



HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 8 NOVEMBER 2017

REPORT OF HEALTHWATCH LEICESTERSHIRE

QUICK POLL: YOUR VIEWS ABOUT GP SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the findings of Healthwatch Leicestershire's (HWL) quick poll survey, that saw HWL listen to patients across Leicestershire.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The County Council, following the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is required to directly commission a local Healthwatch. The local Healthwatch in turn has a set of statutory activities to undertake, such as gathering local views and making these known to providers and commissioners, monitoring and scrutinising the quality of provision of local services and taking a seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
3. HWL has become an established member/ participating observer of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board where we are able to present evidence-based insights and findings reflecting patients and the public views of health and social care services.

Background

4. Members are reminded that in July 2015, Healthwatch Leicestershire produced a report from the findings of a survey 'Your views on GP services'. Since then, members of the public have continued to raise issues around their experience of GP services and wider.
5. Our new survey was promoted during August and September 2017 via newsletters, E-news, website and through social media as well as face to face at general engagement events. The content of the survey reflected what HWL had heard through general engagement around GP services, which was predominately about booking appointments, being able to see a nurse and information for carers.
6. We heard from 240 people in total, 102 from west Leicestershire and 88 from East Leicestershire. We received 37 responses from Leicester City, one response from a Rutland resident and two from out of area.
7. We have had good coverage across Leicestershire and Leicester from patients using GP services. We heard feedback for 41 of 48 GP practices in the West Leicestershire CCG area. In East Leicestershire and Rutland CCG area we heard feedback from 30 of 33 GP practices. In respect to Leicester City CCG area we heard feedback for 16 of 63 GP practices.

Emerging findings

What have we learnt about online GP services?

8. The majority of the respondents reported that they were aware that their GP practice offers an online booking service for registered patients and most of them had used the service to book an appointment or order a repeat prescription. Most of the respondents found the process easy and straight forward, however some experienced login failure and at times the website would not work properly.

What have we learnt about GP referrals?

9. A small minority of respondents said they had been referred to a voluntary or community organisation such as a mental health support group, a day centre or a walking group by their GP in order to get support. In comparison however, over half of the respondents said they had been referred to services such as podiatry or physiotherapy by their GP. Of those who had been referred, most of them said their referral went to plan, however many respondents reported that the waits for treatment etc. were very long

What have we learnt about support for Carers?

10. A fifth of respondents identified themselves as a Carer and just over half of those respondents said they have made their GP aware of their caring role. The remainder however had not notified their GP.
11. Less than half of the Carer's said they have been able to access useful information about support for Carers from their GP, the majority said they have not had any support. A very small minority of Carer's said they were accessing support for being a Carer and the majority were not.
12. Notwithstanding the sample size, we are concerned that the majority of Carer's who responded to our survey were not accessing information about support or support to help with their caring role.

What we learnt about satisfaction of GP practices

13. We wanted to know how satisfied respondents are with their GP practices. 42 respondents said that they were not at all satisfied or slightly satisfied. Nearly a quarter said they were moderately satisfied with their GP surgery. The majority, 134 respondents said they were very or extremely satisfied with their surgery.

Report recommendations

14. We heard from over 200 respondents living across the City and County of Leicestershire. Based on the experiences they shared with us and from our analysis we would like to suggest that service providers and commissioners in particular, consider the following:
 - More promotion of online GP services especially how to book appointments.

- Consider providing more appointments with a health care professionals as all but a small minority of respondents said they would not mind seeing a Specialist Nurse instead of a GP.
- When making referrals it would be helpful to provide information on expected waiting times to manage patient expectations and support the patient on what to do if it takes longer.
- Publicise and make information about support for Carers more accessible in GP practices and encourage patients to inform their GP if they are a Carer.

Recommendations to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

15. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
 - I. Note the findings and to urge health and social care partners to consider actions associated to the report recommendations to improve services, systems and processes outlined in the findings report.

Officer to Contact

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Relevant Impact Assessments

Equality and Human Rights Implications

1. Healthwatch Leicestershire is aware that the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) applies to all functions of public authorities that are listed in Schedule 19 Equality Act 2010. Schedule 19 list does not include Healthwatch England or Local Healthwatch organisations, however as bodies carrying out a public function using public funding we are subject to the PSED general duty.
2. Healthwatch Leicestershire is committed to reducing the inequalities of health and social care outcomes experienced in some communities. We believe also that health and social care should be based on a human rights platform. We will utilise the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out our work and in influencing change in service commissioning and delivery.

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