

# healthwatch

## County Durham

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News update - January 2019

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Happy New Year and best wishes for 2019 from all of us at Healthwatch County Durham.

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### Lucky Dee bags our hamper of goodies



You might remember from last month's newsletter that we were offering any new joiners to our mailing list the chance to win a luxury hamper in time for Christmas.

The response was extremely positive and we are pleased to announce that lucky Dee Lyle, from Ferryhill, was our randomly selected winner. Faye Smith, our outreach officer, visited Dee with one of Santa's elves to present her with the jam-packed hamper made by Knitsley Farm Shop in Consett in time for Christmas. Mum-of-two Dee said: "...the girls are going to really enjoy the goodies in the hamper - it feels like Christmas has come early for us!"

Thanks to all of you who signed up like Dee - and welcome to our monthly newsletter!

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## And talking of food...



A big thank you to our board members, volunteers, Kidzone Nursery, and Lorna Moore Childcare in Crook, who all donated food to our pre-Christmas collection for [Durham Foodbank](#). Along with the donations from our team it came to a total of 247.92kg of food, toiletries and household essentials - the equivalent of 309 meals! It was fantastic to see people coming together to look after one another.

Durham Foodbank operates all year - not just at Christmas. So, if you, or someone you know, need help, you can contact a member of the foodbank team on 0191 303 7559.

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## Vascular services: information events



Over the next two months, we are holding a number of information and listening events on behalf of NHS England about vascular services. Public and patients will be able to find out about changes to vascular services directly from NHS staff, including vascular consultants. Dates and locations are detailed below. For more information, and to book a place, email us at [healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net) or call 0800 304 7039. Refreshments will be available at each event from 4.45pm.

- Thursday 17 January 2019, 5-7pm - Spennymoor
  - Wednesday 23 January 2019, 5-7pm - Stanhope
  - Monday 28 January 2019, 5-7pm - Durham
  - Wednesday 30 January 2019, 5-7pm - Darlington
  - Wednesday 13 February 2019, 5-7pm - Consett
  - Wednesday 27 February 2019, 5-7pm - Barnard Castle
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## GP appointments: what you told us

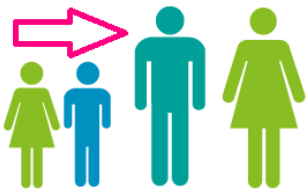


Last year, we spent time collecting people's views about accessing GP appointments. It's something you told us you were concerned about when we asked for your priorities and in total 346 people completed our survey - thank you! We were able to gather valuable information about the things that matter most to patients, what currently works well and what could be improved. We are sharing our findings with GPs across County Durham and the [full report](#) is available for everyone to read on our website.

The clinical commissioning groups have now asked us to continue this work by seeking patients' views of the new "care navigation" service in GP practices. **Give your feedback on care navigation via this [online survey](#).**

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## Taking our transition work forward



Many thanks to everyone who took the time to complete our survey on young people's transition from children's to adult services for sharing your experiences with us. It already looks as though there is work to be done to improve the process but we'll be digging into the data fully over the next few weeks. We'll be publishing a report detailing exactly what we find and this will also include recommendations for changes based on what you have told us. We'll let you know as soon as this is ready to view.

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## Could 2019 be the year Healthwatch visits you?



We're keen to fill up our shiny new 2019 diaries ... so now is the time to shout up if you are part of a community organisation or group and would like us to visit you. We are always happy to be on hand to answer any questions about health and social care services that people may have and to signpost them to the support they need. We can bring our pop-up information stand or, alternatively, can visit as a guest speaker. To find out more please contact Faye, our Outreach Officer, at [faye.smith@pcp.uk.net](mailto:faye.smith@pcp.uk.net) or call 07395 790757.

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## Spotlight on signposting



Do you have a health or social care need and want advice on the services available? Or, do you want to comment on a service you have received?

Our Signposting and Information Service can give you the information you need so that you can access the services you are entitled to. It is also there to listen to your comments on the services you receive and can point you in the right direction if you wish to make a complaint or compliment. Help is just a call away!  
**Freephone: 0800 304 7039 / Text: 07756 654218**



### Help is just a call away

After the rush of the holidays, January can be a difficult month. The festivities have ended and it is a long wait till payday. For some, the reality of Christmas may have been far removed from the chocolate box image of family gatherings overflowing with gifts. People may be entering the new year with feelings of disappointment, anxiety, sadness, depression or isolation. Talking to someone can often help, so please pass on these useful contact details to anyone you know who is struggling.

**Housing solutions/homeless - 03000 268 000 ext 2 (out of hours) or 01388 722538**

**Samaritans - 116123 (freephone)**

**Citizens Advice - 03000 323 2000**

**Welfare Rights - 03000 268969**

**Emergency Social Care - 03000 267979**

**NHS Helpline - 111**

**Drugs and alcohol support (FRANK) - 0300 123 6600**

**Police (non-emergency) - 101**

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## Consultation extended into 7-day access

NHS Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is extending its public consultation into changing 7-day access to primary care services. The consultation will now run until Wednesday 30 January 2019. More information about the proposals for change are available on the [CCG website](#) and you can contribute your views on the plan via this [survey](#).

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## Northern Cancer Voices - update



Work has been ongoing this summer to develop a plan for involving people in NHS cancer services - the Northern Cancer Voices project. A draft plan has now been produced based on information collected from communities across the region. You can find out more about what is happening on the project's [latest bulletin](#), which also includes information about local Cancer Information Centres and cancer patient and carer groups.

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## Support to step into adulthood



The Changes programme is a new course being run by Durham County Council's Adult Learning and Skill Service for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. It aims to make sure parents and carers are well-informed about opportunities, support networks and resources available regarding moving into adulthood. Changes runs every Wednesday from 10am-2pm from 9 January to 13 February at Ethicare, Southbrook House, Pitington. For more information or to book a place contact the Adult Learning and Skills Service on 03000 266115 or email [alss@durham.gov.uk](mailto:alss@durham.gov.uk).

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## Care support 24-7



Durham County Council's [Care Connect](#) service supports local people to enjoy an independent life in their own home. People can use a pendant or pull-cord system to contact a central control centre if they need help, e.g. if they feel anxious, unwell, or have had a fall and can't get up again. The service runs all day, every day of the year, so can offer peace of mind, especially for those living alone. [Find out how to apply.](#)

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## Mindfulness for life



A mindfulness course specifically for people with learning disabilities starts next month at Pelton Community Centre. The eight-week programme will teach people how to use mindfulness to live in the moment to cope better with life. The course starts on Wednesday 20 February but there is a taster session on Wednesday 30 January from 10am-12.15pm for those who are interested. Contact Anne at [Humankind](#) for more information on 07786 156739 or alternatively call Kathy at [Skills for People](#) on 0191 281 8737.



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### Contact us:

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