

## **Local Healthwatch: saying what you think and getting your voice heard**



**A guide in Easy Read**

## What this booklet is about



This booklet tells you about **local Healthwatch**.

**Local Healthwatch** is the new way for the public and patients to say what they think about **health and social care** where they live and where they work. **Health and social care** means making sure you are well and get the support you need.



The government want everyone to be able to say what they think about health and social care. They want people to be able to do this in the local area where they live and work.

Healthwatch will listen to what you say. This is important to them and will help make services better in health and social care.

**Local Healthwatch** starts in April 2013.

### 1. The government White Paper



The government wrote a **White Paper** about things to do with health and social care. A **White Paper** is a report. It says what the government want to do about something.

The **White Paper** says that the public and patients should be at the centre of everything to do with health and social care. The government want to set up



- a committee called **Healthwatch England** – this committee will tell the government what people are saying about health and social care
- groups called **local Healthwatch** – these are local groups where people can report things that happen to them in health and social care

**Healthwatch England** and **local Healthwatch** will work together to make things better for everyone in health and social care.

## More about Healthwatch

The government want **Healthwatch** to

- build on the good work that has happened already in groups like **LINKs**
- listen to what the public and patients have to say about things to do with health and social care
- be a **champion** of everything to do with health and social care. Being a **champion** means standing up for things - this will help people who sometimes do not get listened to
- be good value for money
- be trusted as a good place to go to find out more about health and social care in your area or to say what you think about things





- be the voice of local people – **local Healthwatch** will be a place that everyone knows about and can get in touch with if they want to report back on things to do with health and social care

## 2. Local Healthwatch policy – what the government want local Healthwatch to do



The government want **local Healthwatch** groups to find out what people really think about health and social care. They will use this information to make things better in health and social care.

There will be a **local Healthwatch** in every area where people can go to say what they think.



**Local Healthwatch** will have a seat on the **Health and Wellbeing Board** – this is a group that makes decisions about things locally. This means things to do with different health and social care services.

**Healthwatch England** will follow up on the things that **local Healthwatch** report on. This will help the public and patients have a say in what happens in health and social care across the country.



**Local Healthwatch** will be the place that everyone can go to report on things to do with health and social care.

They will work **independently** and decide things for themselves.

## Healthwatch England



**Healthwatch England** will be an independent committee but they will still have to work as part of the **Care Quality Commission**.

The **Care Quality Commission** is in charge of making sure that health and social care is

- safe
- of good quality



**Healthwatch England** will support the work that goes on in **local Healthwatch** groups and lead the way in what they do.

The **Care Quality Commission** will give **Healthwatch England** support to do this work too.



You can find out more about plans for **Healthwatch England** by going to this website

**[www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)**

**and search for healthwatch**

### **3. Changes to the way things are happening now in health and social care**



There have been a lot of changes in things to do with how people tell health and social care what they think.



The government want to make sure that **Healthwatch England** and **local Healthwatch** build on the good work that has happened already and make the changes work for the better.

They want to give everyone a chance to make a difference to what happens in health and social care. They will listen to what people say.



They will give support to

- local communities
- local people



**Healthwatch England** will be a leader and support **local Healthwatch** in what they do.

They will write a separate report to the government about the work that has happened and the things they have found out.



#### 4. The role of local Healthwatch: things they will do

**Local Healthwatch** will

- give advice and information to people about things to do with health and social care
- ask people what they think about things to do with health and social care





- write reports about what needs to change to make things better
- take part in local health board meetings and have a say in what happens. **Local healthwatch** can have a say in what happens in health and social care
- make sure that people who need help to make a complaint about something that has happened to them get help. For example, when they use a health service like the NHS
- tell **Healthwatch England** what local people are saying about things to do with health and social care



## More things local Healthwatch will do

**Local Healthwatch** will act in a good and fair way and follow the rules to do this.



**Local Healthwatch** will follow the law to

- treat people in a good and fair way
- let everyone know about the work they are doing



They will give people support to say what they think about things to do with health and social care so that things get better for everyone.

## 5. Planning how local Healthwatch will work



All local authorities will have a **local Healthwatch** group in their area. They will work together with the **local community** and work with other groups too. **Local community** means the people you know and the place you live in.

**Local Healthwatch** will work with the local authority – they are in charge of things where you live. **Local Healthwatch** will have the power to tell the local authority if they are not doing things in the right way.



**Local Healthwatch** will work with other groups locally to do with health and social care but will also work on their own.

**Local Healthwatch** will report back to **Healthwatch England** to tell them what is happening in health and social care in local places across the country.



The government have set aside some money to pay for **Healthwatch** to happen.

They will give local authorities ideas and support to get **Healthwatch** groups started up.



The government know it is important for the public and patients to say what they think about health and

social care. They will do as much as they can to make the new **Healthwatch** plans work.

Thank you to **Raincharm** for the words

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