



healthwatch

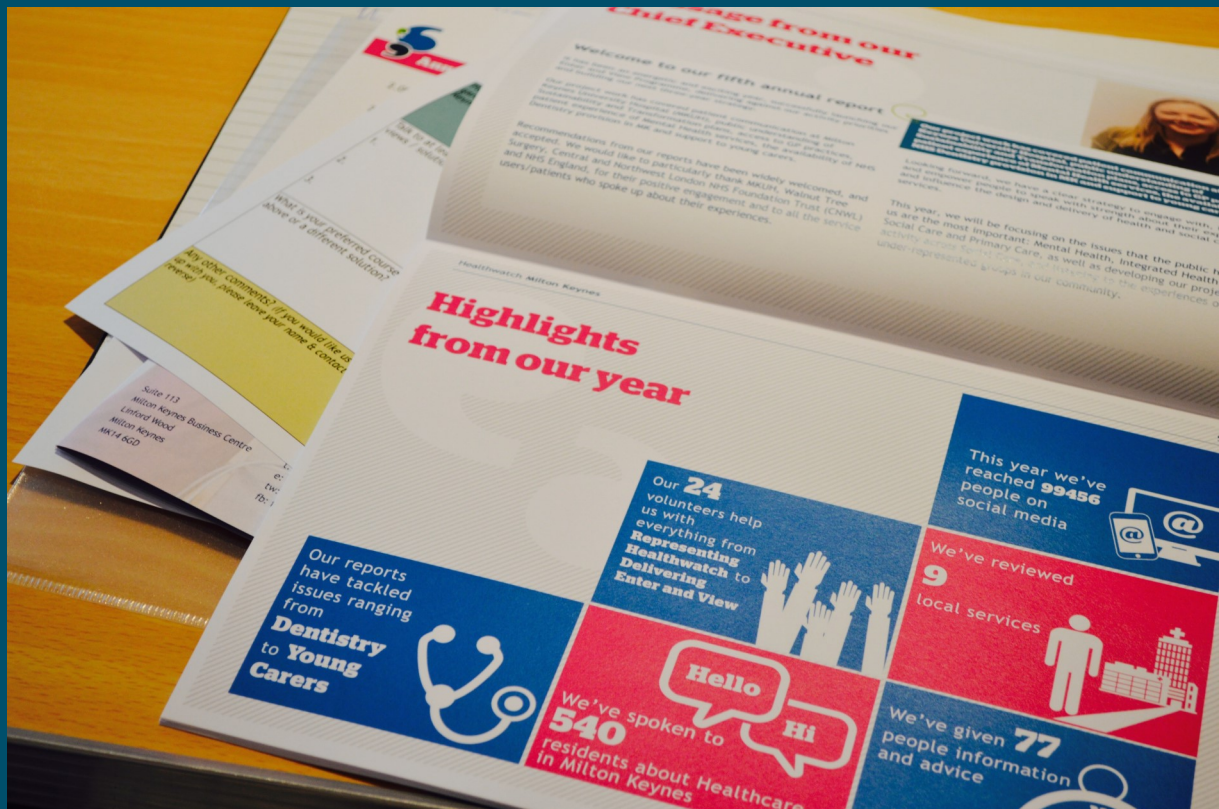
Milton Keynes

Autumn Newsletter

2018



Healthwatch Milton Keynes proudly present
their main successes this year at their Annual
General Meeting



Our Mission:

To be an independent organisation, providing an effective local voice for people in Milton Keynes; influencing and shaping health and social care services to meet their needs.

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter

Welcome from the Chair of Trustees

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. Before mentioning some future initiatives I would like to reflect on an interesting summer period, during which we appointed two new members of Staff; Anna and Dee (see page 7 for more information). We hope they will be very happy working as part of our team.

Also in September we held a successful AGM at the Ridgeway Centre. Those present heard from Paul Maclean about the amazing progress of our Enter and View team who are now deeply involved in visiting premises all over Milton Keynes. Attendees also found themselves participating in an engagement session - a small taster of things to come! At the AGM we welcomed two new trustees to the Trustee Board - Alan Hancock and Caroline Higgins - in addition to two new volunteers for the Board's sub committee (formerly the HSCC but recently renamed **Healthwatch Advisory Panel**) - John Needham and Geraldine Boyle. All these people are bringing more expertise to our governance and our work.



Turning to the forthcoming winter period I am delighted that we will be hosting a series of engagement events. You can find more information about the first of these events on page 7. Finally, just to say that our website is being changed in the near future. Our new website will be more user friendly and easier to navigate.

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If you would like to receive a postal copy of any of our reports, please call or email us to arrange.



Some of our Current Projects

Windsor Intermediate Care Unit (WICU) Enter and View Report

You said: WICU leadership told us that the results of their Friends and Family surveys were very positive but they wanted to ensure that patients had a greater opportunity to talk about how they experience the service.

HWMK did: In August 2018, Healthwatch MK volunteers undertook an Enter and View visit to the WICU in Milton Keynes.

The WICU provides a short term programme of nursing and therapy for people who need a period of rehabilitation after discharge from hospital before they return home. Patients reported being unclear on what was happening and when during their stay. One of our recommendations suggested that the whiteboards available in patient's rooms be utilised to outline the likely 'shape of their day' including mealtimes, treatment, physiotherapy and activities. WICU have said they will adopt this recommendation.

We made 10 recommendations to the leaders at WICU following our visit and they gave us a full response. Get in touch if you would like a postal copy of the full report.

Social Isolation in Care Homes

Our volunteers are currently undertaking Enter and View visits in 16 Care Homes across Milton Keynes. Our Enter and View program allows us to get to the heart of people's experience of the Care Homes they are in. This allows us to make specific recommendations to service providers about what is working well and what can be improved. We will also be producing a summary report which will draw on the key themes identified across the 16 care homes we visit. We look forward to sharing this report with you. Reports are also presented to local commissioners, the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and NHS England.

We would love to hear about your experiences of care services. Get in contact with us to share your story. In the New Year we will also be holding an event for the families of those in care which will provide a space for you to share your experiences.

'Right to Access a GP' Healthcards

You said: People who cannot give proof of address or identification are being told they cannot register with a GP.

HWMK did: In response we have designed a 'Right to Access a GP' Healthcard which states:

'I have the Right to Access a GP Practice. I do not need a fixed address, I do not need identification, my immigration status does not matter'

We want these Healthcards to be distributed as widely as possible. If you know of groups who would benefit from these cards please contact us. We are also looking for mystery shoppers who would be willing to go to GP practices to try and register without identification or proof of address. We want to know how GP Practices respond to the Healthcards we have made.

Wolverton Enter and View Report

You said: People came to us with concerns about Wolverton Health Centre.

HWMK did: We undertook an Enter and View visit to Wolverton Health Centre and spoke to patients about their experience of accessing GP appointments, the complaints process and how patients could engage better with the Patient Participation Group.

We are currently waiting for the response to our report from Wolverton Health Centre. We will be publishing the report within 20 days.

Celebrating our AGM

On the 20th September we held our Annual General Meeting.

We were so pleased to see so many of you there.

We began the afternoon with Maxine Taffetani (CEO) bringing to life our **2018-21 strategy**. Maxine highlighted what members, the public and professionals can expect to see when it comes to delivering against our strategic aims (engage, empower, influence, inform, develop, grow) this year.

Following this, Paul Maclean (Healthwatch Volunteer) spoke about our **Enter and View** activity and how volunteering with Healthwatch MK can make a positive impact on health and social care in the community.

Tracy Keech (Deputy CEO) gave us ‘**a day in the life of Healthwatch MK**’ where she focussed on the principle that talking to people as being at the very heart of what Healthwatch does.

Anita Devi (Trustee) led us in an **Engagement Activity** which allowed members to share issues and solutions about local health and social care services (see next page for further details).

Finally, we topped off the day with a presentation of our **2017-18 Annual Report**. Maxine highlighted some of our main successes last year. This included the launch of our Enter and View programme, the influence Healthwatch MK had on NHS dentistry services and the role of Healthwatch MK in ensuring Young Carers are able to access higher quality information about their caring roles, and their rights to support.



Celebrating our AGM

AGM Engagement Activity

We asked those who attended our AGM to share an issue that affects them, or someone they know who receives health and social care services in Milton Keynes. We then asked them to spend some time discussing possible solutions to their concerns with the people around them.

We've pulled together some examples of what was shared and solutions that were suggested.

Example 1: Inadequate Mental Health Provision

Individuals who suffer from depression are only offered anti-depressants. There is particularly poor provision for young people.

Possible Solutions:

Better access to free mental health care/counselling/therapy.
Train volunteers to bridge some of the gap in provision.
Allow GP appointments to be longer than 10 minutes.
Improve signposting by GPs about the range of services available to patients.
Funding for Mental Health services should reflect the level of need.

Example 2: Difficulty in accessing GP appointments

Particularly difficult on the telephone.

Possible Solutions:

Reduce the number of people who fail to attend their appointments (e.g. GP could send out reminders to patients).

Example 3: inadequate parking at MKUH for taxis carrying wheelchairs

Parking is too far away from the entrance with wheelchair access.

Possible Solutions:

Designated drop-off point near Hospital entrance for wheelchair access.

Example 4: Inability to make routine follow up GP appointments

Particularly for individuals with chronic conditions, who need regular appointments for specific purposes.

Possible Solutions:

Booking system that allows for advance appointments to be made e.g. computer system where individuals can book once to have regular appointments for a specific injection.



These examples highlight a small sample of the issues that people discussed.

We were encouraged to see how many ideas for improvement were generated in such a short amount of time. We hope this simple exercise demonstrated the potential that Healthwatch Milton Keynes has to act and work with health and care professionals to create change when people voice their concerns.

Information

Dementia Information Service

Alzheimer's Society has employed two full time Dementia Support Workers to deliver the new Dementia Information Service (DIS).

- The DIS will run a staffed telephone helpline Mon-Fri 10am-4pm.
- The DIS aims to support people with dementia, their carers, people with memory concerns and professionals to understand the benefits of a timely diagnosis and to raise awareness of specialist and community services, post diagnosis. This includes
 - Advice around delaying progress of some symptoms of dementia
 - Increased knowledge and understanding of dementia
 - Advice around managing the condition
 - Easier navigation of available services
 - Help in planning for the future
- People can self-refer or be referred to the DIS

To contact the DIS call 01908 669404 or email dis@alzheimers.org.uk

Partnership Boards

Since October Healthwatch has taken over the administration and management of 4 of the Partnership Boards; Dementia, Carers, Mental Health and Older Persons.

- The Partnership Boards are a key space for service users, families, carers and voluntary groups to talk to those who pay and provide for services about their experiences and how services could be better for people using them.
- For the Partnership Boards to be truly effective at challenging the activities across health and care provision, we need the voices of residents who are affected and or/using local services.

If you are interested in coming, please contact us for more information. If you can't attend the meetings but still have stories you want to share, please still get in contact as Healthwatch representatives will continue to share people's experiences on their behalf.

Flu Vaccinations

The flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are most at risk.

You should have the flu vaccine if you

- Are 65 years of age or over
- Are pregnant
- Have certain medical conditions
- Are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facilities
- Receive carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill

If you have young children visit the NHS website to find out if they are eligible.

Frontline health and social care workers are also eligible – it is your employers responsibility to arrange and pay for this vaccine.

We have heard that people are having trouble getting the vaccination. We would like to hear from you if you are having problems getting your flu vaccination.

HWMK Updates

Staff Changes

In September Healthwatch MK welcomed two new members of staff to their team.

Anna Mason

Communications and Engagement Lead

Anna recently graduated from Durham University studying Sociology.

Dee Prior

Administration Officer

Dee has 13 years experience in administration, 3 years of which have been in the health sector.

Save the Date

Gut Feelings

Saturday 24th November, 15:00-17:00

Great Linford Parish Council

The people who pay for the Gastro services in Milton Keynes want to hear what you think works, what doesn't, and how you think they could reduce emergency admissions for the diverse range of Gastro related conditions. We also want to hear how the recent changes to gluten free prescribing has affected you or your family.

Healthwatch Q&A Session

Wednesday 28th November, 15:30-17:30

Milton Keynes Central Library

This is an opportunity for you to find out more about Healthwatch MK and ask any questions. Email us to book your place.

Why should I join my Patient Participation Group?

Thursday 10th January 2019, 18:30-20:30

MK College, Silbury Campus, Lecture Theatre

We know a lot of people have ideas on how their GP practice could make things better for patients, and we know that a lot of people don't know what to do with these great ideas. Come along and find out what a PPG is, what they can achieve and how you can join in to make a difference in your practice.

These events are open to residents of Milton Keynes who are affected by or interested in health and social care services. Please get in touch to find out more.

Volunteers

You can have a positive impact on health and social care in your community.

We are very grateful to the fantastic group of volunteers that have supported our projects this year. We are looking for new volunteers in a wide variety of roles - from chatting to the public through engagement activities, to being a 'Mystery Shopper'.

If you have been inspired to help support our work through volunteering with Healthwatch MK please get in touch.

The more volunteers we have, the more evidence we can gather and the bigger impact we can have.





healthwatch

Milton Keynes

**Have
your
say**

Do you have concerns about the health or social care you have received?

Have you got a good news story you want to share?

The information we gather helps us build a picture of people's experiences of health and social care. The more information we

gather the more evidence we have to influence the people who pay for and provide services.

**Talk
to us...**

To share your experience you can call us or fill in a feedback form on our website.

Did you know that if you have access to email, you can receive fortnightly e-alerts from Healthwatch Milton Keynes, where we regularly advertise opportunities to feed in to local surveys and community events.

If you would like to switch to online membership, please contact us.

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