

Welcome to Healthwatch Cornwall's January 2014 newsletter.

“Putting you at the heart of health and social care”

2014 is the year Healthwatch Cornwall needs you to step up and **share your stories** about your health and social care. As services change in response to issues such as budget cuts and longer life expectancy, the watchdog needs to hear from you about what you think is working, or is not working, well in Cornwall's publicly funded health and social care services. With your **input** it can take action and use its powerful influencing abilities to ensure commissioners and providers in the county, and in some cross-border services, hear your voice and make positive changes to services when necessary. Healthwatch Cornwall's Steering Group has implemented further research into three topics.

The first will gather people's GP experiences in relation to mental health issues such as depression, self-harm or drug / alcohol misuse. It will help build a picture of how GPs handle these issues and identify any gaps in services or systems that can be improved. To share your views, please take part at www.surveymonkey.com/s/healthwatchcornwall-MH, visit **Our Work** to download a survey or call **0800 0381 281**.

The second research group is actively seeking views on cross-border services such as dentistry, hospital referrals, transport to hospitals, minor injuries and accessibility. Face-to-face interviews are being conducted in Bude, Launceston, Callington, Liskeard and Torpoint, along with a leaflet drop. Download a questionnaire at **Our Work** or call **0800 0381 281** to receive a postal copy.

The third research project is focussing on emergency services or services people might use when their GP is not available. Issues around the changing landscape of these services were discussed. More research into the reasons people use emergency departments at Derriford and Treliske, police protocol for assisting people with mental health issues, NHS Kernow's plans for commissioning emergency services and the 136 suite review of Longreach will now be conducted to clarify the main areas to focus. This will be reviewed towards the end of February with next steps decisions made.

Visit www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk for more updates or join in the conversations on **Facebook** and **Twitter** too.

To share your views on, or for information about, health and social care services you can call Healthwatch Cornwall's freephone advice line on **0800 0381 281***.
Get in touch to have your say.

*mobile networks may charge



To tie-in with the research into mental health and GP support, Healthwatch Cornwall is holding a 'Time for Tea - Time to Talk' event as part of the national Time to Change campaign. Read more **here** or on the last page of the newsletter.



“Putting you at the heart of health and social care”

Out and about listening to you

Healthwatch Cornwall has been out and about talking with a number of organisations and agencies to ensure they can feed in the views of the people they represent.

But it needs you too. To make Healthwatch Cornwall the ultimate champion of health and social care services for people in the county it needs to grow its volunteer base. There are currently two great ways to get involved and by doing so you can help make a positive difference to services where needed and help others to do so too.

You could represent Healthwatch Cornwall in your community, take part in events, help out in the office, talk with commissioners and providers, and whatever your time and interests Healthwatch Cornwall could have a role for you. Click [here](#) or call Jody now on [01872 273501](tel:01872 273501) to find out more about Enter and View Visitor, Community Outreach and general support opportunities.



Healthwatch Cornwall's outreach work has now begun in earnest, with a number of events taking place soon. Check out the events page or visit the [website](#) for full details.

Truro Library became the first venue for a pop-up information event where Healthwatch Cornwall was joined by Monkey from [Monkey Wellbeing](#) as a means to attract toddlers and parents to the stand - see him in action above.

The first Steering Group meeting of the year was also held and discussion centred around developing an Enter and View plan. This included engaging in care homes, comparing perceptions of elder care wards at Royal Cornwall Hospital and overseeing specific departments at the hospital as part of its quality surveillance.

More details can be found at [Our Work](#) on the website.

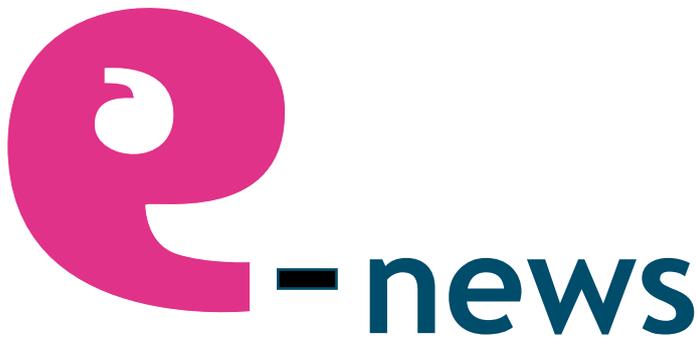


Healthwatch Cornwall - in the news

Healthwatch Cornwall has commented in radio and TV interviews this month, with topics including bed blocking at Royal Cornwall Hospital, Derriford car parking charge increases and patient data.

The CEO, Debbie Pritchard (pictured above) has also met with a number of people such as the patient experience staff at the Royal Cornwall Hospital; Cornwall Carers; Young People Cornwall; Cornwall Council's Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing, Children's Services and Safeguarding departments; Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust; Age UK Cornwall; the Health and Wellbeing Service; and Cornwall Youth Work Partnership to discuss ways of working together to represent people's views.

Read full details [here](#) or to read the latest news and press releases click [here](#).



“Putting you at the heart of health and social care”

Other health and social care news

The first phase of a review into children’s services is being conducted by Cornwall Council, the Council of the Isles of Scilly, NHS England and NHS Kernow and views of those who use or provide these services is currently being sought. Read full details [here](#), take part in the survey [here](#), or email your opinions to childrens.review@kernowccg.nhs.uk. By taking part you could help shape services in the future but you need to do so by Jan 31 - don’t delay.

The Care Quality Commission has conducted inspections at the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trusts acute hospitals in Truro, Hayle and Penzance. As part of this Healthwatch Cornwall attended the CQC-led listening events in Truro and Penzance to gather its own feedback from attendees around services. The findings from the inspections should be available by early March, with the outcome potentially influencing the Treliske site’s Foundation status approval. Read more [here](#).

You need to have your say on what will happen to the Poltair Community Hospital by February 10. If you don’t speak out now you may not be able to influence the decision after this date and although attendance at the drop-in events was good only 25 surveys have been returned as of mid January. Healthwatch Cornwall wants to help ensure NHS Kernow and those involved in making decisions around this topic do so with as much public feedback as possible. Click [here](#) to access full details, visit [here](#) to take the online survey or call NHS Kernow’s engagement team on **01726 627800** for hard copies.

Cornwall’s NHS 111 service is due to start on February 4. It will help people who need non-emergency medical assistance and will be run by the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust - read full details [here](#) or call NHS Kernow on **01726 627800** for more information.

Cornwall became one of the first areas in England to be awarded **Pioneer** status by the government for its plans to deliver better joined up health and social care in the county. Healthwatch Cornwall is continuing to take part in meetings to help influence and oversee how these plans will benefit people in their communities. More updates to follow.

At an informal meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board on January 9, Healthwatch Cornwall presented a report about the Disabled Children’s Charter and this is now being reviewed by the Board for sign-up. Issues relating to a review of short break services, with a Cabinet hearing on January 29, that could led to the closure of two centres affecting 35 families and 27 staff, were also highlighted. People using the services will be offered alternatives but this will be based on a re-assessment of needs first.

Read more details [here](#) or the meeting minutes [here](#).

At an extraordinary meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, discussions centred on follow-up hospital appointment backlogs at Devon and Cornwall hospitals.

Healthwatch Cornwall offered to gather feedback from patients in the worst affected Ophthalmology, Neurology and Cardiology departments at the Royal Cornwall Hospital by working with patient experience staff. A report is expected by March. The meeting minutes can be read [here](#).

Events around the county

It's **Time to Change** and **Time to Talk** about mental health on Thursday, February 6, at Healthwatch Cornwall's **Time for Tea** event, which is part of Mind's and Rethink Mental Health's national awareness raising campaign.

Join in the chatter from 10am to noon and 2pm to 4pm at Fodders Espresso Bar, Tinner's Court, Truro, TR1 2LL. If you share your experiences of mental health support in the county with Healthwatch Cornwall on the day, you can also claim a free cup of tea or coffee too.

Find out more [here](#) or follow #timetotalk on Twitter too.

Healthwatch Cornwall will also be "popping up" at a number of events in February and March.

You can find out more on the [events page](#) or call **0800 0381 281** for details.

As a taster, you will find Healthwatch Cornwall volunteers and staff at Redruth, Newquay, Penzance and Falmouth soon, with further events planned in Camelford, Hayle, Helston, Launceston, Wadebridge and Saltash.

You can also share your health and social care experiences with Healthwatch Cornwall by **email**, online at www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk, via its Twitter and Facebook pages or by calling **0800 0381 281**.

Could you help promote the work of Healthwatch Cornwall? Promotional materials such as posters and leaflets can be made available to organisations that are happy to display information posters or leaflets.

The more people know about the work Healthwatch Cornwall can do on their behalf to improve services and share best practice the more positive changes can be made.

Call Emma Squire on **01872 273501** to request outreach and engagement materials.

Promote your health service

Do you have a recommendation for a health-related public, charity, not-for-profit, free or low cost organisation? You can add its details to NHS Kernow's Community Services [page](#).

Safeguarding training opportunities

IVO, Cornwall Youth Work Partnership (CYWP) and Safe Network are hosting two safeguarding support sessions in March for the voluntary and community sector. To find out more click [here](#) or call Richard Mckie on **07891 866914**.



Don't forget that you can do your bit to take pressure off emergency services and other health and social care services by knowing the most appropriate care for your condition or concern. Visit the [Choose Better website](#) to find out more.



Our Partners.

This month, Disability Cornwall's Healthwatch Cornwall Champion Debbie Iles (pictured above) has been helping to promote the ways people can share their views. As well as assisting her colleagues to organise a Healthwatch Cornwall article for Carers News and taking part in a fact-finding meeting about the emergency services, she has also liaised with the police to research their procedures around assisting people with mental health difficulties. Thanks Debbie for all your hard work.

Click [here](#) to find out more.