

healthwatch

County Durham

News update - March 2018

Working to increase access to health screening



We've just published a report on reducing barriers to breast screening. Around one in four women in County Durham do not attend screening when invited to do so. We gathered views and experiences of breast screening from more than 450 women. The top reasons they gave us for not attending were:

- being embarrassed or frightened
- the venue or time being inconvenient
- the service being inaccessible due to disability

We have made several recommendations to improve uptake of screening based on what women said and are sharing these with local service providers and commissioners. We'll let you know their responses!

[Read the full report.](#)

Meanwhile... a big THANK YOU!



...to everyone who has contributed to our survey about cervical screening since the new year - more than 800 people in total!!

We will be making recommendations for how to improve uptake of cervical screening to Durham County Council, who are keen to use the findings from all our screening reports in their cancer awareness raising work. Find the three screening reports we've already published [here](#).

Pharmacy services - you've been listened to!



The Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) has responded to our [report](#) compiled from your views of local pharmacy services. They intend to act upon several of our recommendations, including:

1. **We said facilities to enable patients to talk to pharmacists without being overheard should be made available/more clearly advertised, as many of those who completed the survey were not aware private consultations were available.**

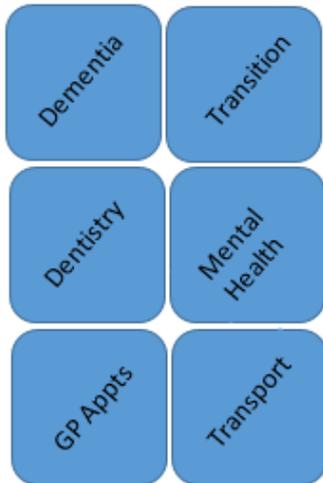
The LPC says it will raise this with pharmacies and suggest that, if necessary, signage is made more prominent and staff make sure they mention to customers such facilities are available.

2. **We said the LPC should develop a strategy to encourage younger people to access pharmacy services.**

The LPC says it recognises the potential of this and will include it as a workstream this year.

We'll continue working with the LPC to improve pharmacy services in County Durham and update you on any more developments. Read what people had to say about current services [here](#).

Still time to help decide what we do next...



30 days left to vote for the services you think we should look into next:

You can tell us your priorities out of the six services shown here by filling in this [online rating form](#).

Or request a paper copy by calling 0800 304 7039.

And thank you...

to all our hard-working volunteers for sharing this vote on what we do next with people across the region, helping us to identify what the priorities are for people in County Durham when it comes to health and social care.

Great North Care Record



The [Great North Care Record](#) is a new way of sharing medical information electronically across the North East and North Cumbria. Healthcare professionals from different services will be able to access the most current details about you 24/7. Sounds complicated? [A short animation](#) has just been published to explain how it should work to save time and promote safer care.

Teesside University is processing all the feedback from focus group sessions held at the end of last year. They expect to publish their findings in late March/early April. We will share the report with everyone who attended.

This is an ongoing project and a network of health professionals will be meeting twice a year to keep developing and improving it. Healthwatch County Durham has chosen to be on the steering committee for this network and we'll be working hard to make sure the views of patients are listened to as things move forward. And of course we'll keep you posted as things move on.

Spotlight on signposting



It's been a busy start to the year for our signposting team. January saw double the number of calls received compared to the same month last year. 590 minutes were spent giving clients information or signposting them to other organisations such as the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and Adult Social Care.

For example, one caller wanted support with a meeting she was due to have with clinical staff about the content of a family member's clinical records. We contacted the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICA) who arranged to go along to the meeting as an advocate to support her.

Have your say...



Help to improve maternity services

If you are pregnant, have just had a baby, or just have a desire to improve maternity services, the Maternity Voices Birth and Baby Information group (BABi) might be for you. The group is part of Maternity Voices in Partnership, which helps to develop local maternity services, bringing together not just commissioners and NHS staff but also women for whom such services are designed. The meetings are informal, with tea and cake and help with travel costs. The next meeting is on Wednesday 7 March from 10am-12 noon at Brandon Children's Centre, Brandon, Durham. For more information contact Cathy Harvey, Chair of BABi, on 01325 284806.



Feedback wanted on extended primary care services

Have you used the extended primary care services in Durham Dales, Easington or Sedgefield? (That is the service for urgent same day need that is available from 6pm-8pm Monday to Friday in Durham Dales and Sedgefield; 8am to 8pm in Easington, and 8am-1pm in all three locations at weekends.) If so, commissioners would like to hear about your experience to help them keep improving the service. Use this [online survey](#) to give your feedback by 31 March 2018 - or if you have some general comments that you would like to contribute please send them to Tina Balbach, Engagement Lead, at tina.balbach@nhs.net.

What would make you take part in research?

The Clinical Research Network North East and North Cumbria is holding a focus group in Durham on 17 March to find out what people would like to know about health and social care research and how they might like to be involved in it. The group is being held from 10am-12 noon at Durham Community Association, Shakespeare Hall, North Road, Durham. Travel expenses will be reimbursed. Contact Andrea or Jennifer on 0191 282 3087 or info@makingresearchbetter.co.uk for more information or to book a place.

Did you know...?



Did you know that if you have dementia; care for someone who has a condition classed as a “severe mental impairment”, or have moved out of your home to provide or receive care, you may be eligible for a discount or exemption from your council tax? This isn’t means tested - you just need to meet the qualifying criteria. Get more information about how to apply on the [Durham County Council website](#), 03000 26 4000 or counciltax@durham.gov.uk.

Support and advice...

Tinnitus course

WHAT? A six-week course for people with tinnitus, organised by Durham Deafened Support. The course will include a look at the causes of tinnitus and information on

how to manage symptoms and cope with the stress it can cause.

WHERE? Skerne Medical Centre, Sedgefield

WHEN? Starts Wednesday 21 March, 2pm-3.30pm

CONTACT: Call 0191 518 3358 or email admin@ddsupport.org.uk to book a place.

CHAT social group

WHAT? Celebrate Hope All Together (CHAT) is a new social group for people affected by cancer and their families. Go along for coffee and chat.

WHERE? Starbucks, Dalton Park

WHEN? The last Thursday of each month. First meeting: 26 April 10.30am-12.30pm.

CONTACT: Beverley Butters - 07552 984440 / cancersupport.bb@btinternet.com

Look Good Feel Better

WHAT? Free skincare and makeup sessions for people who have/had cancer. Held in a relaxed and supportive environment, they aim to boost confidence and wellbeing. Each session (normally 10 -12 people) is hosted by qualified beauty volunteers who teach skills from helping to correct uneven skin tone to recreating missing eyebrows.

WHERE? Bannatayne Health Club and Spa, Eden Terrace, Belmont, Durham, DH1 2HJ.

CONTACT: Call 0191 333 2815 for details of upcoming sessions.

Help to Health - volunteer patient transport

WHAT? A volunteer driver service for those who need assistance to get to their health appointments. The service is charged per mile and the total cost is confirmed when you book.

WHERE? Durham Dales, Easington, Sedgefield, Derwentside, Durham and Chester-le-Street areas.

WHEN? Transport is available Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm. At least 48 hours' notice is required.

CONTACT: Call 0300 330 9424 to check eligibility, book an appointment, or enquire about volunteering. More information at helptohealth.org.uk.



Contact us:

Healthwatch County Durham
Whitfield House
St Johns Road
Meadowfield Industrial Estate
Durham
DH7 8XL

Freephone: 0800 3047039

Text: 07756 654218

Email: healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net



[Facebook](#)



[Twitter](#)



[Website](#)



[YouTube](#)



[LinkedIn](#)

Copyright © *|2018|* *|Healthwatch County Durham|*, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you signed up to our mailing list.

Our mailing address is:

Healthwatch County Durham
Whitfield House
Meadowfield Industrial Estate
Durham, - DH7 8XL
United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Please do not publish or reproduce this newsletter in full.