

IMPROVEMENT AND

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –

HEALTH

March 2023

About Us

Healthwatch Derbyshire is an independent voice for the people of Derbyshire. We are here to listen to the experiences of Derbyshire residents and give them a stronger say in influencing how local health and social care services are provided.

We listen to what people have to say about their experiences of using health and social care services and feed this information through to those responsible for providing the services. We also ensure services are held to account for how they use this feedback to influence the way services are designed and run.

Healthwatch Derbyshire was set up in April 2013 as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and is part of a network of local Healthwatch organisations covering every local authority across England. The Healthwatch network is supported in its work by Healthwatch England who builds a national picture of the issues that matter most to health and social care users and will ensure that this evidence is used to influence those who plan and run services at a national level.

Updates on Key Issues and Themes

Access to GP Appointments

The ways in which patients access their GP services is changing, the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated many of these changes but even prior to the pandemic many GP's were increasingly offering a wider range of ways to access their services.

Face to face appointments are traditionally how many patients would access their GP, however this is not the only option available, and for some patients and their individual health concerns, alternative appointments may be more suitable and even preferable for their lifestyle.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, GP surgeries offered alternatives to face to face appointments that included access to care moving to a triage system, online bookings, and video and phone consultations.

Throughout Summer 2022 Healthwatch Derbyshire ran a survey to hear from patients, carers, and the wider public, offering an opportunity to share their views and recent experiences of accessing their GP. Over 1300 responses were received to the survey.

Our GP Access Report has now been published and includes a response from the Integrated Care Board and Derby & Derbyshire Local Medical Committee.

At the time of writing, the final report has been shared with providers, with an offer to GP Practices to provide their individual practice responses to the survey, where these are available. The report has been well received by practices and we have engaged with several practices so far as we look at ways of highlighting best practice and seeing how practices could implement recommendations from the report, as well as hearing from practices about ways in which they have addressed their own issues around demand and patient access to appointments.

A copy of the final GP Access Report is included.

Closure of DCC Day Care Centres

HWD has closely followed Derbyshire County Council's consultation into the proposed closure of eight day centres and a redesign of the service. We promoted opportunities for local residents to take part in the consultation, and have been kept informed as to the outcome of the consultation and the decisions taken.

It has now been confirmed following a decision made by Cabinet that the proposed closures will take place and that a new model will be put in place which includes the expansion of a Support Service Team and Community Connectors. The eight centres will be closed in phases over the next 12 months, with four existing day centres to remain open.

We have established good links with an LD carers group via Derbyshire Carers Association, and have been able to share their feedback with adult social care. The responses to their queries from adult social care have been fed back to the carers group, and it is encouraging that adult social care is keen to hear how these have been received.

Healthwatch Derbyshire will continue to follow the progress of changes and closures, and keen to highlight the importance of hearing from those affected by the changes as well as gather feedback on how the new model of service is being received, once this is in place later in the year and into next year.

Maternal Mental Health

HWD are supporting the Healthwatch England campaign around Maternal Mental Health. With one in four women experiencing mental health problems during pregnancy and in the first year following the birth of a child, support from maternity services can significantly impact their mental health and wellbeing. A recent Healthwatch England review of the evidence of 2,500 people's experiences of maternity services showed that, overall, people's experiences are worsening.

Healthwatch England are launching a national survey to better understand what is working and what needs improving for people who develop mental health difficulties relating to their maternity

experience. We also want to know whether the six-week checks meet the needs of new mothers and birthing parents.

The goal of the campaign is to improve mental health support in maternity care and ensure birthing parents are supported before, during and after birth.

HWD shared the survey in order to gather local data, as well as attending parent and baby groups to gain feedback from new mothers and birthing parents about their experiences of maternal mental health support in Derbyshire.

As this is a Healthwatch England led campaign, our local data has contributed towards national findings and we expect the survey results to be available in late March. We have had interest and support for this campaign from professionals within maternity services, and we have developed links with appropriately placed professionals to ensure the findings are shared where they may have most impact.

Contact

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