Report to Health Overview Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group - MSK Healthshare

September 2018
1 Background

In September 2017 Healthwatch Oxfordshire started to hear from the public and patients about Healthshare. Concerns were raised following a letter to patients who had appointments for MSK services or had been referred for a service. Concerns were raised by patients contacting us by email and telephone, via Patient Participation Groups and their Locality Forums.

The letter told them that their appointments were cancelled and that Healthshare will be in touch to rearrange appointments. The letter was badly written, confusing, frightening to patients, vague about who Healthshare were, gave the impression that patients were no longer being treated by the NHS, no contact details, and left many patients worried about whether they would get a new appointment.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire contacted the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) and had meetings with representatives of Healthshare to convey the concerns that had been expressed and seek clarification as to what was happening. Specifically:

- the closure of the service at Wantage Hospital
- the poor communication with patients about where their next appointment will be and when - some patients have had their appointment cancelled and do not yet know when - or where - their next appointment will be
- the fact that people have been told their information will be given to the new provider which is a private company.

We subsequently asked for clear communication with the patients and public as to the exact situation. This was actioned by the OCCG and promoted by Healthwatch Oxfordshire through our website. Appendix A details what was posted on the Healthwatch Oxfordshire website on 22nd September 2017.

In early February 2018 we began to hear from patients and the public about issues with contacting Healthshare via their telephone number. This was raised with Healthshare via telephone and a follow-up meeting, and OCCG were informed. Healthshare admitted that they had a problem with the telephone line as they were waiting for a new system to be installed. We suggested that they put a note on their website and direct people to using email to contact them. This was agreed but it took further intervention by Healthwatch and OCCG for this to happen. OCCG informed us that the new telephone system had gone live and should solve these problems being faced by patients.

From February through to June 2018 Healthwatch continued to receive patient stories all of which were negative experiences of the system - referral to receiving the appropriate service. Occasionally we heard about negative experiences of care and signposted patients to the OCCG complaint’s procedure and email address
for Healthshare. Most comments we heard were about the patient’s journey from GP referral to physio / consultant.

Again, in June 2018 Healthwatch began to hear from patients that they could not get through to Healthshare on the telephone. We alerted the OCCG and met with Healthshare. We were told by Healthshare that they were aware of this issue and that it was caused by ‘spikes’ in calls for which they had no explanation. Again, we suggested they put the message up on their website directing people to their email address.

1.1 What we learned
The OCCG and Healthshare are receptive to hearing about patient experiences and act - if not always in a timely fashion.

Healthshare, when aware of communication issues, does not always communicate in a timely manner with their patients ‘we are aware...’ but had not done anything to ease the stress imposed on patients.

Patients and public were from the change over date in September became suspicious of Healthshare and are not shy in coming forward to Healthwatch Oxfordshire with their experiences.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire can effectively inform and influence changes in communication by the provider for the benefit of patients.

From information provided to us by OCCG in August 2018 the waiting times for patients and number of patients waiting is still extremely high. The Business Case - Integrating Musculoskeletal Services 2 March 2015 promised:

- Self-referral - this is still on hold
- Person centred approach
- Information management and technology
- Primary and secondary care interface meeting

Much of what we have heard does not reflect any of the above.

The Business Case also identified benefits (5.5.1 Benefits Table 2). Healthwatch Oxfordshire request that the Task and finish Group assess the attainment of these identified benefits against the quality of the patient experience.

2 Summary of what we heard
In total we have heard from more than 50 patients all often describing a dire patient experience, summarised as follows:

- confusing and poor communication between Healthshare and the patient
- often long and complicated patient experience through from GP referrals, Healthshare, to GP referral, to Healthshare, to hospital, back to Healthshare, referrals...and so it goes on
• people not being able to contact Healthshare by telephone despite frequent, and often over a long period of time, making calls; emails not being answered
• patients not knowing where to go to make a complaint
• long waiting times for appointments

The following sections detail what we have heard from patients about their experience of being referred to Healthshare by their GP. Generally, these experiences are of the process - the patient journey. They include:

• 37 telephone calls to Healthwatch Oxfordshire over a seven-week period July - August 2018
• 10 patient stories - many asking for help with making complaints.
• 8 reviews on Healthwatch Oxfordshire Feedback Centre

Information Healthwatch Oxfordshire has given to individuals including contact telephone number, email address, signposted to Healthshare Oxfordshire web page and ‘How we are doing?’ link, seAp details who provide advocacy to people going through NHS service complaints, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group how to make a complaint information.

During our outreach in Wantage in May and Abingdon in August we were approached several times by Healthshare patients (often in error as they thought we were Healthshare) complaining about the administration of Healthshare / appointments / referrals / distance travel.

3 Key concerns and recommendations

1. Constant problems with accessing Healthshare telephone number
   a. Increase capacity at Healthshare to answer calls within agreed time
   b. Do not let people hang on waiting for reply then cut them off!
   c. Offer a call back system

2. Patients not receiving written confirmation of appointment time and location
   a. Automated letter sent within 24 hours of when appointment made with contact number and email for cancellation / further information
   b. Use mobile telephone text for confirmation and reminder

3. Patients are being asked to travel substantial distances to appointments
   a. Review of locations of service considering where people live who are being referred
b. First choice appointment offered at closest location - ask the patient as they will know travel / public transport needs

4. Information about Healthshare not given to patients on referral - confusion arises about whether this is an NHS service or not and how to contact them prior to receiving ‘welcome’ letter
   a. General Healthshare leaflet given to all patients referred by GP to include contact number, email, commitment to contact within set time

5. The Healthshare complaints procedure, including how to complain, should be accessible on the web site and in paper form. Patients who file a complaint should then be responded to stating whether Healthshare are treating this as a formal complaint.
   a. Healthshare must be required to report to OCCG on complaints received.
   b. Healthshare should place the Healthwatch Oxfordshire widget on their web site, thus giving patients a route to an independent voice.

6. ‘How are we doing?’ is not part of a complaints procedure.
   a. Healthshare should be required to report to OCCG analysis of ‘How are we doing?’ not just on the patient survey.

7. Patient satisfaction survey does not ask any questions about the referral process or administration.
   a. Healthshare Patient satisfaction survey must include questions about the referral process, and communication between Healthshare and patient.

4 Patient stories
The following ten patient stories have been sent to Healthwatch from patients or their relatives who either wanted help with seeking a solution to their problems or simply wanted Healthwatch to be aware of their experience of the Healthshare service. The stories are reproduced as written by the patient but dates and names have been deleted replaced by [xx] or blocked out in black to ensure anonymity.

In addition, sections 5 and 6 of this report details:

1. what we have heard from patients / members of the public / carers / relatives over the telephone in the past two months
2. extracts of patient feedback left on the Healthwatch Oxfordshire Feedback Centre since February 2018.
4.1 Hip replacement saga

Hip replacement saga - summary

After 20 months the patient met all criteria required for referral for hip surgery; in November 2017 their GP made referral, e-mailed form, to Healthshare. The following is taken from the patients report to Healthwatch Oxfordshire:

‘It is not clear to [patient or relative] why a referral to Healthshare was required when the GP was quite clear that hip surgery was indicated, but the GP informed us that this was standard procedure and he could not refer direct to NOC.

The patient heard nothing from Healthshare and on [20 days later] decided to contact them direct via the phone number on the CCG website in that time. {xxx} answered the phone and after she looked at the email inbox, she confirmed that the Dr’s [xxx] email referral had arrived on 03/11/2017 but had not been opened. She said that there were 45 emails in the inbox and couldn’t understand why Dr x’s was still there. She said she would message the “other office”. It was unclear to us how the emails were treated as she could not just forward them. She said there was only mobile phone communication at that time, a landline not yet having been installed and we could not phone the “other office” direct as they did not give out mobile numbers to the public. However, she said she would chase up our referral and get back to us.

[She] rang at about 0910 the following day. She said that Dr x’s email referral had now been seen by a clinician that morning and as the referral was outside the capability of Healthshare it had been forwarded to the NOC under the ‘Choose and Book’ procedure. She gave us the phone number so that we could follow this up. Later that morning we picked up a phone message from the NOC to hear that an appointment had been made for my husband to attend outpatient clinic at [xxx] on Monday 27th November! This he duly did - was assessed and placed on the 3 - 4 month waiting list for a hip replacement. We couldn’t fault the NOC - very efficient, professional and courteous.

We do wonder what would have happened to the referral if we hadn’t chased it up with Healthshare - we would probably still be waiting for the “other office” to do something!’

4.2 Podiatry problem

A colleague of mine from xxxx Patients’ Panel wrote me the following email:

"I went today (xx January) to the follow-on appointment from last May when I saw the Podiatry service at Abingdon Hospital [pre Healthshare contract]. I have been waiting for a follow up since July (should have gone back 2 months after my initial May visit). Eventually I had the Health Share appointment today.

I went to a different place (East Oxford Health Centre) but saw the same man who I had seen in May.
He didn’t have my notes from my last visit - “sorry we don’t have the records, we have to start all that again now with HealthShare” - so I had to go through the whole history etc again.

In the course of giving him all the history, I reminded him how he had proposed treatment at my last visit (“you said you wouldn’t recommend an operation as it can be risky”), and he said “the treatment pathways are all different now with HealthShare so what I told you about treating this condition last May is probably different to what I am going to say today”. My condition hasn’t changed!

Then he told me that the inserts for my shoes which he sorted for me last May (and seem pretty good to me) now have to be replaced by a different kind (“HealthShare use a different provider”). So I had to be all measured up again for something I’ve already got and works well!

All a bit frustrating - and what a waste of money and resources... Lost notes, changed treatment plans mid way through treatment and duplicate materials ...

Added to which the carpet was filthy (on which I had to walk barefoot) and there were no proper consulting rooms - just a big open plan room separated into curtained off sections - so we could all hear each other.

In Abingdon hospital it was clean and pristine with proper clinical spaces and consulting rooms.

I felt a bit sorry for the podiatrist I saw and wondered what all this has done for motivation of staff.”

4.3 Lack of physio

An instance of lack of physio - My husband broke a bone in his pelvis. He was told on his return home to organise urgent physio via his GP. This was offered six weeks later. When he could not keep the date offered he was offered one in Chipping Norton (from his home in [the south of the county]). My husband is 77 years old. Had he sat at home in a chair for that time he could have lost significant amounts of muscle. (We knew about bath boards and bought one for access to the bath. Our shower is only accessed by getting into the bath.)

The privatised MSK appears not to be catching up with the "back log."

4.4 March 2018 - 6 months cut off

I wanted to draw your attention to another issue with the MSK service that I hadn’t heard about until contacted by a resident. He has an annual MSK podiatry review relating to shoe inserts however when he didn't receive his appointment he followed up to be eventually told by Healthshare that they had filtered out anyone who hadn’t been seen in last 6 months and anyone outside that category was discharged from the service without their knowledge. This clearly must be having
an impact on large numbers of people - the extent to which we might not know yet.

He has also forwarded me the correspondence he had with Oxford Health (who he originally approached). Although very detailed, there is a worrying tone in the correspondence from Ox Health which is very unhelpful and confusing for patients who often have no concept of internal markets.

I wondered if you already knew about this issue and whether there could be some further discussion around the 6 months cut-off.

4.5 February 2018
I was referred to the MSK hub in January by my GP as I have a knee injury which is making it difficult for me to walk, weight bear and is incredibly unstable. I had my appointment on [beginning of] Feb. I was quite impressed with the physiotherapist. He seemed thorough and took my situation seriously. He thinks that I have ruptured my ACL and torn my meniscus. He referred me for an urgent MRI and advised me that it would be 2-4 weeks. He also advised me unofficially that I could access an MRI via A and E. He has advised me not to drive and to continue with the crutches.

I contacted the MSK hub today as I hadn’t heard anything. They advised me that they had done everything ‘their end’ and to contact the JR radiology dept. I contacted the JR and they said they had not received anything. I went back to the MSK hub and a different lady advised me that they had not sent my referral yet and they would do it now and to contact the NOC tomorrow (Tuesday). She sensed my exasperation and said they were dealing with thousands of patients, which I do understand, but I wasn’t given the right information on 2 occasions. I find this extremely frustrating and am concerned that I now have to wait another 4 weeks for an MRI scan. I previously contacted the Manor who will charge £542 for a knee MRI scan and require a referral. I seriously am considering this but am concerned that if the result goes back to the MSK hub it will get lost in the system again.

My situation has not improved with regards to instability and walking and am relying on friends [for transport etc].

4.6 Trapped nerve
Since October 2017 I have pain in my thighs when I am standing up, walking or reaching up. The pain is much reduced when I am sitting or lying down. In November 2017 my GP, [xxx], referred my case to the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre.

The background history is that I had similar (but lesser) pain in 2015 which the Falls Clinic identified (after an MRI scan on xx June 2016) as due to a trapped nerve coming out of my spine. While waiting for a triage consultation at the NOC, I started treatment by a physiotherapist, [xxx]. I did exercises under his direction and the pain reduced and I found that I could walk increasing distances without pain. At the NOC triage consultation on xx September 2016 I was advised to
continue physiotherapy and was told that NOC surgeons felt that surgery was not indicated at that time. Over the next year the pain reduced and I found that I could lead a fairly normal life.

But on [xx] October 2017 the pain returned - even worse. I went back to the physiotherapist who reported to my GP that he could not improve the flare up symptoms and suggested reference to a spinal specialist. I was then referred to the NOC in November 2017.

I received a “welcome” on 23 November from Healthshare promising further contact later. This occurred in February 2018 when I was offered a consultation in Oxford in June or in Faringdon in April. I chose to see [xxx] on xx April 2018 in Faringdon. He told me that he would accept me on his Support Programme consisting of advice on pain management and access to a blog on managing spinal problems. I accepted this offer and was promised a confirmatory letter in three weeks. No such letter came, so I telephoned Healthshare on 23 May 2018. The woman who answered said she knew nothing about this programme, but would ask [xxx] to telephone me at 9.10am on 19 June 2018. No such call was received.

I went on holiday from 4 to 11 June 2018 and when I returned I found three messages on my answering machine asking me to come to see [surgeon xxx] on xx June. I then saw him on [xx] June and asked why I had been summoned. He said that I had been referred to him for surgery. I pointed out that in September 2016 the NOC had said that surgery was not indicated. [xxx] said that I should not have been so advised and that, if I changed my mind, I should contact him.

When I returned home and opened the letters which had come while I was away I found a letter from the Churchill Hospital inviting me to a Pain Management Clinic on xx July and a letter from the NOC inviting me to a Spinal Surgery Clinic on xx June. This was rearranged for [xx] July (to be after the Pain Management Clinic).

[Since found out that Healthshare referred patient to NOC and Churchill BUT did not inform the patient. Patient only found out when received letters inviting to attend clinics].

4.7 June 2018
I am writing to you to express my concerns about Healthshare. I have been receiving physiotherapy for a trapped nerve from one of their practitioners, [xxx], who has seen me 3 times of the last three months. Her work seemed to be helping, but then the problem reoccurred, and my GP referred me for an urgent steroid injection using an ultrasound scan. (A previous injection without ultrasound had been ineffective.)

When I saw [xxx] I mentioned the referral. She checked on the computer and it was displayed as a routine referral and I was offered an appointment in mid-July. I expressed my surprise and dissatisfaction and was told they would check with the GP. I raised the matter with her myself and she confirmed that it was an urgent referral and asked her secretary to contact Healthshare. I have learned today from
[xxx] that she had established that the referral was triaged by someone at Healthshare who had never met me and was unaware of my medical history but had nevertheless downgraded it to routine without consulting either my GP or the physiotherapist treating me.

I find it unacceptable that my GP’s clinical decision based on her long familiarity with my long-time health needs should be arbitrarily overridden in this manner.

I have now three weeks after the original referral been offered an initial consultation with [xxx] at the Horton Treatment Centre, because Healthshare are unable to offer me an urgent appointment. I find it difficult to believe that Healthshare are fulfilling their contractual obligations satisfactorily.

**July update - re response to complaint**

Getting a response from either Healthshare or the CCG has like drawing teeth! I have finally received a letter from Healthshare, which I find totally unsatisfactory. I have discussed it with my GP, who was clear that as she did not know which physio was treating me, she could not have contacted her direct. Secondly it was only on the initial referral form that she checked a box about distress ie before the referral was downgraded and not, as they suggest, afterwards.

The CCG have not responded to my concern about whether the contract is being adequately met. When I spoke to someone about this, I was told that they had not realised that I saw it as a commissioning issue, though I think I made this very clear.

The outcome for me was that I received the guided injection on **July [xx]th**, a very long and painful delay, which impacted seriously on my mental health [xxx].

I shall see [xxx] on August [xx]th. He is considering a referral to a spinal surgeon. The saga drags on.

I am very dissatisfied with it all, but I don't have the emotional strength to pursue it any further. I must leave it in your hands.

4.8 Having physio (Healthshare) following joint replacement surgery

April - July 2018

- Pain - suspected DVT
- Physio stopped referred to advanced physio at another site
- Referred to Manzil Way for scan
- Following scan advised see GP asap
- Saw duty GP on day

August 2018

- Saw consultant at JR, after numerous tests including a more in depth ultrasound (I was there all day) was advised I needed to see a [xxx]
specialist at Nuffield and was sent home with morphine for the pain and advised to rest for 6 weeks.

- xx August - received letter from Healthshare asking me to call them to make an appointment - which I was really puzzled about!
- Rang Healthshare was told needed to go to Deer Park to have an injection - queries why as I knew nothing about this and who had requested the injection. Was told to ask at my appointment.
- Attended Deer Park physio - they knew nothing about any injection. I asked why I was there they said for an assessment, I was really puzzled as I had already had an assessment and I explained that I was waiting to go to the Nuffield to see a [xxx] specialist.
- I was told that I would not get an appointment at the Nuffield unless Healthshare deemed it appropriate and was told I had to go for a scan. I asked what about the diagnosis the consultant at the JR had given me, I was told that further investigation was needed before a referral to the Nuffield.
- At this stage I was really upset, in enormous pain and dosed up on morphine. I said I was not going to have an x-ray as I was told by a hospital consultant that I needed to see a [xxx] specialist. I was told that nothing further would be done until I had an x-ray as in their opinion they disagreed with the consultant at the JR.
- I agreed to have an X-ray and was then told that the physio I was talking to did not have the authority to sign the X-ray request form and could I pop back in a couple of days to pick up the signed form!!

I am appalled at such a waste of money referring me back where I started in April to be re-assessed for a problem I had in April. I have worked in the NHS and understand the pressures but if what happened to me is replicated many times over then no wonder it’s in such a mess locally.

Story taken end of August 2018

4.9 Patient Story
Concerned about delays to treatment because of the way the system is set up

I saw my GP in January because I was having further problems with my knee/hip (both of which have been replaced over the years). I asked if I needed to be referred to see the consultant I had previously been under at the NOC and the GP said, “it doesn’t work like that now”.

My GP made a referral to Healthshare for “triage” and sent me for an X-ray and a scan on my knee/hip.

After a long delay I finally saw a “senior physiotherapist” at Manzil Way and she said - “can’t do anything for you its bones, you need to go to see a consultant at the hospital”!!”

I asked if she had looked at my X-ray and scan results - “no, we don’t have access to them”. I asked how she could treat me as a whole person if she didn’t know what my results were?
Following this I was given a form to enable me to choose and book an appointment to see a consultant, however, between seeing my GP in January and getting to see a consultant will take ten months and if I had chosen to go to the NOC to see a consultant it would be 11 months.

The system seems to be set up to delay people getting the best treatment for them by routing them through a “triage” system even when not appropriate. And when you are in the “triage” phase the people responsible do not have access to your test results which makes a nonsense of the whole thing!

4.10 Healthshare Patient story
August 2018

Under Nuffield (NOC) as I had problems with my feet this was in 2016 and I had treatment and medication. Over the last 18 months the medication has not worked so I called the NOC and asked to be seen again. They informed me that I must be re-referred to them as I am no longer under the clinic!

I made an appointment and saw my GP who said he could not send me to the NOC as I had to have an assessment by Healthshare first even though the problem was exactly the same as in my previous visit to the NOC. The GP referred me to Healthshare in early June and some 11 weeks later I am still waiting for an appointment.

I have tried ringing, emailing and to be honest it is all a waste of time you wait on the phone and wait and wait.....

I have written to Healthshare to complain and to the OCCG and I am dissatisfied as it appears that Healthshare is blocking the system and I think the OCCG have commissioned a very poor contract and should be looking at their commissioning practices.
5  July and August 2018 - Healthwatch Oxfordshire telephone contact with public / Healthshare patients

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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Comment &amp; action</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wrong number</td>
<td>Googled Healthshare and called Healthwatch - 18 calls in this period. Gave Healthshare number and email address. Advised about Healthwatch Oxfordshire Feedback Centre.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contacting Healthshare</td>
<td>Wanted to contact Healthshare and didn’t know how to - GP had referred them. Had lost letter from Healthshare and googled physio Manzil Way and got our number - gave number for Healthshare and advised to feedback any experiences on the Healthwatch website.</td>
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<td>Telephone system not working / no reply etc</td>
<td>Has been ringing number for a week, but never picked up...just message so can't get through (2 callers)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cannot get any answer on telephone been trying for one week on and off. Gets an automated message saying you are in a queue and then after a period of time gets told no one here to take your call. Very angry and frustrated said commissioners of these services should be ashamed of themselves because they are not fit for purpose. Was going to get in car and drive to Manzil Way to make an appointment with the receptionist.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Couldn’t get anyone at Manzil Way to put him through to physio</td>
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<td>Patient could not find number for Manzil Way</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Caller couldn’t find number for Healthshare physiotherapy in Witney. Gave number. Called back as got no such number tone when she dialled it. Gave email address as an alternative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Is that the Manzil Way physiotherapy centre”. Gave him the central Healthshare number.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointments</td>
<td>Had an appointment made by Faringdon Physio and was not given any information such as a card with the appointment time Monday. Caller forgot the time and needed to contact Healthshare but had no contact details.</td>
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<td>Issue</td>
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<td>Tried to book appt with orthopaedic surgeon following Healthshare appt. was told need PIN number from Healthshare...has not received. Tried to ring them to find out how to get but can't get though so stuck</td>
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<td>Couldn't find number to contact Manzil Way physio centre (2 callers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caller couldn't find number for Deer Park Physio centre</td>
<td>Frustrated because could not find number for Deer Park physio centre (2 callers)</td>
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<td>“I was trying to get through to the physiotherapy department”</td>
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<td>Couldn't get through on the phone, no one available to take his call. Wanted to confirm appointment was going ahead as had been given on the phone with no letter confirmation.</td>
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<td>Woman phoned Healthwatch Wednesday evening. Had been trying to get through to Healthshare at Manzil Way since Monday. Worried as had been trying to change appointment which she had now missed. Phone rings then cuts caller off. Had tried emailing but got automatic reply saying appointments could not be dealt with on this email address.</td>
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<td>Caller had confused us with Healthshare. Gave them correct number ad email. Wanted to change appointment.</td>
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<td>A man called to say his wife has been given an appointment for physio at Townlands, Henley. They live in Bicester and she has had two previous appointments at the Community hospital there so does not understand why they have to trek to Henley. Also, no postal letter confirming the appointment yet- so he says they wouldn’t have any idea where to go if he hadn’t lived near Reading before. (I gave him the Healthshare email address to contact them to follow this up).</td>
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## 6 Healthwatch Oxfordshire Feedback Centre (web based)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Appalling, disorganised bad service</td>
<td>Unacceptable long wait for appts, no continuity of care as difficult to see same physio who knows you so have to go over problems again so feel there is no progress. The central number for appts is not patient friendly, over 20min wait to speak to someone to simply change an appt. It was far better when you could ring the clinic you were attending. Too many services going through 1 phone number. I also found it confusing as my GP had also referred me to Rheumatologist but the letter said it was a referral to the MSK Assessment Triage and Treat Physiotherapy &amp; Podiatry Service, I was put on hold (having already waited 15mins to be connected) when I queried that I was already having physio for her to read my notes to find out this was the referral the Rheumatology Consultant!!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Five months to get an appointment</td>
<td>I had a knee injury and have got an appointment after five months for Healthshare physiotherapy. My knee has got worse and it affects my work. Still two weeks away from the appointment I was offered in January 2018.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Not a joined-up service</td>
<td>My contact with staff was good, however I had to chase appointments and results every step of the way. I got the distinct impression if I had not followed up on results, my case would have disappeared in the system. I started the process in Dec 17 requesting the GP to refer me back to the surgeon who performed an operation on my knee several years ago. My GP said this wasn't possible and that I had to go via a triage system. Six months and 3 face to face appointments, 1 possibly unnecessary MRI, multiple phone calls later guess what! I ended up in the clinic of the surgeon who initially operated on my knee.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Trying in vain since Monday 13th to cancel appointment</td>
<td>I have tried since Monday 13th to get through to 01865 238108 to cancel my appointment for the Podiatrist. The phone is answered by an answering machine saying my call is being dealt with, then says there is no one to take your call please call back. It is now 15th and...</td>
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<td>Rating</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Long wait, little communication</td>
<td>It was a very long wait to be seen. I had a very challenging injury that didn’t respond to physio, at that point I didn’t feel listened to.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dire appointment system over 5 months delay</td>
<td>The worse medical experience I’ve ever had. Appointment system is pathetic. The consultant rushed through my assessment ignored back problems offered a steroid injection for a hip which he said had excellent movement didn’t discuss my medical history which inc. diabetes &amp; thin bones &amp; discharged after 4.5 minutes with no further advice or follow up. [xxx]</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Too far from home</td>
<td>Live in Grove but was referred to Wallingford for physio. Too far.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Appointment cancelled last minute</td>
<td>Physio I saw was good. Sent fit MRI and three weeks later I’m waiting for results when told it would be two. Cannot contact anyone. Cabt leave messages. Have requested contact from online message service not heard anything. I’m in a lot of pain and debating taking myself to A&amp;E totally disgusted does not even describe how I feel. Absolutely dreadful aftercare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very Unhappy</td>
<td>Not impressed i was sent for an xray by es practioner. Waited at hospital for 2 1/2 hours then to be told she had not filled ut the request form correctly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unable to speak to anybody in 8 days</td>
<td>You as a body are a complete shambles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Complete waste of a days leave</td>
<td>Waited months for an appointment for a steroid injection and they refused to do it. Accused my doctor of misdiagnosis and refused to accept that a person with Hypermobility Syndrome could have the problem I was diagnosed with. Left there feeling humiliated, in pain and in tears.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Treatment for knee pain</td>
<td>After an extended period of physio for knee pain which was only partially successful I was referred to a senior physio in November 2017. I was offered aspiration and corticosteroid injections. After the second injection in February it was clear that this treatment was not successful. I had to wait for 10 weeks for a further appointment at which I was told I was being referred to a surgeon. In fact I was not referred then, but put on a waiting list to be referred. I waited a further 6 weeks before receiving the referral letter. since then things have progressed more quickly and I will have surgery in the next few weeks. When I was already ‘in the system’ I fail to understand why it took so long to be referred to a surgeon. I have no complaints about the treatment offered by the physios. Unfortunately it happened as my knee was deteriorating more rapidly and the best efforts would not have made any difference.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

Healthwatch Oxfordshire – public statements
Physiotherapy services in the county – response from Healthwatch Oxfordshire 22 September 2017

Healthwatch Oxfordshire has heard from many patients that they are concerned about what is happening to their appointments with the new physiotherapy service.

People have told us they are concerned about:

- the closure of the service at Wantage Hospital
- the poor communication with patients about where their next appointment will be and when – some patients have had their appointment cancelled and do not yet know when – or where – their next appointment will be
- the fact that people have been told their information will be given to the new provider which is a private company.

We understand that the new service will mean shorter waiting times for appointments, but at the moment some patients are feeling that the service will be worse with longer travel times to appointments especially in the South West of the county.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is speaking to all concerned – Healthshare Ltd (the new provider), Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – to find out what is actually happening.

In the meantime, we urge all concerned to work together so that patients are properly informed about what is going on and that appointments are made as soon as possible.

For further information about where services will be delivered please see the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group web site – follow this link [http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/news/physiotherapy-services-in-oxfordshire-an-update/37687](http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/news/physiotherapy-services-in-oxfordshire-an-update/37687)