

29th October 2013

Phone (01273) 810236

Email jane@cvsectorforum.org.uk

Mr T Rixon
23 Stirling Court Road
Burgess Hill
RH15 0PS

Dear Mr Rixon

Re: Healthwatch Brighton and Hove's response to Terence Rixon's Supplementary Question to the Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Supplementary Question:

Can the Committee therefore please give consideration to asking for and then placing in the public domain, confirmation from Healthwatch they will.....

Implement the relevant provision of the statement of Common Purpose contained in the Government's initial response to the Francis Report (Patients First & Foremost).....

And also the statements from Healthwatch England regarding the Frances Report?

Back Ground

The initial Government Response to the Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Enquiry "Patients First and Foremost" sets out an initial overarching response, on behalf of the healthcare system as a whole, to the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Inquiry. It details actions to ensure that patients are "the first and foremost consideration of the system and everyone who works in it.

The recommendations contained within “Patients First and Foremost” and the final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry are focussed on approaches to identifying problems quickly, ensuring swift action to address them, holding organisations to account and ensuring that staff have the skills, motivation and support they need to give the best to patients. But the first focus must be to prevent poor care occurring in the first place.

The recommendations stressed that:

1. The NHS demonstrates a shared culture in which the patient is the priority in everything done. (1)
2. That the patients must be the first priority in everything the NHS does.(T)
3. As expressed in the NHS constitution the overriding value should be that patients are put first. (4)
4. There must be zero tolerance of, any service that does not comply with fundamental standards of service. (T)
5. The CQC should be responsible for policing the fundamental standard and a service incapable of meeting fundamental standards should not be permitted to continue. (20,28)

Healthwatch England’s initial response to the Francis recommendations states that as the consumer champion for health and social care, this is a crucial report because it emphasises the importance of the patient voice within the healthcare system. Patients and their families must be placed at the centre of the healthcare system, not side-lined or ignored. Their response highlights the following implications for Local Healthwatch:

The Francis report raises concerns about whether the lack of a consistent and basic structure for local Healthwatch could replicate the weaknesses experienced by Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). Healthwatch England believe that while there needs to be consistency in outcomes for consumers, the way in which these are delivered will need to remain flexible to local need. They will therefore follow the lead of the Francis report, and the feedback from local Healthwatch, and will work over the coming year to develop a consistent set of quality standards that support best practice and define good outcomes.

The Francis report raises the issue of the need for local Healthwatch to be able to source good guidance and training to support them in delivering their core functions effectively. Whilst the Francis recommendations focus specifically on training for the leadership of local Healthwatch, Healthwatch England intend to expand on this and draw on existing good practice to develop training for volunteers and others who might get involved in the work of local Healthwatch.

The Francis report calls for scrutiny committees to be given new powers to carry out provider inspections. Clearly, a key priority for Healthwatch England is to avoid any duplication of work carried out by local Healthwatch in relation to their 'Enter and View' responsibilities. Healthwatch England will be working to support local Healthwatch to ensure they are using their existing statutory powers to best effect and will keep under review any further changes needed in the local landscape to ensure that effective oversight and scrutiny is delivered.

Response from Healthwatch Brighton and Hove:

What follows is Healthwatch Brighton and Hove's response to addressing the relevant recommendations within "Patients First and Foremost", the final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry and Healthwatch England's initial response to the Francis recommendations.

Sharing Information

Need to share information between regulators, which should extend to all intelligence which, when pieced together with that possessed by partner organisations, may raise the level of concern.

There needs to be a template of the sort of information each organisation would find useful. (35)

Collection of accurate information about performance of organisations must be available to providers. (36)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Has developed an insight intelligence data base where intelligence from the public about local health and social care services is collected and analysed.

Intelligence gathered currently comes from: phone calls to the Healthwatch Helpline; Independent Complaints Advocacy and Community Engagement work.

- Is currently developing systems so that anonymised data from: PAL's; Access Point; Patient Opinion; local media and feed-back from Community Spokes can also be gathered.

- Will analyse all intelligence and feed this data into service providers, commissioners and regulators enabling us to spot trends and areas of concern. This will be fully operational by the end of October 2013.

Complaints

CQC must have access to all useful complaints information relevant to assessment, via local relationship managers. Any bureaucratic or legal obstacles to this should be removed (38)

Patients raising concerns about their care are entitled to have the matter dealt with as a complaint unless they do not wish it; identification of their expectations; prompt and thorough processing, sensitive, responsive and accurate communication; effective and implemented learning and proper and effective communication of the complaint to those responsible for providing the care.

Cause for concern should be the subject of investigation and response (112)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Provide CQC Local Relationship Managers with feed-back about local services and where necessary alert the CQC and Adult Safe Guarding if there is a Cause for Concern about a local service.
- Has established internal systems, processes and procedures to run the new Healthwatch helpline so that we can help local people get the best out of their health and social care services.
- Is working in partnership with Impetus which provide the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS). ICAS is a free and independent service to help Brighton and Hove residents make a complaint about care or treatment provided by the NHS. Trained advocates support people to understand whether they wish to make a complaint and provide support to those who wish to.

Improved Patient Focus

Monitor should incorporate greater patient and public involvement into its own structures. (62)

Decision-making bodies should be transparent. (135)

Those charged with oversight and regulatory roles in healthcare should monitor media report about the organisation for which they have responsibility. (43, 145)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Promote and enable the involvement of local people (via the subscribers list, community spokes and engagement activities) in the commissioning and monitoring of local health and social care services.
- Obtain the views of people about local health and social care services, and make their views known to those involved in commissioning, providing and monitoring health and care services.
- Monitor the local media to ensure that the public voice about local health and social care services are included in its Insight Intelligence data.
- Play a role in the preparation of the statutory Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies on which local commissioning decisions will be made.
- Will make all Healthwatch papers, reports and minutes available to the public.

Structure of Local Healthwatch

Consistent basic structure for local Healthwatch throughout the country. (145)

Local authorities should be required to pass over the centrally provided funds allocated to its Local Healthwatch, whilst requiring the latter to account to it for its stewardship of the money. Transparent respect for the independence of Local Healthwatch should not be allowed to inhibit a responsible local authority – or Healthwatch England as appropriate – Intervening. (146)

Guidance should be given to promote the co-ordination and co-operation between local Healthwatch, Health and Well-Being Boards, and local government scrutiny committees. (147)

The complexities of the health service are such that proper training must be available to the leadership of Local Healthwatch as well as, when the occasion arises, expert advice. (148)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Will take advice and guidance from Healthwatch England in the development of its Governing Body.
- Will work with the local Healthwatch commissioner to implement the Local Healthwatch outcomes and Impact development tool.
- Has presented a paper to the Health and Wellbeing Over View and Scrutiny committee highlighting the relationship between Scrutiny and Healthwatch.
- Has a seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Have recruited a Volunteer Co-ordinator to ensure that the Healthwatch, Governing Body, Representatives, Authorised Enter and View Representatives and Volunteers are provided with the appropriate training, supervision and support.

Openness, transparency and candour

Every healthcare organisation and everyone working for them must be honest, open and truthful in all their dealings with patients and the public, and organisational and personal interest must never be allowed to outweigh the duty to be open, honest and truthful. (173)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Will ensure that all Healthwatch Governing Body Members, Representatives, Authorised Enter and View Representatives and Volunteers will sign a Code of Conduct that includes the Principles of Public life.
- Will expect all Healthwatch Governing Body members to adhere to a Conflict of Interest Policy and sign the Register of Interests.
- Will make all Healthwatch papers, reports and minutes available to the public.

Continuing responsibility for care

The care offered by a hospital should not end merely because the patient has surrendered a bed – it should never be acceptable for patients to be discharged in the middle of the night, still less so at any time without absolute assurance that a patient in need of care will receive in on arrival at the

planned destination. Discharge areas in hospital need to be properly staffed and provide continued care to the patient. (239)

All staff and visitors need to be reminded to comply with hygiene requirements (240)

The arrangements and best practice for providing food and drink to elderly people requires constant review, monitoring and implementation. (241)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Will gather feedback from the public about their experiences of being a hospital inpatient.
- Review local services adherence to the above recommendations.

Information

Healthcare providers should be required to lodge their quality accounts with all organisations commissioning service from them, Local Healthwatch, and all systems regulators (247)

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will:

- Review the information contained in healthcare providers quality accounts and provides statements on what is reported to be published in the providers Quality Account.

In conclusion

An institutionalised lack of care was central to events at Mid Staffordshire. As the local consumer champion for health and social care we will work with our partners to ensure consumers of health and social care are placed at the heart of the system.

If you have any further comments please do let me know.

Yours sincerely

Jane Viner
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Manager (Maternity cover)

Note:

The numbers at the end of each paragraph refer to recommendations contained within the final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry and 'T' refers to the Themes.

Further Information:**“Patients First and Foremost”**

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/170701/Patients_First_and_Foremost.pdf

The final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry

<http://www.midstaffpublicinquiry.com/report>

Healthwatch England’s response to the initial response to the Francis recommendations.

www.healthwatch.co.uk/resource/healthwatch-england-responds-independently-francis-report