

Chair's Report

Purpose

1. This report sets out public activities carried out by the Chair since the last Board meeting, and comments on aspects of the local health and care system.

Key issues

2. Appendix 1 lists the Chair's external meetings from 1 July to 31 Aug 2020. Directors representative activities are maintained in a strategic engagement log. I am very grateful for the role of directors in the continued success of the Healthwatch Forums, and for maintaining links with organisations and working groups.
3. The STP (local NHS and social care partnership) is planning how to get services up and running, while preparing for a possible second wave of coronavirus and expected winter health challenges. Clear messages are emerging from our COVID-19 survey of local people, to make the case for restarting services together, and with more attention to individual needs driving communications about what to expect.
4. We continue to make adaptations to our own safe working practices, which I can commend to the Board.

Action required by the Board

5. The Board is asked to:
 - Note the report.

Author

Val Moore, Chair

16th September 2020

Let's restart NHS services together

6. Our Healthwatch COVID-19 survey¹, with its series of briefings for local NHS, social care and community support providers has given us a strong evidence base for involving local people in the reset of services following unprecedented disruption.
7. Some services have carried on during the coronavirus pandemic- others have paused or stopped. Many people are satisfied and grateful with their experience of care and support, but it has been hit and miss as to whether information has got through to some people who need it. One important finding has been that people are still anxious about going to hospital or their GP for fear of catching Covid-19 or because they think their need isn't important enough, or because others need the care more.
8. In our recent BBC Radio Cambridgeshire discussion², it is agreed that there had been a very significant reduction in the number of people asking for help with their healthcare.
9. Whilst there are challenges ahead, people are encouraged to come forward if they are ill or concerned about their health or care. New ways to hold virtual consultations, deliver tests nearer to home and a plan for more hospital bed capacity over the winter are in place.
10. Highlighting the importance of communications with patients, Healthwatch calls for the local health system to offer more personalised information and support to people. This way, people know what is happening with their care and treatment, and can understand their individual risk and how they can better look after themselves and stay safe.

Protecting our staff, volunteers and the public

11. Healthwatch England has reminded local Healthwatch of the changing environment for COVID-19 restrictions. The Board can be assured that our Office manager and CEO have:
 - continued to keep abreast of changing guidance
 - carried out a recent risk assessment
 - ensured safe workplaces to accommodate limited return to the offices

¹ <https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/news/2020-09-01/final-survey-briefing-flags-lonely-motherhood-journeys-some-new-mums>

² <https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/news/2020-08-26/lets-restart-health-services-together>

12. The whole team have adapted extremely well to working and contributing using IT. I'm proud to highlight the COVID-19 survey, the volunteers project looking at GP websites, and our facilitating of the councils' Partnership Boards as significant contributions to engagement, insight and challenge during this time of extraordinary change in public services. I welcome the focus on our excellent communications at this board meeting.

Appendix 1 - External meetings attended by the Chair 1st July to 31st Aug 2020

Meeting	Purpose	Date
Joint Prescribing Group for C&PCCG	Lay member	2/7
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Engagement Group	Member	10/7
C&PCCG Health Inequalities Strategy and Action Plan	Member	20/7
Integrated Commissioning Board, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough planning meeting	Independent Chair	23/7
Regional Healthwatch Network Meeting	Participant	23/7
Integrated Urgent Care clinical advisory group	Member	29/7
Joint Prescribing Group for C&PCCG	Lay member	6/8
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Engagement workshop	Member	7/8
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Engagement Group	Member	7/8
STP Ethics Committee pre-meeting	Member	8/8
Integrated Commissioning Board, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough planning meeting	Independent Chair	13/8
Dr Zoe Fritz, national lead ReSPECT, Sandie Smith	Joint working	14/8
C&PCCG consultation meeting on Peterborough Urgent Treatment Centre	Participant	19/8
Regional Healthwatch Network Meeting	Participant	24/8
CQC insight event on inspection policy and practice	Participant	25/8
Dr Charlie Bell, Cambridge University Clinical Education	Podcast content	26/8

Plus

Healthwatch Board in public (15/7)

Healthwatch AGM (22/8)

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire- restarting the NHS/Healthwatch Covid-19 survey (24/8)

Management team meetings/ survey planning x 6