

Are you happy with your GP services?

Healthwatch Lambeth Trustee Seminar Report

Healthwatch Lambeth Trustees held a seminar on transforming primary care services (dental, GPs and community pharmacists) on June 10, 2015. The seminar took place from 6pm - 8pm at the Norwood Health and Leisure Centre.

Around 50 people including Lambeth residents, Healthwatch Lambeth Trustees, Patient Participation Groups, GPs, pharmacists, NHS Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group and Lambeth Councillors attended the seminar. It was opened by Knights Hill Ward Councillor Jane Pickard and closed by Lambeth Council Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Jim Dickson.



The seminar also gave those attending an opportunity to meet Healthwatch Lambeth Trustees, who were there to listen to Lambeth residents views.

Why we held this seminar

This seminar was a follow up to the “Big Health Debate” seminar we held with the NHS Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group (LCCG) and Lambeth Patient Participation Groups (LPPGN) in June 2014.

Lambeth residents told us a year ago that:

- they valued the work of their GP
- were keen to support healthy living initiatives
- they would like to see friendlier receptionists
- provide front line staff with a sound knowledge of local services that meet the needs of lonely people and/or those with mental health.

The joint report “Transforming Primary Care in Lambeth, The Big Lambeth Health Debate continues” documented commitments made by all three organisations and included an action to report back progress made to Lambeth residents.

We used this “Happy with our GP services?” seminar as an opportunity for Healthwatch Lambeth, LCCG and LPPGN to provide an update on developments in primary care services over the last 12 months. We also wanted to find out if Lambeth residents had felt a change in primary care services - good or bad.



Updates

Sandra Jones, Chair, LPPGN - (link to handout when report on our website)

LPPGN - is a network of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) set up to develop and strengthen patients' voice in primary care services and increase influence with the LCCG. There is more information on LPPGN in workshop discussion section. The Network reported that over the last 12 months they had:

- Received £65,000 funding from NHS Lambeth Clinical Commissioning to strengthen patient participation groups (PPG).
- Recruited a Development Worker to develop the structure of network and improve engagement with patients within GP surgeries.
- Held bi-monthly meetings with PPGs.
- Run the PPG Awareness Week programme in June to raise the awareness of PPG, some PPGs also held "Warm and Well in Winter" activities with people over the age of 75
- Produced a PPG directory providing benchmarking information on PPGs in Lambeth.

Sandra added that the Network is at present visiting and building relationship with all GP practices and PPGs and is represented in a number of committees in the LCCG.

Catherine Pearson, Chief Executive, Healthwatch Lambeth

Catherine explained that Healthwatch had taken forward learning from last year's event around patients' experiences of accessing primary care - particularly general practice. We noted that under the four Transforming Primary Care Standards, patient feedback included references to the way staff, especially front of house staff such as receptionists, speak to some patients. Examples included:

Standard 1 - Proactive care: *Receptionists who are responsive and more customer friendly whether on front reception or over the phone, especially towards vulnerable people.*

Standard 2 - Accessible care: *The acknowledgement that one size does not fit all patients. Patients need to be put first, and not interrogated by receptionists when calling practices.*

Standard 3 - Co-ordinated care: *For reception staff it was suggested: training that covers being courteous to all staff at all times.*

Standard 4 - Continuity of care: *Recognition of special patient needs. This should be identified on patient notes, for example partially sighted, deaf. Patients made to feel empowered and encouraged to see their own records/results*

We noted that communication is often a barrier to providing good health care, especially health care that is structured as a universal, standardised service.

We have learnt through our other engagement work that when people talk about good care and good care outcomes they often describe the caregiver as 'kind'. We have been investigating what 'kind' means in care systems. So, for example, we have developed a partnership called 'Right 4 Everyone', which brings together people with learning difficulties to enter and view healthy living pharmacies and test the quality of healthy living advice provided.

We have also been working with partners in Lambeth DataNet and the Biomedical Research Council to develop a patient and public engagement plan for DataNet. This uses anonymised GP patient records to improve local health needs. The project teams will be reporting on both of these work areas in the discussion groups.

Dr Adrian McLachlan, Chair, LCCG and Dr Hasnain Abbasi, Joint Chair, Improving Access in Lambeth (IAL)

- LCCG working within a fast changing national environment that includes the London wide health programmes, [Better Health for London](#)¹ and [Transforming Primary Care London](#)²

Prime Minister's Challenge Fund - (link to handout)

- IAL partnership of 3 GP federations (North Lambeth Practices, SW Lambeth Healthcare and South East London Health Professional covering 47 practices) and LCCG
- Put in successful bid in to Prime Minister's Challenge Fund to improve access, management of long term conditions, improve patient/community resilience, provide holistic health assessments and manage frail elderly population.
- The £3.4 million funding will be used to:
 - Develop four new Primary Care Access Hubs: Open 8am - 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 6pm weekends.
 - Hubs to be supported with seamless and innovate technology.
 - Establish patient hub.
 - Reduce avoidable admissions.

¹ Mayor Boris Johnson set up London Health Commission in 2013 to review health of capital, from provision of services to what Londoners can do themselves to help make the city the healthiest in the world. Over 60 recommendations and 10 ambitions to combat the threats posed by tobacco, alcohol, obesity, lack of exercise and pollution, which harm millions of people.

² Transforming Care looks at how to best plan and provide local health services so that they meet needs, improve health, improve quality, reduce inequalities in health and are sustainable for the future. Part of the [NHS Five Year Forward View](#)

Workshop discussions

We then held three workshop discussions to give people an opportunity to find out more, give their views and ask questions.

The discussion topics and questions were:

- Right for Everyone (R4E) - How can healthy living pharmacies deliver services that are fully accessible to all our residents and how can the importance of kindness in care systems be promoted?
- Lambeth Datanet - What is DataNet and what can it do for Lambeth?
- LPPGN - How can we develop the patient voice in primary care?

R4E

Catherine Pearson, Chief Executive, Healthwatch Lambeth led the discussion.

The Right for Everyone Team explained the project.

Between January and March 2015, 11 trained Enter and View visitors visited six healthy living pharmacies. Each visiting team had at least one person with a learning disability and a support worker. They chose two pharmacies from each of the three health areas in Lambeth - north, south-east and south-west.

Many people use community pharmacies and know that they play a key role in giving healthy living advice. However, people with a learning disability often do not get as good healthcare as other people, therefore the R4E team wanted to find out:

- Do these pharmacies give health and wellbeing advice that people with a learning disability can understand?
- How good is the information and advice about health issues people may have (for example, diabetes, epilepsy and stroke)?
- How kind are the people who serve us in the pharmacy?

The team wanted people with a learning disability to be confident about using a pharmacy - and believe that this could cut down on people going to their GP or hospital if they do not really need to.

Their findings included:

- Some pharmacies were inaccessible for wheelchairs and only one had a space for a mobility scooter.
- All the pharmacies were welcoming, smiling and respectful.
- In general, the healthy living information they were given was clear and easy to understand, however there was no easy read materials.
- Some staff spoke too quickly and didn't give the visitor a chance to respond to their questions or didn't make sure the visitor understood what was being said.

They made the following recommendations:

1. All pharmacy staff should undertake disability awareness training.

2. All pharmacies should have some easy read materials available and ideally on display.
3. Pharmacies should make links with day centres and other community places nearby. They need to help people understand what a pharmacy does and encourage everyone to use their services.
4. Pharmacies should think about how to improve the physical accessibility of their building.
5. Pharmacies should have clear information about health check charges for people who have to pay.

Richard Keegan Bull, a co-Chair of Lambeth Learning Disability Assembly, explained that the Assembly believes that if we get things right for people with a learning disability then we will get it right for everyone. Participants said that they thought Lambeth was lucky to have this enter and view team because they provide such useful information for people commissioning and providing services.

The group discussed ‘what do ‘kind’ services look like?’ We agreed that kindness is good for everyone - people thought that a service is kind if the person providing it is smiling, listening and understanding what they are being told. Someone said, it is about *‘having heart in what you do’; respecting people by giving them some of your time; showing that you care and trying to help.*

Lambeth DataNet

Discussion began with a short presentation on Lambeth DataNet by Janaki Kuhanendran, Engagement Manager, Healthwatch Lambeth:

- DataNet is an information resource comprising of anonymised GP patient records of 350,000 people registered at 47 practices across Lambeth.
- The data includes registration information from patients such as the area they live in, age, gender, ethnicity, language, country of birth and religion. It also includes medical conditions but not GP notes.
- A network of Lambeth GPs share records with public health and university researchers to identify local patterns of illness and health needs and how to tackle them.
- DataNet is not used for commercial purposes.

Issues raised during discussion

Wider sharing of the (research) outputs from DataNet

Voluntary organisations and individuals taking part in the workshop wanted to know more about the benefits of DataNet and how they could use summaries of research findings to improve the health of their own client groups and local communities.

Comments included:

“I would like access to this information and to share it with my neighbours”

“can the information be shared more widely than proposed? For example with local charities. If I know certain groups aren’t getting access to breast screening services then we can encourage them through our work”

Dr Ashworth liked the idea of Lambeth voluntary sector organisations generating health related research questions. He proposed to further explore this with the LCCG.

Transparency

The workshop participants were surprised that Lambeth Datanet was already up and running and therefore all agreed that there needs to be greater transparency.

Patients should be made aware of what Lambeth Datanet is and how it uses their records and research findings should be shared more widely.

Comments included:

“Why have we not been made aware that this has been up and running for so long?”

“Are there any current projects in progress that we can read about?”

“Where will ongoing research be displayed?”

“People are suspicious due to their experiences. It is very important to engage with ethnic minorities and the whole community”.

Suggestions

- Hand out a Lambeth Datanet leaflet when a patient registers with their GP and include a note and tick-box on the patient registration form explaining that the information provided will be used for DataNet purposes. Patients would be more willing to give personal information if they know it is going to help improve local people’s health.
- Put Lambeth Datanet information on GP practice TV screens.
- Plan outreach to communities who may be sceptical about data-sharing and are unlikely to attend public meetings.

Difference between care.data and Lambeth Datanet

Workshop participants were keen to understand the difference between Lambeth DataNet and other national data-collection schemes to ensure that local resources were being used efficiently.

Care.data, an NHS England initiative, that takes GP records and uploads them on to a national database to provide a picture of how care is being delivered across the different healthcare systems, has been paused.

NHS England are currently carrying out a “listening exercise” with the public after concerns that intimate medical information would be shared with external bodies.

Lambeth Datanet - is different and unique because it uses local health information to tackle local health inequalities. It is not used for commercial purposes.

All agreed that this difference needs to be explained in Lambeth Datanet material.

Lambeth Patient Participation Group Network (LPPGN)

Wai Ha Lam, Development Worker and Sandra Jones, Chair, LPPGN began the discussion.

In April 2014, the LCCG agreed to provide funding to enable the LPPGN to strengthen the network and provide support to individual PPGs.

They are working to ensure that

- PPGs influence the changes taking place in primary care services
- there is joint working with GP practices and other stakeholders to improve the patient experience.

The group discussed how to develop the patient voice in primary care and some of the barriers faced.

Issues raised during discussion.

Raising awareness of Patient Participation Groups within GP practices.

- General information needed by patients - dates of meetings and how to get involved.
- Need advertising dates and feedback from meetings that have taken place.

Suggestions

- Notice boards and displays in practices as well as advertising on websites and newsletters and social media, for example Twitter, Facebook groups.
- Network intranet for PPG could include a patient opinion tool, single place where agendas, minutes and other feedback can be given.

How do you get diversity and representation of practice population in PPGs?

- Problems of self selecting participants who have single focus and dominate agenda about own health needs- can be a deterrent to others getting involved

Suggestions

- LPPGN could support practices in reaching out to the seldom heard to ensure their voices are heard in PPGs.
- Use Asset mapping to profile key organisations in community and network to engage with them?

Relevance and quality of PPG meetings

- Meetings can be off putting if not interesting or well chaired. It won't encourage patients to attend another meeting.
- Very often, practice managers have limited views on PPG and are not creative in running events and meetings
- Joint ownership of agenda and forum by patients and staff needs developing - new concept for both staff and patients - needs to be promoted and skills built up.

Suggestions

- Need an interesting topic to get patients interested- for example befriending, skills time bank, healthy eating, diabetes management and walking group.
- Issue of the month notice board display in GP practices (supported by PPG network)
- LPPGN support practices to get PPGs set up, arrange speakers and organise publicity.
- Provide skills training for patients and staff.
- Minimum standards and format for PPGs across practices to be developed so that patients know what to expect.
- Focus on active two way communication, rather than the PPGs being an information receiving group.

Discussion feedback

The discussions came to an end and the three groups were asked to feedback three key points.

R4E

- 1 **Charging for pharmacy health checks** - ensure charges for health checks are clearly displayed
- 2 **Easy read materials** - ensure the health system in general provides information that is accessible for everyone.
- 3 **Kindness in service delivery** - a service that is smiling, listening and understanding what they are being told is good for everyone, not just learning disabled adults.

Lambeth Datanet

- 1 Involve voluntary groups in generating research questions - these groups have a wealth of local public health knowledge, use it!
- 2 Transparency - ensure Datanet is transparent and upfront about how patient records are being used and this is publicised.
- 3 Involve community and voluntary organisations in disseminating research findings to their client groups and neighbours.

PPG

1. To have some minimum standards for PPG, this is to ensure both patient and practices have agreed expectations.
2. More transparency and increase the visibility of PPG, for example, have PPG specific notice board and minutes and meeting notices on the practice's website.
3. More training and motivation for both patients and practice managers.

The floor was then opened up to questions.

- Given that patient participation groups are becoming well established in GP surgeries, and we can see the value and benefits of hearing the views of patients - can we please take it into Dentistry?

Healthwatch Lambeth's Right 4 Everyone project is seeking funding to

survey patient feedback on dentist services in 2016. The quality of patient centred care in dentists is increasingly being raised by the public and we know that Healthwatch England are considering doing more work on this.

- What do we do if we think the patient data on GP records is inaccurate?

Practices have a legal duty to keep accurate patient records. Therefore, talk to your practice manager.

If this doesn't work then make a formal complaint.

- Does Datatnet duplicate information already held by public health?

No, in fact Public Health in Lambeth uses Lambeth DataNet information for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Annual Public Health Report.

Councillor Jim Dickson, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing thanked Healthwatch Lambeth for setting up these meetings and giving residents and service users an opportunity to have their say on local services.

He thanked everyone for taking part and added that working together towards integrated services was the best way to ensure Lambeth residents stayed well, especially when funding was being cut.

Next steps

Healthwatch Lambeth, with the help of Lambeth resident's feedback, will continue to monitor the fast moving changes taking place in primary care and how this affects patients and carers.

NHS Lambeth CCG's successful bid to Prime Minister's Challenge Fund presents an exciting opportunity to improve access to services at the same time as managing long term conditions. However, the LCCG needs to ensure that the patient voice is present in the shaping of new services.