

Press Release

For immediate release: 10/09/2020

Healthwatch are focusing in on local Covid-19 discharge procedures

Healthwatch Shropshire and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin are working together to find out about people's experiences of leaving hospital during the pandemic. Since March hospitals have been working closely with community health, social care partners and local councils to improve the discharge process. Triggered by Covid-19, the aim has been to make sure no one is in hospital longer than they need to be.

Healthwatch are gathering people's experience of discharge under the current arrangements and have worked with local hospital trusts, the Clinical Commissioning Group and Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Councils to develop a short questionnaire. They want to hear about what is working well and where things could be improved so that lessons can be learnt and changes made to improve the process and patient experience of leaving hospital. People can find the questionnaire here:

<https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/tell-us-about-your-experience-leaving-hospital-during-covid-19>

Lynn Cawley, Chief Officer of Healthwatch Shropshire, told us, "This survey is an extension of a national survey by Healthwatch England. We are very keen to hear people's experiences of discharge, the detail will help local hospitals and councils understand how the systems they have put in place are affecting people across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. We want to hear from as many people as possible so encourage people to call their local Healthwatch and we will complete the survey with them over the phone."

Paul Shirley, General Manager of Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin, said that, "Systems put in place at the beginning of the pandemic will stay in place for some time to come so it is vital that the patient experience is recorded and shared with the hospitals and organisations involved. There is a real desire to hear from patients and learn from their experiences, we are here to help this happen."

Claire Old, Urgent Care Director and Senior Responsible Officer for Discharge for Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin, explained "Health and social care partners across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Powys have prioritised partnership working that focusses on overcoming the barriers to sharing information and removing unnecessary delays when people leave hospital. Working together hospital teams have supported patients in decisions for discharge at the right time. Improved communication and processes has put individuals, families and carers at the center of all decision-making discussions so that when a loved one leaves hospital, they have the best support and plans in place. We want to hear about your personal experiences to ensure continuous improvement of the hospital discharge process."

Healthwatch Shropshire and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin are the independent consumer champions for health and social care in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. They gather the views and experiences of patients, service users, carers, and the general public about

services including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children's services. They also has statutory powers that can be used to influence service provision by encouraging improvements.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

Healthwatch Shropshire and Healthwatch Telford & Wrekin are part of a network of 148 Local Healthwatch in England. It is supported by a national organisation, Healthwatch England.

It has a team working in community engagement, plus a volunteer programme, a visit programme to health and social care premises and an associate membership scheme to involve the public in its work. It also has a signposting service to help people access health and social care services and support.

Healthwatch Shropshire also provides the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service (IHCAS) for Shropshire. The IHCAS service provides information, advice and, if necessary, can support people through the NHS complaints process.

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