

PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE IN ENGLAND

Zaangażowanie pacjentów i sektora rządowego w opiekę zdrowotną i pomoc społeczną w Anglii

JANE RANDALL-SMITH^{1 E,F}
CATHERINE PRITCHARD^{1 E,F}

Healthwatch Shropshire, UK

A- przygotowanie projektu badania (study design), **B-** zbieranie danych (data collection), **C-** analiza statystyczna (statistical analysis), **D-** interpretacja danych (data interpretation), **E-** przygotowanie maszynopisu (manuscript preparation), **F-** opracowanie piśmiennictwa (literature search), **G-** pozyskanie funduszy (funds collection)

Summary

Significant changes were brought about in health and social care in England in 2013, as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. As part of the changes in 2013, a network of local Healthwatch organisations was set up to act as the people's champion for health and social care in their local area. Healthwatch Shropshire is one of these local Healthwatch. It gathers experiences and opinions from patients, carers, service users and the wider public about publicly funded health and social care services and uses this information to influence health and social care service delivery. Healthwatch Shropshire also recruits and trains volunteers to support its work, in particular, specially trained volunteers visit locations where health and social care services are provided and report on their findings. Healthwatch Shropshire also has information and signposting services, provides volunteering opportunities, and has a statutory authority to visit locations where health and social care services are being delivered.

Keywords: patient participation, consumer participation, public opinion

Streszczenie

W roku 2013, wraz z wprowadzeniem Ustawy o Opiece Zdrowotnej i Społecznej, w Anglii dokonały się znaczące zmiany w tych obszarach. W ramach tych zmian powstała sieć organizacji o nazwie „Healthwatch”, której zadaniem jest stworzenie najlepszej opieki zdrowotnej i społecznej w środowisku lokalnym. „Healthwatch Shropshire” jest jedną z takich lokalnych instytucji. Zajmuje się ona gromadzeniem doświadczeń i opinii od pacjentów, opiekunów i innych osób korzystających z pomocy lekarskiej i społecznej na temat publicznej służby zdrowia i pomocy społecznej, aby wpływać na jakość świadczonych usług. Organizacja ta rekrutuje i szkoli wolontariuszy, aby zbierać od nich cenne informacje na temat tych właśnie usług. „Healthwatch Shropshire” zajmuje się również udzielaniem informacji, organizowaniem wolontariatu oraz posiada statutowe upoważnienia do wizytowania placówek, gdzie udzielana jest pomoc zdrowotna i społeczna.

Słowa kluczowe: zaangażowanie pacjenta, zaangażowanie klienta, opinia publiczna

Background

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 [1] brought about significant changes in the organisation, commissioning and delivery of health and social care services in England when it came into force in April 2013. Publicly funded health care is commissioned, and in the main provided, by the National Health Service (NHS). Family medicine (known as primary care services) e.g. family doctors, community pharmacy and opticians, is commissioned by NHS England [2]. Secondary care, e.g. hospitals, community health services and mental health services, is commissioned by local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) which are run by local family doctors. Publicly funded social care services (e.g. social workers and residential or nursing care homes) are the responsibility of Local Authorities (Councils), who either directly provide or commission these services.

Healthwatch Shropshire

Organisation

Healthwatch Shropshire is part of a network of 148 local Healthwatch across England which was established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012; there is a local Healthwatch in each of the local authority areas of England. They are supported nationally by Healthwatch England [3]. Funding comes from the Department of Health via local authorities. Healthwatch builds upon the legacy of previous patient and public involvement organisations: Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) (2008-2013), Patient and Public Involvement Forums (2003-2008) and Community Health Councils (1974-2003). Community Health Councils are still in existence in Wales, and Healthwatch Shropshire has links with local Healthwatch in neighbouring English counties as well as with Community Health Councils across the border in Wales.

Healthwatch Shropshire is a charity which has a small staff team whose work is overseen by a Board of Trustees. Local individuals and organisations in Shropshire are encouraged to become associate members. The organisation's mission is 'to be the recognised independent voice of the people of Shropshire in seeking to improve their experience of Health and Social Care services'.

Shropshire

Shropshire is a large rural county with a low population density. The population lives in the county town, a number of small market towns and in much smaller settlements so that people are dispersed across a large area. This makes delivering health and social care services challenging and also accessing services by the people of Shropshire can be difficult. Healthwatch Shropshire exists to help make sure everyone gets the best from their health and social care services and that those services are as good as they can be and work in a joined up way. It gives patients,

service users, carers and the wider public a real say in the way health and social care services are run.

Role

Healthwatch Shropshire gathers experiences and opinions from patients, carers, service users and the wider public about health and social care services across Shropshire, then makes sure those views are used to improve services for all. Local health and social care organisations have a duty to listen to what Healthwatch Shropshire has to say regarding patient and public experience and opinion. People can make contact in a variety of ways including phone, email, through the website, a 'Tell Us' leaflet, social media and through participation at community engagement events across the county.

Healthwatch Shropshire also provides information and signposting services to support the people of Shropshire in making choices about health and social care services and how to access them. Where people want to make an official complaint, or need assistance in how to proceed with their particular issue, Healthwatch Shropshire can help them find the best way to do this.

Healthwatch Shropshire also has a statutory authority to visit locations where health and social care services are being delivered for the people of Shropshire. This is called Enter & View and is conducted by volunteers who are trained as Authorised Representatives. Authorised Representatives observe what is happening, speak to patients and service users, talk to their families and carers and report on their findings.

Volunteers

There are also other volunteering opportunities at Healthwatch Shropshire in the form of community champions and specialist leads. These volunteers help Healthwatch Shropshire to understand what is happening in all the different communities across the county and also provide particular expertise for specific pieces of work. As well as gathering views on existing services Healthwatch Shropshire also works hard to make sure that ordinary people have the opportunity to have their say when there are proposals to make changes in the way health and social care services are delivered. Volunteers (and the Associate Members) are very important in helping to make sure that people's voices are heard.

Impact in the first year

In Healthwatch Shropshire's first year of operation, 56 people received information and signposting services, 370 comments were received about health and social care services, and 27 issues were raised with commissioners and providers of services. 125 local community engagement events were participated in and 3000 Tell Us leaflets were distributed. By March 2014 there were 178 Associate members and 615 Twitter followers.

Further information about Healthwatch Shropshire and its work can be found on its website <http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/>.

References

1. Health and Social Care Act 2012 [accessed 05 Nov 2014]. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>
2. NHS England [accessed 05 Nov 2014]. Available from: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/>
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Correspondence Address:

Jane Randall-Smith
Healthwatch Shropshire, 4 The Creative Quarter,
Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6LG. UK
Phone +44 (1743) 237 884
E:mail: jane.randall-smith@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk

Received: 26.11.2014
Reviewed: 30.11.2014
Accepted: 01.12.2014