

Healthwatch Manchester - Enter & View Visit Protocol

Background

Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 amended by Statutory Instrument Number 3094 of 2012 allow for authorised Healthwatch representatives to undertake visits of premises of Health and Adult Social Care providers within Local Authority areas such as Manchester. These visits are described as "to enter, view and observe". The Regulations make the following stipulations:

- Healthwatch must have an agreed and published "visit Protocol"
- Healthwatch may not undertake visits of excluded premises e.g. parts of a care home, which are not communal areas, or premises which are occupied by one or more persons as their home.
- A service provider may refuse a visit if the purpose of the visit is to view excluded premises or to observe excluded activities. A visit may also be refused if it would compromise the effective provision of care services or the privacy or dignity of any person.
- Healthwatch will appoint "Authorised Representatives" who will conduct visits on behalf of the Healthwatch.
- "Authorised Representatives" must obtain a criminal records certificate under section 113A of the Police Act 1997(a).
- A person nominated by Healthwatch will satisfy themselves that the prospective representatives are "suitable for the purposes entering and viewing, and observing the carrying-on of activities on, premises owned or controlled by a service-provider"
- Where a report or recommendation is made as a result of a Healthwatch visit, the Service Provider(s) must, within 20 working days, acknowledge in writing receipt of the report and provide an explanation of any action the relevant service may take in respect of the report or an explanation of why no action will be taken.
- All visits undertaken on behalf of Healthwatch Manchester must fully comply with the guidance.
- All visits undertaken on behalf of Healthwatch Manchester must be agreed and authorised in advance by the Healthwatch Manchester Chief Officer.
- A visit report must be produced within 10 working days of the visit detailing any observations or recommendations made by the "authorised individuals". (Service providers must acknowledge and respond to any visit report within 20 working days of receipt)
- The Chief Officer of Healthwatch Manchester will nominate up to a maximum of 50 Healthwatch Manchester representatives to become "authorised individuals" to conduct any visits on behalf of the Healthwatch.

- Authorised Representatives will agree to undertake training to help them carry out their visit duties in an effective manner. The lead staff member will arrange relevant training and development opportunities.
- The lead staff member will undertake "DBS" checks for all authorised individuals, at no cost to the individual.
- The lead staff member will act as the "nominated person" on behalf of Healthwatch to satisfy themselves that the prospective representatives are "suitable for the purposes of entering and viewing, and observing the carrying-on of activities on, premises owned or controlled by a services-provider"
- The lead staff member will maintain and update the Healthwatch Manchester Enter & View Authorised Person Database and will issue all Authorised Persons with written evidence of that individual's authorisation.
- For member safety and security any visit must be made by at least two Authorised Individuals. It is recommended that the maximum number of Authorised Members on any one visit is 6, unless circumstances and the type of visit dictate otherwise.
- If an authorised individual does not feel well on the day of the visit, they should refrain from taking part and inform the lead staff member.
- At all times when conducting visits Authorised Individuals must comply with the Healthwatch Manchester Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities Code of Practice.
- At all times during visits Authorised Individuals will respect the privacy and dignity of patients, residents, carers and staff.
- Any contravention of this protocol will be dealt with under the Healthwatch Manchester Dignity at Work Policy.
- The lead staff member will provide support and direction in organising and conducting visits and producing visit reports.

Document Control Sheet

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Signed

