

# inside look

Spring 2020

Local news from your local Healthwatch

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## Homeless Project Update

The team have been undertaking a project to find out about access to healthcare services by people who are homeless. This includes those who are registered as homeless and in priority need with the local authority, 'hidden' homeless such as those who are 'sofa surfing' with family or friends but do not have a permanent stable address. rough sleepers and those staying in hostels and refuges.

This project commenced by mapping out local commissioned and non-commissioned services that support homeless people and creating a partnership network with these agencies to support us to gain access to people experiencing various kinds of homelessness. We have completed our interviews and surveys and the next step will be a report on our findings distributed to local commissioners and publication on our website shortly.

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## Young Peoples Project



Another of our projects is to find out the needs of young people in Sandwell and their experiences of health and social care. We have been talking to young people about local services including hospitals, GPs, mental health, social care and others. We have met with groups of young people to talk with them about their concerns and the barriers they face. We will be publishing a report later in the year.

This project is expected to lead to the creation of a Youth Healthwatch in Sandwell.

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## Enter & View Update

We have been continuing our visits to GP surgeries in Sandwell to talk with patients about appointments, suggestions for improvements and Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). So far, we have been to 6 surgeries with more planned for this year. Highlights of our visit are problems getting through on the phone, how easy is it to get an appointment when you need one and knowledge of PPGs. To give feedback on local GP surgeries please visit our feedback centre on our website <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/services/>

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### Healthwatch Sandwell

Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton. DY4 9RY

Tel 0121 569 7210

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## Obituaries

We are sad to hear of the passing of two former board Chairs.



Pam Jones died in November 2019. Before becoming Healthwatch Sandwell Chair, Pam was Chair of Sandwell Local Involvement Network (LINK). She was also well respected for her involvement in other health and social care organisations in the borough.



John Clothier passed away in January. He took over from Pam as Chair in 2016. Before retiring, John was a consultant orthopaedic surgeon at Sandwell Hospital.

Both Pam and John were also involved with patient groups and forums in Sandwell and their contribution to health and social care services will be greatly missed.

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## Cancer Champions

HWS is part of a project with Cancer Research UK, Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, and the Clinical Commissioning Group, who are working in partnership to have local people involved to raise awareness about cancer and support people who are affected in Sandwell. The Project is entitled Community Cancer Champions.

The aim of the project, which is taking place across the Black Country, is to improve patient outcomes in relation to prevention, screening and early diagnosis.

The role simply requires local people to take top tips and best practice back to the community setting and help to improve awareness around cancer screening and early diagnosis.

If you are interested in being a part of this project, please contact us.

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## Deaf Focus Group

Healthwatch Sandwell in partnership with the New Deaf Centre are facilitating a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Focus Group.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, we would like to invite you to a focus group to share your experiences of health and social care on Tuesday 31 March 2020 at 2pm at the New Deaf Centre, Summer Street, West Bromwich B71 4JA.

To book, please contact SDCA on 0121 553 0201.



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## Carers Project Update

We have carried out a project that looks at support for adult Carers in Sandwell. The project aimed to engage with as many Carers as possible including hidden Carers and those not accessing support.

The findings and recommendations aim to inform the development of the Joint Carers Strategy in Sandwell by the Sandwell MBC (Adult Social Care)

### Key Findings

#### Levels of caring responsibility

83% of the survey respondents said that they were caring for a member of their family whether that was a spouse, child or another adult family member.

17% of respondents to the survey said that they were caring for a friend or neighbour.

23% of respondents to the survey were full time carers.

#### Carers Assessments

63% of survey respondents said that they had not had a Carer's Assessment.

#### Support Services

57% of survey respondents had used information and advice services in the last 12 months.

The reports identified the impact on health from caring responsibilities, loneliness, lack of employment opportunities and the impact on finances

The report made several recommendations, which include:

1. A publicity campaign by the Local Authority or relevant voluntary sector to publicise tasks which would define a person as a Carer, carer support services and promote the carers assessment.
2. Provide a central point of access that would give relevant information to address financial social support, practical support, respite, health information (carers and the cared for) and support for back into employment.
3. Promote/provide service for people who provide emotional support to carers e.g. a buddy/befriending service to alleviate loneliness and isolation.

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## Advisory Board Recruitment

We are looking to recruit Advisory Board Members who share our passion for developing Healthwatch Sandwell as the 'consumer champion' for NHS, public health and adult and children's social care services across the Borough. You will need drive, energy and enthusiasm and the ability to play a leading role in maintaining our vision.

So, if you want to play a leading part in shaping the future of a vital organisation, then we would be delighted to hear from you. Contact us for the recruitment pack and application form.

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## Welcome to the Healthwatch team!

We are please to welcome Leanne Abbott to the team. Leanne is supporting our Young Peoples project and will be leading with the implementation of the Sandwell Youth Healthwatch later this year.



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## Volunteer with us!



If you are passionate about health and social care services in Sandwell, why not consider becoming a Healthwatch Sandwell volunteer? We have varied roles available. Interested? Give us a ring on 0121 569 7210 or visit our website <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/get-involved/>

**healthwatch**  
Sandwell

**insight**  
your spotlight  
on local services

**A public meeting on 23rd March 2020 to discuss**

**Healthwatch Update**  
An update on our work including current projects and thoughts and suggestions for our priorities from April 2020.

**Carers Strategy Update**  
Following our Support for Carers Report in 2019, Beverley Stevens, Commissioning Officer, Sandwell Council Adult Social Care will be here to give an update on the Sandwell Carers Strategy and how the contribution of carers and service users in Sandwell has influenced future carers provision., and will also answer any questions.  
Our Support for Carers Report is available on our website [www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)

**At**  
**SAFS, Windmill Community Centre**  
**Messenger Road, Smethwick**  
**B66 3DX**  
**From 11am until 1pm**  
**(bus routes 80A)**

**Everyone welcome**  
To book a place call 0121 569 7210 or email [info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)

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