

# Role and responsibilities



# Our role

Healthwatch Hertfordshire provides an independent consumer voice for social care and health in the County by gathering local intelligence and information, and using it to influence service improvements

The Government has put in place legislation that places duties or obligations on local Healthwatch. This means

- that there is a requirement for Healthwatch to undertake certain specified actions or activities.
- in addition there are powers for local Healthwatch that allow Healthwatch to undertake an action or activity at Healthwatch's discretion.

# Some recent activities around Social Care

- Adult Social Care Co-Production Board
- Withdrawal of discretionary social care funding by HVCCG
- Signposting around social care issues
- Care Home enter and view visits
- Quality of social care services eg working with the County Council on Service Quality Improvement Group
- Involvement with Learning Disability (LD) services, sensory and physical disabilities
- Nascot Lawn
- Meetings with Executive members and Directors of Adult Social Care and Children and Young People's services and Public Health

# Priorities and Focus

## Our Values

*We will be:*



## Our Strategic Priorities:

1. Having strategic influence over social care and health in Hertfordshire
2. Going from evidence to outcomes
3. Growing our reach and communications
4. Strengthening the voice of the public
5. Securing sustainability and quality

# Legislative requirements include(1)

1. promoting and supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services
2. obtaining the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experiences of, local care services and importantly to make these views known;
3. enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved;
4. making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. These should be directed to commissioners and providers , managers and scrutineers
5. providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services;
6. formulating views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved:

# Legislative powers (1)

1. Local Healthwatch can escalate matters to the overview and scrutiny committee of a local authority where they feel it necessary to do so. The overview and scrutiny committee **must** acknowledge receipt and keep Healthwatch informed of any action they take.
2. Local Healthwatch has a **right** to attend the health and wellbeing board.
3. Local Healthwatch have a reporting power enabling Healthwatch to refer matters relating to social care services to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of a local authority. The committee **must** then have regard to any relevant information Healthwatch has sent to it
4. There is a separate **requirement** on NHS bodies and local authorities to implement the necessary arrangements to ensure that independent providers respond to Healthwatch's requests for information.
5. Local Healthwatch can ask providers for information which they **must** make available.
6. Local Healthwatch have an additional **power** to Enter and View providers so Healthwatch can observe matters relating to health and social care services.

# legislative powers (2)

1. The expectations with regards local Healthwatch are the same for adults and children.
2. To help make the views of people known to those responsible for the commissioning, providing, managing or scrutinising of local care services, Healthwatch can make reports and recommendations. The service providers must have regard to those views, reports and recommendations and respond to Healthwatch explaining what action they will take, or why they are not taking action.
3. Organisations must allow an authorised representative to Enter and View and observe activities on premises controlled by the provider as long as this does not affect the provision of care or the privacy and dignity of people using services.
4. Healthwatch activities cover private and independent providers who are in receipt of public funding (e.g. providers who provide services to both self-funders and publicly funded service users).

# Going forward....

- Further work around social care -Board are looking to put an increasing focus on social care
- Whole system role (eg Nascot Lawn)
- Signposting
- Feedback on quality of care services
- Welcome ideas for focus here