

To
Joanna Smith
Healthwatch Isle of Wight Manager

By email only:
joanna.smith@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk

From
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Your Ref: Healthwatch Trauma Informed Learning Event

06 August 2025

Dear Joanna,

Thank you for your email of 6th August 2025 attaching the outcome of the recent trauma informed learning event together with your request for a formal response.

The Council is very proud of the service it commissions from Healthwatch IW and values the work that your team do to support Island residents. The Healthwatch IW Learning Event and the subsequent report provides great insight into health and social care locally and more specifically the support that as a system is available for local people living with a dementia and their families/carers. The themes and trends identified in the report will help to shape our services and those that we commission.

In relation to the specific recommendations I trust that the following updates will be helpful in understanding how the Council has applied the learning from this event.

Recommendation 1 - Increase training in trauma-informed and dementia-aware practices across frontline services

Our recent annual Adult Social Care and Housing Needs Conference focused on trauma informed practice. As part of the event all staff across the whole department were invited to engage in learning events based on real life scenarios and trauma informed practice.

All staff are provided with access to the agreed system learning and development opportunities for dementia. This includes all managers having completed the Dr Gemma Jones Dementia Training and open access across our Learning Management System to the following learning opportunities:

- Dementia Awareness

- Supporting People Living With Dementia
- Interactive Forum Theatre: Working With People who have Dementia and their Carers
- Partnership Working with Dementia
- Advanced Dementia Awareness for social workers, frontline managers and staff
- Complex Care and Dementia Workshop
- Dementia Awareness for non-frontline manager, staff and administrators
- Dementia for staff in direct care roles
- The Care Certificate Standard 9: Awareness of Mental Health, Dementia and Learning Disability
- Assessing Older People with Mental Health Needs.

The Isle of Wight Council is a core signatory to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trauma Informed Concordat and is committed to embedding trauma informed practice.

Recommendation 2 - Strengthen joint working protocols between police, ambulance, and mental health services.

We are committed to working with partners to strengthen joint working protocol. We propose to meet with partners identified to establish how best to take this recommendation forward.

Recommendation 3 - Capture and share learning from positive interventions to prevent future incidents.

Our teams will continue to collate examples of good practice and where this related to people with a dementia or their family/carers we will ensure that the learning is shared with system partners. Examples will be collated through feedback received directly from individuals, as part of our internal quality assurance processes or from our partners.

Recommendation 6 - Establish clear contingency support for unpaid carers who are hospitalised.

We have recently re-tendered our Carers Support Contract with a shift in focus. The new contract specifically required the contractor, Carers IW to 'embed best practice into ways of working by taking a holistic, strengths based, trauma-informed and flexible approach'. The contract requires a focus on:

- Providing access to carers support services
- Improving quality of life, health and wellbeing of carers
- Ensuring that carers feel supported to manage their caring role

- Assisting carers in feeling more included and respected as expert carer partners.

The shift in focus will support early help and crisis avoidance. Contingency planning is a core part of this activity.

We are also committed to working with the Island's Ambulance Service to ensure that they make a decision to convey a cared for person to hospital in circumstances where their carer required hospital admission is appropriate and that other options to support the cared for person to remain at home have been explored first.

We look forward to continuing to work together with system partners to drive forward sustainable and positive change for local people living with a dementia and their carers. We remain committed to delivery of the Island Dementia Strategy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "L. Gaudion", enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Laura Gaudion
Director of Adult Social Care and Housing