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**Healthwatch Tameside Board Membership:**

**What’s it all about?**

Q. **What does Healthwatch Tameside do?**

A. Healthwatch Tameside (HWT) was set up in 2012 as part of the Government’s Health and Social Care Act. It carries out several statutory and discretionary functions designed to provide an independent consumer voice for local people using NHS and social care services in Tameside.

HWT gathers the views of local patients, service users and families in order to review the quality of health and social care services and shape the way services are designed and delivered. The services we cover range from GP practices, dentists, hospital-based services and pharmacies, to social care services covering care homes, reablement and ongoing care where health funding is involved.

**Q. What is the Healthwatch Board?**

A. The Board is the group of people who are responsible for making sure that Healthwatch Tameside is run properly. It is also responsible for making sure we are representative of local people and our work is based on the feedback and views of local people.

Q. **What does the Board do?**

A. The Board does three main things:

* Makes sure that Healthwatch meets its legal obligations and use its legal powers in the best interests of local people;
* Makes sure that Healthwatch does what it is being paid to deliver – our funding agreement contains detailed information about the services that Healthwatch must provide;
* Agrees how we will set our priorities – the staff team is responsible for our day to day work, but the Board is responsible for setting the overall work areas and the policies and procedures the staff team will follow.

Q. **What do Board members need to know?**

A. The Board needs a mixture of knowledge and skills. Some Board members will have expertise in running an organisation and some will have a good knowledge of working for, or with health and care services. We expect every Board member to have something to contribute to one of these areas, but we recognise that a range of backgrounds and experiences is valuable – it helps the Board to make balanced, well informed decisions.

Q. **What is expected from Board members?**

A. We expect Board members to be committed to good quality health and care services for people in Tameside. In addition to this, there are some specific expectations:

* Attendance and participation in Board meetings – approximately once every two or three months
* Preparation for Board meetings – reading the papers before the meeting and asking for more information if you need it
* Participation in Board training and development activities
* Acting as an ambassador for Healthwatch – including respecting and representing the Board’s agreed position on a range of topics
* Always acting selflessly, in the best interests of Healthwatch, in line with standards of accountability in public life.

Q. **How will Board members be supported?**

A. All new Board members are offered an induction programme which helps them to understand what Healthwatch is expected to do and what their role is.

Every year the knowledge and skills of the Board are reviewed, and a training programme is organised to make sure that Board members have the information they need to be confident in their role. The Healthwatch staff team is also available to support Board members, especially those who are new to their role.

Healthwatch staff will provide detailed papers and information about topics for Board members.

Q. **Who will be on the Board?**

A. The Healthwatch Tameside Board will have up to 10 members. Members are appointed based on the skills and experience needed to make up a balanced Board able to deliver all its responsibilities. There are up to 2 members nominated from Tameside Council, which commissions Healthwatch.

Q. **Are you looking for any specific skills and experience for the new board members?**

A. Yes. We are specifically looking for people who have one or more of the following experiences or knowledge:

* Commissioning or delivering health and/or social care services or public services particularly within a health and social care environment.
* Running an information or advice service for members of the public.
* Experience of managing domiciliary care or residential/nursing home services.
* Management or leadership of a voluntary organisation or social enterprise.
* Experience of working with children and/or young people.
* Strategic management of a large organisation.
* Community engagement with residents to enable their experiences to influence policy and service delivery
* People who live and/or use health and care services in Tameside plus members of organistions (including public and private sectors and voluntary, community and social enterprises) active in Tameside
* Experience as an unpaid family carer.

It is not necessary for each appointed board member to have knowledge, skills and experience in all these areas – providing the board has these collectively. If you feel that you have something to contribute from at least one of these areas and would like to be considered for appointment to the board, please complete the attached form and return it to julie.beech@healthwatchtameside.co.uk