

November 2013



Mental Healthwatch

**together we
are stronger**

Mental Healthwatch

The National Survivor User Network (NSUN) is the only service-user-led charity supporting involvement, peer support and self-care across England.

When people with mental health experience are supported to look after themselves, each other and the services they use the result is better outcomes and taxpayer's money saved.

To that end NSUN has started the Mental Healthwatch scheme to encourage people with experience of psychological distress to join their new, local service-user and patient champion Healthwatch group.

In April 2013 local Healthwatch took over from Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) as the organisation representing people using health and social care services in each council area.

Your local Healthwatch should:

- Communicate service-user and carer views and experiences when local needs are assessed and strategies are prepared by the Health and Wellbeing Board of which it will be a member.
- Influence the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), which arranges NHS care in each area, to ensure that mental health and other services are right for local people.
- Provide information about choices and what to do when things go wrong.
- Inform commissioners and providers of care of what services are like for users.
- Enable people to share their views and concerns about their local health and social care services and understand that their contribution will help build a picture of where services are doing well and where they can be improved.
- Be inclusive and reflect the diversity of the community it serves. There is an explicit requirement in the Health and Social Care Act that the way in which a local Healthwatch exercises its functions must be representative of local people and different users of services, including carers.