



Welcome to our August update. Throughout the summer, while enjoying the sunshine, the Healthwatch Dorset team have been helping people with enquires and complaints about accessing local health and social care services, we've continued to run our *Because we all care* survey about care during COVID-19, and we've been preparing for the important engagement work we have planned for the Autumn. Here are a few things we would like you to know about this month...

Community Mental Health Services



Primary and community mental health services don't always meet people's needs. Through their Mental Health Integrated Community Care Project, Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are currently working with local people and communities to improve mental health services for adults and older people, and those that support them.

They want **people aged 16 and over** to share their honest opinions about mental health services in the community - what's good now, what doesn't work, and what changes would make a positive difference?

The CCG survey, which runs until 9 October 2020, is available on-line and in paper and easy read versions - [all can be accessed here](#), or experiences can be shared over the phone by calling Dorset Mental Health Forum on 01305

257172. Spread the word and encourage people have their say to improve mental health services in the county.

Support services for homeless people – get involved

We will be working with homeless support groups over the next couple of months to find out more about people's experience of health and care services, particularly community mental health services. If you have experienced homelessness or you work with a support group and would like to be involved in this project, [please get in touch](#).



Young people help shape mental health services in Dorset

We published our report about young people's experiences of mental health services in Dorset and shared it with Dorset CCG to inform ongoing development of services in the county.

The report, *Your Mind, Your Say: Young people's views of mental health services in Dorset*, presents findings and recommendations based on our work (prior to the coronavirus) with young people who don't always have a strong voice. This includes those excluded from school, young offenders, care leavers, young asylum seekers and young people who are experiencing homelessness. [Read the report here](#).



The doctor will zoom you now – how was it for you?

We recently took part in a national research study designed to understand the patient experience of remote and virtual health consultations. We will report on the findings next month, but in the meantime, we are gathering local feedback about people's experiences of medical appointments online or over the phone.

We can help local services to improve how they deliver care remotely, but we need to hear from you first. Share your feedback of care during COVID-19 <https://smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CoronavirusHWD/>.



That's a wrap – a new film about mental health

We are collaborating with some film and media students to create a film focusing on mental health awareness. This month, we filmed three Healthwatch Dorset volunteers sharing their personal experience of mental health to promote the message that 'it's OK to talk'. The film is now in production and we are looking forward to releasing it on World Mental Health Day in October.

Rules around wearing face masks

Although it is now mandatory to wear a face covering in shops and on public transport, some people are exempt. This includes children under the age of 11, and people who are unable to wear a face covering because of a disability or where it will cause severe distress. Find out more about the latest government advice: <http://orlo.uk/ZiADD>.



Some supermarkets are providing lanyards to support customers who are exempt from wearing a mask, to help raise awareness and avoid misunderstandings. Do let us know if you are aware of any similar schemes.



Share your views and get involved - help make health and social care better for you and your community

Healthwatch Dorset is the county's independent health and care champion. We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved. These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference.

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