



Dear Colleague,

Re: Development of Telford and Wrekin Healthwatch

You will probably know that the Health and Social Care Bill which is currently progressing through its parliamentary stages will establish local Healthwatch organisations in every part of England on 1<sup>st</sup> October next year, and at the same time it is intended to establish a national organisation called Healthwatch England.

The government intends that local Healthwatch will be “commissioned” by the local authority and that Healthwatch England will be a statutory committee of the Care Quality Commission.

The proposed functions of local Healthwatch are:-

1. To provide an information and signposting service for members of the public seeking advice concerning health or social care.
2. To undertake visits to local hospitals, care homes and other places providing health or social care to the local community.
3. To represent the views and interests of patients and the public in the commissioning of health and social care services.
4. To engage with the wider community and patient and care organisations to ensure that their views are identified and made known at both local and national level in relation to all health and social care matters.

In order to carry out these functions local Healthwatch organisations will have statutory powers which will include right of “enter and view” to health and social care premises, membership of the local Health and Wellbeing Board and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the ability to raise issues of concern with those bodies, as well as with the Care Quality Commission and NHS Commissioning Board.

Telford and Wrekin Council and Telford and Wrekin LINK are working together as one of the “pathfinder” Healthwatch groups and in order to take this work forward

locally we are keen to engage with as many local third sector and community organisations as possible.

We are therefore inviting you to join us at a meeting on

**Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December at either 2.00 pm or 7.00 pm  
at Meeting Point House, Telford Town Centre.**

In order to give you more information on the current thinking on the development of Telford & Wrekin local Healthwatch and to, hopefully, identify some people who will work with us to establish the organisation and ensure that people in the area have the best possible organisation to represent them. We have decided to hold two meetings in order to provide an opportunity for people to participate at a time convenient to them.

**Please contact the Telford & Wrekin LINK office on 01952 614180 or contact Catherine at [c.pert@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:c.pert@staffs.ac.uk) to confirm your attendance.** If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Dag Saunders

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Chair Telford & Wrekin Link