



BRIEFING NOTE

Local HealthWatch Consultation – Stockton-on-Tees

The '**Health and Social Care Bill 2011**' sets out that patients and the public must be at the heart of everything our health and social care services do. To help this happen, '**HealthWatch England**' and '**Local HealthWatch**' will soon be set up to champion the views and experiences of patients, people using these services, carers and the wider public. In future, HealthWatch will play an important part in improving health and social care services across the country and here in Stockton-on-Tees.

By October 2012, each local council will have in place a Local HealthWatch. From that date onwards, in Stockton-on-Tees, 'Local HealthWatch' will:

- **Be a contact point** for anyone and everyone (regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, religion/beliefs, sexual orientation, or disabilities) who either wants/needs, or has used health and/or social care services.
- **Provide information and support** to help people make the right choices about, amongst other things, what to do and where to go if they need health and/or social care services.
- **Listen to people's feedback** (good or bad), about their experiences with health and/or social care services.
- **Make health and social care service providers aware of how people feel** and, where necessary, hold them to account and help put right any situations that have bothered people.
- **Make sure that people have the support they need to make any complaints about NHS services.**

To do all of this, in addition to continuing the work of the Stockton-on-Tees Local Involvement Network (LINK) Local HealthWatch in Stockton on Tees will:

- **Work closely with 'HealthWatch England' and the 'Care Quality Commission'** (the national 'watchdog' for health and care services).
- **Be entirely independent of the NHS and the Council.**
- **Be a member of the Stockton-on-Tees Health and Wellbeing Board.**
- In future, **work with NHS Complaints Advocacy Services** to make sure that people have the support they need to make any complaints about NHS services.

- **Involve a wide range of organisations and individuals who volunteer to be involved.**

Work is being undertaken between Tuesday 25th October 2011 (the work was launched at the Council's 'Are you being served ... well?' older people engagement event on 25/10/11) and Tuesday 17th January 2012 to consult with relevant stakeholders about how Local HealthWatch should operate in Stockton-on-Tees. When complete, the consultation work will inform the procurement of a Local HealthWatch provider for the Borough by October 2012.

People interested to participate in the consultation can do so in any of the following ways:



Complete the **Local HealthWatch Consultation online questionnaire**. Please either double click on the following link, or copy and paste it into your Internet Explorer browser pane: www.stockton.gov.uk/healthwatch



Complete and return the **Local HealthWatch Consultation** questionnaire which is provided in the **November 2011 edition of Stockton News**.



Attend the **Local HealthWatch Consultation meeting which is being hosted by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council at the Stockton Central Library Lecture Theatre on Tuesday 6th December**. The meeting will start at 18:30 and close at 20:00.



Attend a meeting to discuss **Local HealthWatch which is being hosted by the Stockton LINK (Local Involvement Network) at the Masonic Hall in Stockton on Thursday 8th December**. Lunch will be available from 12:30 and the event will start at 13:15 and close at 15:15. Please note, pre-registration is essential. To reserve a place, please email: stocktonlink@shaw-trust.org.uk or telephone 01642 636162.

If you have any queries about the consultation/want to know more about Local HealthWatch in Stockton-on-Tees /would like a paper copy of the questionnaire, please:



Telephone: 01642 527005



LHWconsultation@stockton.gov.uk