



Health Scrutiny

Key facts

The Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee provides critical challenge to local NHS health organisations, asking them and others for information, examining that information and asking probing questions.

The Committee

- Works in partnership with local health service providers and the public to improve health and wellbeing in Dorset.
- Makes constructive recommendations for improvement.
- Looks at areas or groups of people in the community who suffer from worse health than others and consider how this inequality can be reduced.
- Considers and comments on major developments or changes by the local NHS which will affect people in Dorset.

How does Health Scrutiny work?

- Health scrutiny is carried out in a number of different ways:
 - Committee meetings (held four times a year).
A variety of methods are employed to consider information including:
 - presentations
 - reports
 - briefings
 - comment from Healthwatch Dorset
 - convening time limited Task and Finish Group to further scrutinise specific local issues that have been considered by the full Committee.
 - Specific Issue Task and Finish Groups:
These are used to undertake an in-depth studies of a particular health issue that is of concern to members. These work over a longer period and may involve some or all of the following:
 - independent research
 - listening to local people and organisations
 - 'select' committee-type meetings to question people and call them to account.

These meetings are not held in public but the review report is made public at the end of the review process. The Task and Finish Group will produce a report of its findings and makes recommendations. A copy will be sent to the Centre of Public Scrutiny archive.



- The number of issues the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee could examine is vast so each November we organise a workshop for members to set and prioritise the issues that they wish to consider. This is then put into the annual work programme. Capacity is limited by the support available to the Committee. The post of Health Partnerships Officer (Health Scrutiny) is part-time (22 hours).

How Health Scrutiny meetings are organised

- **Committee arrangements**
In Dorset there are two different arrangements for health scrutiny meetings. Which one is used depends on the communities most affected by a proposed change to a health service or a particular health issue.
 - **The Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee** is a joint committee, made up of six county council members and six borough or district members (one from each local authority area).
 - **Joint Health Scrutiny with Bournemouth Borough Council and the Borough of Poole.** When the communities of Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset are affected by a health service change and each local authority wants to scrutinise the proposals a Joint Committee can be convened to carry out that scrutiny on a joint basis. Each Joint Committee convened is made up of representatives from each of the participating authorities. At the present time Joint Committees are convened on an ad hoc basis and there is no standing body.
- **Planning Agendas**
Because the Committee receives reports from a wide range of NHS bodies and other organisations an officers' reference group meets about six weeks before each Committee meeting to have an informal discussion and plan the agenda. The Chairman of the Committee attends this session. Health service colleagues who are due to give presentations or provide reports are given guidance on the format that report should take and information on how the Committee operates.

How can the public be involved in Health Scrutiny?

The Health Scrutiny Committee is not a body that deals with individual complaints but the elected members on the Committee are expected to make themselves aware of the concerns of the public that they represent. A list of the current membership of the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee can be found on page 4 of this briefing. At the discretion of the Chairman members of the public can address the Committee according to the County Councils normal procedures about public participation at meetings. The public may also have the opportunity to be involved in some aspects of health scrutiny through Task and Finish Groups looking specific health issues through their involvement in special interest groups / organisations.



Contact Details

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Useful Links

- The Centre for Public Scrutiny <http://www.cfps.org.uk/>
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group <http://www.dorsetccg.nhs.uk>
- NHS England – Wessex Local Area Team
<http://www.nhs.uk/Services/Trusts/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=89773>
- Healthwatch Dorset <http://www.healthwatchdorset.co.uk/>
- Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee
 - General Information
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/healthscrutiny>
 - Agendas and minutes
<http://www1.dorsetforyou.com/Council/COMMIS2013.nsf/MOC/Dorset%20Health%20Scrutiny%20Committee?OpenDocument>
- Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board
 - General information
<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/healthandwellbeingboard>
 - Agendas and minutes
<http://www1.dorsetforyou.com/Council/COMMIS2013.nsf/COM/43F16E812B7D58A280257B4B00319227?OpenDocument>



Membership of Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee

➤ **Members of the County Council**

Bevan Mr M J
Byatt Mr M
Coatsworth Mr R W
Kayes Ms R
Lovell Mr M W J
Trite Mr W S

➤ **Members of Other Local Authorities**

Batty-Smith Mr W (North Dorset District Council)
Elliot Mrs G S (East Dorset District Council)
Ezzard Mrs B (Purbeck District Council)
Hill Ms J (Weymouth and Portland Borough Council)
Jones Mr D (Christchurch Borough Council)
Summers Ms G E (West Dorset District Council)

Councillor contact details

Information on contact details for councillors can be found on

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/councillors>

Dates of Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee Meetings 2013

The dates for forthcoming meetings of the Committee in 2013 are:

- Friday 13 September 2013
- Tuesday 19 November 2013

Meetings are generally held in Committee Room 1 at County Hall, Dorchester