

Nichola Esmond
Service Manager
Joint Commissioning Adults' Health and Social Care
Wakefield Council and Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group

27th May 2020

Dear Nichola,

Many thanks for your recent communications around the work you are doing in your joint commissioning role on behalf of both Wakefield Council and Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group, and particularly around the local Care Home sector response to the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown. I am more than happy to provide an overview of how Healthwatch Wakefield has been engaged with, and involved in, the system response to date.

From the outset of the work across Wakefield and district in addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Healthwatch Wakefield have been included in a number of strategic and tactical decision-making groups, including the Older & Vulnerable People Bronze Group, Hospital Discharge Support Group, and the Multi-Agency Tactical Planning Group (amongst others) where we have been kept up to date regarding the pandemic situation locally.

We have also been asked to feed in the views and voice of the public, gathered through our ongoing survey, into a wide range of decision making bodies, and we led the formation of a 3rd sector collaborative to ensure that the sector's activities and communications were aligned. The weekly interim reports from our survey have been shared with these groups, as well as all other key local health and care providers, including WMDC, Mid-Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, the Mental Health Provider Alliance and the CQC, to name a few.

More specifically, you and I have had discussions regarding the impact of the pandemic on the Care Homes in our district. You have shared details of the planning and activities locally, including providing copies of the information given to your team in regards both Care Home and Domiciliary Care services response, for which I am most grateful.

We have also discussed the ongoing monitoring and management actions you are undertaking on a weekly basis, and you have invited me to join the weekly calls you hold with Care Home managers and stakeholders.

Overall, I am delighted to state that Healthwatch Wakefield's contribution in addressing the current challenges has not been underestimated, and indeed has been welcomed. We feel that we have been invited and allowed to play an important part in helping shape the local response to the pandemic, and to help ensure service resilience locally as far as possible. The collaborative working arrangements across the Wakefield place are something to be proud of, and I am sure that our system will become all the stronger because of them.

We look forward to continuing to work with you through the Covid-19 pandemic response and beyond.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Jevon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gary Jevon
Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Wakefield