

# Engagement during COVID-19: What we learned

Bren McGowan - Healthwatch England

Oonagh Quinn - Healthwatch Lincolnshire

---

15 December 2020

---

---

## The challenge

What Healthwatch *needs to do* doesn't change, but *how it can do it* must change.

- Collect people's views
- Provide information
- Tell services what they need to know

---

## Asset-based approach

- If Healthwatch isn't meeting people, who might be?
- What connections does Healthwatch have?
- What is already happening?
- What can we learn from other Healthwatch?
- What do services need?

---

## Healthwatch Knowsley

- Focus shifted to ‘emergency’ work - welfare calls and local authority Covid-19 support line
- Daily e-bulletins
- Supported community members to access free iPad’s with internet use and offered practice sessions for using Zoom

---

## Healthwatch Wakefield

- Survey - highlighted to mailouts to 40,000 people on the vulnerable / shielding list
- Results distributed **weekly** to local health and social care service leaders
- Development of third sector leaders' group
- Leaflet, directory and newsletter to be distributed to all local Independent Living Schemes (over 1,500 households), as well as GPs and care homes

---

## What next?

- Virtual visits guidance and training
- Research guidance
- Opportunities:
  - Online engagement testing
  - DNACPR research with seldom heard groups
  - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Learning Sets

---

# Learning from the network

Healthwatch Wilshire

Engaging with people who live with dementia

Healthwatch Leeds

How to engage with people using video diaries

Healthwatch Croydon

How to co-produce with seldom heard groups

---

# Rapid Response to Online Engagement

YourVoice@Healthwatch

Moving from a face to face event to an online event during  
COVID19 (April to October 2020)

*Healthwatch Lincolnshire*

*Oonagh M Quinn, Engagement Officer*



---

# Background Context: YourVoice@healthwatch

- 2014 to 2017 Development of Provider Network Meetings - a series of public network meeting at 16 locations (4 in each CCG area as we had 3 hospital Trusts / 4 CCGs in Lincolnshire). Mainly attended by professionals in health and care. Each meeting chaired by a member of the Board of Trustees with minutes.
- 2017 to 2018 Development of less formal style and a workshop element basis on a theme (priorities). Reduction in number of events from 16 to 8. More public attending. Appointed one Chair / Vice Chair for consistency across all sessions. More focussed and more input from a mixed audience.
- 2018 to 2020 Development of a quarterly event and renamed YourVoice@healthwatch. Quarterly Event: different theme for each event, a Panel (Commissioners / Providers), Q+A session and a marketplace. 50+ community representatives, members of the public in attendance and less professionals from health and care. More input from public.

---

# Background Context: YourVoice@healthwatch

Quarterly Event held face to face in April, July, October and January of each financial year with the Healthwatch Steering Group (HWLincolnshire) directly linking the event with priorities for the coming year.

Each event is designed to:

- Have its own unique focus e.g., dementia, stroke, Mental Health, Children and Young People Services, Personal Health Budgets, hospital transport, hospital discharge
- A panel consisting of commissioners, providers and decision makers in the respective areas within the theme
- An opportunity for community groups to promote their work, professionals to network informally and opportunities for signposting and information around services within local and regional area.

---

## Rapid Response: adapting our engagement

- In March 2020 we took the decision to cancel our planned face to face event for April and after discussions with the Healthwatch Lincolnshire Steering Group, Chair of the YourVoice@healthwatch, Healthwatch Contract Coordinator and Engagement Officer took the decision to host our first online event using Zoom in July 2020.
- It was important to keep the essence of the event that we had worked so hard to develop within our county. It was a leap of faith and involved a number of new skills and partnerships that did not exist before.

---

# What went well and what needs to improve

## Positive

- We were able to put our first event on in July, followed by another in October.
- Chair held a brief informal pre event meeting with panel to discuss questions that had been sent in prior to event. Professionals and public more willing to send in questions for discussion before the event.
- Utilising the skills of colleagues to support such as technology. Peer mentoring / tutoring to gain upskilling and knowledge.

## Negative

- Smaller numbers in attendance - only people who could access the event via technology. 20 online attendees compared to 50+ when face to face.
- No “walk ins” - attendees had to book a place for the event and the meeting was “closed” at a given time.
- No Informal networking or signposting/ information sharing.

---

# What we have learnt and future plans

## What we have learnt:

- This is an opportunity to have a very focussed public event and embrace the technology. Max of 2 hours compared to a 3 hour face to face event.
- Reviewed Protocols - for many it was very new!
- How do we improve the experience for the audience such as the networking / signposting / information which was a very important aspect of the Event previously? Our Signposting / Advice Officer attended the Oct event.
- Saves money on venue hire, travel costs, expenses
- Slightly less personal than physically being in the same room! Less people attending and no “walk ins”.
- Reviewing the event, being honest and making the second one even more professional than the first!

## Future plans:

- To develop a series of informal virtual “a cuppa with ....” sessions to do signposting / advice / sharing of experiences
- Involving different members of the team and utilising different skills / experience.

---

# Talk to us

[www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

03000 683 000

[enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatch.co.uk)

@HealthwatchE

Facebook.com/HealthwatchE

[www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)

01205 820892

[info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)

@HealthwatchLinc

Facebook.com/healthwatchlincolnshire