

Committee: Health and Wellbeing Board	Dated: 9 February 2022
Subject: Healthwatch City of London Progress Report	Public
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Summary

The purpose of this report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on progress against contractual targets and the work of Healthwatch City of London (HWCoL) with reference to Quarter Three 2021/22.

Recommendation

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

Healthwatch is a governmental statutory mechanism intended to strengthen the collective voice of users of health and social care services and members of the public, both nationally and locally. It came into being in April 2013 as part of the Health and Social Care Act of 2012.

The City of London Corporation has funded a Healthwatch service for the City of London since 2013. The current contract for Healthwatch came into being in September 2019 and was awarded to a new charity Healthwatch City of London (HWCoL). HWCoL was entered on the Charities Commission register of charities in August 2019 as a Foundation Model Charity Incorporated Organisation and is Licenced by Healthwatch England (HWE) to use the Healthwatch brand.

HWCoL's vision is for a Health and Social Care system truly responsive to the needs of the City. HWCoL's mission is to be an independent and trusted body, known for its impartiality and integrity, which acts in the best interests of those who live and work in the City.

1. Current Position

Since the last report plans to move to face to face meetings have been postponed due to the Omicron variant, staff returned to home working and maintained output of up-to-date information in a rapidly changing environment. Communication platforms continued to provide residents with relevant information on the Covid-19 vaccination Booster programme via the website, newsletters, bulletins, and social media. In December, the rise of the Omicron variant resulted in an increase in demand for information on support for self-isolation, the availability of Covid-19 tests sites over the Christmas holiday period and where to obtain a Booster jab. Recognising residents

need for accurate information staff provided support during their Christmas break to update residents. On Covid-19 safety grounds staff returned to remote working in December 2021, continuing to work remotely in January with a phased return to the City in February 2022.

2. Annual Public Meeting

In December, the team held a successful public meeting on-line, with guest speakers, Professor Charles Knight OBE, Chief Executive of St Bartholomew's Hospital, part of Barts Health NHS Trust and Catherine Pelley, Chief Nurse, Homerton University Hospital Foundation Trust (HUHFT). Both provided an overview of how the Trusts have managed during the pandemic and how they envisage carrying out patient engagement during the reestablishment of services.

Barts Health NHS Trust supported over 18,000 people to recover from Covid-19. St Bartholomew's were able to maintain cardiac surgery support for London, supported a surge in demand for Extra-corporal membrane treatment (ECMO) and maintained cancer services throughout the pandemic.

Outpatient waiting lists have grown during the pandemic. To address this Barts have embarked on a transformation programme by:

- Continuing to offer virtual appointments
- Making greater use of advice and guidance to support GPs to manage patients in the community
- Rolling out patient initiated follow up (PIFU), giving patients the power to request an appointment when they need it, rather than at routine intervals.
- Introducing 'Super Saturday' clinics

Barts Health Trust are implementing a new patient engagement strategy that aims to communicate with more people and groups to obtain coordinated and insightful patient feedback. HWCoL have joined the St Bartholomew's Patient Experience & Engagement committee and will be joining the equivalent committee for The Royal London Hospital.

The Healthwatch team will ensure they monitor the effectiveness of the changes described and the impact on City residents.

Catherine Pelly described the actions taken by the team at HUHFT which included suspending elective activity in the first wave of the pandemic to enable care and treatment of patients with Covid-19. The trust was able to recommence elective surgery in June 2020, suspending surgery again during the second wave in the winter of 2020-2021, before recommencing in the spring of 2021. Visitor numbers have been reduced to prevent infections as this will make a difference to the ability to keep services running at the highest operational level.

HUHFT are working in partnership with the City and Hackney Integrated Care System to support patient engagement and the co-production of services; recent developments include the introduction of the Long Covid service designed through patient engagement.

The meeting provided HWCOL with the opportunity to address the lack of direct access to St Bartholomew's Hospital for non-invasive cardiac tests for City residents. Professor Knight gave a commitment to discuss establishing a pathway for residents registered with the Neaman Practice. Following the meeting HWCOL have facilitated a conversation between the Neaman Practice and St Bartholomew's Hospital.

3 North East London Integrated Care System (NEL) update.

3.1 Creation of Community Diagnostic Hubs (CDH)

NHS England is funding a programme of CDH development across London, with a mix of short term "early adopter" schemes to stretch and adapt existing capacity as well as longer term funding to establish new delivery sites.

The two early adopter sites in NEL are Mile End Hospital and Barking Riverside. NEL has identified other potential sites, which includes St Leonards Hospital and Canary Wharf to support the working population.

HWCOL are bringing this to the attention of the Board and recommend that the Health and Wellbeing Board investigates whether there is capacity in the City to provide a diagnostic hub for the benefit of City workers and residents before the opportunity is lost.

3.2 NEL working group for patient engagement

NEL CCG are in the process of establishing a NEL Engagement Leads network to explore areas for joint working. HWCOL are one of the three Healthwatches members. The role of the group is to advise the Chair of NEL CCG on how patient engagement is best advanced in the new Integrated Care System for North East London.

The NEL CCG are due to attend the HWCOL Public Board in February to outline plans and seek feedback. The HWCOL team will continue to make sure that engagement with City residents is robust and that City voices are heard.

4. Projects

Covid-19 Information Grant

The Board will be aware HWCOL received a Covid Information grant from Hackney Giving. Hackney Giving administered the Covid Information grants on behalf of the City and Hackney Public Health Team. The grant covered the period from December 2020 to November 2021,

The funding was used to send out messages relating to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic to residents. The grant was also applied in assisting the Public Health team to identify and feedback Covid related issues arising in the community.

4.1 Achievements

- Enabled significant engagement with residents improving reach and awareness. During the period covered by the grant HWCOL's website recorded 34,720 sessions, the number of visits to the website, with 29,120 users visiting

the Covid-19 pages for information on booking vaccination, test and trace and the latest advice on staying healthy during the pandemic. The average number of monthly sessions was 2,893 with an average of 2,427 users. This compares with the November 2020 website figures of 522 users visiting the site 675 times during the month. Monthly visitors to the website increased by 365% with pages viewed increasing by 329%.

- Produced weekly newsletters and bulletins containing up-to-date information on Covid-19 which is directly relevant to City residents. The bulletins have challenged myths on Covid-19 and the vaccination programme. Barts Health have used the newsletters and bulletins to disseminate information regarding Covid-19 vaccination programme for City residents. Partnering with the City of London estates team and Business Healthy team to distribute HWCOL's bulletins and newsletters. The number of direct subscribers increased by 14% and residents reached via the partnership 29%.
- Incorporated social media platforms to disseminate information, with 144 Covid-19 posts on Twitter and 125 via Facebook. Followers to HWCOL's Twitter account increased by 6% from 633 to 670 and Facebook by 433 % from 15 to 80. Social media enables HWCOL to provide information to residents at speed, particularly useful for informing residents how to access the Covid-19 vaccination programme delivered at St Bartholomew's Hospital.
- Delivered two successful webinars on the vaccination programme with the support of public health and the City and Hackney Integrated Care Partnership. Webinars are a new engagement tool for HWCOL, and they are now incorporated into business as usual.
- Supported the delivery of monthly focus groups for carers and bi-monthly focus groups for those needing more information about access to mental health services. Attendees provided feedback on their experience of health and care services during the pandemic enabling feedback and challenge providers, more recently with Neaman practice, resulting in them addressing issues with the home vaccination programme.
- The mental health focus groups brought mental health providers and residents together during the pandemic. Residents have been informed of the services that are available to them and providers have been able to hear from residents their experience of mental health services during the pandemic.

4.2 Next Steps

Now that funding has ended weekly bulletin and newsletters are not supportable within current resources, but the team are able to produce a fortnightly communication. To ensure that residents receive up-to-date information on Covid-19, there will be an increase in the use of social media and a review of how these platforms can be used more effectively. The team will also consider how they can reach those who are not digitally connected.

The Carers and Mental Health focus groups will continue to be delivered until April 2022 when a review of the impact will be assessed with attendees to determine frequency and shape.

Delivering the grant has highlighted the importance of providing public health messages through trusted sources. As a trusted source of information HWCōL's reach in the community has grown significantly in the last year. This has enabled HWCōL to provide feedback to partners on a range of issues including test and trace, covid vaccinations for residents with allergies and difficulty in accessing Bocking Street vaccination centre to the Public Health team via HWCōL's quarterly reports.

From December 2020 to May 2021 HWCōL dealt with 215 calls relating to the Covid-19 Information grant. The majority of the calls requested details on Bocking Street vaccination centre including booking appointments, the location of the centre, parking, and disability access; cancel and check appointments, inform the centre that caller is running late. As a result of feedback Public Health were able to improve their on-line communication.

5 Access to accommodation

HWCōL's treasurer is in discussions with the CoL regarding access to the new Portsoken community centre for three days a week. As well as an office HWCōL will require occasional break out rooms for project work. HWCōL are planning to use this base to deliver face-to-face engagement with residents, (in particular, residents in the East of the City), develop partnership work with City Connections and City Advice including a joint monthly advice clinic for residents and workers.

6 Q3 Performance Framework Report (Appendix 1)

There has been no significant change in performance as measured by the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).

The Care Quality Commission have announced recommencement of visits to care providers will begin in February. HWCōL are monitoring the development as it may precede the lifting of restrictions on Enter and View activity.

HWCōL continue to experience difficulties in attracting local volunteers. A paper on the number of volunteering opportunities for residents in the health and social care system will be discussed at HWCōL's Board meeting in public in February. The outcomes will be reported at the next Health and Wellbeing Board.

7 Other Activities

7.1 HWE Quality Framework

In January HWCōL completed HWE Quality Framework, a toolkit for assessing organisational excellence in Healthwatch services. The toolkit identifies six key areas against which each Healthwatch must self-assess. HWCōL submitted the following:

- Leadership and Decision Making-21 subheadings of which six require additional work and one rated as requiring significant improvement
- People-11 subheadings of which two require some improvement.
- Sustainability and Resilience-nine subheadings of which five require some improvement
- Collaboration-nine subheadings of which two require some improvement and one rated as an area requiring significant improvement
- Engagement, Involvement and Reach-14 subheadings with one requiring work
- Influence and Impact-13 subheadings with six requiring some improvement.

Following a review with HWE HWCoL will develop an action plan to address area for improvement.

7.2 Webinar programme

HWCoL delivered two successful webinars in January and February.

In January Dr David Collier delivered a talk on the work of the William Harvey Research Institute and provided an absorbing session on the first clinical trial that resulted in the approval of drugs to treat patients in hospital with Covid-19. The UK were the first country in the world to carry out trials and approve drugs for the treatment of Covid-19

Joanna Lyndon-Cohen, Highly Specialist Occupational Therapist in City and Hackney gave a talk on Long Covid services in City & Hackney. The Office for National Statistics reported in October 2021, 1.2 million people in the UK were experiencing self-reported Long Covid symptoms. Support is provided by the City & Hackney Covid Rehabilitation Service (City & Hackney CoRe) and the Homerton Post-Covid Specialist Assessment Clinic. Joanna described how City and Hackney GPs can refer any patient over 18 years of age who has had Covid-19 or suspected they had, due to symptoms impacting on their daily functions. The service aims to help patients understand their symptoms, and learn strategies to manage problems e.g. fatigue. The service provides access to investigations and referrals to other specialist medical services if needed.

8 Planned Activities in Quarter 4 2021/22

- Develop a programme of webinars to provide information, up to date news and topics of general interest.
- Further development of the information on the HWCoL website including:
 - Mental health services-to address concerns raised by attendees to HWCoL's focus groups, on their lack of knowledge of the services available. The website will include information on service provision in the City of London from both statutory and voluntary providers.
 - Adult social care-to provide information on the support available for residents and the application process.
 - Children's social care- to provide information on the support available for residents and their children.
- Engagement with younger residents and workers, those aged under 26, The team are working with volunteers to establish a Young Healthwatch for the City. This requires the team to work collaboratively with other organisations in the City to prevent duplication and enhance the offer for young people.

- Review of the delivery of the business and development of the 2022/23 plan building on local objectives.
- Review of the engagement and communications strategy to deliver the business plan
- Preparation for the production of the Annual Report and the Annual Surveys.

9 Risks

Trustees review the Risks and Issues Log at Board meetings. The Risk Log identifies data security, non-compliance General Data Protection regulations as key risks. HWCoL currently lack a Data Protection Officer (DPO). HWCoL are in the process of securing access to a DPO through a shared service with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets and Healthwatch Hackney.

10 Conclusion

Since the last report HWCoL adapted to the challenges of the Omicron variant by continuing to deliver a programme of activity online. HWCoL have contributed to the development of the patient engagement programme of the NEL Integrated Care System by ensuring the voice of users is at the heart of how the system operates from its inception.

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