

Healthwatch Lewisham response to proposed changes to south east London Clinical Commissioning Groups -

October 2019

To deliver the NHS Long Term Plan, the vision in south east London is of a 'system of systems' with an Integrated Care System (ICS) across geographical and health and social care boundaries. To enable this to happen a merger of the six existing south east London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) is proposed, alongside the creation of a Borough Based Board in each borough. This merger is to take effect on 1 April 2020.

Healthwatch Lewisham (HWL) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to South East London CCGs.

As a local Healthwatch, we are the independent champion for local people's voices in health and care services in Lewisham. Our work ensures that local people's views and experiences are known to decision makers. "Through public engagement we form opinions on service standards and whether provision could be improved. Using our local knowledge, we can make recommendations to ensure that patient experience directly influences the work of local health and care services." We are an integral part of the regulatory framework for NHS services and have a crucial role in scrutinising the quality of services and the gaps in provision for local people. We may also make recommendations to Healthwatch England or the CQC to conduct reviews or investigations.

We are committed to seeing that new CCG arrangements uphold and build on the successes of public engagement to date. We, therefore, welcome the proposal that Healthwatch Lewisham will sit on the Borough Based Board.

We also welcome the ongoing commitment to engagement with local Healthwatch and the proposed funding by the South East London Commissioning Alliance to provide strategic liaison between the six south east London Healthwatch and the proposed South East London CCG. (SEL CCG)

Managed and hosted by local Healthwatch, an independent representative will sit on the Governing Body of SEL CCG.

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Both of these positions will be valuable in bringing the views and experiences of patients and the public into decision making and help to improve transparency and accountability, especially for the new CCG. Together they reflect a commitment to the importance of the role of Healthwatch and the public and patient voice.

We acknowledge the engagement and communications work carried out by Lewisham CCG as part of the proposed changes. Active and good engagement and communications at the regional and local level will need to be adequately resourced throughout the merger process and in the future. It is essential that local people have clear accessible information that allows them to understand what has changed and what, in practical terms, these changes mean for them.

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Healthwatch Lewisham is delivered by Community Waves a Registered Charity (1159132) and Company Limited by Guarantee (9044348). Community Waves is a voluntary and community organisation that builds bridges between local people and decision makers by using effective engagement and involvement to impact on community wellbeing and development.

