



Making a difference to patients, families and your local health and social care services in Darlington every day!

What the Health Connectors have been up to from January - May 2018

Community Outreach: Our team of volunteers have been out in the community holding various information sessions. This has been giving patients and their families and opportunity to ask any questions they may have about local health & social care services. We've visited places such as Redworth Community Centre, Café JJ and the Dolphin Centre.



Training: Our volunteers are currently undertaking various training courses including Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, and Dementia Friends training, the latter with the intention of following this up with Alzheimer's Society in the near future.

'What's Important to you?' Survey: During the last few months our volunteers have been asking the public to take part in our Survey to find out exactly what the public want Healthwatch to look at in the next few months within Health and Social Care. We gathered a staggering 171 responses. Thank you!

Enter & View: Some of our volunteering team have been busy conducting authorised enter & view visits into local care homes across Darlington. You can read more about our findings via our report:

www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/news/healthwatch-darlington-care-home-experience-report

Volunteer of the Month: Our Volunteer of the Month for March 2018 was Jamie Odgers (Below). We currently have a new recognition scheme ongoing for volunteers which is a chance for us to select one volunteer every 3 months to receive a recognition certificate for their enthusiasm and personal development as a Health Connector volunteer.

Our next Volunteer of the Month is to be announced end of June 2018.

To read Jamie's volunteer of the month interview please visit:

<http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/content/volunteering>



Congratulations Jamie from everyone at Healthwatch Darlington!



Our Future Plans

Mental Health Project: From the responses gathered from the 'What's Important to you?' Survey we were told by 45 % of survey users that we should prioritised Mental Health services. With this in mind mental health services will be our first project across the summer months (June - September). Our Volunteers will continue to develop an understanding into Mental Health services and produce a report for the commissioners and providers of these services in an effort to improve upon recommendations set out in the report.

Community Engagement: Our volunteers will continue to talk to the public through our community outreach sessions and events engaging in discussions around Health and Social Care services in Darlington.

Volunteers Week: It's not long until 'Volunteers Week' which takes place from 1st June-7th June 2018. We are very excited to invite you to: **Healthwatch Darlington's Volunteer Celebration and Recruitment Event** which will be taking place on:

Tuesday 5th June 2018, 12:00-2:00pm,
Pease's Suite, Dolphin Centre.

Outreach sessions in June:

- **Dolphin Centre:** 4th June 11.30am-1.30pm.
- **GOLD VIP event:** 7th June, 10am-2pm.
- **Darlington college:** 12th June, 11am-1pm.
- **Care and Share at the King Centre:** 13th June, 1pm-3pm
- **Friends Meeting House:** 21st June, 11:00am-1:00pm
- **Tees, Esk and wear valley mental health and learning disability information showcase:** 27th June, 10am-1:30pm.

Further Training: Coming up in July 2018, new volunteers joining the team will undertake Healthwatch introductory training and learn more about the various roles volunteer Health Connectors can do and the policies they will be required to adhere to as a volunteer Health Connector for Healthwatch Darlington. This will be the perfect opportunity for anyone thinking of joining Healthwatch Darlington as a volunteer to sign up now as our next round of training will be taking place very soon. The training is delivered by our very own CEO Michelle Thompson.



To book your place at our FREE 'Volunteer Celebration & Recruitment' event or to simply find out about our volunteering opportunities please contact Jemma Austin our Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator via j.austin@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk or on 01325 380145.

You can find more information about our Health Connector volunteering programme on our website via: <http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk/content/volunteering>