

Healthwatch Barnet Q1 Update

Health and Wellbeing Board

July 2021



Recently Completed Projects



Hospital Transport - Insight Report

- In March 2021, we were contacted by community organisations expressing difficulties in using hospital transport. We held focus groups to gather qualitative data.
- We have already reviewed the topic of hospital transport in 2017 and 2019 and Healthwatch England produce their report in 2019 too.
- **2021 update findings:**
 - Difficulties in booking the transport & long waiting times.



They tell me to wait 2.5 hours before an appointment and I'd rather they give me a realistic time. If I have an appointment at 10am then I have to be ready at 7:30am but I know they won't be there at 7:30am so if they gave me a more realistic time and I wouldn't be so tired by the time I get back home.



Hospital Transport - Insight Report

- High parking cost and difficulty in finding car parking spaces on hospital sites.
- Lack of information about available transport schemes, from the NHS and charities upon arrival, and different travel options.



It's been a positive experience with people, that's been fine. It's logistics that are the challenge, you either use hospital transport or don't.



- Impact of COVID-19 for in-person appointments for the future with digital healthcare.



As a deaf person, I would have difficulties in using more digital appointments in the future and would require an interpreter.

Not everyone has internet at home and it can be hard to communicate online sometimes for people with learning difficulties.



Deaf People's GP Challenges - Insight Report

- In April 2021 we attended a forum at the Jewish Deaf Association (for people of all faiths and none) and Barnet deaf residents shared their challenges with GP services. Consequently, we held focus groups to gather in-depth qualitative data.
- **Key Findings**
 - Lack of provision for qualified interpreters and over-reliance on family/friends.



I don't want my partner or family members to translate for me because they're not qualified interpreters, I don't feel confident and leave the doctor's feeling insecure.

Without communication, it affects our confidence and is a waste of time. It's not up to us to provide family members as a substitute.



Deaf People's GP Challenges - Insight Report

- GP staff not trained on being deaf aware.



Staff were wearing masks and I couldn't lip read them. Staff need to drop their masks when talking to deaf people. It was a very bad experience for me. I think the treatment was unfair, and deaf people suffer.

The worst time has been during COVID because I can't meet my doctor, I can't visit the surgery, they can't visit me, and the doctor always wants to talk to me with speech, but I can't use speech because I'm profoundly deaf.



- Negative impact upon deaf patients' mental wellbeing.



When I come home, I'm very down. I'm out but haven't understood anything that's going on around me. My family are worried about me, people are worried about me.

It's not just a hearing aid, it's an intrinsic part of our wellbeing and if we don't have it, it can affect our day to day lives in a big way.



Deaf People's GP Challenges - Insight Report

- Accessibility in the use of written language.



The GP surgery does not understand for deaf people English is not our first language. The English in letters has to not be so complex and at such a high level for us to understand.

Hearing people can phone and get an on-the-spot response but as a deaf person, I have to email, which gets a slow response.

- Difficulty with physical accessibility to GP surgeries.



I was outside the door [of the GP surgery] and there was a buzzer, there's a voice through the buzzer and a queue behind me. They don't know I'm deaf, there's a camera and I'm waving and saying I'm deaf, I need to get in. They should be aware that I'm deaf. Someone in the queue helped me and I had to tell them my name, but I had to rely on a stranger to help me.



Virtual Visit Pilot

- The pandemic has hindered all local HW's abilities to perform their Enter and View function.
- COVID-19 restrictions have continued in some form or another for almost the last 16 months, and beyond the hope that things will go back to some normality in Q3 2021 to allow us to start again, there is no guarantee.
- Healthwatch Barnet have been proactive & followed the steps of a few other local HWs that have carried out Virtual Visits as an alternative engagement tool whilst maintaining the spirit of Enter and View.
- There are known pros and cons to Virtual Visits.

Virtual Visit Pilot

- We conducted a pilot Virtual Visit in a residential care home. We used all 3 staff and 3 volunteers.
- We spoke with 8 staff members, 3 residents, and 12 relatives after the visit.
- Expect for a physical check of the building and a sense of smell and physical feel, this visit was as a comprehensive review of all areas of the service as it would be for an Enter and View visit.
- We have produced a report with 8 core recommendation for the service's management and they are currently producing their response to the report.

Recently Completed Community Events



Community Events

- April 2021 - Q&A with the senior management team of the Barnet division of BEH Mental Health Trust to answers questions from local residents.



It was very informative and useful to learn about the exciting news about the forthcoming transformation in Barnet.

- May 2021 - Dying Matters Awareness Week event and Q&A together with North London Hospice and Jewish Care. Panel included leading palliative care experts. Encouraging people to start their own 'what matters to me' conversations.

Thanks to the great panel, thought-provoking discussion and sensitive facilitation.

- June - Long COVID Event and Q&A together with Barnet COVID-19 Champions. Panel included Barnet GP, CCG and Long COVID reps.

Thank you Healthwatch Barnet for providing this useful information session and for taking Long COVID seriously/



Ongoing Projects



Accessing GPs through Remote Consultations Project

- COVID-19 has accelerated the use of digital technology in health and social care services.
- Digital healthcare has already been planned prior to COVID - NHS LTP
- There are pros and cons to accessing your GP/Nurse remotely.
- We have been gaining insight about people's experience of accessing and using GP practices remotely since Q1 2021.
- We have engaged with over 250 residents through 1-2-1, focus groups and an online survey.
- Final report is due at the end of July 2021.

Long COVID Project

- Recent data from ONS has shown 1 million people are self-reported to be suffering from long COVID that is impacting their daily live. The CCG anticipates, using national data, the prevalence in the NCL area is approximately 14,000 people.
- Given the novelty of the condition, in May 2021 we started a project to gain insight into people's experience of long COVID and the support availability locally, and identify if there are any gaps/areas of improvement within the long COVID pathway and feed that back into the CCG.
- In June we hosted an online event with local health leaders and the Barnet COVID-19 Health Champions and engaged with approx. 55/60 people. We have also started to collect insight through 1-2-1 interviews and an online survey and have engaged with an additional 25 more residents using those channels. Expected completion August.
- We will also be working with all 5 NCL HW's on an NCL wide Long COVID Project. Q2 start and the expected completion is December.