

# healthwatch

## Healthwatch North East & North Cumbria 10th Birthday Celebrations



08<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023



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Christopher Akers-Belcher



Claire Riley



Networking and planning at the Healthwatch 10 Year event.

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On Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 fourteen local Healthwatch came together to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. The fourteen Healthwatch work collectively across the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (NENC ICS) region to add value and service user voice to the changing health and care landscape.

Staff past and present, Board members, volunteers and partner organisations came together to share in the success that Healthwatch has achieved to date.

Since the commencement of Healthwatch there has been a strong commitment to ensure that the voice of service users and the public remains embedded in the decision-making process of health and care services, championing the views of those that access services to ensure service delivery and changes made promote the best wellbeing outcomes for individuals, carers and families.

As Integrated Care Systems (ICS) begin to take shape it is recognised that only through partnership working, meaningful engagement and combined resources will we make a positive difference to the health, wellbeing, and care of the communities we represent.

The event provided an opportunity for reflection of the journey of Healthwatch so far. The trials and

**11**

There are 11 NHS Foundation Trusts across the North East & North Cumbria (NENC) region

**14**

Local HW across the NENC were represented at the event

**CO DURHAM**

**522,100**

HW Co Durham has the highest population in the NENC

**CUMBRIA**

**2,613 sq m**

HW Cumbria covers the largest geographical footprint across the NENC



North East & North Cumbria ICS is one of seven ICS regions across the country

North East & North Cumbria ICS represents 2.9million people

**2.9M**

What one word sums up your reflection of Healthwatch?



**REFERENCES**

ONS 2021 survey data, Healthwatch England & NENC ICS

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tribulations, the growth, the changes and more importantly the successes that demonstrated the passion that remains with us on our journey to change.

Throughout the day guest speakers spoke of their own experience and involvement with Healthwatch and shared their vision and hopes for the future.

**Jennifer Clark and Delana Lawson** from Healthwatch England presented detail of our vision, mission and values, providing reference to our changing world with its challenges and opportunities and building on our success with three key objectives.

1. To support more people who face the worst outcomes to speak-up about their care and access the advice they need.
2. To ensure care decision-makers act on public feedback and involve communities in decisions that affect them.
3. To be a more effective organisation and build a stronger Healthwatch movement.

*“What an incredible way to mark 10 years of Healthwatch in the region. It was a privilege to be invited to join in.*”

*“I am as ever blown away by the passion, dedication, and talent of Healthwatch volunteers, boards and staff members. People working within limited resources to create real changes in people’s lives. This Healthwatch region has moved deftly towards becoming a truly effective collaborative in a way other regions have struggled to do. It was clear to me how the Healthwatch is valued by the ICB, providers and partners. Personally, this is my home region, where I started my own Healthwatch journey, and I couldn’t be prouder of how far you have all come in the last decade. I look forward to seeing what the next decade brings.”*

**Jenny Clark**

Deputy Head of Engagement and Sustainability, Healthwatch England

*“Thank you so much North East. What a fabulous day, well done to you all. You have set the standard for celebrations and collaboration nationally.*”

*I heard some interesting conversations throughout the day and during the networking session and am looking forward to the implementation of ideas we should take forward as a region.”*

**Delana Lawson**

Quality Assurance & Regional Manager (North East, Yorkshire & Humberside)  
Healthwatch England

**Arthur McKean** is the current interim chair with Healthwatch South Tyneside and shared his journey as a volunteer throughout the full ten years of Healthwatch.

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Arthur has watched as the organisation has grown in strength and resilience and given his time freely towards the success of the organisation. Arthur is as passionate now as he was when he first began his journey and looks forward to seeing the impact that Healthwatch continues to make to the communities it serves.

*“It is good to be able to share in this celebration, it has been well organised, friendly, informative, interesting and to meet and chat with other like-minded people. Well done to all.”*

**Arthur McKean,**  
Interim Chair, HW South Tyneside

**Helen Kennedy** from Youth Focus North East attended the event with Olivia Read, Olivia is a young representative who works alongside the organisation. Youth Focus North East and Healthwatch across the Tees Valley have collaborated to develop a Young Persons Advisory Board. The aim of this project is to ensure meaningful young person representation is included within service commissioning and planning.

Throughout the ongoing development of ‘Youthwatch’ it has highlighted the challenges that can be faced engaging with diverse communities and how strategic planning and commissioning needs to ensure that a variety of engagement mechanisms are used to ensure meaningful engagement, both for the communities it is working with and to better inform the delivery of health and care services now and in the future.

A video was shared on the day that provided a heartfelt insight from the perspective of young people into their desire and determination to make a difference and have their voice heard.

This can be found here: [YouthWatch video](#)

*“Youth Focus North East is working with each of the Healthwatch across the Tees Valley area to develop a young person’s Advisory Board. The aim is for the young people to identify issues that impact them and their peers in the sector of Health and Social Care and to propose solutions to these. The young people will lead the delivery and they will link with the Healthwatch priorities. This is an amazing opportunity for young people to not only have their voices heard on key issues in health and social care but to also take action and work alongside Healthwatch to begin to tackle these key issues together.”*

**Laura Bush**  
Director of Youth Work, Youth Focus North East



David Thompson shared his experience of his time with Healthwatch, firstly as Chair for Healthwatch Northumberland and more recently as the Healthwatch NENC ICS representative.

David shared his insights into what he experienced during his time with Healthwatch as both challenging and rewarding transformations. He thanked all those involved in ensuring that the voice of the public had a firm place within the decision-making process of the ICS. Protocols and processes have been embedded within the decision-making structure to support local Healthwatch, ensuring we can effectively collaborate building on our capacity and fully utilising person-centred engagement expertise.

He personally thanked Claire Riley for the warm welcome he had received as a respected partner within the ICS and the commitment to ensure the voice of service users is embedded within this period of transformation.

*“The celebratory event was an interesting and timely reminder of what has been achieved in the past decade, both in terms of the influential regional reports which have been written on health and care and of the manner in which the Network has clearly established itself as a respected member of the ICB and the ICP.”*

**David Thompson**

Chair HW Northumberland, HW Network ICB Participant

**Dominic Gardener from Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS FT (TEWV)** attended the event to provide an opportunity to showcase the power of collaboration and service user voice. Dominic spoke of the previous work that had been undertaken with Healthwatch and the positive outcomes that the collaborative work had achieved in being able to help shape future plans for service transformation. He shared a commitment from TEWV to ensure service user voice was at the heart of planning and decision making and looks forward to the development of the partnership throughout the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme.

Dominic also shared a video that had been prepared to give an insight into the development of the ongoing work, with the aim and vision for better mental health services within communities, with improved accessibility, person centred choice and referral pathways.

Details of the Healthwatch report and video can be found below:

Report: [Community Mental Health Needs Report](#)

Video: [TEWV Mental Health Community Transformation](#)

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*“I’d like to thank the various Healthwatch organisations across Tees Valley for inviting me to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary event.*

*“I’d particularly like to say thank you for the opportunity to talk about the collaborative work that we have undertaken to ensure the patient voice is at the heart of the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme that is now underway.*

*“I am looking forward to the continued input of Healthwatch as we progress with the agreed changes in our local communities, and I very much welcome their continued support to understand and address the key health inequalities that impact upon access, effectiveness, and experience of our mental health services.”*

**Dominic Gardner**

Care Group Director MHSOP / AMH, Durham Tees Valley Care Group  
Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT

We were delighted that Claire Riley from the NENC ICS was able to attend the event and share with us her ambition for the future of health and care services. With the ICS transformation underway Claire spoke of her desire to ensure insight and feedback from the public was used at both a national and local level. Claire welcomed the opportunity she has had to work alongside Healthwatch and is looking forward to continued collaboration that will support system wide planning and service delivery.

Claire acknowledged there will be challenges and ‘hard conversations’ along the way and that positive system change will only be achieved through meaningful partnership working. Claire welcomed the opportunity to answer questions raised and provided honest feedback on the challenges ahead, with a determination to ensure positive outcomes for health and care services.

*“Thank you for inviting me to join the Healthwatch 10-year celebration. It is important to celebrate the great work of the Healthwatch teams and the impact this has had on patients, carers and the public. Now we have the opportunity to learn from this work and ensure the voices of our communities are at the heart of health and care services.”*

**Claire Riley**

Executive Director of Corporate Governance, communications and involvement,  
North East and North Cumbria ICS



## Networking

The event provided an opportunity for attendees from various roles, with a large breadth of knowledge and involvement of Healthwatch, to participate in group discussions to gather feedback and views of:

- *What has been the greatest success of Healthwatch?*
- *What has been the greatest challenge of Healthwatch?*
- *What is your ambition for Healthwatch in the next 10 years?*

The purpose of this exercise was to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to have their views captured and that this information would help to plan the future delivery of Healthwatch in each local area, taking pride in our successes, acknowledging the challenges, and aspiring to our future vision what the next ten years of success will look like. All feedback has been included at the end of this report.

## Summary

In summary to the questions asked, there was a strong sense of partnership working, both within Healthwatch and with external partner organisations. The diversity and breadth of work undertaken throughout the previous ten years has given us strength and recognition of being a trusted organisation providing a voice to the public and influencing change.

Our resilience throughout the pandemic has been evidenced with ongoing meaningful engagement, despite needing to find new ways of working, relationships with colleagues and partners have grown and the passion and determination harboured by staff and volunteers to make a difference has remained.

A challenge for all Healthwatch is the funding available, capacity and the length of time awarded to contracts. To ensure consistent meaningful growth, there is a resounding request for additional funding and that the longevity of contracts needs to be a key component and embedded within the long-term planning of the strategic health and care landscape.

The day was seen as a great success with the opportunity to share ideas and celebrate in success. There is a request to Healthwatch England to support the ongoing collaboration that was achieved and lead with similar workshop style events for the North East and North Cumbria region, so we can maximise learning, grow in strength and continue to make a real difference to the communities we serve.

Healthwatch would like to thank all those involved with the success of the day and looks forward to influencing the next ten years of change.



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## Feedback from attendees:



*“I thoroughly enjoyed the 10 Year Celebration event last week. So well thought through and organised - well done to you and your team for creating such a good day.”*

*“Can I say a massive thank you for my invite to the event on Wednesday; it was the best event I have been to in a long time.”*

*“Your passion, commitment and enthusiasm as a staff and service is outstanding and it was great to be in a room with such amazing people.”*

*“The event was organised spectacularly - well done and thanks again.”*

*“It was a great day, well done - really good to feel part of something bigger again.”*

*“Well done to everyone involved a great event, great to see everyone.”*

*“I wanted to say a massive well done to everyone for today, great co-ordination of the whole thing and thanks to everyone for the contributions you made to making the day run smoothly. A great success.”*

*“I was truly delighted with how the day went and the feedback I received was all very positive. All the speakers were so good and covered such different dimensions of our work. It was amazing to be able pull together such a successful celebration event in such a short time scale.”*

*“Thank you to all for organising the event and making me feel so welcome as a new addition to the Healthwatch family.”*



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## HW 10-year event - flipchart feedback

### *What has been your greatest success?*

#### Flipchart 1

- Independence
- Partnership working
- Critical friend
- Community mental health transformation
- Good at engagement

#### Flipchart 2

- Better partnership and collaboration between HW
- Recruitment
- Relationship with HWE regional manager
- Stronger influence pushing strategic change
- Surviving
- Pandemic resilience, adaptations, survival
- Recognition
- Reputation - trusted, respect
- Volunteers - still as passionate today as Day 1!

#### Flipchart 3

- Access to GPs
- Dentistry
- CQC onboard
- CCG networking
- Raising awareness

#### Flipchart 4

- Place assessments for mental health trusts/independent observer scheme
- Instrumental in getting Rothbury Hospital re-opened
- Dentistry report/SEND report - both influenced provisions
- Northumberland integrating with PPGs
- Being commissioned to do several research papers because we're admired for that
- Engagement with young people
- Various ethnic groups in Darlington - health connections
- Successful newsletter

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## Flipchart 5

- L.T plan
- Disability Voices
- Transformation work within mental health - patient voice
- Dentistry work
- Care homes
- GP access
- Substance misuse
- Breast screening
- Raise profile of HW within different communities

## Flipchart 6

- Chris South Tyneside here 10 years!
- Health info on website/signposting/dedicated young people page
- Integration of digital/physical engagement/online sessions

## Flipchart 7

- It was the survey about doctors appointments
- In Hartlepool there's an emergency doctors put there by the NHS and the mental health one that we did 10 months
- When I got involved I really got involved, think outside the box

## Flipchart 8

- Diversity of topics looked at
- How we have grown in size and influence
- Seeing change happen as a result of recommendations
- New service commissioned following research
- Building relationships with the trust, local authority and local organisations
- Reach - how many people we've spoken to
- Reach - new areas
- Reach - hard to reach groups
- Continuing our work through Covid

## Flipchart 9

- Brought ground-level awareness of accessibility issues to HW and wider communities
- Involvement of champions in the community, especially during the pandemic
  - enhanced the work of the local HW
- Continue to proactively recruit champions from under-represented groups to increase volunteer base
- Organisational level - to develop and grow rapidly - need to continue that dynamic response to local health needs in changing landscape

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- Maintain the open dialogue with NHS/partners

## Flipchart 10

- Pulling together forums to promote wider mental health service
- Improve patient experiences
- Getting feedback from patients
- Passing on patient feedback
- Raised awareness/for somewhere to go to gain further information and knowledge
- Enter & view visits hospitals/care homes/discharge
- Raised awareness of transport experiences/feedback - e.g. PTS
- Actual patient experiences - experienced
- Information from carers/impact/knowledge
- During Covid - keeping in contact with care homes
- Able to give feedback to Board/HW

## Flipchart 11

- HWS involvement with breast care
- Evolving with the times
- HWS Youthwatch
- Longstanding Board members
- Positive relationships with partners
- Reports
- Amount of clients supported through signposting
- Long term plan
- Vascular services HWD & HW CD
- Care home life work - HWS
- Video diaries work with young people around mental health - HW CD

## ***What has been your greatest challenge?***

### Flipchart 1

- Money/funding
- Longevity/contracts
- Funding - not moved with demand
- Change in landscapes e.g. Covid
- Independence
- Results/review/clarity

### Flipchart 2

- Breadth of remit

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- HW relationship with VCFSE sector
- Capacity
- Maintaining professionalism
- Impact and outcomes
- Recruitment
- Board development
- The 'so what'?
- HWE - more practical toolkits and longer timescales
- Funding
- Demographic representation in engagement

## Flipchart 3

- ICS x 6 integrating/scarcely/difficult
- Combatting isolation in the elderly
- Encouraging new Board members and volunteers

## Flipchart 4

- Getting in touch with minority groups and rural areas especially young people
- Getting enough staff for the extra work
- Outreach
- Hearing from housebound older people
- We don't challenge the authorities
- Feeding back on impacts especially longer-term impacts

## Flipchart 5

- New forms of engagement during Covid
- Staffing/resources
- Focus resources/what's most important
- Impact - how to demonstrate/follow up
- Impact - for individuals who contribute - 'so what'?
- Not being service

## Flipchart 6

- Integration/use of resources
- Getting across what HW does/awareness

## Flipchart 7

- Gatekeeping - there's services out there working with young people but when you try and get involved there's a bit of gatekeeping
- Getting people to understand what HW is in the first place - people don't understand what we do

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- People don't understand what HW stands for
- If we got young people involved, people that have been there a long time could call it a day
- I think HW Digital could move a bit faster and flex their muscles. We could have more authority. 'We've noted your concerns' but it shouldn't be that they've just noted them.
- Young people will listen to other young people
- There's a lot of negative press about young people

## Flipchart 8

- Following up on recommendations - monitoring impact
- Capacity - part-time staff, staff retention, room to grow
- Geography - rural areas
- Gatekeeping
- Practical support from organisations e.g. enter & view, family surveys
- Lack of understanding around research methodology especially qualitative
- Maintaining independence
- Different definitions/perceptions of what is research
- Different HW work differently
- Not enough time to do the job well
- Funder is often same person as have to be a critical friend for - fear of rocking the boat

## Flipchart 9

- Funding at all levels
- Reliance on volunteer Chairs/Board members can stretch resources thinly
- Volunteering isn't free - they need support, co-ordination
- Capacity - especially balance between ICB/LA priorities and local needs
- HW profile in the national picture

## Flipchart 10

- How many people don't know about HW
- None shared changes - so not aware of
- Frustration in systems
- Different systems in different areas
- GP issues - appointments, ring up
- Status/human life scale/power structure
- Close down of services in Covid/lost funding

## Flipchart 11

- Working from home
- Technology

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- ICS/B - understanding
- Recruiting volunteers
- Funding - staff morale
- Rurality of the county

## *What is your ambition for the next 10 years?*

### Flipchart 1

- Grassroots understanding
- Engage before commission

### Flipchart 2

- Northern HW award
- For network to continue to grow and learn
- More CYP
- Equity in core funding from DHSC
- Maturing our relationship between HW
- Succession planning = staff, Boards, volunteers
- Annual face to face conference

### Flipchart 3

- Sorting out funding for social care including paying staff = NHS salary scale and provide education, training and career progression

### Flipchart 4

- Engage with young people
- Provide meaningful information
- Feeding back on impacts
- Keeping services accountable - consistently challenge
- Develop relationships with LA and funders
- Promoting lived experience
- More inclusive and diverse

### Flipchart 5

- CQC/HW - better working relationships
- Household name
- NHS to continue to build on relationship with HW

### Flipchart 6

- Getting across the width and breadth of what we do
- To integrate as a network

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## Flipchart 7

- Raise our profile
- Get the younger generation involved
- More teeth to our recommendations
- We would have a better outcome
- More joined up working
- The govt should put a nationwide as on the TV promoting HW
- More evening events so that young people can get involved
- There needs to be activities held on an evening

## Flipchart 8

- Maintaining independence - when being pulled in different directions
- Demonstrating relevance of HW
- Embedding HW in new ICS structures

## Flipchart 9

- Survival
- Embed culture of listening
- Impact

## Flipchart 10

- More funding
- More training
- Recruit more volunteers
- Increase visibility/educate public
- Mental health services - expand/improve/employ more
- Rights!
- Services talk to one another
- Reliance on services - need to network/communicate, non-dependence for patients
- More staff - improve patient care

## Flipchart 11

- Stability with funding and contracts
- More awareness of HW for general public
- Stay positive
- Better knowledge of healthcare and vice versa
- Continued support from HWE
- Better relationships with NHS



## CELEBRATING SUCCESS – 10 YEARS OF HEALTHWATCH

Time	Agenda Item	Who	Information
10am	Registration/refreshments	All	
10.25am	Housekeeping	Christopher Akers-Belcher	Host
10.30am - 10.50am	Welcome	Delana Lawson & Jenny Clark, HWE	Welcome & achievements
10.50am – 11.30am	Quiz	Lisa Bosomworth/All	Facts & Figures
11.30am – 11.40am	What volunteering means to me	Arthur McKean, Interim Chair, HW South Tyneside	Experience of Healthwatch
11.40am – 11.50am	Young People & importance of engagement	Youthwatch Tees Valley	The voice of young people, messages & engagement
11.50am – 12.15pm	Community Transformation Report	Dominic Gardener, TEWV	The power and importance of collaboration
12.15pm – 1pm	Lunch	All	Music from Rise Up
1pm – 1.25pm	Networking	All	Tables with specific topics
1.25pm – 1.35pm	Our success so far	David Thompson, Chair, HW Northumberland	Developments on embedding HW/local voice within ICS
1.35pm – 2pm	The vision, the future	Claire Riley, NENC ICS	The future, embedding Healthwatch within Integrated Care Systems (ICSs)
2pm – 2.15pm	Close	Delana & Christopher	Gifts



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