

Healthwatch Solihull's response to Clinically-led review of NHS

cancer standards Consultation

Healthwatch Solihull welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation on the clinically-led review of NHS cancer standards. Our key role is to make sure that patients, the public, service users, and carers are at the heart of service improvement in health and social care. In line with our role, we have focused our comments on patient and public involvement and the proposed changes.

Patient and Public Involvement

Healthwatch Solihull are pleased to see that the consultation has been available to respond to for several weeks, giving the public time to consider the proposal and respond.

We are disappointed to note that we are only aware of the documents that have been available online and are unaware of any other steps taken to engage the public in this consultation. We also note that although the documents have been offered in any other formats, this is only stated at the bottom of the last page of document. This may exclude those with language or sensory impairment needs from taking part as it is not clearly noted on the NHS England website before the document is opened.

If other engagement activities have taken place, Healthwatch Solihull would like to see these publically and clearly displayed to inform.

Healthwatch Solihull would like to urge you to not only listen to people's views but also demonstrate how these views have affected the final proposal. This will ensure that people feel part of the decision-making process not just rubber-stamping decisions that may have already been made.

Healthwatch Solihull would like to see it noted who will be responsible for ensuring this feedback is collected and the process for considering the feedback, improving service design and feeding back to the public the changes their feedback has made.

There needs to be a continuous cycle of feedback and engagement with the public as the this moves forward.

Proposed Strategy

Healthwatch Solihull are pleased to see the commitment from the NHS improve the current pathways available to reach cancer diagnosis and treatment.

As a local Healthwatch, we are often contacted by members of the public about cancer waiting times, as some people are not happy about the amount of time they have to wait for cancer diagnosis or treatment. People have struggled to get the help and support they need to understand things clearly.

We agree with points made regarding communication of these changes to the public. There is definitely a need for a “greater clarity on the meaning of ‘communication of diagnosis’ to the patient would help distinguish ‘reaching a diagnosis’ from ‘finalising a treatment plan’” as based on feedback received this may cause confusion and then frustration to patients.

Healthwatch Solihull therefore believes that there needs to be clear guidance about how to access and communicate with the public about these changes to the NHS cancer standards, so they do not face unnecessary hurdles and they understand exactly how changes may impact their future care. Otherwise, only those able to understand the changes to the system are likely to adequately advocate for themselves to get support - increasing the likelihood of inequality/ inconsistencies across the UK.

Generally, Healthwatch Solihull agrees with the changes outlined in the proposal and we believe that the public need to be kept informed and engaged as this moves forwards.

Yours Sincerely,



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Project Officer



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