

# Healthwatch

# Voices

Your views on your health and care services in Devon: Autumn 2017



## In this issue:

**CQC Maternity  
consultation**

**NHS dental  
services**

**Help us be a  
stronger local voice**

## Contact us

**0800 520 0640**

[info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

[healthwatchdevon.co.uk](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

Twitter: @HwDevon

Facebook: /healthwatchdevon

Healthwatch Devon,  
Freepost RTEK-TZZT-RXAL,  
First Floor, 3 & 4 Cranmere  
Court, Lustleigh Close,  
Matford Business Park,  
Exeter EX2 8PW

We welcome all contributions\* to Healthwatch Voices but regret that we cannot guarantee publication and we reserve the right to edit for reasons of space or style.

To contribute an article, please email [info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

\*Published items do not necessarily represent the views of Healthwatch Devon

Articles may include personal accounts which have been anonymised.

### Photograph credits

**Cover:** Nicola Giordano

**P4** Healthwatch Devon

**P5** Pexel 59042

**P6** Nicola Giordano

**P7** JPC-PROD

**P9** SWAFT

**P10** Healthwatch England

**P12** Pexel 266011

# Contents

<b>In this issue</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Your views</b>	<b>2 - 3</b>
<b>Devon churches tackling loneliness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>#takethetime</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>NHS Dental Treatment</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Have your say - NHS prescriptions consultation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Spotlight on ambulance services</b>	<b>8 - 9</b>
<b>Volunteer - help us be a stronger local voice</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Good Care Matters</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CQC Consultation #YourBirthPlan</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Feedback form</b>	<b>13</b>

# In this issue . . .

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Voices -

As we enter a new season, have you noticed how frequently matters on health and scientific discovery are being reported on in our papers and on television? As new discoveries are made and service delivery evolves it's you, the consumer of health and care services, that we want to hear from. Your voice and our reports can influence change.

The Healthwatch Devon staff and volunteers, have been active in recent months, gathering views and experiences in Devon, through online consultations (see the report on p.2) and meeting you in person at one of our summer roadshows (p.5). The insights and evidence that you shared with us are gathered in the form of reports and shared on a local and national level. We make formal recommendations for service improvements. Please come and talk to us when we are out and about or visit our website to take part in consultations and have your say (<https://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/speak-new/>).

There's plenty more in this edition of Voices, including a report on our conference focused on how churches address loneliness in their communities and congregations - read the Archdeacon of Exeter's reponse (p. 4).

There is also an item on how we have supported someone to get the type of dental treatment needed when it had previously been denied. If you have had problems with dental services of an particularly good service, as always we would like to hear your feedback and we will make sure that your experiences are shared with commissioners and providers. (p. 6)

We have a spotlight on the Ambulance Service and the increasing role it will place in helping people to stay longer in their own homes instead of in hospital (p. 8).

In this issue we want your views and feedback including: NHS prescriptions - which products should be made available; the CQC maternity consultation focused on the right to choose where to give birth. All interesting discussions and we look forward to hearing your views.

Finally, our team is enriched and made more dynamic thanks to the support of our Volunteers and Board Members. This Autumn we are looking for more talented and experienced people to join us, perhaps this will be you. Please take a look on page 10 for more information.

Please continue to share your views and experiences and we will make sure that your voice is heard.



Colin Potter, Chief Executive

## Alerts and escalations

We will always pass on matters of serious concern to the relevant authorities. Recently we have escalated concerns about the following:

- A family raised concern over increased care needs of a relative which were not being met by a care home
- Neglect and poor care for a disabled resident in a care home

## Out and About

We've been touring the local shows and we have more dates planned over the next couple of months.

We have heard a range of views about local services already and we look forward to having many more conversations.

Come and see us at:

- Great West Run 14 Oct
- Women of the World 15 Oct

# Your views

Healthwatch Devon believes that decisions about local health and care services should be based on feedback from service users.

We gather your views and pass them on to service managers to help them make better decisions.

This is what we heard between 1 Apr to 30 Jun 2017.



**78 people** used our feedback form to have their say on local health and care services

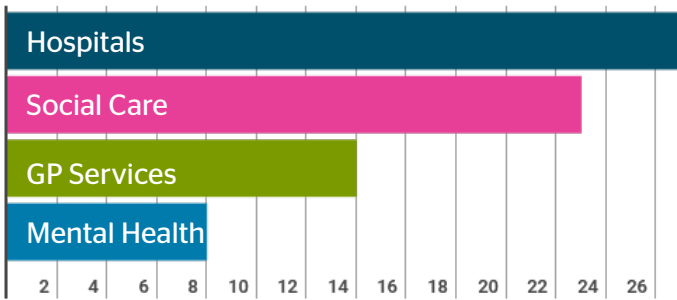
**53%** of all comments were **negative**

**1 comment** raised a **safeguarding issue**

**13 cases** were referred to another organisation for advice



## What people are commenting on



Other services included: Dentistry, Opticians, and Pharmacies.

## 48 different services

were commented on from medical centres, to hospital wards and more.



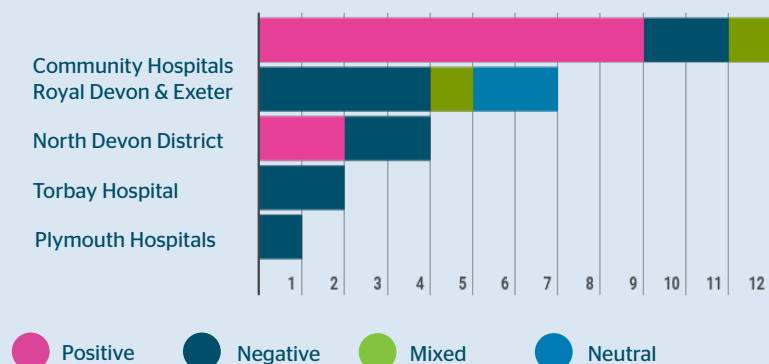
## How did your comments relate to our consumer principles?

<p>Being listened to</p> <p>9 comments</p>	<p>A safe, dignified and quality service</p> <p>24 comments</p>	<p>Access</p> <p>22 comments</p>	<p>Being involved</p> <p>3 comments</p>	<p>Essential Services</p> <p>6 comments</p>	<p>Information and Education</p> <p>10 comments</p>	<p>Choice</p> <p>6 comments</p>	<p>A healthy environment</p> <p>3 comment</p>
--	---	----------------------------------	---	---	---	---------------------------------	---

\*based on unprompted feedback from Devon's residents 6 comments

# Hospitals

**35%** of all comments received were about **hospitals**



## You told us:

*"I went into the North Devon District Hospital for my cataract operation. Waited around for 6 hours in total. The staff were very nice and polite. Offered me lots of tea. Operation went well and I was very happy with the service I received."*



# Social Care

**65%** of all experiences shared about social care services were **negative**

The top three themes were ...

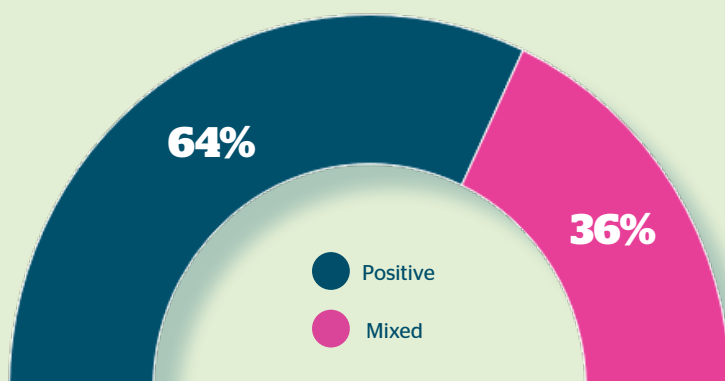


## You told us:

*"Earlier this year my father employed a carer for my mum. The weekly charge was agreed and social services also agreed to pay 60% towards this care. However, the weekly charge for the carer has now increased by 72% to over £1,500 per week. My father will struggle to pay this amount, which will lead to difficult financial circumstances in the near future."*

# GP Surgeries

**14%** of comments were regarding **GP surgeries and health centres**



## You told us:

*"My GP is brilliant, you can drop in anytime if you need something."*

*"My GP was very helpful. They referred me quickly to hospital for further treatment. I am happy with my care."*

The top 3 themes were ...



Find out about our work and share your views on local health and care services

Write to us: Healthwatch Devon, 3 & 4 Cranmere Court, Lustleigh Close, Matford Business Park, Exeter EX2 8PW  
t: 0800 520 0640 e: info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk w: healthwatchdevon.co.uk Charity no: 1155202

# Devon churches tackling loneliness

**How can churches address loneliness in their communities and congregations? Healthwatch Devon held a conference and asked Devon churches just that.**

Public Health research suggests that as many as 50,000 people in Devon experience some kind of loneliness.

This can have detrimental effects on our health and well-being, and lead to poor quality of life - for the young and old alike.

Rural remoteness brings its own challenges, but it's equally possible to feel lonely in the centre of Exeter as it is living in a hamlet in the north Devon countryside.

Devon's Christian faith community has a valuable contribution to help lonely people and wanted to get involved in our project.

Speaking at the conference, the **Archdeacon of Exeter, Venerable Christopher Futcher** said:

***"The church offers a safe space to bring people together - not just for worship - but for social events and community gatherings".***



*Devon church representatives discussed loneliness at our conference.*

## How churches can help:

### Comfort

Meaning having someone near, someone who can listen and support.

### Volunteers

Unpaid friends to visit and spend time in purposeful conversation.

### Encouragement

Enabling people to come together for activities make for the fabric of sharing and breaking down isolation.

### Home

We can take new life to them and show an interest in lives that feel lost.

**Martyn Goss, Director of Church & Society, concluded that:**

*"If the emphasis from our faith is on caring relationships, there is no room for loneliness. Our humanness is realised through the lives of those around us. We all need to feel loved and to return that love to others, and that is why the church has to tackle loneliness in Devon".*

**460 people completed our loneliness survey. You can still add your voice by visiting our website [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay)**

# #takethetime

This summer we took our photo booth on the road, meeting Devon residents and asking them to share their views.

We attended many events and country shows meeting lots of people all across the County. A particular highlight was getting to meet Devon based singer Joss Stone at Exeter Pride.

Many people stopped to talk and we've enjoyed hearing your views on local health and social care services and finding out what really matters to you.

This year we are asking people to *#takethetime*, to share their thoughts on what they think it's like to feel lonely and how people have become isolated or alone.

We've had a great response so far. Over 400 people have shared their thoughts with us and we'll be using this information to inform our work.

We look forward to seeing you soon at one of the shows listed on our website [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/events](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/events).



## Enter our photo competition

and win up to £100 in shopping vouchers



WIN  
Prizes

1st Prize  
£100

2nd Prize  
£50

3rd Prize  
£25

Share your photos by 15 November for your chance to win. For full details see [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/loneliness](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/loneliness) (1 entry per person)

# NHS Dental Treatment

Everyone should be able to access good quality NHS dental services. However, people tell us they have experienced problems and there seems to be confusion over treatment charges. Here is one example we have heard.

## Patient Story

*“During the last 12 months I have had 3 sets of dentures made by my dentist, all paid for by me, all of which only lasted up to 2 months each. At no point did my dentist advise me that due to me being unable to wear dentures that I could get dental implants on the NHS. The thought that I would have to continue to wear dentures that no longer fit and cause great pain or have no teeth at all has made me very stressed and upset. I cannot eat solid foods and have lost over a stone in a short time. I am caring for my terminally ill husband and feel unable to cope with this at present due to my depressive state and pain. These dental implants are vital to my mental and physical health. My dentist has completed an individual funding request for NHS funded dental implants and has asked my GP to write a supporting letter to confirm the impact on my health. However, my GP has refused, stating that they have no record of an impact on my health.”*

## How Healthwatch Devon helped...

We called the patient to find out how we could support her. Like many in her situation she didn't feel willing or able to make a complaint and wanted support and guidance about her treatment.

Our Healthwatch Champions were able to give her more information about NHS dental implants that can be available for people who dentures are unsuitable.

The patient was awarded her funding request and was referred to hospital for an initial consultation. She said: ***“I'm over the moon, this will change my life for the better”.***

### Three problems people have shared with the Healthwatch network ...

Access to NHS dental care



Lack of consistent guidance



Difficulties making a complaint



For more information about what has been said about dentists see [healthwatch.co.uk/dentistry](https://healthwatch.co.uk/dentistry)





# Have your say

You can tell us about any health or care service at any time. We want to hear about your experiences, whether they are good or bad. Your feedback can help improve local services for everyone. Please use our feedback form on page 13 or visit our website [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay)

## Which products should be available on prescriptions?

In 2015/2016, the Northern, Eastern and Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group (NEW Devon CCG) spent more than £560,000 on prescribing gluten-free foods. Prompting a consultation with GP's and clinicians and new guidance recommending patients aged 18 years and over should no longer receive gluten free products on prescription.



Last year 1.1 billion prescription items were dispensed in primary care at a cost of £9.2billion. This cost coupled with finite resources means it's important that the NHS achieves the greatest value from the money that it spends.

The NHS has put together a consultation document which proposes guidance for CCGs on what medicines should be available on prescription. The medicines are those which are of low priority for NHS funding and include items that are available over the counter to treat some of the following conditions:

- Diarrhoea
- Teething
- Nappy rash
- Mouth ulcers
- Head lice
- Insect bites and stings
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Indigestion and heartburn
- Minor burns and scalds

Examples of products which are currently prescribed on the NHS and which can be used to treat some of these conditions include: painkillers, medicines for fever, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, Eczema creams and

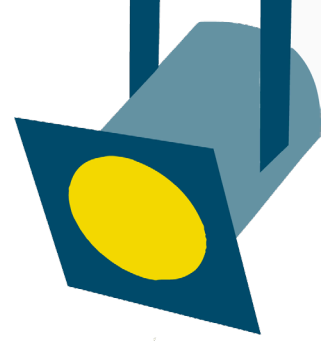
ointments and coughs and cold remedies.

You have until **21 October 2017** to have your say by completing our survey.  
[www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NHSPrescriptionConsultation](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NHSPrescriptionConsultation)

More details about the consultation and proposals can be found on the NHS consultation website  
[www.engage.england.nhs.uk/consultation/items-routinely-prescribed/](http://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/consultation/items-routinely-prescribed/)

**We would like to know what you think about these proposals. Do you have an opinion on what should be made available on prescription? How might this affect you and your family?**





# Spotlight on Ambulance services

**We often hear stories about the rising demands on our emergency services. We spoke to the South Western Ambulance Service (SWASFT) to better understand the daily pressures they face.**

Ambulance Trusts across the country have been facing increasing levels of demand for their services for a number of years.

SWASFT serves a population of more than 5.3 million which is one of the largest geographical areas served by any ambulance service across the country. Additionally, the South West of England is estimated to receive an influx in excess of 17.5 million visitors each year, some of the largest visitor numbers in England.

Below we take a closer look at their work . . .

## Did you know . . .



**They respond to 900,000 calls a year**

The number of calls has doubled in the last 10 years. During 2015/16, the ambulance service received 911,378 emergency and urgent incidents. Incidents managed through the 999 service are up by around 5 per cent year-on-year. Since 2014 this has meant an extra 270 extra a day.



**50% of patients are treated at home**

Many people who call 999 do not need an ambulance. Many patients receive advice over the telephone. Skilled clinicians can also treat patients in the comfort of their own home, avoiding inappropriate hospital admissions and less pressure on emergency departments.



**Prioritising calls for life-threatening conditions**

All 999 calls are prioritised to ensure those patients in an immediately life-threatening, time critical condition receive the care they need as soon as possible. SWASFT was one of the first Trusts to take part in a national NHS Ambulance Response Programme which aims to improve response times to critically ill patients.



## What people said about the ambulance service

*"My family and I would like to thank the ambulance crew who came to our aid. They were kind but at the same time very efficient, dedicated and obviously very well trained. They were quickly in touch with the coronary care ward which meant that by the time I arrived there the medical team were waiting for us. Without their expertise and such prompt care my outlook could have been very different."*

*"My son had collapsed and they were on our doorstep immediately and with their skill, by the time he got to hospital he was critical, they didn't know whether he would survive or not, and by the skill of the paramedics he survives, we really can't thank them enough. He's fine now, he had a pacemaker fitted since then. He's back home, and doing absolutely brilliant. We're delighted. We just cannot thank them enough."*

*"My son suffered a broken leg during football training. The ambulance was called several times, until one finally arrived over 2 hours later! The first response car arrived half an hour earlier and could do very little as they did not have any gas and air to relieve the pain. My son could not be moved and had to stay still on a freezing cold ground."*

## Have you got something to say about ambulance services?

Your views can help improve the quality of our local services; just a few moments of your time could make a big difference. Share your experiences with us

Visit [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay](https://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/haveyoursay) or call 0800 520 0640

# Help us to be a stronger local voice

Join the hundreds of people in your community who are helping make care better for everyone.

Healthwatch Devon is the independent champion for people using health and social care services. We help people find information, listen to what they have to say, and ensure their views are heard by those who plan, deliver and regulate local services.

Our voice can only be strong if people like you get involved.



## 3 ways you can get involved

### Become a Volunteer\*

Join our dedicated volunteer team who are actively involved in helping people have their say on local services.

- Enter and View Team gather views from people in care.
- Admin Team input valuable consumer data at our Exeter HQ.
- Promotions Team spread the word about Healthwatch in community settings

### Join the Board\*

Our Board Members serve for a fixed time and due to this some Board vacancies have emerged in the following areas:

- Treasurer
- Legal Adviser
- Human Resources Adviser

The Board meet on a monthly basis and as required between Board meetings, with a degree of flexibility.

**Membership** is free and open to all individuals and organisations in Devon who would like to see better health and care services influenced by public feedback. As a member you can attend our Annual General Meeting, vote on matters affecting the way our organisation is run and stand for election to our Board.

\* Suitable training and pocket expenses available for voluntary positions.

**For more information and to get involved please call 0800 520 0640  
or email [info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk)**

# Good Care Matters

We're looking for people to join our 'Good Care Matters' programme. This important part of our volunteering programme has been planned so we hear from the most vulnerable people in our communities.

## About our project

Thousands of people in Devon are receiving care in residential homes. Some care is very good, others not so good. No matter what the experience has been, those who have an experience of this type of care, or know someone who is, are best placed to know what good care looks like.

Our project aims to better understand what good care could look like in Devon. We have already heard from a few people but we'd like to hear from more. The views we gather can help improve the quality of services by letting those running services know what people want from care.

We are looking for volunteers who can help us listen to the views of care home residents and their families. We have a small team in place but we need extra note takers, drivers and good listeners to help expand our team.

If you are interested in volunteering with us please visit [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/volunteer](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/volunteer)

## What people are telling us

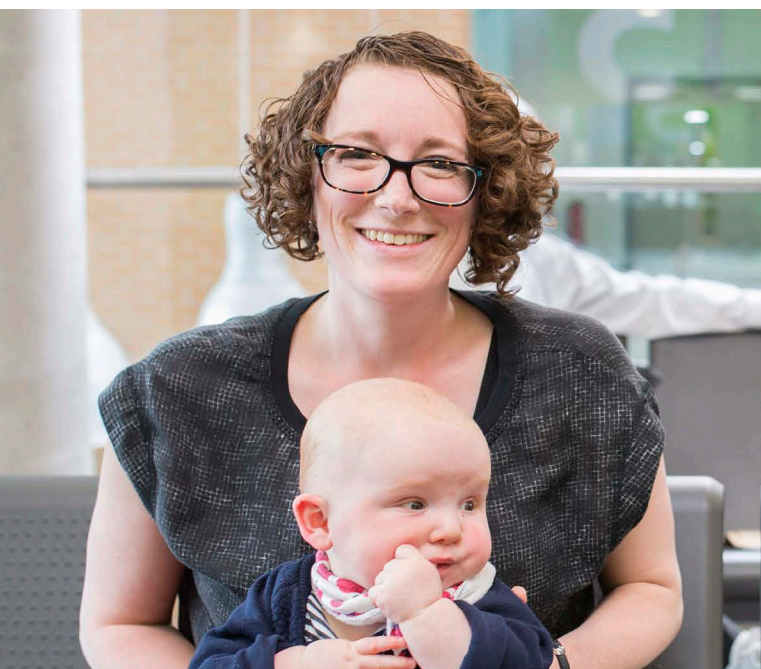


*Leisure breaks, living with like-minded people of my own age. Having groups of people who like talking together.*

*Staff approach to relationships is very important. They bath you and do all your personal things. I would like to go out more often...I'm not very stable though.*



*The staff, quality of care, interest and involvement, hotel standard of food. Things are taken care of very well and it's very clean. My mum's been here 18 months.*



### Are you a good listener?

**Do you care passionately about the wellbeing of vulnerable people?**

**Would you like to help improve local services?**

If you've answered yes to any of these questions then volunteering might be for you.

For more information about volunteering with us visit [healthwatchdevon.co.uk/volunteer](http://healthwatchdevon.co.uk/volunteer)



# #YourBirthPlan

## New CQC research reveals lack of awareness over right to choose where to give birth

New research commissioned by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has found that more women must be made aware of their right to choose their birth hospital.

The research, which surveyed over 1,000 women who had given birth in England in the last three years, found that 40% either weren't aware or didn't feel they had a choice about their birth hospital.

Of those who choose their hospital 53% stated this was a 'very important' decision, however 57% spent less than an hour choosing theirs, suggesting a lack of awareness about the amount of information that is available to help make an informed choice.

The CQC is encouraging all expectant parents to understand their right to choose where to give birth and to use CQC inspection reports in order to help make an informed, considered decision.

Heidi Smoult, Deputy Chief Inspector at the Care Quality Commission, explains: *"Pregnancy is a very exciting time but it can also be daunting and many women can feel at their most vulnerable. Women have the option to have a hospital, birthing centre or home birth.*

*It's vital that all women know they have a choice over where they give birth. It's a big decision and while advice from family and friends can be useful, it's important that expectant parents know there's free independent*



*information available to help them.*

*Our inspection reports provide detailed scrutiny of all aspects of maternity care - we urge all prospective parents to do their research to help ensure they have the best possible birth experience."*

The CQC found the top influencing factors effecting where women choose to give birth were the hospital being close to home (65%), followed by hospital cleanliness and safety (55%), a good reputation (39%) and caring staff (36%). CQC inspection reports include detailed information asking these key questions and the research found that of those who did use the inspection reports 95% found them helpful in informing their birth choice decision.

The research also found a third (34%) of mums spent less than an hour choosing the type of birth they want and making a birth plan, and 15% didn't do this at all.

As part of the campaign the CQC also wants new parents to share their experiences of maternity services. Heidi continues: *"We really want to hear about women's real-life experiences as this information supports*

*our monitoring, inspecting and rating of services and helps us provide the most up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the current quality of maternity care being provided at a local level across the country. We urge new parents to help other parents by sharing their experiences with us."*

The CQC is responsible for inspecting all hospitals, including private hospitals, GP practice, dentists, care homes and home care in England. Its maternity service inspections include all services for women that relate to pregnancy, including ante and post-natal services, labour wards, birth centres or units and theatres providing obstetric related surgery.

Each inspection answers five key questions: Is the service safe? Is it effective? Are the staff caring and responsive to people's needs and is the service well led?

For more information about the CQC's campaign and to find out how to share your experiences please visit [www.cqc.org.yk/yourbirthplan](http://www.cqc.org.yk/yourbirthplan)

To follow the CQC on Facebook and Twitter: @CareQualityCommission/ @CareQualityComm and join the conversation with: #YourBirthPlan



# Have your say

## on local health and care services



We are interested in what you have to say about local health and social care services. You can tell us about any health service in Devon. We collate all feedback (confidentially) and provide reports to inform health services managers decisions and improve services.

### Which service(s) would you like to tell us about?

### Tell us about your experience

*Thinking about your experience what would you like to tell us, who was involved, how did it effect you, how did it make you feel. Provide as much detail as possible.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Please attach an additional page if needed*

### When did it happen?

*If an exact date can't be given please indicate month and year it happened.*

DD/MM/YYYY

### Overall feeling about this experience (✓)

Postive  Negative  Mixed

### Are you giving feedback as an: (✓)

- Individual
- Relative, Friend or Carer
- Health/Care Professional
- Advocate
- Other

*Please specify* \_\_\_\_\_

If you feel you have been treated unfairly there are organisations that may be able to help. **Would you like us to contact you with this information?**

Yes  No

### Contact Information:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1st line of your address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Would you like to join our mailing list?

Yes  No



**Please return your completed form to:** Healthwatch Devon, FREEPOST RTEK-TZZT-RXAL, First Floor, 3 & 4 Cranmere Court, Lustleigh Close, Matford Business Park, Exeter EX2 8PW



## What do you think of health and social care services in Devon?

We're here to help make care better. We listen to your experiences of services, and share them with those with the power to make change happen.

Join the hundreds of people in your community who share their story with Healthwatch. No matter how big or small the issue, we want to hear about it. Together we can help make care better for everyone.

**#ItStartsWithYou**

it starts with  
**YOU**

[www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

t: 0800 520 0640

e: [info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchdevon.co.uk)

 [@HwDevon](https://twitter.com/HwDevon)

 [facebook.com/healthwatchdevon](https://facebook.com/healthwatchdevon)

**healthwatch**