

Healthwatch Committee meeting
19 September 2019
Outreach update – paper 1
Presented by: Melanie Bramley

Members of the Committee are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report

Quality statement: 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17

Volunteer and outreach

3 June 2019 to 31 August 2019

Since the last meeting we have attended five focus groups, run five stalls and attended one drop-in event.

A large part of the engagement that we carry out over the summer involves the people that we speak to the city's two largest festivals: Northern Pride and Newcastle Mela. These events are well attended by a diverse group of people and this year in total we spoke to over 230 members of the public. This was a good opportunity to raise the profile of Healthwatch and the work that we do as well as gather information and feedback on health and social care matters. Pride proved particularly popular this year with our "name the bear" competition. We also asked people to vote (using our tubes and tokens) on the following.

Have you received treatment locally for any of the following;

- Anxiety/depression (169)
- Self-harm/suicidal thoughts (106)
- Gender dysphoria (26)
- Eating disorder/body image (74)

Although this is not a scientific or validated survey process, the results give us some food for thought in terms of how this feedback could initiate a project or further investigation by Healthwatch. By far the majority of people who were putting the counters in the tubes were young people, aged 16–25 years.

Newcastle Mela attendance was lower than usual generally. We were situated next to a stall run by NHS diabetes, which probably helped bring people to the Healthwatch stall. The event was most useful in raising awareness than getting actual feedback. Next year may be an opportunity to run a stall jointly with another voluntary group, having a key health theme to focus on.

Other engagement that has taken place included a broad range of focus groups for older people (55+), ex-offenders, homeless women, asylum seekers, and parents of children with a learning disability.

With the help of our volunteers we continue to gather general feedback by attending events, running stalls, etc. Some of our volunteers have collected feedback independently from Healthwatch staff. This included volunteers talking to people at their churches, community centres and other group events they attend.

As well as the outreach work, I have attended several key meetings over the last three months. These have included talking with representatives from Diabetes UK and the MS Society. Both groups are keen for us to work with them to gather more feedback from members of the public about the support and services on offer and barriers that people face in accessing the help they require. Beth Nichol (Gateshead Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator) and I are carrying out these 'mini projects' across both Newcastle and Gateshead. We have already gathered some useful feedback from some of our volunteers who have first-hand experience of being affected by MS/diabetes. This will help us to develop key questions for members of the public.

In the last quarter of the year we have also successfully recruited two new volunteers. This brings our total number of volunteers in Newcastle to nine, along with three Gateshead volunteers all willing to help. We now have three volunteers aged 20–25 years giving a more representative balance to the group. Three volunteers also speak several languages, which will assist us in reaching out to more marginalised people in the community. All volunteers' records are currently being updated to ensure that an enhanced DBS check has been carried out. This will allow us to carry out work in the NHS, such as the future Emergency Department (A&E) research at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI).

The draft Newcastle Health Scrutiny Committee report on equality of access to health care services by BAME communities has now been circulated to group members and contributors. The findings of the review will be presented to the Health Scrutiny Committee in September 2019. General feedback highlights the urgent need for the clinical commissioning group to be proactive in improving the services open to the BAME community, for example, in accessing mental health services, improving interpretation and translation services and developing better community approaches and links. Healthwatch Newcastle will continue to support this work, liaising between voluntary and statutory services to help with opening the lines of communication.

Future work

Aside from the mini projects mentioned above, it is important that we respond to the feedback we received at Pride and consider further research amongst the LGBTQ+ community and mental health services.

We hope to commence our work on behalf of the NHS before the end of the year by carrying out Emergency Department surveys to map the journey for patients coming into the hospital department.

Rachel's project (children and young people's mental health) continues to build up momentum and we are working together to identify young people who have previously used the single point of access (SPA) and the Kooth service (offering anonymous online support for young people). While Rachel is devising a questionnaire, I am contacting voluntary organisations and young people willing to participate in focus groups and 1-2-1 discussions.

Date	Organisation	Event	Attendees	Volunteers	Hours of volunteers	Notes	Comments
11/6/2019	Anchor Housing	Bishops Court, Fenham	11	0	0	Focus group Older people 55+ Sheltered Scheme	General feedback
25/6/2019	Grainger Market	Stall	3	0	0	General public	Awareness raising of Healthwatch
4/7/2019	Change 4 Life	West Newcastle Partnership, Benwell	23	1	3	General public run by Public Health England on health and obesity	Awareness raising of Healthwatch and feedback from general public
9/7/2019	Parents Newcastle	MEA House, NE1	7	1	2	Parents and carers of children with learning disabilities	General feedback around health services and barriers towards access them
10/7/2019	Newcastle CVS	Stall, Banburgh House, NE1	24	1	2	Organised By Newcastle CVS on food poverty and health.	Awareness- raising of Healthwatch and feedback from general people.
20/7/2019	Northern Pride	Pride stall, NE1	200+	1	2	Largely LGBT+	Issues around mental health
25/7/2019	Ozanam House	Changing Lives, Elswick	6	0	0	Ex-offenders (male) 20 - 65 years	General feedback

21/8/2019	Francis House	Changing lives, Westgate	6	0	0	Homeless women 18–45 years	General feedback
25/8/2019	Mela	Festival stall	30	2	4	South Asian community and general public	General feedback
27/8/2019	Action Foundation	Drop-in, NE1	6	0	0	Men's asylum seekers drop-in 18–55 years	GP and dentist services feedback
29/8/2019	Comfrey Project	Focus group, NE8	7	0	0	Turkish/Kurdish men's focus group	Primary care