

**EAST KENT HOSPITALS UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

**REPORT TO:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 25 APRIL 2014

**SUBJECT:** HEALTHWATCH KENT

**REPORT FROM:** DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

**PURPOSE:** Information

**CONTEXT / REVIEW HISTORY / STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

HealthWatch are the national consumer champion in health and care. They have significant statutory powers to ensure the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services.

This is an opportunity to begin develop a relationship with HealthWatch Kent and hear from about their approach

**SUMMARY:**

The Chief Executive of HealthWatch Kent will give a short presentation to the Board of directors to share the HealthWatch vision and values and to update the Board on emerging issues and priorities and then sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) along with the Chief Executive EKHUFT (MOU attached).

**IMPACT ON TRUST'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**

1. Deliver excellence in the quality of care and experience of every person, every time they access our services
2. Ensure comprehensive communication and engagement with our workforce, patients, carers, members, GPs and the public in the planning and delivery of healthcare

Working closely with HealthWatch Kent will support both of these objectives.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

None

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS / IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY:**

The aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are relevant to this report but no equality analysis is required.

**PROFESSIONAL ADVICE TAKEN ON ANY NOVEL OR CONTENTIOUS ISSUES**

None required

**BOARD ACTION REQUIRED:**

- ~~(a) to consider the recommendations and either support, reject or modify~~
- (b) to note the report
- ~~(c) to discuss and determine actions as appropriate~~
- (d) to agree the Memorandum of Understanding

**CONSEQUENCES OF NOT TAKING ACTION:**

A reduction in opportunities to carry out stakeholder engagement

## HealthWatch Kent

### 1 Overview

- 1.1 The Health and Social Care Act formalises the relationship between Healthwatch England, the Secretary of State, NHS England, Care Quality Commission, Monitor and English local authorities. HealthWatch have a unique power to advise this wide range of organisations. Their ultimate recourse is the Secretary of State. They have the power not only to report on the key issues that affect people who use services, but to expect that those in control respond to them. They don't have to agree, but they have to publicly tell HealthWatch what they are going to do to respond to their advice
- 1.2 Engaging Kent CIC has been established as an independent community interest company (a social enterprise) acting for the benefit of the community. This company will be the primary vehicle to deliver the functions of Healthwatch Kent, a new consumer champion for users of health and social care services.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, all local authorities in England which provide Adult Social Care services now have a duty to establish an effective, efficient and representative local Healthwatch from April 2013. Healthwatch will strengthen the collective voice of local people across both health and social care, influencing Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and joint health and wellbeing strategies – on which local commissioning decisions will be based through its seat on the Kent statutory Health and Wellbeing Board. Establishing successful Healthwatch organisations, rooted in communities and responsive to their needs, will mean working differently in many cases. It will also mean working much more collaboratively so that local Healthwatch organisations can operate as part of existing local community networks

**3 The role of Healthwatch Kent will be to:**

- Gather the views and understand the experiences of patients, social care clients and the public;
- Make these views known to commissioners and providers of health and social care;
- Make a strong and effective contribution through its statutory seat on the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Promote and support the involvement of these groups in the commissioning and provision of local care services and how they are scrutinised;
- Provide information, 'signposting' for services and support to make informed choices;
- Recommend the undertaking of investigations or special service reviews to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC); and
- Make the views and experiences of people known to Healthwatch England and provide a steer to help it carry out its role as national champion.