

Healthwatch Harrow Forum

3rd September 2019, Harrow Baptist Church



Shaping the future of our NHS in Harrow

“We're carers and have chased care co-ordinators numerous times - they don't come back. You can email or phone and still no response.

In the end we get tired, there are other things to do and ultimately we just give up.”.

Harrow resident and informal carer

Healthwatch Harrow Forum, Tuesday 3rd September 2019

The Healthwatch Harrow Forum is an opportunity for local people to find out about health and social care services, and to share their views and experiences.

Meeting quarterly, the Forum also helps to shape the priorities and associated work programmes of Healthwatch Harrow.

On Tuesday 3rd September, around 50 local people attended the Autumn event. Hosted at Harrow Baptist Church, this lively event featured presentations from:

Donna Adcock

Deputy Chief Nurse at Northwick Park Hospital

Angela Morris

London Borough of Harrow (Resilient Harrow Programme)

Genevieve Ojadi

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) at Northwick Park Hospital

Yvonne Lee

Advocacy 1st (independent NHS complaints advocates)

Service Related Feedback

As well as learning about local projects, delegates were able to share their views and experiences of local health and social care services.

We heard much positive feedback, with accounts of hard working and compassionate staff. However people also said that services were at times difficult to contact and unresponsive - for example not returning messages.

It was also felt there is a lack of general support for service users and carers, and more information was needed - particularly on what services are available locally.

Below are selected comments about Mental Health, GP and Social Care services.

Mental Health Services (General)

“Carers haven't got the time to constantly chase things up - it's 'so mentally tiring'.”

“It's s struggle to get support and chase things up and people with serious mental health conditions don't have the capacity to do so.”

“There's not enough information about Mental Health services.”

“I think the service has improved, I was given a leaflet and when I phoned the number it was picked up straight away.”

Mental Health Services (Bentley House)

“Inadequate. The allocated staff are not there and it's very disorganised.”

“Major issues for mental health at Bentley House.”

“Nobody answers the phone! Also they don't have a clue - they're all too ready to make assumptions.”

“So many services crammed into one small building and it can be very loud.”

“There are too many clinics inside a small space.”

“They have one telephone number and it's hard to get through. Also they don't get back when they say they will. We were told these issues will be fixed, but not yet.”

“They take information about blood pressure and weight - but this is not sent on to the GP.”

“We're carers and have chased the care co-ordinators at Bentley House numerous times - they don't come back. You can email or phone and still no response, despite promises. Also no response from the consultant. In the end we get tired, there are other things to do and ultimately we just give up.”

“Wife can't get through to Bentley House - even for simple things.”

“One particular staff member is very helpful, we'd be stuck with her. She even helped us with the paperwork”

GPs

“Lists of committees, points of contact but no real faith that anything will improve as we have been down this path many times before. We still cannot get appointments with our doctor!”

“We care for our son but the GP won't listen to us or give us information - they cite confidentiality.”

“Receptionists get a lot of criticism but they're doing a very difficult job!”

“There's a lot of talk about referrals but in my case I didn't wait long for an MRI scan. I also had the results within days.”

Social Care Services

"I care for my son and do need support but I don't know who to contact and where to go, to get advice. We can't cope any more! Who will help?"

"Some care agencies turn up late."

"Don't know who to call to get help (my mum is 92)."

"The care co-ordinator doesn't do anything and I'm fed up - they don't listen."

"My mum has Alzheimers and I'm having a problem getting support - I don't know who to contact. Already been to social services but they didn't help."

"Since Harrow Carers introduced charges we've stopped going and miss out on some quite useful discussion and support groups. I'd be willing to pay per session, but not for the whole year, as currently required."

"I can't fault the home care service, but my mum is lonely and even though staff know this, nothing is done about it. We live a long way away, and it's difficult."

We'd like to thank all those who attended this event, and assisted on the day.

Your Views?

If you didn't get a chance to attend the event, we'd still like to hear your feedback about local health and social care services.

Simply contact the Healthwatch office:

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