

Proposed Whittington Health Estate Changes in Haringey

Healthwatch Haringey was appointed as the Independent Evaluator for this consultation, and we are pleased to report that we are very satisfied with the:

- consultation and engagement process,
- analysis of service user and resident feedback, and
- report on the findings of that consultation and engagement.

Introduction

Whittington Health have clearly articulated the positive benefits of the proposed relocation of services – modern facilities, convenient location with good public transport links, a place where patients will be able to access a wider range of services, and to enable and strengthen joint working with other services (NHS, Council and VCS). These improvements will benefit both patients and staff.

Consultation and engagement process

We were impressed with the effort and energy Whittington Health had invested in reaching out to all of its service users affected by the relocation of services, and to genuinely seek their views on the proposals:

- They wrote to all service users who had attended clinics from January 2019 to January 2022. This was important as, during the pandemic period, there were significant changes in the way NHS services were accessed and delivered. By taking as their starting point a year before the start of the pandemic, Whittington Health ensured everyone who would be affected by the proposed moves was included in the consultation
- 30,000 individual letters were sent out, reaching those who were digitally excluded and had no access to the internet
- The information booklet contained a sentence explaining people could request the information in 12 community languages, reaching many service users whose first language was not English
- An Easy Read version of the information booklet was produced, reaching those with learning difficulties and literacy issues
- 200 posters and leaflets were distributed in Haringey libraries and sports centres, reaching those who were digitally excluded
- Invitations to participate in the consultation were shared with over 250 community stakeholders, all Haringey Councillors, 45 religious organisations and all primary, secondary and SEN schools in the borough
- Patients could complete a survey – in hard copy, online or over the phone

- Patients could also attend a consultation event and feedback their views there, for people who found it easier to express their views in person rather than in writing
- Consultation events were a mix of in-person and online, allowing those who were shielding, more vulnerable, or less able to travel to participate too
- Specific groups with particular needs were targeted in terms of reaching out to collect their feedback eg Haringey Black and Minority Ethnic Carers Group, Older People's Reference Group, Physical Disability Reference Group
- 2,000 responses were received, which is a credit to the time and effort Whittington Health put in to genuinely reaching out to their service users about their proposals.

This was a comprehensive consultation, with Whittington Health genuinely reaching out to, and including, all their service users who would be affected by the proposed moves.

Analysis of service user and resident feedback

A very comprehensive analysis of service user and resident feedback has been undertaken and written up in the report:

- Service user feedback and resident/stakeholder feedback has been analysed and reported separately
- Service user feedback has been analysed by service, to see whether patients for a particular service hold different views on the move, or have particular needs
- Service user feedback has been analysed by age and ethnicity to see if this highlights any issues for particular client groups

Service users were broadly in favour of the proposed moves – 66% were happy with the proposed moves, and 20% were not happy with the proposed moves. This was consistent across different services.

Black people were more supportive of the proposed moves, feeling the Wood Green location would make these services more accessible to their communities. This will help to reduce health inequalities by opening up access to NHS services for Haringey's diverse communities.

Report on the findings of that consultation and engagement

The report documents in detail the service user and resident feedback. Whilst service users were broadly in favour of the move, a number of potential challenges were flagged. A real strength of the report is that all of these have been highlighted in a table flagging comments, concerns and actions proposed. This pulls together all the challenges raised by service users, residents and stakeholders, as part of the

consultation, alongside the action proposed by Whittington Health to mitigate these challenges.

The table is comprehensive and highlights all the concerns and challenges raised by service users and residents during the consultation, whether through the survey or at events. These concerns and challenges have all been captured and documented, and robust recommendations made in terms of the action proposed to mitigate those challenges.

Further work

The only issue not highlighted in the report that we picked up on was the discrepancy between service users and residents/stakeholders in their attitudes to the proposed moves.

Most service users were in favour of the move - 66% were happy with the proposed moves, and 20% were not happy with the proposed moves. This was based on around 2,000 responses. However, in the resident and stakeholder survey, only 32% were in favour of the proposed moves, whilst 48% were against. This was based on a much smaller number of responses – around 200.

This shows there is more work to be done promoting the benefits of having these community health services in Wood Green, with easy access to the Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC), co-located with other services, in a location with very good public transport links, which is more accessible for many more people, especially those in diverse communities.

The key concerns raised through the resident and stakeholder consultation were Wood Green being a busy area, traffic, pollution and safety. These issues fall within Haringey Council's remit rather than Whittington Health's, and should be addressed through the Council's plans for the Wood Green area relating to walking, cycling, public transport, clean air, green spaces, community safety and policing.

This highlights the need for Haringey Council to play its part in improving the Wood Green environment (traffic, clean air, public safety) so local people feel confident and safe in accessing NHS services at the new Integrated Health and Wellbeing Hub. We recommend Whittington Health work in partnership with Haringey Council to see what can be done to mitigate against these challenges in the medium to longer-term.