



HEALTHWATCH AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Public and Patient Involvement in Health and Social Care

November 28th 2013

WELCOME TO THE HAPIA CONFERENCE – THURSDAY NOVEMBER 28TH

We are delighted that you are able to attend the HAPIA meeting and hope you will enjoy listening to and engaging with the excellent speakers that will be presenting today.

The theme of today's meeting is the role of Healthwatch in transforming care –the impact of our work on the safety of local services, gathering the data we need to understand what's happening locally, knowing enough about our local services to be the voice of public when it needs to be raised in the town hall, board meeting and face to face with care staff. Our focus is real influence and effectiveness when it comes to contributing to the development, monitoring, assessment and improvement of health and social care services.

Healthwatch must be representative of local communities and have the authority, power and clout to challenge systems and services that have ceased to work for the benefit of patients and receivers of social care. Regulators will come and go, but local Healthwatch must always be there listening, engaging, challenging and where necessary blowing the whistle.

HAPIA wants to see Healthwatch as bodies which are democratic and accountable to the public and defend the NHS. We want Healthwatch to empower patients, care receivers and carers and enable them to effectively influence planners, commissioners and providers of health and of social care. There is still so much fear of challenging decision makers, and we believe Healthwatch has a vital role in changing that culture from dependence to shared decision making and shared empowerment.

HAPIA will investigate and challenge health, social care and public health bodies, which fail to provide safe, effective, compassionate and accessible services. We are committed to inclusive and robust models of public involvement that embed the voice of the service user and carer into the monitoring and commissioning of health and social care services.

We do hope you will work with us to achieve these ends and that today's meeting will be stimulating and enjoyable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Alexander", is written over a white background.

Malcolm Alexander

Ruth Marsden