

Purpose

This document proposes a model to assist local HealthWatch to execute its statutory functions in respect of children and young people.

The proposed role offers youth health champions to listen to the views of children and young people and collate and share these with decision makers in child health services i.e. LAs, HWBs, CCGs and clinical senates and networks

This is a proposal for funding for this development.

Project Background and Context

Local HealthWatch will provide a collective voice for patients and carers, and advise the new clinical commissioning groups on the shape of local services to ensure they are informed by the views of the local community. They will champion patients' views and experiences, promote the integration of local services and improve choice for patients through advice and access to information. As a key partner in the new structure Local HealthWatch will have a member seat on the new health and wellbeing boards to represent the voice of the local population.

Local Healthwatch will be created by developing the role of existing LINKs (Local Involvement Networks). They will ensure that views of people who use care services, carers and the wider public become integral to local commissioning of services. They will support people who use services and carers to make choices about services, and will provide intelligence for HealthWatch England about the quality of providers.

In 2012 National Children's Bureau (NCB) commenced a 3 year funded project with HealthWatch funded by the department of Health. "Getting it right for children and young people" aims to increase the engagement of LINKs with children and young people and children and young people's voluntary sector organisations. Research published in June 2011¹ identified that across the LINKs surveyed in the research, involvement of children and young people was irregular; with a few engaging well with young people, whilst others thought that they were not allowed to involve children and young people in their work.

Of the 10 HealthWatch pathfinder sites in the east of England none are currently part of the NCB project, although some have expressed interest for the coming year.

Proposed Model

This model suggests a solution to local HealthWatch to assist in executing their statutory function to include the whole local population, through the creation of a **HealthWatch Ambassador for Children and Young People**.

Structure

The model suggests that each LA/HWB would have one young person acting as an Ambassador, who would be part of a group of 11 for the east of England, forming a virtual team to provide cover for one another and offer the opportunity to work across organisational borders to meet with children and young people, offer peer support and ongoing learning and development. The model would also enable the development of individual expertise in specific age groups such as younger children or specific presentations such as excluded groups or obesity.

The HealthWatch Ambassador for children and young people could be recruited from a pool of experienced and trained young people who have completed the Prince's Trust employment based Health

¹ http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/48063/links_vss_report_final2.pdf

and Wellbeing programme, which incorporates the Royal Society for Public Health Level 1 and 2 Award in Understanding Health Improvement. Participants have the opportunity to gain work experience with local health services and hospitals in addition to community project work thus ensuring a minimum level of training and experience as well as ensuring that the Ambassador has experience of vulnerable and excluded young people. This would offer access to an appropriate and sustainable pool of potential candidates alongside effective support structures

Case study

A recent programme in Luton carried out a consultation exercise around people's awareness of health provision in their community. The young people were responsible for creating a questionnaire and were trained in how to engage with members of the public, including how to deal with conflict. As well as completing the questionnaire, the group also helped to signpost people to NHS services. The group spoke to over 300 people over a 4-day period and provided valuable data for the NHS services.

Three graduates from these programmes are now Young Ambassadors for The Prince's Trust and have recently represented the views of young people in a Strategic Network for Child Health and Wellbeing 'Model of Care' meeting; giving the perspective of a young person's experience of the NHS. Their views have directly impacted on the design of future services

The HealthWatch Ambassadors would be employed as a 12 month apprenticeship through the Princes Trust, or a host partner, to combine continued learning to level 2 or 3 academic qualification alongside a local focused experiential placement mentored by the local participation worker in local authorities

Delivering the Children & Young Person's Perspective

The HealthWatch Ambassador's for children and young people would meet directly with local children and young people's groups exploring their experiences and views on specific priority areas. Thus able to hear and represent the views of a full demographic range of the young population through thematic summaries of strengths and concerns to local HealthWatch and the local health and wellbeing boards. The role would be inclusive of the health and wellbeing agenda including issues from GP's and primary care, public health, mental health, sexual health, accessibility of services etc.

The collated local area information would be shared with the east of England Strategic Network for Child Health and Wellbeing who would be able to identify the support required to address the key challenges and themes for the region.

Key tasks of the role would include:

- The development of a local Children and Young People's Organisation Directory to promote inclusion of all groups, provide local signposting and promote sustainability.
- Meeting with existing local groups of children and young people to hear their views on local priorities and development of themes for reporting back to local HealthWatch and therefore health and wellbeing boards.
- Developing a relationship with local support systems to signpost to those who may be of potential assistance.
- Collating views from local HealthWatch to feed into the EOE Strategic Network for Child Health and Wellbeing.

Benefits

- **A Solution to a long standing challenge:** the effective involvement of children and young people in decisions about the health and social care system.
- **Giving Young People a development opportunity:** This proposal offers localities the opportunity to offer an apprenticeship to invest in their local youth population.
- **Well informed decision making:** through access to children and young people of all ages across the diverse local population, giving more disadvantaged groups the chance to be heard, this role will be able to give a thematic overview of views and feedback to promote well informed decision making by the Health and Wellbeing Boards as well as adding depth to the core of local HealthWatch.
- **Evidence based:** the research to date demonstrates that the views of children and young people are more effectively heard by other young people. The proposed model offers a local lead within the local structure to be able to build the dialogue from young people through young people.
- **Proven structure of support:** the model builds on the Princes Trust track record of delivering benefits for both young people and for the local health and social care system to offer a robust framework to fit local structures. This framework secures the effective recruitment of young people from diverse and deprived backgrounds with existing training and experience and supports them to work as a team for HealthWatch and to work within their individual locality.

Who will be involved and their responsibilities

Local Authorities

A key partner in the commissioning of local HealthWatch with an important role to include children and young people within this service specification.

Local Authorities have a depth of expertise in participation across the looked after children agenda and other children's work streams; it would be helpful to connect this role to the participation worker to support local connectivity.

The Princes Trust

It is proposed that the role would be recruited from and be hosted within the Princes Trust system to provide a pool of suitably trained applicants and a skilled support system. The Princes Trust experience of developing and supporting young people in similar roles would manage their training and development as a group supporting and facilitating the Ambassadors work within the locality structures.

The Princes Trust Young Ambassadors group have been consulted and support this as being an opportunity for both young person development and effectively hearing the voice of children and young people on developing effective health and social care services.

Health & Wellbeing Boards

As Local HealthWatch has a seat at the Health & Wellbeing Board this body would need an understanding of the HealthWatch Ambassador's for children and young people and how to see and use their views as part of the structure.

Clinical Commissioning Groups

The views of children and young people can be beneficial in informing commissioning decisions. As Clinical commissioning groups evolve many are exploring children and young people champions. The HealthWatch Ambassador's for children and young people would have the opportunity, through local HealthWatch, to share the views they had heard with this wider audience.

Costs

Whilst local authorities have been allocated “set up” funding for local HealthWatch this is minimal and is not specifically identified for this type of development so Local Authorities, CCGs and local Health and Wellbeing Boards will need to consider the source of the investment funds.

Costs include:

Salary:

Approximate costs per local authority area would be:

- £9.5k for 16-18 year old apprentice: lower starting experience and expertise.
- £14k for 18+ years on minimum wage: greater maturity and mobility
- £16k for 18+ experienced young person: experience and expertise

Hosting/ Management and overarching supervision:

- For a full time Princes Trust Co-ordinator role for the 11 local area ambassadors: £26-28K. If all local areas shared this cost this would require a contribution of £2.5K per area.

Additional resourcing costs:

- Travel and some IT support
- Local Mentor: possibly some Participation worker time
- Training: an accredited training in advocacy to NVQ Level 2.

Based on all local authority areas being in agreement total costs would be £12-£20K per area depending on the age and experience of the young person and whether additional resources have cost implications. Smaller local authority areas may wish to consider a part time opportunity, sharing the additional capacity with larger areas to offer increased capacity.

Timescales

Should key partners approve this proposal it is important to engage with children and young people early to facilitate their influence on the development of local HealthWatch and the emerging structures. It is suggested that once funding and hosting arrangements are agreed that recruitment should commence in September 2012 involving the Princes Trust Young Ambassadors in the development of job descriptions and interviews with appointments from October 2012 to enable the role to be effectively functioning by April 2013 when the HealthWatch structures become fully operational.

Recommendations

1. That this proposal is agreed for funding and development across the east of England.
2. That localities consider the benefits of this investment for the long term future of Local HealthWatch
3. That localities consider the added value of including the views of children and young people embedded in the new structures.
4. That locality's explore future sustainable sources of funding to support this development, potentially through a third sector partner, for future years.
5. That Local Authorities in their commissioning of Local HealthWatch systems include in their specifications the importance of effective engagement with children and young people