

LANCASHIRE HEALTHWATCH NETWORK

Memorandum of Understanding

This MoU creates a framework in which local Healthwatch organisations in Lancashire will work together

Ownership:

This Policy belongs to the Lancashire Healthwatch Network

Sign off by all participating members of the Lancashire Healthwatch Network

Implementation & Quality Assurance

Implementation is from July 2016 and this MoU is a working operational document until any alterations are formally agreed by all three local Lancashire Healthwatch.

The MoU is to be reviewed annually **and** in the light of experience, best practice or significant change where deemed necessary.

The Lancashire Healthwatch Network is committed to developing a model of practical cooperation to ensure public engagement in Health & Social care in Lancashire.

This MoU is between the 3 local Healthwatch organisations in Lancashire.

The partners to the agreement are:

- Healthwatch Blackpool
- Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen
- Healthwatch Lancashire

Purpose

This MoU describes the intentions of local Healthwatch in Lancashire in regards to their future cooperation and collaborative working.

The MoU suggests how local Healthwatch (the partners) will work together to ensure, and secure, true patient and public involvement in developments in health and social care.

The MoU responds to the specific challenges faced in the current health and social care landscape across Lancashire.



A Memorandum of Understanding between Local Healthwatch in Lancashire

Declarations

We agree that positive change to the health and social care system is needed and that increased involvement of the public, patients, consumers and service users' representation is needed in order to ensure that services are focussed on meeting the needs of the communities they serve.

We agree that the Lancashire wide transition programme in health and social care presents unprecedented opportunities to create a more person centred health and care economy. We also agree that ensuring the public are properly engaged with the process demands new mechanisms and appropriate resourcing.

We accept that by working together local Healthwatch can demonstrate a clear and significant mandate and capability with regards to public engagement.

We accept that by working together we can add more value to the Lancashire Change Programme and ensure citizens from all the communities of Lancashire have equal opportunities to get involved and make their views known.

In order to mitigate against under resourcing and reduce inequalities in provision of Healthwatch services, we commit to exploring all practical options for continued collaborative working.

We recognise that Lancashire Change programme may have implications for neighbouring (outside Lancashire) Healthwatch organisations. We will work with Healthwatch England and collaborate with them appropriately.

We recognise that they are not the only way to achieve effective community representation and will encourage and support work with voluntary, community and other local organisations and local residents.

Guiding Principles

We acknowledge that;

- Legislation fixes Local Healthwatch organisations to a Local Authority footprint and representation of Locality based communities.
- Local Healthwatch organisations know their local communities well, have close and strong relationships with individual service users, expert patient's groups, communities of interest, health champions, campaigners and the wider voluntary and community sector, and as such are best placed to advise on reaching their local populations.
- Local Healthwatch organisation are best placed (and in some cases statutorily obliged) to engage with the local health and care system and to contribute to local strategies including JSNA, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plans.
- Local Healthwatch work within their own individualised governance, management and operational frameworks and are as such free to retain their independence and manage their affairs as they see fit.

- In order to adequately represent the interests of all patients we will increasingly be required to provide coordinated approaches.
- We need to develop and agree consistent, effective and efficient approaches to cross-border, sector-based and city-wide issues, initiatives and services.
- We will use Healthwatch England's Quality Statements as an opportunity to raise standards and ensure an equitable Healthwatch offer is available to engage the public effectively and represent them in joint work.
- Within the constraints of our current resourcing we can achieve more through the sharing of skills, knowledge and capabilities.

1) Representation

The Lancashire Healthwatch Network believe that at a strategic level they can be effectively represented by a single (or small number of) representatives.

- Suitable representatives will be nominated by the Lancashire Healthwatch Network and will report to its respective local Healthwatch partners.

2) Lead Agency Principle

The Lancashire Healthwatch Network will appoint one of the partners as 'lead Healthwatch' when undertaking collaborative projects to:

- Progress specific developmental activities
- Co-ordinate operational projects / activities
- Act as the 'accountable organisation' for contractual purposes.

Refer to [Appendix 1: Collaboration checklist](#) (for operational activity)

Agreement Signatories

Signed for and on behalf of the Lancashire Healthwatch Network

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

Name

Position

Signature

Date

Healthwatch Blackpool

Name

Position

Signature

Date

Healthwatch Lancashire

Name

Position

Signature

Date