

# Healthwatch Bromley

## NHS Long Term Plan

Spring 2019

## What is the NHS Long Term Plan?

With growing pressure on the NHS - people living longer, more people living with long-term conditions, lifestyle choices affecting people's health - changes are needed to make sure everybody gets the support they need. The Government is investing an extra £20 billion a year in the NHS. The NHS has produced a 'Long Term Plan' setting out the things it wants health services to do better for people across the country. This includes making it easier to access support closer to home and via technology, doing more to help people stay well, and providing better support for people with long-term health conditions.

## Feedback from Local People

Healthwatch Bromley, alongside the network of 152 Healthwatch organisations has collected local views on the Long Term Plan through surveys, focus groups and events between April and May 2019, to give tens of thousands of people the opportunity to help local hospitals, GP surgeries and community services hear about the changes people would like to see. Hosting two focus groups in May 2019 and an engagement event, Healthwatch Bromley engaged with a total of 53 local people. 127 people completed the online survey and in total 180 people participated in the Long term plan engagement process.

## Engagement Event

Big Health Day at Community House, South Street Bromley 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019. We engaged with 29 local residents with a Learning Disability or Autism.

## Two focus Groups

**Mental Health Focus Group** Meeting at Mind centre, Masons Hill, Bromley, 14th May 2019, there were 12 people in attendance at the focus group.

**Learning Disability Focus Group** Meeting at The Lodge, Bromley, 22nd May 2019, there were 12 people in attendance at the focus group.

The groups were asked about their experiences of accessing services and support that they receive. We asked people 'what works, what doesn't work, and what could easily be improved'? What Matters We then asked what matters most to them and recorded experiences around prevention and early intervention, assessment, diagnosis and treatment, and ongoing care and support.

### Summary of Findings:

#### What matters most to people in Bromley to maintain a healthy lifestyle?

Top three aspects to help people live a healthy live are:

- 1) Access to the help and treatment I need when I want it.
- 2) Professionals listen to me about my concerns.
- 3) Easy access to information to help me make decisions about my healthcare.

Respondents had an opportunity to provide free text comment and it supported the top three statements. The top themes people raised were:

- Faster access to GP appointments was of great importance for people in helping them live healthy life. The benefit of a GP hub service in the borough with additional access to selected surgeries was seen as a positive step. *This includes appointment availability until 8.00 pm. The respondents felt that there are still not enough available appointments.*
- A number of people were unsure of the options available to them when they felt unwell. Going to the GP or Emergency Department is not always the right solution.
- More information about the opportunities in the borough where I can take action to improve my health. This to include prevention information and benefits of having a healthy lifestyle. The costs of any activity or sports services that I may choose to use.
- 42% of the people who engaged said that they would like more time with the health professional. “I don’t get enough time with the health professional to sort out my multiple health needs”. “Only 10 minutes per appointment is not enough”.
- “More accessible and clearer information given on treatment and support in managing health conditions”.
- “There are too many options and I am not sure what is right for me”.
- “Some of my benefits were stopped because I was getting myself more mobile and this is detrimental to my wellbeing”.

## Summary of Themes

Bromley residents told us that they would like greater access to services (particularly GPs) and better support in obtaining their appointments. A large number of people still use the telephone as their preferred booking method. People would also like greater levels of co-ordination between services locally.

People told us that better communication between themselves and the service provider (GP, Hospital or other health and social care professionals) is required. This includes more consultation time which is time consuming initially but saves time in the long run.

Many people are aware of the pressure that health and social care services are under, with considerable pressures on staff. It is desirable that future changes are equitable for staff and service users alike, with good levels of support available to all. In Bromley many people are happy to see a different health or care professional to reduce their waiting time.

Easy access to information is not being received by a number of people who were unclear about the options open to them. This is particularly relevant when making healthy life style choices.

Rate how important the following statements are to you when it comes to living a healthy life	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not Important And/or Not Important at all
Access to the help and treatment I need when I want it	88.88%	11.12%	0.00%	0.00%
Professionals that listen to me when I speak to them about my concerns	77.77%	17.59%	1.85%	2.79%
Easy access to the information I need to help me make decisions about my health and care	73.38%	23.36%	2.81%	0.00%
Having the knowledge to help me do what I can to prevent ill health	72.72%	23.63%	3.65%	0.00%
For every interaction with health and care services to count; my time is valued	61.11%	31.38%	4.62%	2.79%

## What matters most to people when managing & choosing care?

Top three aspects are:

- 1) Timely communications.
- 2) Choosing the right treatment (including my input)
- 3) I have time to consider my options.

Respondents had an opportunity to provide free text comment and it supported the top three statements. The top themes people raised were:

- Delays in receiving follow-up appointment information to be improved. A number of people said that they had to chase appointments, as these were not coming through automatically.
- “It takes a long time for my doctor to get hospital results and often these are not received prior to my next GP appointment”.
- “I spend a lot of time trying to establish who is telling the truth”. “I am told by the hospital that they have sent the information and the doctor is telling me that he doesn’t have it”. “Is there a standard target time for this to be done”?
- “There was no choice in deciding where I was going for my healthcare, I was just told”.
- “LISTEN to what I am really saying as this would help to know what was wrong and therefore not get so much wrong by presuming; assuming and guessing”.
- “Spend a few more minutes to save time and money for all concerned”.
- “To be listened to carefully and to have a health professional take plenty of time in finding out what is troubling me, taking into account previous notes”.
- “Having a regular GP who knows my medical history and can give advice and support rather than just prescribing medication”.

### Summary of Themes

Communication is a key part of a prevention programme. People tell us that good communication is important - at both individual level (between service and patient) and for the wider community (having information about services available in and around the

borough). Avoiding delays in communicating information such as test results can have an adverse effect of a person’s wellbeing. “I was misdiagnosed which as a major problem”.

People often complain about insufficient or inconsistent treatment information from health or social care professionals: “My doctor did not explain the effects of my new medication”. “There was not enough information provided to me during my consultation (10 minutes)”. “Inconsistent information provided.” People told us that they would like to receive:

- Good levels of information and communication.
- Information that is consistent.

Having sufficient time to decide about my care. In order for this to work well patients need to have their options /information clearly stated in writing and/or given to them in a format which they understand. “I was told verbally what my options were but I could not remember everything, I received nothing in writing”. “I was not given any time to make a choice about my treatment”.

Rate how important the following statements are to you when it comes to managing and choosing support	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not Important And/or Not Important at all
Communications are timely	69.44%	24.97%	4.25%	1.34%
Choosing the right treatment is a joint decision between me and the relevant health and care professional	60.75%	30.84%	4.68%	3.73%
I have time to consider my options and make the choices that are right for me	53.70%	39.41%	5.55%	1.34%
I make the decision about where I will go to receive health and care support	46.29%	34.25%	13.88%	5.58%
My opinion on what is best for me, counts	44.44%	34.25%	15.76%	5.55%
I should be offered care and support in other areas if my local area can’t see me in a timely way	44.44%	40.74%	8.33%	6.48%
I make the decision about when I will receive health and care support	40.74%	40.74%	10.18%	8.33%

If I have a long term condition I decide how the NHS spends money on me	32.71%	34.58%	23.36%	9.35%
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## Staying healthy when older

Top three aspects are:

- 1) Ability to stay in my own home for as long as possible.
- 2) I want my family to be supported at the end of life.
- 3) I want there to be convenient ways to travel to health services I need.

Respondents had an opportunity to provide free text comment and it supported the top three statements. The top themes people raised were:

- “Home care services that you can rely on are very important, this also applies to the district nurses”.
- “I have no family and I don’t know what my options are so I am staying put”.
- “I would like to think that my family will be supported when I die but I have not heard any good examples of this happening”.
- “Since the start of my mobility issues I find it hard to get around, so I have to rely on dial a ride or taxi to get me to places”.
- “I live near Orpington Hospital and was getting my diabetic checks done there, but they have moved me to the Princess Royal which is harder for me to get to”. “I understand that checks are still carried-out at /Orpington Hospital so why am I being sent to the PRUH?”

## Summary of Themes

A majority of people would prefer to stay in their own home if it is possible and safe for them to do so. While home care staff are trained to carry-out their duties, people have told us that they will often miss key prevention signs. In addition, there are some surgeries that no longer provide home visits which is an issue.

Getting to health care services is important to people in Bromley. While the borough has a good public transport network, it is not available to some people. Services are in the process of being reallocated to different hubs in the borough where specialist services can improve efficiency and also provide a more localised support. It is important to ensure that appropriate transport infrastructure is in place or accessible.

Stay healthy when older	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not important at all
I want to be able to stay in my own home for as long as it is safe to do so	80.56%	12.96%	6.48%	0.00%	0.00%
I want my family and me to feel supported at the end of life	74.07%	18.51%	7.42%	0.00%	0.00%
I want there to be convenient ways for me to travel to health and care services when I need to	69.44%	24.07%	3.70%	2.79%	0.00%
I want my family and friends to have the knowledge, to help and support me when needed	62.03%	27.77%	8.33%	0.00%	1.87%
I want my community to be able to support me to live my life the way I want	58.34%	32.41%	8.33%	0.92%	0.00%

## Interacting with the NHS

Top three aspects are:

- 1) Any results are communicated to me quickly making best use of technology.
- 2) I can access services using my phone or computer
- 3) I have absolute confidence that my personal data is managed well and kept secure.

Respondents had an opportunity to provide free text comment and it supported the top three statements. The top themes people raised were:

- “I don’t have a new phone that can do everything and I don’t have a computer”.  
“How does this work for me”?
- “I need to receive information by phone or letter”.
- “Access to my medical records is important to me”, “I do use the patient access computer service but it only has limited information”.
- “Can computer data really be secure?”



## Summary of Themes

While people want to receive medical results as quickly as possible not everyone has access to technology and people are concerned that they may be excluded as a result. People tell us that they want to be communicated with in a way which best suites them.

There are mixed views on accessing data using technology. There were approximately 60% in favour of these services.

Data security is important but there were no specific responses to this in Bromley.

Interacting with NHS	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not Important	Not important at all
Any results are communicated to me quickly making best use of technology	62.98%	25.92%	6.48%	0.92%	3.70%
I can access services using my phone or computer	57.43%	23.14%	12.03%	5.55%	1.85%
I have absolute confidence that my personal data is managed well and kept secure	54.65%	27.77%	12.96%	1.85%	2.77%
I can talk to my doctor or other health care professional wherever I am	53.72%	27.77%	10.18%	6.48%	1.85%
I can make appointments online and my options are not limited	50.01%	27.77%	11.11%	6.48%	4.63%
I manage my own personal records so that I can receive continuity in care	45.38%	25.92%	21.30%	4.63%	2.77%
I am able to talk to other people who are experiencing similar challenges to me to help me feel better	38.90%	32.40%	21.30%	4.63%	2.77%

## What did people tell Healthwatch?

Here, we take a more detailed look at the top themes emerging from discussion.

1. **Service Access** - It is clear that people would like greater access to services (particularly GPs) and better support in obtaining their appointments. Booking GP appointments over the phone are generally not working and there needs to be alternative methods to get same day appointments. This is particularly important as a large number of people still use the telephone as their preferred booking method. More available appointments would be an obvious answer but recruiting doctors is difficult. Bromley has and set appointments available daily through the GP Alliance and these are popular. In addition some surgeries have access to a Pharmacist who takes appointments for patients with medication issues/problems, freeing up some time for the doctors to see more patients.
2. **Poor communication** - Communication is an issue for people in the borough. Here is a list of the areas of concern for patients:-
  - “Hospital test results take too long to get to my GP”.
  - “The GP doesn’t have enough time to read my notes before he sees me and asks me why I am here? “This applied when he had called me into the surgery for some results”.
  - “Information was lost between the hospital and my doctor”.
  - “The doctor didn’t have time to explain things to me so handed me a leaflet to read”!
3. **Staffing levels** - There are insufficient staff and you rarely see the same person twice, so there is clearly an issue over continuity of care. It is desirable that future changes are equitable for staff and service users alike, with good levels of support available to all. Seeing the same health or care professional is important but some were willing to compromise continuity of care to ensure reduced patient waiting times.
4. **Co-ordination between services** - People would like greater levels of co-ordination between services locally - for example services in different localities to work together. The Health Passports are a ‘good idea’ but they are currently underutilised and not a health standard.

5. **Health Passports** - “Health Passports aren’t always utilised by some medical professionals.” All medical professionals should be aware/made aware of Health passports and know to use them.”

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us.

**Operations Manager: Mina Kakaiya**

**Patient Experience Officer: Peter Todd**

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**Healthwatch Bromley**

**Community House**

**South Street**

**Bromley**

**Kent, BR1 1RH**

**Telephone 020 3886 0752**

**[www.healthwatchBromley.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchBromley.co.uk)**

**[info@healthwatchBromley.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchBromley.co.uk)**

## Specific Conditions

### Summary of Findings:

#### Mental Health Focus Group

Meeting at Mind Centre, Masons Hill, Bromley, 14th May 2019, there were 12 people in attendance at the focus group.

#### What matters most to people with a Mental Health condition?

- To have better continuity of care.
- Support to be timely.
- To be taken seriously and seen by experts.
- Better communication/understanding.

- Cost of service.

### **To have better continuity of care.**

- “Apparently you can only bring up one issue with your GP per appointment”. “This isn’t good enough for me with my multiple conditions”. “It means that when I make a next appointment I am not seeing the same person”.
- People still feel that they are in a system where they are required to repeat their story to numbers of different health professionals.
- Not all mental health patients were in receipt of a care plan from their psychologist. This has led to poor monitoring of medications both regular and newly prescribed.

### **Support to be timely.**

- “Delays in getting appointments is a problem”.
- One person described waiting 10 to 15 weeks to see a psychiatrist. This was not seen to be unusual by most of the group.
- Making an appointment with the GP or other medical practitioner takes a degree of self-worth, with hurdles to doing this it makes getting that vital appointment sometimes very difficult, if not impossible. Also if you don’t turn up for an appointment you are deemed as being not in need of the appointment and therefore ok to be discharged.

### **To be taken seriously and seen by experts.**

- A few people in the group described how they were discharged back to their GP who does not have enough expertise regarding mental health needs, especially regarding MH medication.
- One person told their doctor that they were suicidal in October and are still waiting to meet with a psychiatrist in May.
- A participant said that a GP had told her daughter “You’re young and fit what I have you got to worry about?” The daughter had described symptoms and said that she was raped, the GP was unable to deal with this situation.
- There was a collective view expressed that people end up just feeling grateful for the fact that they’ve spoken with someone quickly even if it’s with Primary Care.
- One person was assigned the home treatment team HTT and they didn’t come out to see the patient when they said they would”. “There was no reason given for the non-attendance”.

## Better Communication/Understanding

- In conversation with the DWP and JCP there is agreement that people should do voluntary work as this is good for mental health. However tribunal teams - over which there is no jurisdiction - may assess the person is more capable than they really are and change benefits in a way that doesn't support their recovery.
- GPs may encourage patients to do physical activity to help with their well-being, but this might be seen, or is seen, by the DWP as evidence that the person does not need to be on the benefits that are on, therefore there is a disincentive to lead healthier lifestyles.

## Cost of service

- GPs are charging £40 for a letter it was £25. This was seen as being very unreasonable.
- Healthy eating should be promoted by GPs. For example one patient took Omegas 3, 6, and 9 and they feel much better. The same person asked how one is able to eat healthily with a food bill allowance of £25 per week

## Specific Conditions

### Summary of Findings:

#### Learning Disabilities Focus Group

Meeting at The Lodge, Norman Park, Hook Farm Road, Bromley, 22nd 2019, there were 12 people in attendance at the focus group.

#### What matters most to people with a Learning Disabilities?

- To have better information and access on healthy living , diet and exercise
- Improve access to see GP and staffing levels
- To have continuity of care and improve access by reducing automation and offer more personal and direct communication within primary, secondary and tertiary settings.
- To have updated information on service websites and more access support around peer support, carers, respite, work/ education social groups

## Questions covered in the focus group

### Prevention

- Staying healthy is important and I would like to have tell us firstly about the FOOD you eat.
- How many meals do you have a day - something in the morning, something at midday and something late afternoon /early evening
- What do you have?

First thing in the morning - nothing? Or e.g. Cereal, bread, toast & jam, a cooked breakfast, other

Midday - Light lunch - Big lunch

Afternoon/evening - Dinner

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- Do you know what have a healthy food is, e.g. Do you know about five a day?
- How many of you have 5 fruit & veg day?
- Exercise
- Do you exercise?
- What do you like to do? - Walk, Swim Sports, going to the gym, Other
- Is it easy for you to exercise?
- If not what would help/encourage you?

### Smoking

- Do you smoke?
- How often do you smoke - more than 5 times a day?
- What do you smoke
- Would you quit? Have you tried to quit?
- What methods did you try and what worked? What didn't? If it didn't work then why?

### Access to appointments

- When you are feeling unwell do you where you can go to get help?
- Do you know how to see your doctor when you need help?
- How easy it is for you to attend appointments? What could help to make it easy?
- What has helped and worked well?
- What doesn't work so well?
- What can be done better to improve it?
- What is important to you when you need to see a doctor or a nurse?
- What can be done to make it easier for you to see a doctor or nurse?

### Hospital Visits

- Have you visited a hospital in the last year?
- Appointment or day visit? Stayed in overnight?
- Have been asked about checking for conditions like bowel/breast or cervical cancer
- What was good about the visit?
- What didn't you like?
- Is there anything that you would like to see to make it better for you

## Support

What do you feel you need help and support with every day?

- Who provides you with the most support?
- Family
- Friends
- Support worker
- Care Professional
- Or someone else

## Responses

### Healthwatch Bromley

### Bromley Well LD Workshop responses 22<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Total 12

#### Food

- 8/10 have breakfast
- Shredded wheat, Weetabix + sugar, toast + marmite/jam/pate/beans
- 5/10 have lunch
- Sandwich, soup, pizza, McDonalds, Kebab
- 10/10 have dinner
- Shepherd's Pie, Chops, Chicken, fish, gammon, pizza, ready meals (from Iceland), Takeaway - fish+chips/Indian/Chinese
- 4/10 regularly have vegetables with meals
- 2/10 have their 5-a-day
- The group receives information about nutrition from TV, the internet, medical professionals

#### Exercise

- 7/11 Walk regularly
- No one cycles
- 3/11 go to the gym
- 2/11 do gardening
- 1 plays bowls
- 1 does kickboxing
- 1 gets exercise through work
- 1 stopped jujitsu through ill health and would consider a less physical form of exercise
- People would like to do the following...
- Golf
- Tennis
- Go Karting
- The following inhibit people to exercise...
- Illness/health
- Laziness
- Not in the mood
- No one to motivate us/ no peer support

## Smoking

- 1/11 smokes
- Has tried to quit and will try again
- Tried cold turkey and had quit for 4 years
- Has tried patches but they did not work long-term
- Went to GP and saw smoking nurse but the nurse is not there anymore
- 2/11 are ex-smokers
- Hypnotherapy and willpower were important to them
- Still tempting to smoke, particularly in crowds

## Health

### GP

- Difficulty in getting appointments
- Go to GP surgery at 7am to get an appointment
- Not always easy
- 3-week wait
- Would like afternoon/weekend/evening appointments
- 1/12 has carers to call GP
- 3/12 have family to call GP
- Others call themselves
- Struggle with language barrier (strong accents)
- Would like to be seen by GP sooner
- Some GPs only work 4-days-a-week

### GP/Hospital Access

- 111 service is useless
- Don't like being passed to different people
- When numbers change, and the new number is left as the automated response on the old number, it is difficult to write this down and call
- Don't trust technology
- Want to speak to a human
- Automated line is annoying
- A+E in Farnborough said, on the website, that it was shut when it was open

### Hospital

- Not bad
- Good food at the PRUH
- Long waits
- Staff good
- Nurses friendly
- Long wait in urgent care - up to 6 hours plus 30 minutes waiting for medication
- Sent place to place
- Lots of stages and people/forms. Would like to see the same person and stay in the same place
- Rushed and busy
- Have to go long distances to see specialists

### Would like...

- More staff
- To be seen quicker



- Blood tests at local GP
- Waiting 3-4 hours at Beckenham Beacon for a blood test - staff chatting and not working

### Support Services

Get support from...

- Family (5/12)
- Friends (7/12)
- Carers (3/12)
- Support workers (7/12)
  
- Oxleas/counsellors - rapport building is difficult as only permitted 10-12 sessions and then have to reapply with a new counsellor
  
- Carers - Front line staff good but care plan poor and disjointed

Would like...

- Joined up services
- Counselling
- Social support groups
- Peer support
- Support around work/education
- Carers' support
- Respite support
- Walking groups
- More referrals from GPs
- Quicker referrals
- Lower waiting times
- Pottery/craft classes
- Greater thought given to accessibility of groups/services when they move place
- Websites
- Council websites updated with more info
- CCG info