

South & Central Community Champion Network Meeting**Wednesday 27th March 2024****Zoom meeting themed:**

Carers Energy Support project – Sefton Carers

Independent Complaints Advocacy Service – Healthwatch Sefton

Primary Care – NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

Chair

Barbara Rouse (BR) Healthwatch Sefton Bootle Locality Rep

Attendees

Maurice Byrne (MB)	Healthwatch Sefton Maghull Locality Rep
Jan Comer (JC)	People First Merseyside
Lesley Curran (LC)	People First Merseyside
Simon Walker (SW)	People First Merseyside
Nicola Hall (NH)	People First Merseyside
Peter Davies (PD)	Liverpool & Sefton Age Concern
Caroline Hesketh (CH)	Sefton Carers Centre
Jerryann Blaney (JB)	Expect Ltd (Bowersdale Resource Centre)
Amy McMillan (AMc)	Sefton CVS Community Connector
Sarah Davidson (SD)	Kindfulness Coffee Club
Sandra Bell (SB)	The Reach Mens Centre
Joanne Wormald (JW)	Select Training
Ellen Sloan (ES)	Sefton CVS Social Prescriber

Healthwatch staff member(s)

Wendy Andersen (WA)	Engagement & Participation Manager
Clare Blasberry (CB)	Digital Communications Officer

Guest Speaker (s)

Tim Hodgson (TH)	Sefton Carers
Diane Blair (DB)	Healthwatch Sefton Manager
Jane Elliott (JE)	Localities Manager NHS Cheshire & Merseyside

Apologies

Mandy Williams (MW)	Healthwatch Sefton Signposting & Information Officer
Debbie Kelly (DK)	May Logan Health Centre
Bob Wilkinson (BW)	The Samaritans

1. Introductions & Housekeeping

BR welcomed all members and guest speakers to the Community Champion network zoom meeting.

Topics planned for today's meeting:

- Energy Carers team to talk about their services
- Healthwatch Sefton to talk about the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service
- NHS Cheshire & Merseyside to talk through any primary care updates and answer questions.

The last south and central Community Champion network meeting was held January 2024. At this meeting we heard from:

- Podiatry and Diabetes services from NHS Mersey Care Foundation Trust
- Training Opportunities from Select Training
- Community Champion Network members – we heard from each of you about your services and activities.

Housekeeping was covered and BR introduced the guest speakers.

2. Code of Conduct / Declarations of Interest

BR informed everyone that the revised policies had been circulated by WA and everyone should have received copies / links to the documents. This included:

- Healthwatch Sefton Code of Conduct
- The Role of the Community Champion Network member
- Kindness & Respect Charter

During this meeting all members were informed that they were to abide by the Code of Conduct and Kindness and Respect Guidelines.

BR asked if there were any declarations of interest.

No declarations of interest were declared.

3. Carers Energy Support project

TH introduced himself and thanked members for the opportunity to talk about their services. A presentation was delivered:

The purpose:

To be one of the first points of contact, providing dedicated and responsive triage support to unpaid family carers who would benefit from support in relation to home energy efficiency issues.

Areas covered included:

- What is fuel poverty?
- Determining if a household is fuel poor
- Effects of fuel poverty
- Challenges of fuel poverty
- How to reduce fuel poverty?
- Sefton Carers Energy Support service
- Energy Partners

The full presentation along with additional information will be circulated with the notes from the meeting.

Question / Comment: LC asked if she could have information with pictures in easy read? **Answer:** TH to take the request back to Sefton Carers.

Question / Comment: MB asked what is the definition of a carer. MB went on to explain that he knows someone who has had difficulty accessing carer support because she was working but also had caring responsibilities. **Answer:** TH stated that the person is classed as carer. CH stated that yes, the person is an unpaid carer and can access services even if she is working. CH informed MB to signpost the person to Sefton Carers. Note: following this meeting CH has offered to do a

presentation to members on 'who is a carer'? and 'what the centre offers for unpaid carers'.

Question / Comment: JC stated she is aware of someone whose husband passed away and she is now in debt to an energy company. She had kept the heating on to keep him warm. She is now in a lot of debt and cannot afford to put her heating on. She has carried on trying to pay off the debt in instalments. Even though this has happened 4.5 years ago can she still get some support from this team? **Answer:** [She can contact the Energy Plus Organisation. WA to share the details.](#)

No further questions were asked. BR thanked TH for attending and sharing information on the services available.

4. Independent Complaints Advocacy Service – Healthwatch Sefton

DB thanked members for inviting her along today to talk about the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

DB acknowledged that the presentation was not in easy read but said that she would take this back to Kate who is the Advocate and ask her to write an Easy Read version.

A presentation was delivered and included information on:

- Kate Grace – Healthwatch Sefton Independent Complaints Advocate
- Mandy Williams – who most of you will have met at the network meetings is Tier 1 support (this will be explained in the presentation)
- What is Independent Complaints Advocacy (ICA)?
- How we can support our clients?
- What we don't do?
- What happens when a client contacts Healthwatch for support with a complaint?
- Tier 1 information, self-help and triage
- Tier 2 Advocacy
- The benefits of advocate support
- How to make contact with the service / refer into the service

Residents can contact us by

- Telephone - 0800 206 1304
- Text – 07912243857
- Email – info@healthwatchsefton.co.uk

Organisations can refer people into the service by completing our referral form which can be downloaded on our website

<https://healthwatchsefton.co.uk/independent-complaints-advocacy-service/>

Question / Comment: MB asked if the service was for NHS provision only or does it include non NHS providers who are funded by the NHS. Also, are dentists covered?

Answer: DB stated that anything funded by the NHS would be supported. DB stated that dentists are covered but that the service receives very little complaints about NHS dentists. NHS England are looking into how residents are aware of how they can complain.

Question / Comment: BR asked how long Healthwatch Sefton had existed? BR went on to say how proud she was to be involved in Healthwatch and that people have a voice. **Answer:** DB stated Since 2013

No further questions were asked. BR thanked DB for attending and sharing information on the services available.

5. NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Primary Care update

JE attended to provide any updates re: primary care and take questions from members.

JE talked about surgeries trying to maximise appointments within the different clinical roles and the different types of patient appointments. A new telephone system is in place that offers patients a call back but education and information on how this works needs to be shared with patients e.g. If a patient chooses the option of the call back but then calls back again, they will be pushed back further in the queue.

Question / Comment: JB reported that patients try and call at 8.30 am and are on hold for a long time e.g. after 9 am and by the time a patient gets through all the appointments are gone. Members at the Bowersdale feel that patients who can queue up outside get the appointments.

Answer: JE responded to say that due to demand and supply they have a dual process. The surgeries have to manage each way a patient can book appointments. Appointments are limited therefore other options are provided including pharmacy first, the respiratory hub, social prescribers and other services.

Question / Comment: JB stated that she worked at the Bowersdale and that they had service users who needed to see the same professional due to their mental health needs.

Answer: JE responded to say that the patient would need a reasonable adjustment notification on their records and on the system. **Action:** [JE to take this issue raised back to the GP practices.](#)

DB informed members that both her and JE attend the Primary Care Forum meeting and feed in all feedback. DB stated that feedback shared by residents and Community Champions does make a difference.

Question / Comment: MB stated that he fully understands the need for offering different appointments but that it can be quite difficult for patients to not be given an estimate time of a phone appointment. It would make things so much better if patients could be given a time slot. **Action:** [JE to take this issue raised back to the GP practices.](#)

It was raised at the meeting that residents are commenting on GP waiting rooms always being empty. WA and JE stated that they will be planning a Community Champion network meeting later in the year themed on GP Access.

No more questions were put forward and BR thanked JE for attending the meeting and taking forward issues raised by members.

6. Community Champion updates

BR asked for each member to provide an update on their services and activities.

Sefton CVS south Sefton Community Connector – AMc reported that she would be holding a cuppa and chat via zoom on 2nd May for residents to come along and find out about the services.

People First Merseyside – LC informed members that they were developing a new group that is peer led – ‘How to become a true self advocate’.

The David project is coming to an end and everyone is welcome to the conference being held on 13th June at the Holiday Inn. [Action: JC to share the poster with network members.](#)

Liverpool & Sefton Age Concern – PD reported that they are seeing an increase in referrals to people living in residential care. It is felt more people are leaving their homes to live in care due to expense, health and loneliness.

PD stated he had been to some meetings re: Warm Spaces and residents are also attending the spaces because they are lonely, they are going for companionship and not necessarily the warmth.

Healthwatch Sefton Maghull Locality Representative – MB said he felt that there was a lot going on in Maghull. Warm Spaces, small support groups, café and chats, all to try and help and support residents with social isolation.

MB said he felt he was hearing less complaints re: GP surgeries as people are moving towards accepting the way the services are working.

NHS dentists – MB stated this was still an issue for residents with lack of NHS dentists for residents to access.

MB spoke to members about a lack of services for people with a learning disability who are 30+ years. This was specifically for the Halton area. Members shared with MB what services were available locally including The Bowersdale and The Reach Mens Centre, and DB offered to share contact details of Healthwatch Halton.

Healthwatch Sefton Digital Communications Officer - CB informed members that she had been recording videos of Healthwatch Sefton Community Champion members and asking them about their experiences of being a member. CB asked if anyone would like to take part to get in touch.

The Reach Mens Centre - SB raised lack of medication available in chemists, in particular difficulties getting ADHD or being given substitute medications.

Sefton CVS south Sefton (Bootle) Social Prescriber - ES is new Social Prescriber for Bootle.

7. Healthwatch Sefton updates

- Revised Community Champion policies have been circulated including the Role of Community Champion member, Kindness & Respect charter and Code of Conduct. If anyone has any questions you can get in touch with me.
- Outreach – thank you to everyone who has invited me along for outreach. I share with you all the themes that are raised following each visit and we ensure we raise issues with the local NHS commissioners and providers.
- Recent examples include: Blister packs being discontinued and the impact this has on patients. Seaforth Village surgery on-going closure due to roof repairs.
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) - Feedback shared by residents on accessing their GP surgery is being picked up by the local CQC inspector to support recent inspections focussing on 'Responsive'. Grovers Lane surgery, Netherton Health Centre and Moore Street have all recently been inspected.

8. Emerging Health or Social Care themes raised and to be taken to Steering Group to be noted:

Identified during this meeting:

- Lack of medication available in chemists, in particular difficulties getting ADHD or being given substitute medications.

9. Community Champion network notes for approval

The notes from the meeting held in January 2024 were previously circulated to all members for comments or amendments. No amendments were received.

10. Information exchange/ Any Other Business

None recorded.

Date and Time of Next Meeting:

10.00 am Wednesday 22nd May 2024.

Via Zoom