

HEALTHWATCH DISTRICT MEETING – FURNESS DISTRICT – 19TH FEBRUARY 2014

Thank you to those who attended our first district meeting of Healthwatch Cumbria in the Furness area. Hopefully we will get to meet you all again at future meetings.

This meeting was opened with an introduction from Sarah Allison - Health and Wellbeing Manager for Healthwatch Cumbria.

Alec Proffitt – Engagement Officer for the south of the county then presented to the audience about the roles and responsibilities of Healthwatch Cumbria and how the public can get involved. What our plans are for moving forward, plans for engagement and the purpose and structure of district meetings.

Guest speaker – Corrine Ralph, Senior Commissioning Manager for Furness, Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) addressed the audience and explained the role of the CCG in this area.

Questions from the audience included:

Are GP's the best people to be managing commissioning? Should their skills not be focused on being doctors?

There is a shortage of GP's in Cumbria – attempts are being made to encourage more professionals to live and work here.

GP's have the best interests of the 'people' in their hearts and are able to share information, to inform commissioning, regarding the needs of everyone and what services will benefit people.

But are they just becoming business men/women?

Maybe – but they still need to adhere to their contract/markers and responsibilities first. Practices can be shut if this doesn't happen.

Do commissioners commission the cheapest solution?

No – they look at the bigger picture.

CCG should look at nutrition – a high percentage of children (age 6) are obese, and by the time they enter secondary school this figured is doubled?

Currently there is a project being set up in Ormsgill – healthy cookery classes for children and their parents.

Who is paying for the new medical centre planned in Barrow (incorporating most GP services)?

Money is from central government.

A representative from the Furness Health and wellbeing board (HWBB) believes the Cumbria CCG, to be positive and genuine, but the public needs to get on-board. This will achieve the health service we deserve. (You will sometimes disappoint some people – but you can't please everyone all the time).

There are some developing plans for Millom because of a recruitment problem. One solution would be to get together staff from hospitals, GP's, and nurses in Millom hospital to ask how they would prefer urgent medical assistance to be delivered. This may mean, re-training. There is no more money to expand/build new services, but re-training may help the best use of what they already have in place.

Future dates for district meetings will be advertised on our website.

To sign up for our e-newsletter and keep up to speed with what Healthwatch Cumbria are doing, please register at www.healthwatchcumbria.co.uk or drop an email to info@healthwatchcumbria.co.uk