

Listening to Neighbourhoods Engagement Report September 2017

Introduction

Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC) engagement team have been speaking and listening to members of the public as part of our engagement programme for 2017/2018 to involve local citizens in helping us to shape the future of health and care services across Manchester.

We want to better understand what matters to Manchester people through neighbourhood conversations. This will ensure that in line with our [operational plan](#) for 2017/2018 and our strategic aims of enabling people and communities to be active partners in their health and wellbeing, we can work together to achieve the best possible health outcomes for everyone living in Manchester.

Methodology

The engagement took place during July, August and September 2017 in a variety of locations, including waiting areas within General Practices. We also attended local events including both north Manchester and Wythenshawe games to engage with members of the local communities. Citizens were able to provide feedback about how we can support them to lead a healthier life, along with allowing us the opportunity to share with them our vision for the future of health and care services in the form of our [Locality Plan](#).

GP Practices were also provided with the web link to the Listening to Neighbourhoods survey with a request that they put the link on their practice websites, if applicable, to encourage as many people as possible to interact with us.

A total of 206 surveys were completed during this time. Citizens were asked four questions that relate to how they can be supported to lead a healthier life, along with questions about their experience of accessing and using local health and care services. In line with the national key priority areas patients were also asked how we can better support them to manage a long term condition.

The feedback gathered will be shared with Practice Managers, NHS organisations and Manchester City Council to support and inform the planning of services and influence change within current services.

The feedback below shows the top themes for each question asked by area, north, central and south Manchester:-

Priorities for north Manchester people

What could help you to lead a healthier life?

- Access to more exercise facilities that are family friendly and enable both children and adults to exercise together
- Access to health and wellbeing classes to maintain good mental health along with learning stress management techniques and life skills
- More availability of indoor activities to keep people healthy
- Less fast food take-a-ways and more healthy food outlets
- Concern about the level of pollution in the local area
- Information on what local activities are taking place

What would make it easier for you to access health and care services?

- Easier access by self-referral to weight management services. Consider prescribing weight management classes such as weight watchers or slimming world for the first 3 months
- Chinese speaking patients would like easier access to translation services within the NHS
- Patients would like easier access to booking future appointments on-line
- Some people stated that it is difficult to obtain a GP appointment at weekends or outside of working hours due to a lack of availability, whilst other people were not aware of the 7 day access to primary care services
- Easier access to physiotherapy or services that can aid injury recovery

Priorities for central Manchester people

What could help you to lead a healthier life?

- Gentler exercise opportunities that can be incorporated as part of more strenuous exercise classes so that people with all levels and mobility's can participate
- Patient living with back condition would like more support to liaise with his employers about his condition – *information provided to patient on the [Fit for Work scheme](#)*
- Patients would like to attend more local activities, however some patients said they are not aware of what local clubs are available

What would make it easier for you to access health and care services?

- Patients feel as though a 2 to 3 week wait to access their GP is too long. They are also concerned that there are no alternatives offered. Some patients stated that they would like to be offered an appointment at another local GP practice that could offer a quicker appointment, this would lead to patient diagnosis quicker or referral to specialist services in a more timely manner
- One patient raised concern about the pavements outside of Princess Road Surgery, Withington which she described as difficult to use as she is in a wheelchair and the pavements are so uneven that her husband has difficulty in pushing the wheelchair over this surface.

Priorities for south Manchester people

What could help you to lead a healthier life?

- Patients would like healthy lifestyle advice with information of alternatives to unhealthy choices
- Opportunities to rent a bike cheaply in local parks
- More allotments in Northern Moor and Woodhouse park area
- Subsidised gym membership
- Information about healthy recipes and what foods to eat

What would make it easier for you to access health and care services?

- GPs who are more informed of local services – one patient provided feedback that she has had to source local services. With other patients stating that they would like to access services in their local communities but are unaware of what is available
- More availability of GP appointments or a better system to ensure that patients don't wait too long to see a GP

To read the engagement report from Wythenshawe games click here <https://www.mhcc.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Wythenshawe-Games-2017-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Patients using health and care services stated that the following areas of healthcare are working well:-

- Initial care for deafness was good however follow support has been poor

- Chronic illness management is good in north Manchester
- Referral system to physio and dermatology in north Manchester is working well
- Text message reminders are greatly appreciated by patients
- Maxillofacial services at Manchester Royal Infirmary – patient
- Peer to peer services through self-help services are really helpful

The following feedback suggests areas we need to improve on:-

- Child and adolescent mental health services – feedback from service user stated that she did not feel involved in her care and that professionals spoke at her rather than to her
- Some patients in north Manchester would like access to services closer to home rather than having to attend Royal Oldham Hospital
- St Marys Maternity Services - access to the midwife was good, but when having a home birth the midwife brought gas and air and it exploded in the patient’s house. When they tried to get another one it took ages to be delivered and then didn't work. Patient also experienced back problems during her pregnancy and had difficulty in accessing physiotherapy through maternity services – only managing to obtain appointments on a 3 weekly basis which the patient felt was inadequate
- Wythenshawe Hospital – Warfarin clinic – patient described how when she is provided with the results of her blood test it is not explained clearly what the blood levels mean and how she can manage these better herself if appropriate
- Patient would like to have blood testing done at home or locally at her GP practice. She explained that as a wheelchair user it’s difficult to attend Wythenshawe Hospital Warfarin clinic
- Patients feel as though waiting times to obtain referrals and access specialist services are too long
- Some patients expressed frustration at the cancellation of hospital procedures at short notice with a lack of an explanation

*all the patients who expressed dissatisfaction with their care or treatment were provided with the contact details and information to advise them of how to bring their concerns to the attention of the providers and of services that could help them

Community Service Feedback

One patient who was 88 years old needed her dressing changing twice weekly and had found it extremely difficult to access treatment room services, reporting a two week wait after contacting 3 different GP surgeries. The patient now travels over 8 miles with her friend who takes her to these appointments as there is no transport provision and she is unable to use services close to her home to have her dressings changed.

Managing long term conditions better

Patients across Manchester were asked what they needed to support them to manage a long term condition better. Forty seven patients said that they considered themselves to have a disability or long term condition with the following top four conditions affecting them the most:

- Arthritis
- Depression/Anxiety or other mental health problems
- Pain or back/mobility problems
- Respiratory diseases such as COPD or Asthma
- Heart conditions

From the feedback provided the following themes would help patients to manage their conditions better:-

- Patients with a long term condition would like a longer appointment with their GP to discuss their concern

- Patients living with back problems would like quicker access to specialist services for diagnosis
- Easier access to pain management services – through a self-referral triage system on a needs led basis
- An ‘app’ that manages all NHS appointments and medications – making repeat prescription ordering simpler, without the need to remember
- Exercise programmes that are tailored to the individual’s needs – but not necessarily physiotherapy
- Some patients living with depression or mental health issues would like easier access to talking therapies
- Patients would like information about their condition and how medication prescribed for the condition will affect them

Summary

People using primary care services report limited or no access to appointments at the weekends or outside of working hours.

They do not appear to be aware of the 7 day access to primary care services.

People are concerned that when they are unable to obtain a GP appointment within a timely manner there is no alternative service for them to access.

People living with a long term condition would like the opportunity to have a longer appointment with their GP to discuss any on-going problems.

Feedback suggests that it is difficult to navigate the NHS system and in particular find it challenging to obtain a referral to specialist services for a diagnosis.

Most patients expressed they are aware of the benefits of exercise and eating healthy, however they would like exercise facilities that meet their individual needs.

Actions/recommendations

- Promote and raise awareness of the 7 day access to primary care services in partnership with stakeholders and Manchester Primary Care Partnership.
- Raise awareness of the [NHS Constitution](#) to support and empower patients and carers to make informed decisions about their care.
- Design and create with stakeholders an information sheet with useful contact details of organisations that can support people living with different conditions that can be shared with GP practices, hospitals, support groups and the public. This information sheet could be promoted through Patient Participation Groups who could be supported to act as a point of contact for patients within individual practices to source information.
- Promote and raise awareness of BUZZ Health and Wellbeing services.
- Continue to promote and raise awareness of the Choose Well Manchester website that can be translated into over 60 different languages and offers advice on how and when to use NHS services in the city.
- Continue to promote and raise awareness of NHS 111 so patients do not feel isolated when they are unable to obtain a GP appointment for urgent medical attention.
- Continue to engage with citizens within the local communities to ensure that services commissioned are reflective of the needs of local communities.
- Promote and raise awareness of the [NHS England patient choice programme](#)

Special thanks to the patient participation group members from GP practices who have and continue to support this engagement programme.