

Spring Newsletter

2017

healthwatch

Central Bedfordshire

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public



Central Bedfordshire receives a visit from HM the Queen.. P3



What is the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes STP?
Find out more on P2



Join us on the RAVE bus
Find out where we will be this year on P5

Tell us how you feel about any NHS or social care service in Central Bedfordshire - it has never been more important. You can rate and review services on our website.

healthwatch
Central Bedfordshire



www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/services

What is the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes STP?

NHS England has recently outlined a new approach for health care providers to help ensure that services are planned by location rather than around individual GP surgeries and hospitals.

To do this, local health and care providers have been asked to work together in regional 'footprints' to produce a Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), showing how services will evolve and become sustainable over the next five years.

Twelve local NHS organisations and four local authorities in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) are working together to develop the STP for the area. BLMK have identified five key priorities to focus on in order to achieve the vision of building a high quality health and social care system in the region that is financially sustainable now and into the future.

These key priorities are:

- **Illness Prevention and Health Promotion:** Encourage healthy living and self-care, supporting people to stay well and take more control of their own health and wellbeing.

- **Primary, Community and Social Care:** Delivering high quality and resilient primary, community and social care services across BLMK.
- **Secondary Care:** Delivering high quality and sustainable secondary (hospital) care services across BLMK.
- **Technology:** Maximising the use of integrated IT systems and use of mobile technology for better co-ordinated care.
- **System Redesign:** Improving the planning, buying and managing of health and social care services to achieve a joined up approach.

What progress has been made?

A series of public consultations, supported by local Healthwatch, were held between January and March 2017, to gather views on transforming health and social care in the BLMK.

These views will be collated into a 'What we've heard so far' document that captures public, staff & clinical views. This document will then be used to develop a formal 'Case for Change' document that will be publicly available from May 2017.

For further information visit:
<http://www.blmkstp.co.uk/>





Priory View receives royal visitors



Priory View in Dunstable is home to 83 apartments for residents aged 55+, both renting and shared ownership.

It is a vibrant and relaxed community building close to the town centre, where visitors are encouraged to stop by and see all there is to offer.

The scheme was recently awarded the 'Best Independent Living Scheme' in the Pinder Healthcare Design Awards 2017.

On site flexible care services give residents privacy and independence, whilst providing the support they need. Other facilities include recreational lounges, cafe, bar, shop, hair and nail salon, foot clinic and spa therapy rooms.

This award-winning independent living scheme was officially opened by HM The Queen on 11th April 2017.

Her majesty was accompanied by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh on a tour of the building. They visited the home of one resident, spoke with people taking part in activities and had lunch with residents and invited guests.

A new independent living development in Houghton Regis

Plans have been approved for a new independent living development in Houghton Regis. This will be built on the land of the former Co-operative store and surrounding area.

It is proposed that 170 apartments will be made available for rental, shared ownership or sale. The scheme will also provide shared community spaces and retail opportunities. For more information on independent living schemes please visit: <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/housing/independent-living/overview.aspx>

Dave Simpson wins High Sheriff Citizenship Award

Our congratulations go to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire board member and volunteer, Dave Simpson, on his Citizenship Award which was presented to him by the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, Charles Whitbread.

The Citizenship Awards are made to adults and young people from across Bedfordshire who give their time to their local community and who nominators feel deserve to be recognised for their actions.

Despite being fully retired, Dave undertakes voluntary work with BCAP (Bedford Cancer Action Partnership), Macmillan Cancer Support and Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire.

Dave joined Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire in 2013. He commits many hours of his time working alongside staff and other volunteers.



Meet one of our volunteers



Albert West

I have been a volunteer for various groups (mainly health organisations) for many years, and it gives me much satisfaction knowing my skills and knowledge are being recognised and making a difference.

Mental Wellbeing is now becoming a high priority as testament to the high profile it now gets in the media, especially among children and adolescents. Giving children and young people the support early on, is key to their future wellbeing and development.

I want to share my experience and knowledge to help shape future health service delivery that benefits young and old alike. By attending seminars, public consultations, and working group meetings, I can inform and share my knowledge with the professionals who are tasked with reshaping our future NHS.

A warm welcome to Dee and Jane



Dee Dillistone is our Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator

Dee began her career in the care sector and has provided support to people with multiple disabilities, the elderly in their own homes as well as in residential and nursing care settings.

More recently Dee has worked in commissioning and contract management of services in the voluntary sector and believes strongly that any service needs to hear from the people it delivers to. Dee is committed to volunteering as a member of her local Good Neighbour Scheme. Dee is new to Central Bedfordshire and looking forward to engaging with the local community.



Jane Kelly is our Digital Communications Officer

Jane has ten years' experience as a communications specialist in the health and wellness field. Prior to her current role, Jane worked for an organisation that provided health and wellbeing services to employees as part of a workplace benefits package.

Jane has witnessed how accessing these types of services can positively impact on a person's wellbeing so is excited to bring her experience in conveying health and wellness information to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire.





JUST ASK...

Talk to us, we are listening



JOIN US ON THE RAVE BUS 2017



Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, working in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council will be visiting an area near you to provide information, advice and guidance about social care, health, housing and additional services. We will be joined by our partner organisations and a wealth of local voluntary groups.

Please come along to any of the locations listed below to find out more about services available in your local area.

DATE	VENUE	TIME
Friday, 7 th April	Asda Supermarket Car Park Court Drive, DUNSTABLE LU5 4JD	9am-1.30pm
Friday, 26 th May	The Market Square BIGGLESWADE SG18 8AQ	9am-1.30pm
Saturday, 10 th June	Flitwick Carnival, Millennium Park, Dunstable Road, FLITWICK MK45 1HP	12noon-4pm
Sunday, 2 nd July	Ampthill Gala, Ampthill Park, Woburn Road, AMPHILL MK45 2HX	12noon-5pm
Sunday, 16 th July	Shefford Summer Fete, Hitchin Road, SHEFFORD SG17 5JA	12noon-5pm
Tuesday, 15 th August	The Market Square LEIGHTON BUZZARD LU7 1EU	9am-1.30pm
Friday, 15 th September	The Market Square High Street, SANDY SG19 1JA	9.30am-1.30pm
Tuesday, 3 rd October	Morrison's Supermarket High Street HOUGHTON REGIS LU5 5BJ	9.00am-1.30pm

Contact Susan George for more information

Tel: 0300 303 8554 | Email: susan.george@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk



Four ways GP practices can become dementia friendly



There are around 850,000 people who live with dementia in the UK, and this figure is expected to rise to over a million by 2025. As more people are affected by dementia, it's important that health and care services adapt to meet their needs.

In Devon, Healthwatch have been working with Exeter Dementia Action Alliance to show GP practices how small changes can make a big difference to patients' experiences of visiting the doctor.

What changes can GP surgeries make to better support people with dementia?

1. Improve the environment. Having dementia friendly signs, which include symbols and pictures, can be easier for people to understand.
2. Longer appointments. Having an easy-to-use appointments system and sending reminders to patients or their carers can help to reduce missed appointments. Communication, understanding and recall are often issues for people living with dementia so offering double appointments can give people extra time to express themselves.
3. Increase dementia awareness for all staff. Regular awareness training for staff could help them understand what information and support people need to manage their condition.
4. Better community engagement. By listening to people from every part of the community, services can understand what patients with dementia and their carers need.

Click on the link for further information: <http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news>

Autism services for children and young people

Since 2014, 33 local Healthwatch across the country have spoken to over 1,000 people to understand their experiences of using autism services and what improvements can be made.

Healthwatch England has published a briefing on the common issues that families want to see improve when it comes to how young people are diagnosed and supported.

Download the report at:

<http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/resource/autism-services-children-and-young-people-findings-healthwatch-network>





Enter and View

Our visits to local services can influence change...

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, patients and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire is scheduled to visit a residential care home and a GP practice during May. Further visits are scheduled for later in the year. You can view reports on previous visits at:

<http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/enter-view/>

We need your views...

Are you, a friend or relative receiving care in Central Bedfordshire? Please share your experiences with us at <http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/services>. We will use them to guide our Enter and View work and also to influence change to local services.

Watch our new video about Carers



- There are an estimated 40,000 carers in Bedfordshire
- Three in five people will be carers at some point in their lives in the UK

Our film explores the reality of caring for someone; What help do they get? How do they cope? Who helps them? Watch the film at:

<http://www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/videos/>

Want to take part in our next video?

Are you, or do you know a young carer? We will be filming a short video about young carers and we are seeking some young people to take part.

If you are interested in sharing your experiences please get in touch. Contact susan.george@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk or call 0300 303 8554



Young Healthwatch members are developing a supportive tool that can be used when visiting their local GP practice.

They want something to help remind them of useful questions to ask on their first independent visits to their GP and the facility to write down their thoughts beforehand.

They have suggested the idea of a 'body map', to help show areas of pain or discomfort. Young Healthwatch aim to launch the body map in June.



New Survey Published - We Need Your Feedback!



Have you or someone you know in Central Bedfordshire used the Non-Emergency Private Ambulance service? We would like to hear about your experiences. This survey has just ten questions and should take you no longer than ten minutes to complete:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MF8LFFG>

If you are unable to complete the online survey, but would still like to contribute to the feedback, please contact dee.dillistone@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk for a hard copy of the survey. The results of the survey will be shared with the commissioners of the service and with our members.

Would you like to volunteer for Healthwatch?

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do, from talking to people about their experiences of local health and social care services and helping at our community outreach events. We have a range of opportunities for you;

- Healthwatch representatives - attend meetings, speak on behalf of the organisation
- Healthwatch on the road - join us across Central Bedfordshire as we talk to people about their experiences on our Just Ask bus and at Listening events
- Healthwatch Enter & View - train to become an authorised representative to visit publicly funded health and social care services in Central Bedfordshire
- Healthwatch Headquarters - help us with back office support, including preparation for events and surveys

Contact dee.dillistone@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk if you are interested in any of the above activities.

Join us to make a difference in Health and Social Care.