

Healthwatch Committee meeting
6 October 2020
Volunteers & Outreach – paper 5

Volunteers:

Continue to stay in touch with Champions through telephone calls, emails and regular meetings. Currently completing Champions supervision sessions via telephone.

In the last two months Champions have completed regular befriending calls on behalf of Age UK, assisted with database updates, critiqued the new volunteer handbook and are assisting with mapping for PCN's.

Have recently written new role description for 'Young People's Engagement Volunteer'. This role is aimed at students who will assist with work in targeting young people. Recruitment for this role has just gone live through Newcastle Uni and the Volunteer Centre.

Currently writing a role description for 'Healthwatch Young Assessor' roles. This would be a 'mystery shopper' type role engaging young people to feedback on a range of services. This will go live via the Volunteer Centre next month. Both of these roles will feed into the work Beth is doing with Children NE.

Finished writing new Volunteer Handbook and waiting for final feedback.

Currently compiling Champions feedback on the 'Complaints Standards Framework' document. If enough feedback is received, I will feed this back to the Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman.

Outreach:

Continuing to make contact with organisations in Newcastle to introduce myself and Healthwatch, publicising BWAC survey and encouraging participation.

Attempting to arrange meetings with interested organisations where we can discuss issues they have and ways we could work together.

Have arranged an online focus group for local organisations in October. Have invited a cross section of organisations in the city to gather as many view points as possible. The aim is to collect experiences of using services during the pandemic and how organisations are planning to operate in the future. Identifying themes and finding ways of working together in the future. Long term plan is to arrange more groups both for providers and service users.

Accessing health service work with ChildrenNE

During the priority setting pre-covid, it was agreed children and young people friendly services would be completed as an outreach project. In Spring 2020, Beth identified Children NE also had a priority of barriers to health services, so we worked in partnership with Children North East, using the 'Your Welcome' criteria and feedback as guidance, to develop a questionnaire. This focused on accessibility, patient choice, communication, confidentiality, and feedback. From this, recommendations were made and [the report](#) was circulated to commissioners and service providers and provided Children NE with evidence to support their wider poverty-proofing health setting consultation.

We are building on from this report to see if, and how, things may have changed. For example, how easy or difficult is it for young people to access local health services and if there are any financial barriers. This will also help inform future planning for the North East and Cumbria Child Health and Wellbeing Network. As we are still unable to do face to face engagement, Beth has asked people to share their experiences through online focus groups, 1 to 1 phone calls, via email or text and WhatsApp. She has also created a video to promote this on social media to young people under 25, parents or carers and those who run young people and children groups. This has been promoted this through contacts in our network and a new approach of posting in resident and community groups on Facebook. So far, Beth has met with a learning disability support group for young people, Gateshead student support group and have spoken to young people and parents/carers on a 1.1 basis about their child's experience. Beth feels like promoting outreach in this way has allowed her to speak to those who are usually at work/university/school who we previously may not have heard from.

This work is continuing for 3 weeks and then a report will written and circulated.