



**Alcohol Services  
Follow Up Report  
July 2018**

## Introduction

Local Healthwatches have been set up across England to create a strong, independent consumer champion with the aim to:

- Strengthen the collective voice of citizens and communities in influencing local health and social care services to better meet their needs.
- Support people to find the right health and social care services for them by providing appropriate information, advice and signposting.

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees works with local people, patients, service users, carers, community groups, organisations, service providers and commissioners to get the best out of local health and social care services. This doesn't just mean improving services today but influencing and shaping services to meet the needs of the local communities tomorrow.

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees is steered by a Board of volunteers, commissioned by the Local Authority and accountable to the public. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees are the only non-statutory body whose sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak-out on their behalf.

Healthwatch has:

- The statutory right to be listened to; Providers and Commissioners must respond to Healthwatch within 20 days of submission of requests for information or reports.
- The statutory power to Enter & View publicly funded health and social care services.

A statutory seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## Rationale for follow up

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees carried out an investigation in September 2017 to research public awareness and experiences of local alcohol services, alcohol related services (such as advice/counselling), alcohol-related hospital admissions and A&E attendances.

Healthwatch Stockton carried out some research to gain an understanding of the views of a cross section of Stockton on-Tees residents regarding local alcohol services and the equivalent service provision.

This work also supported the JSNA, to capture intelligence to support and ensure commissioning strategies are cohesive. The aim of this was to enable better provision of services, for those in areas of greatest need.

Following this piece of work, Healthwatch Stockton made a number of recommendations to Public Health to help improve service user experience of alcohol services. The aim of this follow up is to identify if the recommendations have been actioned and if service user experience has improved as a result.

### **Methodology**

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees contacted Public Health and Change, Grow, Live (service provider) to ask the following questions:

#### **Questions for Change, Grow, Live:**

1. Since publication of our report in September 2017, do you feel the public and service users are now aware that CGL is now the current service provider or do service users still think that Lifeline is still the service provider?
2. Since September 2017, are you aware of any public consultations which Public Health have carried out regarding alcohol and substance misuse services to help inform the JSNA?
3. Any other information / updates regarding service user experience of alcohol and substance misuse services?

#### **Feedback from Change, Grow, Live:**

Change, Grow, Live consulted with 18 service users. The following responses were received:

When service users were asked if they are now aware that CGL is now the current service provider, 17 said 'Yes' and 1 said 'No'.

When service users were asked if they were aware of any public consultations which Public Health have carried out regarding alcohol and substance misuse services, 17 said 'No'.

Change, Grow, Live have a service user involvement team which is made up of:

- Service user representatives who represent service users' views and opinions regarding their local service or project.
- Regional service user representatives who represent their service at Regional Service User Councils.
- National service users representatives who represent their region or directorate at the National Service User Council and attend CGL management and governance meetings.
- Service user leads and coordinators who are staff members that support service user representatives; acting as a conduit between service users' and all areas of CGL business.

By having effective and meaningful service user involvement processes they are able to:

- Ensure that their services are accountable to service users
- That the service user experience is improved
- Provide a vehicle through which consultation on future action plans can be undertaken
- Promote healthier lives, wellbeing and active citizenship
- Increase service user choice
- Foster positive relationships between staff, volunteers and service users
- Ensure any changes in service provision are communicated clearly, in a way that makes sense to those affected by them
- Develop more innovative ways of working to improve service quality

Reference: <https://www.changegrowlive.org/what-we-do/about-us/our-approach/service-user-involvement>

#### Questions for Public Health:

1. What additional work areas were included within the alcohol JSNA as a result of our report?
2. In your response you acknowledged the need for additional consultation within the JSNA as an area for future development, how have you achieved this?
3. How have you ensured a more representative response for public consultation from males and those under 25 years old?

### Feedback from Public Health:



Health and Wellbeing

Big plans for the health of our people

Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees  
TS18 1LD  
SAT NAV code: TS19 1UE  
Tel: 01642 527054

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018

HealthWatch, Stockton  
Catalyst House  
27 Yarm Road  
Stockton on Tees  
TS18 3NJ

Dear Healthwatch Stockton

Thank you for your email dated 13<sup>th</sup> June and your continued interest in the alcohol service and service user needs.

Since I last wrote to you in October, we have been working with partner organisations to develop the strategic thinking and partnership approach to the creation of the JSNA and the strategic plan for alcohol for the borough.

Please see my response to your request for an update on the recommendations from your report (September 2017) below:

**Recommendation 1:** It is clear that some of the people who completed the survey believe that Lifeline still exists. Whilst Healthwatch is sure the change of provider was widely circulated, perhaps a new promotional campaign of all available services could be written into the JSNA.

**Response:**

Oct 2017: We appreciate that there is work to do in raising the profile of the alcohol service which is now under CGL, however we feel this recommendation is an issue that would be addressed more appropriately on an operational level, this will therefore be picked up through existing contracting mechanisms.

July 2018: Our current provider, CGL, promotes the service as part of the operational management of the service. We will promote the service as part of our refreshed webpages (currently underway with the assistance of SBC Communications Department).

**Recommendation 2:** As over 71% of those who completed the survey were women, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees recommends that Public Health target the views of more males. These findings may be very different from the intelligence gathered by Healthwatch.



**Response:**

Oct 2017: We accept the finding that a high proportion of women completed the survey; therefore we will include the need for further consultation within the JSNA to ensure a more representative response.

July 2018: CGL have a Service-user Forum to ensure the views of service users are heard. Public health will be performing a health needs assessment with regards to alcohol as part of a review of alcohol services. Our services consult men in the development of services which target them.

**Recommendation 3:** Due to the lack of responses received by CGL, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would recommend that Public Health work closely with the people using these services to ascertain how they found the help and information they needed, and to see if the service meets their needs. Also, to find out how people found out about the service.

**Response**

Oct 2017: We accept the finding that a high proportion of women completed the survey; therefore we will include the need for further consultation within the JSNA to ensure a more representative response.

July 2018: CGL has a Service-user Forum to ensure that views of service users are heard. The service is monitored and reviewed through a process of contract management. Service users are consulted as part of service improvement methods.

Yours sincerely



**Sarah Bowman-Abouna**  
Director of Public Health

## Conclusion

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees were pleased to find that service user awareness has improved with regards to the change of service provider. The service user involvement team at Change, Grow, Live ensures that service user views and experiences are taken on board to help inform service delivery and improvement.

Positive actions are being taken by Public Health to work with partner organisations to develop an approach to help inform the JSNA and strategic plan for alcohol services in Stockton-on-Tees. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees will continue to monitor the development of this plan and service user feedback during 2018/19.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank Public Health and Change, Grow, Live for their feedback and support during our follow up investigation.