

Dear Friends,

It only seems like yesterday when we sent out the January newsletter. As usual lots of things are happening in the world of health and social care. So please read on.

“But there’s nowhere to raise my concerns”

We heard this from a resident just the other week – let us tell you that there are ways of raising your concerns and, equally important, of sharing good experiences.

The number one role of Healthwatch Brent is to take resident experiences of health and social care to the council and the CCG/NHS, and other providers and decision makers. If we don’t hear residents’ views we cannot do this. We hear from residents by visiting local groups and undertaking surveys on a range of service areas. But the more experiences we hear the more we can take to decision makers – so please let us know, and please pass on the word. <http://www.healthwatchbrent.co.uk/content/contact-us>

There are also a range of opportunities to attend consultation and listening events held by Brent CCG and the Council – we advertise as many of these as possible.

Clearly, services have to fit within the constraints of the money available, but there is a strong desire within the Council and the CCG to design services around residents. They are keen for us to provide as much evidence as possible that comes from one source only – you, the residents, workers, volunteers of Brent.

Healthwatch Brent priority areas

Mental Health – We have a number of pieces of work in this area. We are gathering the experiences of young people regarding Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Via our Community Chest we have commissioned: the mental health needs of young travellers – report due next financial year; the experience of people using Self Directed Support – report due after April; the voice of Looked After Children – report due end of March; we are a partner in the CAMHS Transformation Plan. With each of these reports we have ensured that the reports do not duplicate existing knowledge, and will add valuable information to commissioning processes. For example, we are working directly with Brent CCG to ensure our reports are actioned by the new Looked After Children (LAC) Board (part of the Children’s Trust) and the CAMHS Transformation Plan.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – we met with the relevant council officer and discussed the FGM Strategy document. This is being updated for the Scrutiny Committee in April 2016. HWB intends to add value by working with young Somali men. This work will start before the end of March and feed into the overall strategy update.

Phlebotomy – We've had good cooperation from the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust (LNWHT), but things it took a bit of time to get data to our researcher. This is now progressing. The Trust is aware of some problems with pathology in general, not just blood tests. Friends and Family Test information is pretty limited so we will be going to the Northwick Park phlebotomy unit to speak directly to patients. We intend and expect to be able to report by the end of March.

Communication around GP access – We have started work with Brent CCG Communications Director and Brent Public Health Communications regarding recommendations from a Brent Scrutiny Report - to communicate clearly about the access routes to GP and primary care services.

Related to this, the Head of HWB attended the London Assembly Health Committee and mentioned our 2 A&E patient surveys and 3 other HW network reports to counter the NHSE / NWL CCG view that such communication was effective – the vast majority of patients know only of difficulties in getting GP appointments and of the existence of A&E.

The range of services is too numerous and the information too complex and constantly developing for a single document. Communicating this is likely to be an on-going task, but we're glad to report that the CCG, Council and Healthwatch Brent are tackling it. We hope there will be an article in the next Brent Magazine. You can also find information at <http://www.rightcare4u.org.uk/> and <http://brentccg.nhs.uk/choose-the-right-care>

Healthwatch Brent Advisory Board

The Advisory Board has met bi-monthly and has become effective in offering advice on our work plan and gaining further insight into our work.

Healthwatch Brent Promotion and Reach partners

We have 5 of our target of 8 Promotion and Reach partners sub-contracted – Brent Mencap, Elders Voice, Brent Carers Centre, Jewish Care and Ashford Place. It has been remarkably difficult to get partners to sign up, but less difficult to gain their support in promoting HWB. We are in discussion with others.

Community Chest grants

We have awarded 3 large contracts and 2 small grants, totalling £9870. In addition to the large grants listed in Mental Health, above, the small grants contributed to a cancer awareness event by the Iraqi Welfare Association and the Brent CVS Making Wembley Wonderful programme.

HWB is currently assessing other applications but there are still funds available. Please do get in touch to discuss any possibilities as soon as possible.

Grants are available from £100 to £3000 to organisations to support Healthwatch Brent's

work to allow our diverse communities to have their say on health and social care issues. We prioritise seldom heard voices.

Larger grants will provide clear evidence to support good practice or the needs of a segment of our community. For example - surveys, reports and/or case studies based on patient and service users' views that demonstrate a need and/or good practice.

Small grants will raise awareness of the role of Healthwatch Brent. For example -

Sponsorship of your local event – we pay for the food – you help raise awareness of Healthwatch Brent. Allow you to spend time gathering the health and social care experiences of your community.

Successful applications will collect the views of less often heard groups on health and social care services as a way of getting views heard by decision makers.

Contact either Nicola Mills: nicola.mills@healthwatchbrent.co.uk or Ian Niven: ian.niven@healthwatchbrent.co.uk

You can telephone the office on: 020 8912 5831

[Healthwatch Brent information and signposting line: 020 3598 6414.](#)

We are distributing a flyer advertising our Information and Signposting service - **020 3598 6414** info@healthwatchbrent.co.uk – **we want you to help us with this so that many more people know this number.**

The information and signposting line is live every Monday and Wednesday from 10am to 2 pm. If you call at any other time you will be directed to voicemail and are welcome to leave a message. A member of the team will get back to you as soon as possible.

We are looking for people who can distribute this flyer to lots of different places such as their local supermarket, their GP or pharmacy, community services and many more. Do let us know if you can help.

This service is not used very much – in common with most local Healthwatch – but it is valuable to those who do. Whilst we cannot offer advice or take on cases, we make sure that the next call or email that the person makes is the one that will lead to resolving their concern. Where we can, we make follow up calls to check this is the case.

These tend to be individual concerns that we do not make public, but the type of calls have included -

- How to complain about GP services, hospital services, social care services, mental health services, 111
- Inaccurate Mental Health records
- Chasing up lack of CNWL response to complaint
- Who to contact re Mental Health services
- Discharge from hospital
- Entitlement to and how to access interpreter services

- Querying Power of Attorney
- Complex medical cases and specific health problems
- All of these were resolved by effective signposting
- We are available to anyone resident, working, studying or volunteering in Brent

Volunteers

Our volunteers continue to be an integral part of our work. These are people who are both directly engaged in local health and social care, and through their actions they engage yet more Brent people. For example - we have a volunteer representative on the LNWH Patient Experience Committee at Northwick Park Hospital; 3 volunteers took part CNWL Quality Inspections; the Enter and view volunteers continue to visit care homes. Our team of volunteers going out to visit local groups is going slower than we'd hoped – so any help you can offer would be great.

If you are interested to volunteer or just want to find out a bit more before you make a decision please contact: elaine.fletcher@healthwatchbrent.co.uk or telephone 020 8912 5831.

You can also log onto our website www.healthwatchbrent.co.uk to find out more information.

Many of our volunteers come through volunteering Brent www.volunteeringbrent.org.uk

Healthwatch Brent Enter and View (E&V)

We have 5 trained E&V volunteers and plan to increase this with Ashford Place, BHeard and Age UK Champions.

We completed 2 visits to Care Homes. One of these, Edinburgh House, was an exemplary home in terms of homeliness and meaningful activity.

We will collate the evidence from 7 reports to present to relevant Brent Council teams and strategic meetings.

We work towards the ideal of sharing a fuller, clearer picture across Brent through the visits and inspections made by HWB, Brent Council, Brent CCG, CQC, BHeard, and Expect the Best.

We will make 3 more visits by the end of March.

Healthwatch Brent - meetings attended

In addition to the many meetings Ian has attended Healthwatch Brent has a volunteer representative on the Patient Experience Committee at Northwick Park Hospital. 3 HWB volunteers signed up to be part of the CNWL Mental Health Trust quality inspection – this was part of their response to the CQC inspection (see also below).

Ian is hoping to bring you an update on the Better Care Fund and Whole Systems Integrated Care in the next newsletter.

Patient Choice

One of our members, Maurice Hoffman, attended an event around patient choice. CCGs will now have to increase their take up of Choose and Book or ERes (the name is still not official). He writes:

‘The Department of Health is keen that there should be patient choice. I made the point that there is a need for transparency including pathways so that patients know the situation. For some conditions there is no choice because care is delivered through specialist centres. We were also told that providers cannot refuse a competent referral unless it declares that it is full. This needs special permission and has to be reviewed on a daily basis. GPs cannot say that they or the CCG has no contract with a particular provider. With payment by results patients can insist on going to a suitable provider providing the referral meets the provider criteria.’

Maurice is the patient champion on the NHS England ERes programme board. He will be pleased to have any comments and ideas how to take forward patient choice and Choose and Book.

General information

Accessible information standard

To make information around health and social care more accessible and easier to understand for everybody all organisations that provide NHS or adult social care, including NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts, and GP practices, must follow the new standard from July 2016.

The Accessible Information Standard aims to provide people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss with information that they can easily read or understand. This means informing organisations have to make sure people get information in different formats, for example in large print, easy read format, braille, British Sign Language (BSL) or other formats.

As part of the accessible information standard, these organisations must do five things:

- Ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs. Record those needs clearly and in a set way.
- Highlight or ‘flag’ the person’s file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs and how those needs should be met.
- Share information about people’s information and communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so.
- Take steps to ensure that people receive information which they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

Check out these websites to find out more:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2015/07/access-info-standard/>

http://www.rnib.org.uk/campaigning-current-campaigns-accessible-information-campaign/nhs-campaign?utm_medium=email&utm_source=campaign-update-jan-2016&utm_campaign=Give%20them%20a%20leaflet

Care home performance comparison

Homes have been added to **My NHS**, part the NHS Choices site, allowing users to leave ratings and reviews to help other people assess services.

Each care home is scored on its level of safety, staff turnover and food hygiene, among other standards.

The National Care Association said if information was not up to date, it could be "unfair" to care providers.

On the website, a database can be searched using a postcode, region or home name to check on facilities with or without nursing.

People can access:

- user reviews - including star ratings
- Care Quality Commission inspection ratings of care homes
- Food Hygiene Standard rating
- levels of staff turnover
- whether the home has a registered manager in post
- key information such as location, services on offer, contact details

Nadra Ahmed, chair of the National Care Association, which represents independent care sector providers, said the move could help people "answer some of the questions" they may have about care.

But she warned that if the "snapshot" of the provider's rating or profile on the site was not regularly updated it could disadvantage those who improve their service.

She added: "Nothing beats actually going to see a service for yourself. If you think that it's good [but the website] says there's something that's not quite right, don't let it put you off.

Click here to get to the website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/performance/search>

Care Quality Commission (CQC) - consultation

Shaping the future of health and care quality regulation

Some of you may have already seen the CQC's Shaping the future consultation document

that sets out their vision for the future regulation of health and social care. The consultation is open until 14 March. CQC will formally respond to the feedback provided when it publishes its strategy in May this year.

Click here to access the consultation: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/2016-2021-strategy-consultation>

or you can email: strategyconsultation@cqc.org.uk

[NHS England \(NHSE\) - consultations](#)

Patient and Public Participation Policy

Have your say on how NHS England's Guidance is working in practice.

NHSE are keen to understand how their new patient and public participation policy and statement of arrangements are being used and how effective they are in practice.

NHS England is also developing bespoke frameworks for participation for each commissioning area.

They will be gathering feedback until the end of December 2016 and reviewing comments on a monthly basis.

For further information please contact the public participation team at england.nhs.participation@nhs.net.

Find more details on this website: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/patients/ppp-policy/>

Mental health services for veterans

NHS England is asking armed forces veterans to share their experience of mental health services and help improve future care across the country.

This national survey is a chance for veterans to share their experiences and views of existing mental health services and to understand the reasons why some people have not sought or received support and treatment. In addition to seeking views from veterans, family members and carers, as well as staff and organisations that are providing treatment and support in this area are all able to take part.

The NHS currently provides 12 mental health services across England specifically for veterans. With new contracts due in the next year, this is an opportunity to develop future services that take account of current experiences.

For further details on the survey, please visit:

<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/veterans-mental-health-services>

Healthy London Partnership

Have you had a mental health crisis? Mind, the mental health charity, have developed an online survey about the experiences of those whose crisis led to –

- Attending A&E
- Being detained under sections 135 or 136 of the Mental Health Act

The survey wants to find out what people want the services to be like.

Click here for the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/crisiscareLondon>

If you want to find out more contact Ruth Davies on 07939 231310

or email: ruth.davies18@nhs.net

New websites

There are a growing number of excellent websites that help people make informed decisions about their care.

Compassion in Dying

This website is a response to growing concerns about the low numbers of individuals planning ahead for their treatment at the end of life should they lose capacity. It is the first free website of its kind in the UK and allows a person to draft an Advance Decision or Advance Statement online. Designed in collaboration with patients, clinicians and lawyers, the website takes users through different conditions and scenarios they may experience, such as brain injury, dementia and terminal illness. People are prompted to consider what they would want in these situations, and then get a personalised Advance Decision or Advance Statement to print, sign, witness and share. MyDecisions.org.uk has been designed with patients for patients, to make it as straightforward as possible. It offers comprehensive guidance throughout and users can save their progress and return to it later to allow them to consider and talk to others about their wishes.

<http://www.mydecisions.org.uk/>

New website for children and young people

This website has advice and guidance for young people using healthcare services. The site has a range of resources, including help for young people who are unsure about their rights. <http://www.getyourrights.org/>

Help with GP appointments

Healthwatch England had feedback from the public about feeling rushed when visiting their GP. Click here to find some tips for you to get the most out of your visit to the GP:

<http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/news/10-top-tips-get-most-out-your-gp-appointment>

[International healthcare systems profiles](#)

If you want to see how our healthcare system compares with other countries check out this website. This site presents profiles of the health care systems in 18 countries:

<http://international.commonwealthfund.org/>

[NHS Acronyms](#)

Do you get frustrated with all the abbreviations the NHS uses? Check out this website to help you with it:

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/primary-care-contacts/general-medical-services/gms-acronyms#>

Unfortunately this does not include some locally used acronyms (or abbreviations).

News from around Brent

[CQC reports](#)

30 Old Church Lane

The CQC inspectors rated this care home for up to eight people with learning disabilities, some of whom have autism and challenging behaviour, as Outstanding following an inspection in November 2015.

Inspectors found that the provider was Outstanding for the delivery of services that were safe and caring, and Good for the delivery of effective, responsive and well led services.

You can read the full report here: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-123927430>

Lee Valley Care Services

CQC inspectors undertook this unannounced inspection on 1 December 2015. Lee Valley Care Services Limited is registered to provide personal care and accommodation for a maximum of 7 people, some of whom may have dementia. At this inspection there were 7 people living in the home.

The overall rating by the inspectors was 'requires improvement' as the areas of 'safe' and 'well-led' needed some improvement.

Click here to read the full report:

http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/INS2-2308629592.pdf

Allforcare Trading Alomcare

The CQC inspected Allforcare Trading Alomcare in Kingsbury on 19 October 2015 and rated 4 out of 5 areas as 'requires improvement'. This was an announced inspection. They gave 48 hours' notice of the inspection because the service is small and they wanted to be sure that the registered manager was available.

At the previous inspection on 13 and 15 April 2015 the CQC found four breaches of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. These related to care and welfare, safe care and treatment, good governance and staff recruitment.

Allforcare is a domiciliary care agency that provides a range of care supports to adults and young people living in their own homes. At the time of our inspection the service provided personal care to 26 people.

Click here to read the full report:

http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAE4788.pdf

Towerhouse residential home

The CQC has rated Towerhouse residential home in Willesden as 'requires improvement' overall. CQC did an unannounced inspection on 30 November 2015. Towerhouse Residential Home is a care home which is registered to provide care to up to 8 older people. At the time of the inspection there were 8 people living at the home, the majority of whom were living with dementia.

CQC gave this rating because they had concerns in some of the areas they inspected.

Click here for the full report:

http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAE5366.pdf

Brent Carers Centre office move

Brent Carers Centre moved to new offices on 1 February 2016. Please amend your records with the new office address & contact details:

Brent Carers Centre, Willesden Medical Centre, 144-150 High Road, Willesden London NW10 2PT

- New telephone number: 020 3802 7070
- New fax number: 020 3802 7080
- email: info@brentcarerscentre.org.uk

Brent Carers Centre apologises for any disruption to their services during the move.

Central and Northwest London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)

After the inspection of CNWL in February 2015 by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) CNWL made an action plan for the 24 'must do' areas that required improvement and other 'should do' actions. The CNWL Board of Directors has now approved the 5th and final report to the CQC about their progress.

According to CNWL's newsletter the final report shows improvements and the completion of all 24 areas for improvement. This is an increase of 8 since the previous report. CNWL also quote a number of additional achievements, such as

- Completion of 72% of 'should do' actions
- A continued downward trend in bed occupancy rates from 113% in March 2015 to 100% in December
- Use of prone restraint down from 93 in January 2015 to 52. (Prone restraint is when a person is physically held face-down to stop them from moving.)

CNWL is monitoring all improvement areas.

Under One Roof

Under One Roof is a 12 month multiagency project that aims to improve the health and well being of vulnerable individuals in Brent affected by cold homes and fuel poverty. Local fuel poverty charity Energy Solutions is working in partnership with Advice4Renters to help households where they need it.

Do you (or somebody that you know) have:

- Difficulty paying your fuel bills or managing your finances?
- Difficulty with your landlord?
- Live in a Cold Home?
- Physical or mental health issues?

For more information call: 0800 169 5693

Events

Healthwatch Brent would like feedback from you if you go to any of these events. If you do attend as a representative of Healthwatch Brent please adhere to our code of conduct.

Dementia Café – Cricklewood

The dementia café is run by the charity Ashford Place and if you are affected by memory loss, dementia or forgetfulness you are free to drop-in.

The café is open every Tuesday.

When: Tuesdays, 2 pm to 4 pm

Where: Ashford Place, 60 Ashford Road, Cricklewood NW2 6TU

For more information contact: danny.maher@ashfordplace.org.uk
or telephone: 07595 631 167

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Cafe - Kingsbury and North Wembley

The dementia café is a friendly meeting place for anyone affected by memory loss, dementia or forgetfulness and their carers. The café is run by the Alzheimer's Society and you are free to drop-in.

When: Wednesdays, 2 pm – 4pm

Where: Kingsbury Resource Centre, 364b Stag Lane, NW9 9AG
Or

When: Thursdays, 11 am – 1 pm

Where: St. Cuthbert's Church, 214 Carlton Avenue West,
North Wembley HA0 3QY (near Northwick Park Hospital)

For more information email: adrian.pennington@alzheimers.org.uk
or telephone: 07740 433472/ 01923

Philomena Mitchell from the Alzheimer's Society also holds a regular advice surgery for people living in Brent if you or your carer would like more information and guidance contact: Brent@alzheimers.org.uk or telephone 01923 824 329.

Monthly Cancer Support Group (MCSG)

The Chinese Association for Cancer Care (CACA) has a cancer support group every 2nd Saturday of the month. It aims to give support and strength to patients, survivors, family, friends. Chinese cancer patients can share their experience, share lunch, exercise and listen to talks. In January a personal health trainer will focus on healthy lifestyle.

When Saturday 6 February, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

Where Soho Outreach Centre (SOC), 166A Shaftsbury Avenue
London WC2H 8JB

Contact Pang Sham on 07938969187 or visit their website: www.cacaca.org.uk

London Ambulance Service (LAS) - Patient Representative Reference Group

When: Tuesday 9 February, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

To book your place at the event, and for further information, please contact the Patient & Public Involvement Team at ppi@lond-amb.nhs.uk
or by telephone on 020 3069 0383.

Please note there will be limited places available.

LAS writes: "As you may know, we have recently been inspected by the Care Quality Commission and while the report gives the Service a 'good' rating for its care of patients, it highlights a number of areas of concern and judges the Service to be 'inadequate' overall

and the NHS Trust Development Authority has placed the Service into special measures. The focus of our next event will be to share the findings of the report with you, to outline our plans for improving our service, and to hear your views and ideas about how your organisations may be able to help us as we make the changes required.”

[BAS4IL Forum – Fire Safety](#)

When Wednesday 3 February, 2 pm – 4 pm

Where Brent Mencap, 379 – 381 High Road, Willesden NW10 2JR

Fire Safety Talk with Willesden Fire Brigade Blue Watch.

Telephone 020 8451 5278 or email administrator@brentmencap.org.uk to book a place (places are limited). The forum is aimed at adults with disabilities and older people. BAS4IL is an Information and Advice Service run by Age UK Brent and Brent Mencap and funded by Brent Council. BAS4IL have a drop in advice service as well as an advice line. <http://www.bas4il.org.uk/>

[Brent Mencap information session - Your benefits are changing](#)

When Wednesday 10 February, 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm

Where Brent Mencap, 379 – 381 High Road, Willesden NW10 2JR

Find out how these changes will affect you and what benefits you receive. Mehrnoush, BAS4IL's adviser will be talking about the changes. This event is for people with a learning disability.

[Brent Mencap Health Focus Group](#)

When Tuesday 16 February, 3.30 pm – 5 pm

Where Brent Mencap, 379 – 381 High Road, Willesden NW10 2JR

This focus group for people with learning disabilities and their carers meets every month to discuss and consult on health and social care issues.

In February the group is going to talk about eye care. A guest from Seeability will explain how to look after your eye sight. There is also a survey about eye tests for people with a learning disability: <https://www.seeability.org/who-we-are/media-centre/news/take-part-in-our-surveys>

Women's Fitness Workshops

When: Wednesdays (from 17 February to 23 March), 2 pm – 3 pm

Where: PLIAS Resettlement, Unit 12, Bridge Park Complex, NW10 0RG

For more information call: 020 8838 6800

This 6 week course for women is free of charge. It is suitable for all fitness levels.

Free Fitness Classes at Harrow Leisure Centre

Free sports and fitness training for residents of Harrow and neighbouring boroughs. The fitness sessions are for everyone from age 18 upwards. It will comprise of Boxercise, light weight training, Indoor cycling, Zumba and more.

Get in touch now for more information and to book your place – info@zestofmind.com or call Alastair: 07956 478 393 / 07444 615 727

Brent Deaf Club

Brent Deaf Club welcomes all BSL users and their family and friends in Brent and the surrounding areas. February topic: Sam2Sam

When: Wednesday 24 February, 7.00 pm – 10.00 pm

Where: The New Millennium Day Centre
1 Robson Avenue, Willesden, NW10 3SG

Tickets: £2.50 on the door /under 16s free; yearly membership available.

for more information contact: (SMS) 07983 591 079

or email: brentdeafclub@hotmail.co.uk

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Please keep in touch.

Our offices are at **3 Rutherford Way, Wembley HA9 0BP.**

Our office telephone number is 020 8912 5831 (If you want advice or information please call the information and signposting line above).

The Healthwatch Brent team