



Healthwatch Lambeth

Enter and View

Living Well Network Hub Visit Report

August 2016

About Healthwatch Lambeth



**Healthwatch
Lambeth is the
independent health
and social care
champion for local
people.**



We work to ensure your voice counts when it comes to shaping and improving services. We address inequalities in health and care, to help ensure everyone gets the services they need. We are a charity and membership body for Lambeth residents and voluntary organisations.

There are local Healthwatches across the country as well as a national body, Healthwatch England.

About Enter and View Visits

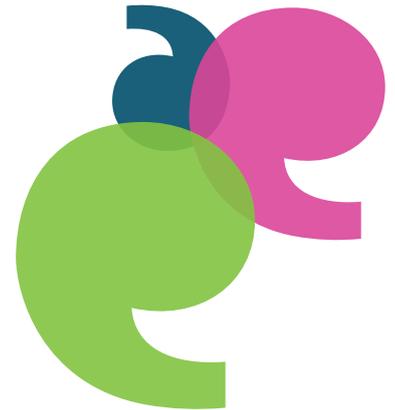
Our Enter and View programme involves visiting publicly funded health and social care services in Lambeth to see what is going on and talk to service users, their relatives and carers, as well as staff.

Every local Healthwatch has a legal responsibility to carry out an Enter and View programme. But we are not inspectors. Instead, we focus on what it is like for people receiving care. We provide extra eyes and ears, especially for the most isolated and vulnerable. Our visits are carried out by trained and police checked volunteers.



Visit overview

Service	<p>Living Well Network (LWN) Hub, Streatham Job Centre Plus, Crown House Station Approach, SW16 6HW</p> <p>Lambeth Outreach Hubs</p> <p>North locality: St Luke's Hub, 25A Wincott Street, Kennington, SE11 4NT</p> <p>South East locality: 121 Clapham High Street, Clapham, SW4 7JR (supplementary visit)</p>
Date of visit	<p>Tuesday 02 August 2016, 10.30am - 12.30pm</p> <p>Thursday 11 August 2016, 11am - 12pm (supplementary visit)</p>
Enter and View Team	<p>Janaki Kuhanendran (lead), Yvette Johnson (authorised representatives); Emily Georghiou (trainee)</p>
Service liaison link	<p>Stacey Hemphill, LWN Hub Manager</p>



Purpose of visit

Mental Health is a priority area of work for Healthwatch Lambeth. Our work in 2015 indicated that knowledge of community-based mental health services among local people was poor. Following this, we were keen to learn from people who have mental health needs how they find information and advice about where they can seek help and support, and what their experiences of receiving this support has been. As a provider of community-based mental health support services, we chose to conduct an Enter and View visit to the LWN Hub to talk to service users and staff. The aims of the visit were to:

- listen to how mental health service users perceive the quality of the support at LWN Hub and, if and how it enables them to manage and maintain their wellbeing
- understand how service users find information and learn about where they can seek help and support elsewhere that appropriately meets their needs.

About the Living Well Network Hub

Established as a pilot programme in the North locality of Lambeth in 2013, and later open borough-wide in June 2015, the Lambeth Living Well Network (LWN) Hub is a 'front door' to comprehensive community mental health and wellbeing support. It hosts a multidisciplinary team of professionals from across Thamesreach, Certitude, Lambeth Council and the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, who work collaboratively to meet service-user needs. As well as operating from its main office in Streatham, the service runs three community outreach drop-in mornings.

Lambeth residents and patients registered with a Lambeth GP aged between 18 and 65 can introduce themselves or be referred from any organisation or individual. The service supports people for up to 12 weeks, working towards achieving three big outcomes for service users: To recover and stay well, to make their own choices and to participate on an equal footing in daily life¹.

¹ For more information, please see <http://lambethcollaborative.org.uk/about/living-well-network>



Participants

An observation checklist of the service environment and questionnaires for staff and service users were developed by the Healthwatch Lambeth Enter and View team. We asked service users about the quality of the service, their views of the staff, how they provided feedback and about how they kept themselves emotionally well. We asked staff about what they thought of the service, how they involved members and how they engaged with other relevant local services.

Prior to our visit, we held a service briefing interview with the LWN Hub Manager and, with her assistance, circulated an online staff questionnaire via email to all staff.

On the scheduled visit date, user attendance was quieter than normal at the Streatham Job Centre and St. Luke's sites - we were only able to talk to two service users. With permission from the service, a supplementary visit to their South East locality community drop-in session held at Clapham Methodist Church was conducted on 11 August 2016.

Across the two dates we received feedback from five clients, and seven staff members involved in support, management and administrative roles. One staff member completed an online survey form.

Location

The main office for the LWN Hub has been situated at the Job Centre Plus, Streatham

since June 2015. The site is situated off a busy main road that is well served with several bus routes and is a five-minute walk away from an overground train station. Its central location facilitates easy access to nearby amenities on Streatham High Road.

External environment

Although centrally situated, our visitors felt that the walk from the main road towards the Job Centre could feel insecure for some, particularly first time visitors. The street was very quiet with no people around, and there was no additional street lighting apart from two wall lights on the outside of the Job Centre building. Although the LWN Hub leaflets and web information clearly state the address, there were no signs in the area for visitors to be assured that they were in the right place to access the LWN Hub until we reached the second floor of the building.

Recommendation 1

Clear signage should be placed at the entrance to the premises to ensure visitors can easily locate the service. We would recommend that a sign be placed on the street/wall of the Job Centre and in the reception/entrance.

Internal environment

The atmosphere of the ground floor reception area of the Job Centre was busy, with many people accessing Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) services. The reception staff were attentive and directed us to the fourth floor where the LWN Hub is situated. Access was via stairs. We were later told that a lift could be made available for those with mobility issues, though in the past the service has had difficulties with negotiating access to it with DWP security staff.

On arrival at the LWN Hub, there was a noticeable change in ambiance compared to the main reception area on the ground floor. We were greeted immediately and warmly welcomed by reception staff. The atmosphere was calm and quiet, and the environment was clean, bright and well-maintained. On the day of our visit there were very few members of staff or service-users present.

The large office space is open-plan, with a waiting area and comfortable seating in the middle of the room. General information about mental health and emotional wellbeing, and services available in the borough such as the Evening Sanctuary at Mosaic Clubhouse and Talking Therapies were well organised in leaflet racks, on noticeboards and office walls. On a wall close to the entrance, we saw a large colourful display board with photos and short personal narratives of LWN Hub staff members.

We were told that there were private rooms available for one-to-one conversations

between practitioners and service users. For our visit, a meeting room was made available to conduct interviews.

Community drop-in venues

Both community venues were centrally located, either on a main road or just off one, with good transport links via several bus routes and an underground station. The buildings were clearly marked and could be accessed by wheelchair users. The working space for the sessions were on the ground floor, which were clean, bright and spacious in both venues. Staff were welcoming and friendly and invited clients to sit in a small waiting area near the entrance. Small tables with chairs were set up in a line for face-to-face consultations. Information leaflets were made available on a display table.

Meeting members

Quality of services

On the day of our planned visit, we were unable to talk to any service users at the main site. Staff explained that it was a particularly quiet day, and also that two locality teams were conducting their drop-in/outreach sessions at community locations. Feedback from two service users was gathered at the North locality outreach on the planned visit day; this was supplemented the following week with information collection from three service users at the SouthEast locality outreach session in Clapham.

The LWN Hub conducts outreach sessions in the community to facilitate easier access for service users and often arranges to meet new clients for their first 15-minute appointment at these venues. The majority of the service users we spoke to were accessing the LWN Hub for the first time and therefore our ability to capture a fuller picture of their experience was severely limited. The people we had spoken to were accessing the service for a different range of problems, some requiring support with housing, employment and welfare benefits and others needing clinical support to manage their mental health.

Clients were most commonly referred to the service by their GP; one was introduced by their therapist, and another by a voluntary sector provider. Interestingly, those referred by their GP both explained that they had either little understanding or different expectations as to how the LWN Hub would help them:

“It’s possibly what I expected. I’m not sure really. When the GP made the referral I thought I was being referred straight for a psych assessment but I understand the need for triage”,

“I had no expectation, the doctor didn’t explain what the Living Well Network does. I came here to get help”.

One staff member commented that although the majority of referrals come through Lambeth GPs and attempts have been made to explain the service at GP fora, there is still

room to improve GPs’ understanding of what the Hub does to encourage ‘appropriate referrals’ and limit needlessly passing patients around.

Another service user who arrived through a different route explained that while at first she didn’t understand why she had been referred to the Hub, she later came to see its value to her as a stopgap between treatment plans, saying *“I received a diagnosis and am getting meds. The treatment is expensive so I had an NHS referral but there is a long waiting list. There is no support in the interim so the Hub is like a half way measure”*.

Two respondents explained that they had waited longer than expected for their first appointment. One person commented that they had waited a *“good couple of months between being referred to getting here”* and another explained that although he had to chase the referral, he was impressed that an appointment was offered for the next day.

Recommendation 2

Review understanding of the LWN Hub service and resource/publicity materials available to local stakeholders (particularly GPs) to ensure that the information provided to patients explains clearly what the LWN does and why they are being referred to the service.

Expectations from clients referred by GPs can also be recorded during their first visit to the

Hub to monitor if and how this understanding is improving.

Having said this, and even with limited interaction with the service, the clients we spoke to were positive about their experience thus far. Service users suggested that they were content with the support provided as it focused on the issue they needed help with.

Comments included:

“It helps with housing and work. XXX is talking to the Job Centre to ask for another form. National Insurance doesn’t pay enough because I don’t work enough so I need to fill in another form”,

“I came here to get help, and I’m happy”,

“I did not understand why I was referred here so staff helped me with that and to come up with an action plan”.

One service user told us that they had used the service about four months ago but found it *“too exhausting”* saying that *“they gave me too many details, and I had to keep explaining myself....I’m not good at expressing myself. I decided not to take it further so I discharged myself as I thought they would just end up referring me from one place to another - the same places as before”*. On this visit, she seemed to experience the service differently saying that *“XXX was very helpful, and his communication was very good, it was at the right level for me”*.

Staff fed back that they felt the LWN Hub offered a good service where people who needed support at a certain time in their life, could receive one-to-one advice to help them find what they needed. Staff explained that they supported people with a wide range of needs, and played a supportive role to encourage people through the process of seeking help. With a variety of links and good relationships to other services, staff felt confident to guide service users and emphasised that no-one is ‘turned away’. Easy access into the service as well as being able to re-introduce themselves at any time was seen as an important.

Staff interaction

Service users described their limited interaction with LWN Hub staff as “really nice”, “pretty good” and “A1 - they are the best”.

We also spoke to short-term temporary staff who complimented the environment created by staff saying *“the atmosphere is really laid back and relaxed here, it’s great for the clients. There doesn’t seem to be any politics, it’s nice and calm”*. As an example, these staff retold an incident where the *“excellent”* way the security guards and staff handled a man who was being particularly aggressive; they explained the *“gentleman calmed right down and was apologetic”*.

Staff noted that they benefited from working in a multidisciplinary team and were able to

learn from others who have many different experiences, expertise and knowledge, which they felt was also important for the people they were reaching out to. Many noted a real sense of 'team', working together and cooperating to support each other.

Most of the support staff we spoke to were employed by Thamesreach and they felt that the range of training provided including benefits, safeguarding, casework management and complaints handling satisfied their professional development needs. Others also mentioned that they felt comfortable to raise training needs with their managers as they arose. Only one person felt that they would benefit from more knowledge about other organisations and current information about changes to benefits and housing, commenting *"Thamesreach training ends and it's not updated"*.

Participation and involvement

As service users had just had their first visit and several had little time to talk with us, we were unable to discuss in depth with them as to how they participated and felt involved with the service.

Staff informed us that service users are involved in developing their support plans and that these are reviewed together. The staff whom we spoke with all stressed the importance of working with the client to

understand what they wanted to achieve. While staff provided suggestions about how to get there, the decision is always made by the service user based on the information provided.

On asking how the service could be improved, two staff members suggested that they would value more time with clients. One person explained that the turnaround of clients can be overwhelming and hiring more support staff so that each could spend a little more time with clients would help build clients' confidence. Another suggested that introducing more peer-led activities and coffee mornings would be a good opportunity for service users to meet each other. They also commented that although other organisations offer this type of support, it would be beneficial for staff to have more interaction with clients.

Related to this, we were told by a staff member that while plans to innovate were discussed e.g. holding events as a means of bringing clients together to recognise and share skills and knowledge, these plans have not been implemented due to workloads. The staff member felt more could be done to involve service users and that *"apart from the flexibility, we're not that different from existing services and the point of the organisation was to look at new ways of doing things."*

Recommendation 3

Space should be given to refresh discussions as to how staff can foster a sense of ownership over space and time with clients, and thus limit the sense that the Hub is a turnaround service. Setting up peer-led activities can be time-consuming, but thinking of other less intensive initiatives e.g. creating a physical space where service users could be encouraged to spend time before/after appointments, have refreshments, read information, talk to one another and undertake their own research might be a useful first step.

Providing feedback/ making complaints

We were told by staff that feedback was gathered using satisfaction questionnaires from service users who had been seen more than twice. Feedback was also used in regular 'labs', where service users share their experience of using the Hub and progress made to a peer support worker who collates their story. The story is used to evaluate what went well and what could be improved with the service user and staff team. Lastly, we were told that interviews with service users were being conducted by King's College London as part of the overall service evaluation.

Staff who had been working for the service for some time commented that they had seen changes to the way the Hub operates to improve service quality in response to both

client and staff feedback: *"Staff members are able to have their say and have an impact on how certain things are being done - there is a room for discussion. This also applies to my role as it developed since I started and I really like it"*. Having said this, one staff member did suggest that keeping up with the pace of change could be a struggle sometimes, quoting an example of *"guidelines: things change so quickly that people find it difficult to ensure they are carrying out the correct processes"*.

We did not see any posters or information on display which explained to people how they could feedback or make a complaint about the service, this was also not available online. However, when discussing this with the service manager, we were told that all complaints are directed to her and that she would distribute the complaint to the relevant team/person to investigate further. Contact would be made with the complainant between 24 - 48 hours and they would always be offered a face-to-face meeting to discuss the issue. The outcome of the complaint and any learning generated would then be shared with staff.

Recommendation 4

Ensure a formal system is in place to record, monitor and learn from informal and formal complaints, and share this information with service users in appropriate ways.

Engagement with other services

Between them, these clients had previously accessed mental health support via community mental health teams, GPs, psychiatric and counselling services; and had undertaken occupational and cognitive behavioral therapies (CBT). Two clients had accessed services privately, with one person commenting: *“I went private mostly because I wanted to see someone quickly, I guess it’s a perception that the wait is long. I guess I didn’t want it on my records, and also it’s about not wanting medication”*.

On asking clients how they found out about local wellbeing and mental health support, one person explained that they knew nothing of what was available, as their perception was that services would cater for people with acute needs. Another service user described how she was unable to absorb any information in her last interaction with a professional: *“In my last counselling session I didn’t speak at all because it was the last one and I felt she was abandoning me. I was going to be left alone with my issues unresolved. I was so focused on that that I didn’t listen to see if she had suggested other things I could access. In the meantime, I just coped on my own. I generally don’t go to the doctor unless I’m in crisis because all they do is raise or change my medication”*.

The LWN Hub brings together staff from a variety of voluntary sector, NHS and council services and therefore is able to use the

knowledge and relationships from across these to troubleshoot clients’ needs. All staff spoke of having excellent links with Mosaic Clubhouse (for employment training) and Certitude (for social inclusion support). Other services mentioned included Improving Access to Psychological (IAPT) services, employment support (Status Employment, Toucan Employment, Lambeth Council), welfare support (Christian Against Poverty, Every Pound Counts, foodbanks), probation and adult social services.

Staff suggested that relationships with mainstream services could be improved. Some fed back that they would like better links with housing and local Job Centres (work is already ongoing to build these); and to work more with gyms. Importantly, keeping up-to-date with existing and new community groups who have a non-mental health focus was also felt to be useful.

Recommendation 5

Maintain the momentum and focus around the integration of different services in Lambeth by continuing to work with established links such as Mosaic Clubhouse and Certitude, as well as drawing new and wider reaching services into the LWN Hub’s collaborative model with the same resolve. We would encourage the LWN Hub’s management team to find ways of managing information, ensuring that staff are able to keep abreast of new services but also have the time to share experiences of working with them.

Conclusion

Given the limited nature of interaction service users had had with the LWN Hub, we were unable to gain a substantial impression of the quality of the service. That said, the initial feedback provided suggests that service users are being listened to, and that support will be offered to deal with their immediate needs.

While it is not solely in the control of the LWN Hub, we believe that continued work needs to be carried out with GPs services to ensure that they understand what the Hub can do so as to manage their own and their patients' expectations. The LWN Hub is an innovative model and a new way of working so we encourage the service to continue to monitor its development and find ways to involve service users fully in this process.

The Healthwatch Lambeth Enter and View visiting team would like to thank the staff of the LWN Hub for their patience, courtesy and openness during our visit.

Provider response

I think this is a fair and honest report and I welcome the feedback for the Hub. I have no comments to add other than to thank you and the team for your efforts.

Recommendations

For ease of reference the recommendations appearing in the body of the report are repeated below:

Recommendation 1

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