

# Healthwatch Hampshire conducts focus group on Wheelchair services in Hampshire

On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 Healthwatch Hampshire conducted a focus group with residents and staff at Enham Trust in Andover. The discussions focused on Wheelchair services and produced some interesting points and areas for improvement.



## General feelings

The groups spoke about their own experiences of obtaining, using and having repairs on their NHS wheelchairs. All but one of the service users used Winchester wheelchair services. The feedback was mostly positive about the individual staff that come to carry out repairs. The trust and relationship with key staff was essential to those that took part.

All those that participated reported that their chairs are prone to breaking and needing attention and the repair services are not always easy to contact.

## Key Points

- Services need to be contactable in an accessible way, they are not always very easy to get hold of, opening times are not long enough and receptionists can be hard to understand.
- Wheelchairs need to be fixed quickly. Speed is essential. A triage system to deal with urgent repairs should be brought in.
- Services need to know about the area
- Service staff should attempt to build up a relationship with the service users it is very important to them to know who is repairing their chair and they need to trust them.
- Service users often felt that their views were not listened to.
- Some feedback about Winchester wheelchair services was poor
- Long wait for some repairs leading to loss of mobility for many for several weeks. Without their chair many residents are trapped and feel as if their lives are on hold.
- Appointments and services are made at times that do not always suit - there is no flexibility or booking with service users, often turning up unannounced. They have to adapt to appointments.



## Next Steps -

- We will add this feedback to our existing work on wheelchair services
- We will also let the West Hampshire CCG and local providers know about these key points.