

Communities share views to improve health and care services in Suffolk

We're Healthwatch. We listen to your views about local NHS and social care services so that we can make them better for everyone.

We have just launched our fourth annual report, which covers the year 2016/17. It tells you how we have been working and using people's experiences to shape, influence and improve local services throughout the year.

Five ways that health and care services have improved:

1. Maternity services increased support for birthing partners and changed policies so that birthing partners can stay with mum and baby overnight.
2. People will receive improved support and information to help them manage their risk of complications from foot disease caused by diabetes.
3. Residential and nursing homes have made changes that will improve the experience of some of Suffolk's most vulnerable people following visits by our volunteers.
4. We made safeguarding alerts that have led to immediate improvements to people's care.
5. We delivered patient feedback that helped to shape pathology services in Sudbury, including improvements to IT systems and access to appointments.

In our annual report, we highlight outcomes from our work that has included specific research projects, visits to local services and work across all levels of health and social care. Further examples include:

- Decisions to keep In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) and Marginalised and Vulnerable Adults services were strongly influenced by public feedback we obtained in partnership with NHS leaders.
- Prompted by calls from young people for more information, we developed a new poster and information card that will help young people to find support.
- We worked closely with new GP partnerships to shape their plans for developing services by engaging patients within surgeries.
- We were central to the launch of a new Dementia Forum for Suffolk that will aim to change the way dementia support is provided in Suffolk.

In addition, we have helped many people that contacted our free [Information and Signposting Service](#) to find support with their health and wellbeing needs.

Andy Yacoub (Chief Executive) said:

“People have a keen interest in their health and social care services and rightly so. Throughout the year, we have met many people; talking to them about their experiences and using them to influence decisions about our local services. We are proud of the impact we have made and, with increasing awareness of Healthwatch throughout the County, we know that our voice and influence can only increase with positive outcomes for patients, service users and carers throughout Suffolk.”

More information is available within the Healthwatch Suffolk Annual Report 2016/17. Visit: www.healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk. You can also call 01449 703949 to find out more.