

## **Local HealthWatch**

The Health and Social Care Act attempts to strengthen the collective voice of patients, users of care services and the public through the establishment of local HealthWatch organisations.

These organisations are not entirely new but build on the work of the Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and the Public Advisory Liaison Service (PALS)

These organisations will have a statutory place on Health and Wellbeing Boards.

Local Authorities and local Clinical Commissioning Groups will have a duty to involve the local HealthWatch. They will be expected to feed information on local needs and priorities into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment process and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The HealthWatch brief extends across all ages, adults and children, and all services provided by the NHS, however, with social care the DoH guidance restricts the brief to adult care services for people over 18yrs. (Information from Manchester City Council Briefing Paper)

Local HealthWatch must be able to employ staff and be able, if they choose, to sub-contract statutory functions.

One of the new functions will be to support people if they need to complain about NHS services.

HealthWatch will come into existence in April 2013 and in Manchester the Local Authority will launch a bidding process for the contract in September.

Manchester City Council want to consult as widely as possible before September, they want HealthWatch 'to be shaped by what people think'. See overleaf for information about the consultation.

## **HealthWatch Manchester Consultation**

HealthWatch is a new, independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public and strengthen the patient and public voice. If people want complaints or issues raising, HealthWatch can be their advocate. Manchester City Council want to know what people want from HealthWatch to make it the best it can be.

The aim of local HealthWatch will be to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality. Local people should be at the centre of how services are planned, designed and delivered in health and social care across Manchester. This includes GPs, dentists, pharmacies, hospitals, mental health services, care homes, day centres, and personal care at home. By April 2013 a new organisation called 'HealthWatch Manchester' will be set up to support this.

This will take over from the Local Involvement Network as the way people aim to shape their local health and social care services.

### **What will HealthWatch do?**

- Ask the people of Manchester for their views about the services they use
- Tell people what health and social care services are available locally and how to access them
- Give people help and support when making a complaint about health and social care services
- Help make local services better

For further information and to take part in the consultation, visit: [www.manchester.gov.uk/healthwatch](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/healthwatch).

Deadline: Monday 24 September 2012