

Healthwatch Darlington is an independent consumer champion for health and social care users, and will help people find and access the health and social care services that are right for them

Darlington CCG Special Newsletter

Healthwatch Darlington (HWD) make it is easier for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to talk to communities and find out their needs and aspirations. We provide valuable insight for the CCG about the experiences of patients, carers and the public as part of arrangements to monitor the quality and outcomes of commissioned services.

This special newsletter brings you updates from the CCG since the Your Health, Your Town, Your Say event in July and subsequent newsletter in September, and how you can get involved in influencing decision making in Darlington.

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A message from Andrea Jones

As we are all preparing for the festive season and as 2013 draws to an end, it seems timely to look back on the year and reflect what has been achieved by Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group [CCG] in its first few months as a fledgling organisation as well as look forward to the on-going challenges ahead. It has been challenging and at times difficult as everyone in the NHS commissioning system has had to 'find their feet'. I am reminded that the responsibilities of our predecessors have gone to thirteen different bodies and at times we have felt that complexity.

At the beginning of the year, we were recovering from the 'authorisation process' and waiting to hear whether we would be confirmed as a 'statutory body' which was confirmed in March and allowed us to start the new financial year 1st April, as a fully authorised, with no conditions or restrictions, upon us. We were among the third of CCGs nationally with no conditions, something we were rightly very proud of.

In February, Darlington was instrumental in the hosting of a Clinical Summit' alongside DDES, North Durham, CDDFT and TEWV and the Area Team (NHS England). This recognised the new dawn of clinical commissioning in the NHS which demonstrated our collective intent to work differently in our local NHS, engaging and involving the wider clinical community as well as prioritise the areas that clinicians felt to be most important. The Summit was a defining moment as organisations came together as both commissioners and providers to collectively address the challenges that face the NHS in partnership and has already been followed up with a Second Summit, held in November that focused on the Frail Elderly which also included our Social Care colleagues with important contributions from patients and carers.

In Darlington we continue to be ambitious for local people and have taken forward a number of clinical work-streams and I would like to thank all those clinicians who have supported these important pieces of work. The urgent care work, nursing home pilot and primary care strategy work are some of the projects that have achieved significantly and lay strong foundations for on-going future transformation that is critical for delivery of high quality and effective services in Darlington.

I would also like to thank our colleagues both internally in the CCG team and within North of England Commissioning Service for supporting the CCG in its first year and rising admirably to the many challenges thrust upon us all!

The CCG is particularly proud of its relationships with our partners and is a member of the Darlington Partnership that has recently launched the Good Friends Scheme to encourage volunteers to support the elderly in the community which has deservedly received national attention and already secured over 200 volunteers. We hope it goes from strength to strength and contributes to making Darlington's communities more resilient and self-supported.

The CCG has also proudly supported the third Sector in a "Dragons Den" type innovation event, encouraging groups to make bids for £50,000 towards schemes that contribute to the CCG's overarching aims and objectives and five exciting schemes have been successful in securing a share of the funding.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to recognise the very important commitment the CCG and Darlington Borough Council have made this year to working much more closely together to ensure the Darlington population gets the most of the public money we have to collectively spend on health and social care in very challenging financial times.

I am under no illusion that next year will be even more challenging, but with the strength of partnerships in Darlington and clinicians resolve to make a better future for the people of Darlington, I am optimistic we will rise admirably to that challenge.

I wish you all the best for this Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Andrea Jones

Chair of Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group



Web: www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk

 Facebook: [Healthwatch Darlington](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchDarlington)

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A 'Big Conversation' About the NHS

NHS England is calling on patients, the public and staff to join in a discussion about the future of the NHS so it can plan how best to deliver services, now and in the years ahead.

The NHS needs to be able to deal with a range of challenges such as an ageing population, a rise in the number of people with long-term conditions, lifestyle risk factors in the young and greater public expectations. Combined with rising costs and constrained financial resources, these trends threaten the long-term sustainability of the health service.

There have already been changes to make savings and improve productivity. However, without further changes, a high-quality yet free at the point of use health service will not be available to future generations. Not only will the NHS become financially unsustainable, the safety and quality of patient care will decline.

Here are just some of the things we need to consider:

- Over 15 million people have a long-term condition and account for over 70% of all NHS spend.
- People living in the poorest parts of England will, on average, die 7 years earlier than those living in the richest areas, yet it is estimated that only 15-20% of inequalities in mortality rates can be directly influenced by health interventions. This is particularly relevant considering health funding is strongly linked to inequalities.
- Nearly two thirds of people admitted to hospital are over 65 years old.
- There are 2 million unplanned admissions per year for people over 65 years, representing 70% of all hospital emergency bed days.
- The proportion and absolute numbers of older people are expected to grow markedly in the coming decades and particularly in the over 85s.
- If the current models of care remain unchanged in England, the gap between funding and spending requirements will grow to £30 billion by 2020/21 in England.

The picture in Darlington

In Darlington we need to manage the increasing demand on healthcare resulting from a growing and aging population, with increasing levels of cancers, cardiovascular disease, stroke, dementia and long-term conditions such as diabetes and chronic obstructive airways disease (COPD). Cardiovascular disease and cancers already account for the majority of early deaths in Darlington.

We need to speed up the pace of change in delivering more services in the community and ensure we commission (purchase) the right services in the right place for patients. We aim to achieve the best outcomes for patients by redesigning pathways of care centered on the needs of the individual.

We need to do more to improve the overall quality of care and reduce unwarranted clinical variation in health care in order to get the best health outcomes and overall patient experience for everyone.

We need to speed up the pace of change in delivering more services in the community and ensure we commission (purchase) the right services in the right place for patients. We aim to achieve the best outcomes for patients by redesigning pathways of care centered on the needs of the individual. In order to deliver the levels of service quality in terms of safety, patient satisfaction and consistency across our services, we must ensure that we get the best return on investment

Our Local Authority is facing some of the same challenges and we are therefore working closely with them to ensure we can improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the local population together.

Priorities for Darlington

We have set out a number of priorities for healthcare in Darlington:

- Health services which are safe and of the highest quality
- Joined up services which benefit patients and the public and give best value for money
- Best possible health outcomes for our population

We need your views

To give us your views, log onto the website: www.darlingtonccg.nhs.uk, email mynhstees@nhs.net or write to: Communications and Engagement Team, Freepost RTGC-XBHS-JUSS, North of England Commissioning Support Unit, Teesdale House, Westpoint Road, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, TS17 6BL.

Find out more

You can find out more about 'call to action' here <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/thenhs/about/Pages/a-call-to-action.aspx>

Darlington GPs' commitment to giving local people a 'meaningful voice'

Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has appointed two new lay members to strengthen its team and who will sit on its Governing Body.

The CCG is a member organisation comprised of the 11 practices in Darlington and is responsible for commissioning care and services to meet the needs of local people. The CCG is only required to have two lay members, but Chief Officer, Martin Phillips, says that the appointment of a third lay member reflects the CCG's commitment to ensure that local people have a meaningful voice in the discussion and decisions of the CCG.

The two new members will join Michelle Thompson who was appointed last year as the CCG Champion for patient involvement. The new members are John Flook and Andie Mackay. Like Michelle, both live and work locally and are excited by the chance to work with partners to improve the health and well being of local people.

John Flook is joining as lay member for Audit and Governance and Andie with a portfolio to challenge 'current thinking' so that the CCG can continue to commission high quality services at a time of austerity in public finances. Both bring a huge amount of knowledge and experience to the CCG from within and outside of the NHS at a senior level. Lay members bring a broad perspective to the Governing Body of the CCG.

As lay member for Governance and Audit, John will draw on his wealth of NHS and financial expertise. John has significant experience in the NHS, having worked as a Director of Finance in the North East for 20 years. He is currently a Senior Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit Committee for NHS Professionals Ltd and an independent member of the Audit Committee of Sport England. John, who has a degree in Economics from Newcastle University lives in Darlington and is married with two adult children.

As a fireman, Andie will be able to reflect on how his service has responded in delivering public services in the ongoing cold financial climate. Andie is a serving Fire Fighter with over 27 years' experience with the County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service. Andie's career has seen him progress to senior manager level, with a wide range of managerial, operational and strategic level responsibilities. Andie lives in Gainford and is married to Rachel with four children and one granddaughter. He is currently Chair of the Parish Council and Governors at local Primary School. He is a graduate of the Institution of Fire Engineers and has a Masters Degree in Business and Administration.

How to get involved/how to get YOUR voice heard.

GP Practice Participation Groups (PPG's)

Are you interested in finding out more about your GP practice and the health and wellbeing needs of your community? GP surgeries welcome anyone in their community to be an active member of their Patient Participation Group. Involvement could be attending regular practice meetings or communicating via email, to discuss any changes or ideas for your surgery or services in Darlington.

This is a great opportunity to become involved in local health issues which affect you and your GP Practice. Your GP Surgery is interested in what you think and how we can all make a difference to the health and wellbeing of our population. You can influence decision making in the heart of your community by becoming your practice representative on the Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group's Community Council. To find out more about your own GP Patient Participation Group, please contact your GP Practice Manager or look on their website.

Community Council

It is a voluntary role which aims to bring a 'reality check' and critical challenge to health professionals and managers to ensure local views are sought and listened to. Members are also involved in other activities such as community groups, health forums etc. This allows them to 'listen-in' to the local issues related to the population and also to communicate what clinical commissioning is about. This means that if there is a 'hot topic' that the member is aware of, and that the local population is talking about, then this could be explored at the meeting. Membership also includes Healthwatch Darlington and eVOLution who are the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) infrastructure organisation for Darlington.

Public events

We organise a series of public events each year which are open to all.

Governing body

Our governing body meetings are open to the public. You are welcome to observe and there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Consultations

We regularly involve the public, patients, users and carers in decision making through involvement activity and consultations.

Details of upcoming meetings and all other CCG information can be found on the website www.darlingtonccg.nhs.uk

Dragons' Den approach identifies worthy health projects in Darlington

The local NHS group in Darlington responsible for planning and buying most of the health services in the area has identified worthy projects to fund using a Dragons' Den-style approach.

NHS Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) invited local voluntary and community organisations to get involved in addressing health issues by bidding for funds from a Community Innovation Fund.

Using a similar format to the well-known television series Dragons' Den, the CCG set aside a pot of funding and asked bidders to pitch their ideas to a panel of 'Dragons', including local GPs.

The successful projects are:

700 Club - £13,952

Based in Grange Road Baptist Church, the club delivers services to the homeless or those at risk of being homeless. Their project will provide health lifestyle coaching to their client group; helping people to better understand how lifestyle can impact on health. They will support clients in accessing appropriate services, including GP appointments, dentists and help this hard-to-reach group to better integrate and engage with mainstream services.

AGE UK - £6,240

Based at Beaumont Street West in the town, AGE UK has already established a number of popular cafes for local people, including a Stroke Club, Dementia Café, Veterans Café and a Friendship Group.

AGE UK plans to establish a further five cafes for older people in Darlington, focusing on healthy hearts, alcohol reduction, depression, hearing loss and macular disease. They will work with partners such as Action on Hearing Loss and the Royal British Legion to support older people and their families to find out more information related to the themed cafes, providing them with an opportunity to socialise in a supported, informal setting. It is envisaged that the cafes will be self sustaining by the end of year one, being popular enough to be run entirely by volunteers with minimum costs to cover room hire and refreshments.

Alzheimer's Society - £9,957

The Alzheimer's Society plans to establish two new activities in Darlington for people affected by dementia. Using experience from successful groups elsewhere in the country, the society plans to introduce a 'Singing in the Brain' group, a music-themed activity in Darlington that will run fortnightly and provide attendees with a social and fun activity, with refreshments. Once the 'Singing in the Brain' activity is established, the society plans to introduce another activity with a sport and recreational theme, such as table tennis or snooker.

Groundwork North East - £11,628

Based on Victoria Road, Groundwork plans to introduce inclusive play activities for children aged 5-13 years who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas in the Borough. Activities will focus on the impact of health, promoting healthy lifestyles and the importance of physical activity and healthy eating. They will also focus on activities that promote self confidence, self esteem, resilience, pride and problem solving

Applications for the CCG's community innovation fund were accepted from community groups, clubs and societies, voluntary sector organisations, registered charities, schools, parish and town councils, social enterprises and other not-for-profit organisations.

Andrea Jones, Chair of Darlington CCG said: "We were very excited to hear the groups pitch their projects to our group of 'Dragons' and would like to thank everyone who put in a bid for our community innovation fund..

"Now that we have awarded the funding, we are very much looking forward to seeing each of the projects develop and succeed in their aims, which closely match the strategic objectives of the CCG and our vision to *'enhance the quality of life for families in Darlington and ensure people receive the correct advice and support for their own health and wellbeing.'*

Have a Good Friend on Hand This Winter

If you know an older or potentially vulnerable person who could benefit from some help over the winter period, there are hundreds of 'Good Friends' volunteers across Darlington waiting to be matched and be on hand in their time of need.



For example, if they have difficulty getting out of the house in harsh weather - local Good Friends can clear the path of snow and ice, allowing them to make a doctor's appointment or go shopping. They may only need someone to pop round and say hello once every few days and see if there are any light jobs that need doing, the kind of simple tasks that most people take for granted.

The project is delivered by Age UK Darlington and Neighbourhood Watch, as well as being supported by many organisations across the Darlington Borough.

If you are a service provider then we can also provide further information such as leaflets, flyers and registration forms - as well as providing information about your service to participants of the project via our directory.

Please encourage someone you know to sign up today - there is no pressure but the ways that a Good Friend could help are endless.

You can call us on **01325 362 832** to register, or visit us online at goodfriends.org.uk

Web: www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk

 Facebook: Healthwatch Darlington

 Twitter: @healthwatchdton

Darlington's Big Community Switch



**You could
save
money
on your
energy
bills!**

- Register for free with no obligation to switch and we'll find you a great deal
- We'll tell you how much you could save and you decide whether to switch
- The more people who join the switch the more money you will save
- Businesses and Voluntary & Community organisations can register for free
- More people = more purchasing power = more £s in your pocket so tell your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours

For further help, and personal 1 to 1 support to register, phone Phill at
Darlington Citizens Advice Bureau on 01325 256999 (ext. 122)

For information online visit

www.darlington.gov.uk/bigcommunityswitch

big community switch



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Darlington

Web: www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk

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Darlington

Clinical Commissioning Group

Urgent Care Centre

Dr Piper House

Opening hours: 8am-6pm every day.

At other times:

If you need urgent care - call 111

From 6pm – 8am, urgent care services will be available at the Emergency Department, Darlington Memorial Hospital.

In a genuine emergency - call 999



When it's less urgent
than 999

If you need help fast but don't think it's a 999 emergency, you can call NHS 111.

You can ring 111, 365 days a year to reach a full range of local health services, including out of hours doctors, community nurses, emergency dental care and late opening chemists.

Calls from landlines and mobile phones are free - just like 999.

An emergency means an illness or injury which could be life threatening.

This can include conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, fits, asthma attacks, head, neck and spinal injuries, major bone injuries, road traffic accidents.

For children and the elderly this can also include breathing difficulties, or any situation where you are concerned about serious illness.



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KEEP CALM AND LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Colds, sore throats, hangovers, upset stomachs and headaches can all be treated by you at home.

Make sure you get plenty of rest ✓

Take a painkiller if needed ✓

Keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet ✓

www.keepcalmthiswinter.org.uk

 [@keepcalmne](https://twitter.com/keepcalmne)

Self-care

Pharmacy

NHS 111

Keep calm and look after yourself this winter

During the winter months, the demand for NHS services increases significantly as cold weather means there are more slips, trips and injuries. Generally more of us feel unwell during the winter as we spend more time indoors and coughs and colds are passed around our family, friends and colleagues at work.

This all adds up to more of us having an accident or becoming unwell with a winter bug, meaning more people want to see their GP, attend accident and emergency or call 999. We've produced [this](#) booklet to provide advice for people in Darlington.

'Keep calm and look after yourself' is our strong message this winter, to remind people that many of the common winter ailments and illnesses are easily treated at home, or with advice from a pharmacist - with no need to see a doctor or nurse.

The 'Keep Calm' campaign which gives advice on how to treat a range of common winter conditions by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home or speaking to your local pharmacist.

Don't panic!

There is no need to panic when feeling under the weather, most normally healthy people with a winter illness do not need to see their GP, attend A&E and absolutely do not need to call 999, so remember to 'keep calm'.

Colds, sore throats, head-aches, hangovers, upset stomachs, coughs, aches, pains, and winter vomiting should all be treated at home or with the advice of your local pharmacist, with pain killers, rest and plenty of fluids.

By doing this not only are you helping to reduce the spread of winter viruses to other vulnerable patients in NHS waiting rooms - you are also keeping appointments available for people who have serious health conditions that must see a doctor or nurse.

The campaign message of 'keep calm and look after yourself' runs across themes including:

- **Keep calm and ask a pharmacist**
 - **Keep calm and call 111**
- **Keep calm and antibiotics aren't always the answer**

If you do need an appointment with your GP call them for information about their extended opening hours and also visit www.keepcalmthiswinter.org.uk

Get Involved

Healthwatch Darlington want to hear from you!

Healthwatch is the new champion for Health and Social Care in Darlington. We can give children, young people and adults a **POWERFUL** voice, making sure **YOUR** views and experiences are heard by those who run, plan and control health and social care services. Healthwatch Darlington will help people to get the best out of services by talking and listening to people in every part of Darlington and then telling local services about people's experiences



Together we WILL make a difference.

Tell Us Your Story

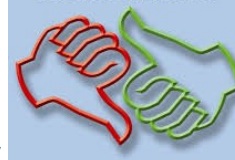
Have you had an exceptional experience when using Health and Social Care services in Darlington?

Healthwatch Darlington are putting together a selection of case studies to help us and the people who pay for services to understand what is happening in local services.

We want to know, good or bad, how your experiences have impacted on your life and if you would recommend the services to others.

Do you have a story to tell? If so, contact us on the details below and let Healthwatch Darlington share your experiences with the people who make decisions.

COMPLAINTS
COMMENTS
COMPLIMENTS



Contacting Healthwatch Darlington

Telephone: 01325 380 145

Text: 07525237723

Information and Signposting Freephone

0808 801 0383

Address: Freepost RTEH-TUCJ-TGCU, Healthwatch Darlington, CVS Building, Church Row, Darlington, DL1 5QD

Email: info@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk

Local Healthwatch Development Officer: Diane Lax

Community Participation and Engagement Officer: Andrea Goldie

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