

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY



Quality Statements for local Healthwatch

www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Produced for Healthwatch England by
Professor Mark Gamsu, Jennie Chapman, Health Together, Leeds Beckett
University
Susi Miller, Federation of Community Development Learning

March 2015

Contact detail: m.gamsu@leedsbeckett.ac.uk



LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

Contents

Background	3
Purpose of the Quality Statements	4
How they might be used	4
The shape of the Statements	4
Quality Statement One – Strategic Context and Relationships	7
Rationale for Quality Statement	7
Quality Statement.....	8
Quality Statement Two – Community Voice and Influence.....	9
Rationale for Quality Statement	9
Quality Statement.....	10
Quality Statement Three – Making a Difference Locally.....	11
Rationale for Quality Statement	11
Quality Statement.....	12
Quality Statement Four – Informing People.....	13
Rationale for Quality Statement	13
Quality Statement.....	13
Quality Statement Five – Relationship with Healthwatch England	15
Rationale for Quality Statement	15
Quality Statement.....	16
Next Steps.....	17
Appendix	18
Local Healthwatch – Statutory Activities.....	18

Background

Local Healthwatch¹ were established by the Health and Social Care Act (2012) and following procurement by local authorities most were set up during the financial year 2013/14.

Local Healthwatch are comparatively new organisations. The Quality Statements recognise that the mandate of local Healthwatch stems from their ability to strengthen the collective voice of local people through gathering people's views and experience of the health and social care system² and presenting this powerfully to local decision makers.

Expectations and practice of local Healthwatch is still developing. These Quality Statements aim to provide a framework that will help local Healthwatch assess progress and help them discuss this more powerfully with their local stakeholders.

The Quality Statements were developed collaboratively with local Healthwatch and supported by an advisory group of twenty local Healthwatch who contributed their ideas and experience to the work. Advisory group members also helped convene four local workshops³; and eleven local Healthwatch were interviewed. Emerging findings were also sense checked with two local authority commissioners. In total more than forty local Healthwatch contributed directly to this work.

The views and experience gathered through this process underpin the Quality Statements and a summary is available in a separate report.

¹ By local Healthwatch we mean the staff - in particular the Chief Officer and the local Healthwatch Board or Committee

² Local Healthwatch Narrative - Department of Health March 2012

³ Greater Manchester, Dorset, Brighton, London

Purpose of the Quality Statements

- To enable local Healthwatch to understand how they are doing and identify areas for improvement and development
- Provide a framework to help local Healthwatch and their commissioning local authority discuss impact, performance and effectiveness
- Help Healthwatch England understand the quality of practice in the country and to direct its resources at areas that require support or improvement

How they might be used

- To provide a framework for a local Healthwatch to review its progress through an annual development and review day
- As part of a local Healthwatch Annual report
- To help set the agenda for contract management meetings between the local authority and local Healthwatch
- Local Healthwatch might incorporate elements of the Quality Statements into staff induction, supervision and team meetings
- To help Healthwatch England support the development of local Healthwatch

The shape of the Statements

The Quality Statements are based on the statutory activities which local Healthwatch are required to deliver, these are outlined in Appendix one. During the course of the review it was clear that essential aspects of the local Healthwatch function were not adequately reflected in these activities, specifically the work that local Healthwatch does managing and influencing strategic relationships and context. The Quality Statements included here address this deficit.

Each Quality Statement is preceded by a rationale for that Statement - this is drawn from the evidence provided by local Healthwatch.

For ease of use the Quality Statements are grouped into five sections as follows:

1. Strategic Context

An effective local Healthwatch will need to have come to an explicit and realistic analysis of their local context to inform priorities, impact and relationship management with key local partners.

2. Local Voice and Influence

Local Healthwatch will enable and support local people to express their views and share their experience in order to influence the commissioning process, service provision and scrutiny of local care and health services.

3. Making a Difference Locally

A local Healthwatch needs to formulate views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local health and care services could and ought to be improved. It will make reports and recommendations about how those services could be improved. These reports should be directed to commissioners, service providers and Healthwatch England with the aim of improving the commissioning and provision of local health and care services. It is important to maintain strong working relationships with neighbouring Healthwatch.

4. Informing People

A local Healthwatch will articulate its strategy for the provision of signposting, advice and information including information quality control and boundaries of the service offered. This strategy will be based on an analysis of the operational context and will include connections to other advice information and signposting services.

5. Relationship with Healthwatch England

Healthwatch England and local Healthwatch will take the opportunity to develop their relationship based on information sharing, evidence and escalations. Local Healthwatch will raise shared issues through national policy development channels and contribute to leading and/or participating in policy forums to share learning through bringing local voice and experience.

Quality Statement One – Strategic Context and Relationships

In order to be effective local organisations need to have a good understanding of the local health and care needs and the strengths and deficits of their local authority area. Local Healthwatch are unique in that they have a responsibility for an area that cuts across individual providers and commissioners in health and social care. Their closest equivalent in terms of scope is the Health and Wellbeing Board. Therefore in order to be credible local Healthwatch have to be able to share this unique perspective with stakeholders and to use this to inform their own priorities.

Rationale for Quality Statement

An explicit analysis of local context is important. This should involve a triangulation of the priorities of the local authority, NHS organisations and what the public are concerned about.

It is important to have a clear view on who the key decision makers in a local system are, and to keep in touch with them on a formal and informal basis - sharing concerns, intelligence and plans.

Local Healthwatch should be playing an active role in existing local committees and meetings - this means that they will be involved in relevant strategic collaborations, agenda setting, projects etc.

In addition to participating in local decision making structures a local Healthwatch may contribute to addressing deficits in the local system through establishing groups or fora that strengthen voices that are not heard strongly enough - for example Voluntary and Community Sector networks, specific areas of interest such as mental health or learning disability, or Patient and Public Engagement leads.

Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch can evidence that it:

- Uses its unique position to develop priorities based on a clear analysis of local strengths and challenges which balances the experience and concerns of the public with the context within which the local NHS and local authority are working
- Has trusting collaborative relationships with key local decision makers through regular formal and informal meetings where its role as a critical friend is understood
- Plays a clear and distinct role in key local decision making structures (going beyond its formal position on the Health and Wellbeing Board) and contributes to better local decision making.
- Contributes to the development and, where appropriate, delivery of the local architecture⁴ for local decision making on health and wellbeing

Commissioners and Providers feel that:

- Local partners understand the rationale for local Healthwatch priorities
- Local Healthwatch brings added value to their work through the whole system perspective that it contributes
- Local Healthwatch has collaborative relationships with key decision makers in their organisations that allows information to be shared and concerns raised and addressed
- Local Healthwatch brings a positively distinct contribution to decision making structures in the local system

⁴ By 'architecture' we mean the local decision making structures that exist beneath the Health and Wellbeing Board and within organisations - for example the CCG Quality Surveillance Group or the local authorities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Quality Statement Two – Community Voice and Influence

Local Healthwatch play a central role in improving the ability of local people to have their views, ideas and concerns represented as part of the commissioning, delivery, re-design and scrutiny of health and social care services.

In each local setting Healthwatch enable and support local people to understand how the health and social system works in ways that support meaningful engagement, and support local people to express their view and share their experience

Rationale for Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch need to be clear about the relationship they wish to build with the public. The ‘ladder of participation’ referred to by Involve in their report People and Participation⁵ describes how participation can vary from just providing information, through consultation, involvement, and collaboration to empowerment and full engagement with decision making. It is likely that a local Healthwatch will focus on some of these forms of participation more than others, this will be determined by local context, relationships and the resources available.

Local Healthwatch need to complement and build on the engagement work of others and not duplicate what already exists.

It is important that local Healthwatch pay particular attention to ensuring that the voices of people and communities who are easily ignored or excluded are heard.

All of the activity of local Healthwatch has the potential to increase the health and social care literacy of local communities, empowering them to have a greater influence on the delivery and commissioning of local services.

⁵ People and Participation: How to put citizens at the heart of decision making. Involve 2005

Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch can evidence that it:

- Has a clear action plan for reaching out to and informing local people of its priorities and activities.
- Has a clear approach to ensuring engagement with easily ignored communities
- Supports local people share their experience and opinions of local services
- Involves local people in setting priorities and commenting on the quality of services that it provides
- Provides pathways for local people to become involved informally and formally in contributing to the delivery of the local Healthwatch service
- Works in a way that contributes to improve the confidence and ability of local people to influence the local health and wellbeing system

Commissioners and providers feel that:

- Local Healthwatch is able to demonstrate the added value it brings through its work engaging local people
- Local Healthwatch pays particular attention to those voices that are often easily ignored
- They can confidently promote local Healthwatch through their organisations media channels
- Investigations conducted by local Healthwatch are built on the experiences of local people
- Local people are involved in the delivery of local Healthwatch as volunteers, spokespeople and committee members
- The work of local Healthwatch increases the ability of local people to be active across all commissioning, delivery and scrutiny functions as a sustained process

Quality Statement Three – Making a Difference Locally

A local Healthwatch needs to formulate views on the standard of provision and whether and how local care and health services could and ought to be improved. It will produce reports and recommendations about how these services could be improved.

These reports should be directed to commissioners, service providers and Healthwatch England with the aim of improving the commissioning and provision of local health and care services. The reports should also be accessible to the public.

Rationale for Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch has an important role to play in raising issues that members of the public consider to be important. These include issues commissioners and providers might struggle to accommodate or may ignore.

Local Healthwatch can use its independence and system level view to raise issues and start conversations that more siloed services may struggle with or lack a mandate to do.

Informal intelligence gathering by local Healthwatch through the networks it creates and joins is just as important as more formal investigations.

Specific investigations⁶ need to be conducted in a way that is seen as credible by the stakeholders that local Healthwatch is seeking to influence. This means conducting investigations that provide added value - that do not duplicate or cover the same ground as other agencies, and that use a coherent methodology which triangulates the experience of the public with local knowledge and national views on notable practice.

⁶ The Leeds Beckett Report 'Healthwatch Investigations Developing Good Practice (2015) notes "that it is better to describe the process of investigation carried out by local Healthwatch as 'gathering intelligence' or 'conducting an investigation' rather than research because local Healthwatch are generally not involved in research as it is formally understood by academia or the NHS.'

Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch can evidence that it:

- Is capturing the experience and aspirations of local people in its investigations and reports
- Investigates issues in a way that is appropriate and ethical
- Investigates, where appropriate producing recommendations for change that are heard and responded to by relevant decision makers

Commissioners and Providers feel that:

- Local Healthwatch investigations bring added value through bringing a stronger public voice - particularly of people and communities who are too easily ignored or who struggle to be heard
- Local Healthwatch investigations and reports while critical and independent are clear about the rationale for the evidence used
- They have been involved in investigations in an appropriate and timely way

Quality Statement Four – Informing People

Local Healthwatch have a role providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about these services.

Rationale for Quality Statement

The local approach to information provision and signposting is determined by factors external to local Healthwatch. It is important to be clear about the rationale for local Healthwatch providing information, advice and signposting services directly and how local Healthwatch manages its relationships with other providers.

Where local Healthwatch provide this service, metrics on demand for advice and information are an important part of their evidence and help determine priorities.

Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch can evidence that it:

- Provides the public with accurate, reliable, relevant and useful information about local services, when they need it, in a format that meets their needs
- Considers the needs of easily ignored and marginalised group in the design, focus and delivery of the service
- Has a clear map of signposting services and refers members of the public to appropriate services or to places they can access information / signposting services
- Provides members of the public with appropriate advice, support and advocacy if they need to raise a complaint about any part of the health and social care system
- Systematically uses the intelligence it gathers through the service to inform its priorities.

Commissioners and Providers feel that the signposting, information and advice service provided by local Healthwatch:

- Has a clear and distinct role that complements those provided by other information and advice services in the local health and care system

- Makes a clear contribution to ensuring that the voice and experience of easily ignored and marginalised groups is heard
- Is delivered to high standards both with regard to the quality of information and advice, referral to other providers and the way in which personal information is recorded and used
- Is used to provide an insight into where there are gaps in local information and advice services and refer these up through the system so they can be addressed

Quality Statement Five – Relationship with Healthwatch England

Local Healthwatch are working with Healthwatch England to identify and share notable practice and jointly enable people's concerns to influence national commissioning, delivery, and the re-design of health and social care services.

Local Healthwatch work with Healthwatch England to identify areas for development and growth, raise awareness of and protect, the Healthwatch brand and to enable the effectiveness of the network to be demonstrated.

Rationale for Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch need to hear about notable practice and approaches from across the network in order to improve. Sharing operational information with Healthwatch England enables the needs of the network to be identified and taken forward.

Identifying examples of work that can be used in parliamentary debates and individuals who can speak to the media about their experiences of health and care provides a national platform for local issues.

Sharing reports, recommendations and issues enables a national perspective to be developed that incorporates local views from across the network, enabling these to be reflected in national work programmes. Escalating issues allows resolution of some issues that cannot be resolved locally.

Local Healthwatch want to be involved in the development of policy positions, rather than just passing the issue to Healthwatch England to resolve.

Healthwatch England is determined to ensure an open relationship with local Healthwatch where concerns about a local Healthwatch can be raised and a joint approach to address these agreed. It would only wish to use its advisory powers over councils as a last resort.

Quality Statement

Local Healthwatch can evidence that it:

- Both learns from and shares their learning with other local Healthwatch
- Consistently share the views and experiences of local people with Healthwatch England to be reflected in national work
- Understands how information about their local Healthwatch has been shared with Healthwatch England and how this information has been used
- Has given consideration to getting involved with national pieces of work, identifying the relevance of this work for their locality
- Has discussed any concerns and issues that Healthwatch England or other partners have raised about its performance and reflected on how best to resolve the situation in an amicable manner
- Is contributing its expertise to national policy development

Local Commissioners and Providers feel that:

- When local Healthwatch has escalated an issue to Healthwatch England this has helped the local health system improve.
- Local Healthwatch has helped place local concerns into a national policy and practice context through their relationship with Healthwatch England.
- Local Healthwatch has used its relationship with Healthwatch England to strengthen the development of good practice with regard to local Healthwatch itself and the local health system

Next Steps

These Quality Statements have been produced in draft and are not set in stone.

Given the intended practical nature of these Quality Statements the most powerful way of testing their relevance will be to pilot their use, capture learning arising from this and then amend them if necessary.

A separate report has been submitted to Healthwatch England. This has specific proposals which include how the Quality Statements might be used to help local Healthwatch improve on a day to day basis and in the longer term.

Healthwatch England will use these proposals to co-design with local Healthwatch a programme to take forward this pilot phase in the financial year 2015/16.

Appendix

Local Healthwatch – Statutory Activities

Groupings	Statutory Activities
Community Voice and Influence	Promoting and supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, the provision and scrutiny of local care services
	Enabling local people to monitor the standard provision of local care services and whether and how local care services could and ought to be improved
	Getting the views of local people regarding their needs for, and experience of local care services and importantly to make these views known
Making a difference locally	Making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. These should be directed to commissioners and providers of care services and shared with Healthwatch England
	Formulating views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could and ought to be improved. Share these views with Healthwatch England
Informing People	Providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made about local care services
Relationship with Healthwatch England	Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission (CQC), to conduct special reviews or investigations direct to the CQC; and to make recommendations to Healthwatch England to publish reports about particular issues.
	Providing Healthwatch England with the intelligence and insight it needs to enable it to perform effectively