the mainstream health system and Healthwatch Warwickshire may be doing work here that is

not being recognised. Nonetheless, the fact that this issue has been raised means that it is important to review activity here.

9. Making a Difference

Fig 5 Making a difference - how effective is Healthwatch Warwickshire?



In general Healthwatch Warwickshire scored well here although there is a larger number of people who either do not know or are not sure. This applies particularly with regard to whether or not commissioners or providers are involved.

The 'Making a Difference' section of the Quality Statements is concerned with the quality and impact of investigations, reports and challenge produced by a local Healthwatch. As we point out at the beginning of this report this is an area that is particularly challenging. Health and Care organisations may be subject to an investigation or an Enter and View and will have opinions about this that may not be completely objective. Similarly, individual service providers may be less aware of all of the work that a local Healthwatch has done across a health and care system.

These caveats aside one of the themes that emerges from comments is consistent with what has emerged in other sections - Healthwatch Warwickshire has a reputation for conducting investigations in a professional and independent way and reporting on findings in a way that is seen as competent by decision makers in the health and care system.

The reports that Healthwatch Warwickshire produce are generally well regarded - this is probably due to their quality AND the fact that most commissioners are open to receiving reports in this manner, this is unusual in our experience.

"Independent reviews of accessibility and quality of GP practices and care homes helped inform change with commissioners"

"Healthwatch Warwickshire bring comments and concerns in a way that we can manage"

"Investigations are reported well and in a timely manner"

"The independence of Healthwatch reports makes them more powerful"

“Impressed with the quality of reports, they are well written and pertinent”

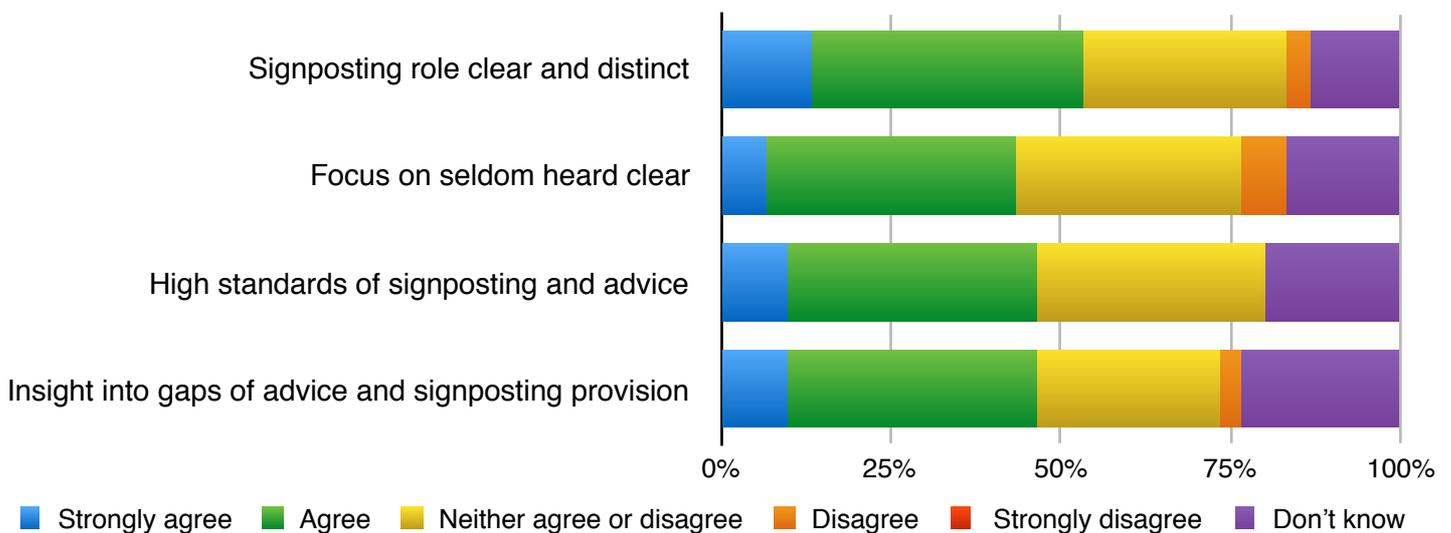
Areas for consideration

“We are not sufficiently aware of their priorities and why they are chosen - triangulating priorities would be helpful”

One of the issues that emerged was that some key decision makers felt that Healthwatch Warwickshire could involve key decision makers more in how they set their priorities and why these were chosen. It is important to note that this was expressed in a way that recognised and valued the independence of Healthwatch Warwickshire. This was more to do with developing a shared understanding at a system level of what analysis different organisations had about challenges and wherever possible to avoid duplication.

10. Informing People

Fig 6 Informing People - how effective is Healthwatch Warwickshire?



The effectiveness ratings while still at 50% are lowest of the four Quality Statement areas. It is important to note that this is consistent with how other local Healthwatch have been rated.

We think this rating is for a number of reasons:

- All local Healthwatch are very small information and signposting providers when compared to the investment and services that are available elsewhere in the health and care system - for example by Patient Advice and Liaison Services, voluntary sector advocacy projects, social care signposting and advice etc
- The Healthwatch Warwickshire signposting and advice service is provided by Warwickshire Citizens Advice - it is possible that people are using this service but do not realise that it is part of the local Healthwatch service.

“Healthwatch have supported the Trust in identifying specific signposting”

“Healthwatch information is high quality”

“There are many signposting and advice services in Warwickshire we need to do a county wide piece of work to streamline and avoid duplication. I am not sure that the Healthwatch Warwickshire role is distinct”

“Healthwatch Warwickshire are a good independent ‘sounding board’ for local people - perhaps other organisations should support them in order to reduce duplication”

Areas for consideration

It might be helpful for Healthwatch Warwickshire to be clearer about its information and signposting function and how this fits within the wider environment of provision. This could help it publicise it more effectively. This is particularly important because it does have an important cross county collaboration with Warwickshire Citizens Advice and the impact of this arrangement needs to be understood more by wider stakeholders. Similarly, the contribution that Healthwatch Warwickshire makes would be better understood and utilised if there was a health and care system view of existing provision and a clearer expectation of where Healthwatch Warwickshire might bring added value.

11. Conclusion

As will be clear from the above there was a general view that Healthwatch Warwickshire is effective and well placed to continue to develop into the future.

What was particularly strong was how effective Healthwatch Warwickshire has been in developing trusted relationships at a senior level across a very complex health and social care system. It was also clear that the work that Healthwatch Warwickshire does with its partners (Age UK and Warwickshire Citizens Advice) help to ensure that it is able to provide a direct cross county service to the public.

There was a clear call from some key decisions for a continued and even stronger focus on patient and public voice - this was considered to be an area where Healthwatch Warwickshire brought significant added value.

Appendix A - Who was involved

Questionnaire Recipients

Please note that some people forwarded the questionnaire to others so this list may be missing some recipients and respondents.

Warwickshire County Council

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care
Portfolio Holder for Health
Leader of WCC
Chair ASHOSC

Public Health

Director of Public Health
Deputy Director of Public Health
Consultant in Public Health
Commissioning and Performance Lead - Mental health and Wellbeing
Healthwatch Commissioner

People Group

Strategic Director - People Group
Head of Strategic Commissioning
Service Manager - Care Accommodation and Quality
Head of Social Care and Support

Children's Services

Chair CYPOSC
Service Manager - Childrens Commissioning

Community Services

Ass Director Integrated and Community Care Division
Ass Director Support Services Division

The Warwickshire Third and Public Sector Partnership Group

Head of Localities and Community Safety
Group Manager, Localities & Partnerships
Consultant in Wider Determinants
Head of Strategic Commissioning
Housing and Communities Manager
Head of Health & Community Protection
Interim Localities Manager
Housing and Regeneration Manager
Communities Manager
Partnership and Development Manager
Policy and Research Officer
South Warwickshire CCG
Director of Partnerships & Engagement
Involvement Lead Cov/Rugby CCG
Chair of Coventry & Rugby CCG
Head of Strategy and Joint Commissioning
WALC County Officer

Warwickshire North CCG

Chief Officer
Director of Partnerships and Engagement
Director of Integrated Governance
Lay Member

Coventry and Rugby CCG

Chair C&RCCG
Chief Operating Officer
Public and Patient Engagement lead
Communications Lead
Rugby Locality Manager
Head of Corporate Affairs
Head of Partnerships
Public & Patient Involvement Lead

South Warwickshire CCG

Chief Officer
Director of Quality and Performance
Director of Strategy and Engagement
Public Involvement Lead
Head of Strategy and Joint Commissioning
Chair

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

Chief Executive
Associate Director of Service User and Carer Involvement

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Chief Executive
Director of Quality

George Elliot Hospital

Chief Executive
Director of Governance
Patient Engagement

South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust

Chief Executive
General Manager, Warwickshire Adult Community Services

Voluntary Sector

Bureau Manager
Operations Director, Age UK Warwickshire
POhWER
Independent Advocacy
Myton Hospice
Mary Ann Evans Hospice
Shakespeare Hospice
WCAVA
WCAVA

Springfield Mind

Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board - all members

Police and Crime Commissioner

Interviews with Key Decision Makers

Interviews were conducted with:

- Warwickshire County Council - Director of Public Health and Communities Group Manager
- 2 Clinical Commissioning Group Chairs
- 1 Clinical Commissioning Group Chief Operating Officer
- Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Five others were unfortunately unable to participate in the interviews due to other commitments.

Appendix B - Healthwatch England Quality Statements

Purpose of the Quality Statements

- Enable a local Healthwatch to understand how it is doing and identify areas for improvement and development
- Provide a framework to help the local Healthwatch, the commissioning local authority and local health and care system discuss impact, performance and effectiveness
- Enable those leading innovative and influential areas of work to be identified and approached to share this to provide inspiration, leadership and support across the network
- Help Healthwatch England understand the quality of practice in the country and to direct its resources at areas that require support or improvement

Summary of Quality Statements

- Strategic context - Shaping and improving local architecture and relationships
- Community voice and influence - engaging with the public and ensuring their experience is heard
- Making a difference locally - Gathering evidence and making recommendations for change
- Informing people - Information, Advice and Signposting