

<b>Committee:</b> Health and Wellbeing Board - For information	<b>Dated:</b> <b>01/09/2023</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Healthwatch City of London Progress Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Gail Beer, Chair, Healthwatch City of London	

## **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 2 2023/24

## **Recommendation**

Members are 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**

The HWCoL team has continued to operate from the Portsoken Community Centre. Through hybrid working – both at the office and home working – and maintained output of up-to-date information in a rapidly changing environment. The new team operating out of Portsoken are developing a good rapport with local people and community groups.

The communication platforms continued to provide residents with relevant information on Health and Social care services via the website, newsletters, bulletins

and social media. The Healthwatch City of London website has been updated to the Drupal 9 hosting site which allows for more functionality.

The recruitment of new Trustees to the Board remains challenging, the team are in conversations with one possible candidate, however another Trustee to increase diversity on the Board and to ensure representation of communities of the City would be welcome.

## **2 Extension of the HWCoL contract**

HWCoL are pleased to report that the City of London Corporation have agreed to a year's extension of the current contract, at the increased funding level agreed last year. The extension contract is currently being written by the City of London Corporation. HWCoL are not anticipating any changes to the deliverables in our current contract.

## **3 Annual report**

In July HWCoL published its Annual Report from 2022/23, the report highlights our achievements over the past year, an overview of our projects and events. Some of the highlights include:

- Successfully negotiating with St Bartholomew's Hospital to carry out ECGs and echocardiograms at the Neaman Practice, saving residents having to journey to UCH.
- Supporting and campaigning for the Foot care service and contributing to the securement of additional clinics (provided by Hoxton Health) at both the Neaman Practice and the Portsoken Community Centre.
- Supporting the development of the London Ambulance Service five-year strategy, as noted in our last report; and
- Continued working with the Neaman Practice to ensure the practice team were responsive to service users.

The report is available on the HWCoL website and is attached as an appendix to this report.

## **4 Annual Survey**

The annual survey of residents and stakeholders was undertaken throughout July the aim of which is to determine the levels of awareness and engagement with Healthwatch City of London.

The survey was promoted to residents across the City of London via the newsletter, bulletins, and website with added promotion on social media.

Stakeholders received a separate survey via email. The aim of this survey is to give insight into how partners view the organisation's effectiveness and how well HWCoL works in partnership with key stakeholders.

Response to both surveys was disappointing with 18 responses to the community survey, which is around the same as last year, but only three responses to the stakeholder survey.

However, the responses received were very positive, with 100% of respondents stating that they feel Healthwatch is very effective in its role, and that our communications are very informative and useful.

It also highlights the need to increase the visibility of Healthwatch across the City of London and that residents would like more information on the meetings that are attended on their behalf.

The outcomes from the survey will be used to shape the communications and engagement strategy that is currently being reviewed.

The full report from the survey has yet to be reviewed by the Board but will be distributed at the next Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **5 Areas of concern**

HWCoL remains concerned about the engagement with City residents and subsequent decision-making processes and the impact on City residents by NHS North East London and the ICB.

HWCoL attend meetings on behalf of City residents to ensure representation. Specifically, the Residents Involvement Committee which now has a detailed action plan to represent and involve residents from across City and Hackney. More support from the City of Corporation is now evident with the strategy and projects officer attending many of the meetings too, however there is concern that funding for patient involvement and engagement across the City has been given to Hackney CVS and is taking place without our involvement. We have contacted Hackney CVS to discuss their plan for engagement. HWCoL will continue to monitor the level of engagement with City of London residents.

### **5.1 St Leonards Hospital site Redevelopment**

There is no change to this area. As reported previously HWCoL were involved in the scrutiny of the St Leonards redevelopment project, this project was put on hold last year, and there is yet to be an update on its status. The services offered at St Leonards play an important part in the delivery of care to City residents. Without a clear strategy there is some uncertainty of the future of the site and the services within it and the likely impact on residents. The HWCoL team will ask for an update from the ICB.

### **5.2 Neaman Practice**

The next quarterly meeting with the Neaman Practice is scheduled for early September. A new Practice Manager has been recruited; we will be closely scrutinising the handover of roles. HWCoL have been made aware of duplication of prescribed medicines by the Portman Pharmacy. The Neaman Practice are aware of the problem and have begun to reject some requests from the pharmacy and are calling patients to double check they have the correct amount of medication.

The Practice is now working more closely with the Shoreditch Park and City PCN, utilising and accessing system wide services, such as the Better Together initiative. They also now hold a weekly coffee morning for patients. HWCoL will attend the

coffee mornings on a regular basis to talk to patients about their experiences of the Practice, this will be fed back to the Practice in the quarterly meetings.

### **5.3 Digital exclusion**

Barts NHS Trust have recently launched a patient portal, Patients Know Best, and there is an increasing emphasis from the Neaman Practice on patients using the NHS App, and appointments booking via their website. This is good news for many patients but, is an area of concern for patients who are unable to access these digital options, with a risk of them becoming excluded. HWCOL are working on a project to look at the extent of digital exclusion across City residents and will be holding a face-to-face event to discuss concerns. HWCOL understands that the City of London Corporation have undertaken some research into digital exclusion and have requested to view the findings. HWCOL have also had discussions with the Older Persons Reference Group about the issues faced.

### **5.4 Mental Health Service Provision and Social Isolation**

Discussions are currently underway with ELFT and the City and Hackney Public Health to address Social Isolation, its extent across the City, current service provision and what needs to be put in place to address the issue. HWCOL are hoping to undertake this project with colleagues at City Connections and MIND.

### **5.5 Over prescribing at the Portman Pharmacy**

HWCOL have been made aware of over dispensing of repeat prescriptions by the Portman Pharmacy. Dr Paul Gilluley, Chief Medical Officer at NHS North East London has been made aware of this as have the Neaman Practice. NEL have the medicines optimisation team looking into the situation and the Neaman Practice are monitoring and have also requested a meeting with the pharmacy to discuss.

## **6 Public Board Meetings**

HWCOL held a Public Meeting in June on the topic of mental health service provision across the City. Jed Francique, Borough Director for City & Hackney, ELFT was our speaker for the event who gave an overview of access to services and service provision to City Residents.

Unfortunately, there was low attendance at the event, it was held on the hottest day of the year, and as an in-person event. The team are exploring new ways of increasing attendance at events with greater promotion through leafleting and the possibility of hybrid meetings.

## **7 Communications and Engagement**

### **7.1 Patient Panels**

The 'Patient Panels' series will recommence in September 2023.

The first of the series will be held with the North East London Cancer Alliance on 28<sup>th</sup> September and will enable residents to find out more about the cancer screening programme in the City and answer any questions residents may have.

Residents will be consulted on panel topics, to ensure HWCOL are addressing the real concerns of service users. The panels will also be used to gain greater

understanding and insight on projects that HWCoL are undertaking, for example Digital Exclusion and Social Isolation and inform the need for further work. The results will also be shared with key stakeholders to assist in shaping changes to services.

## **7.2 Communications and Engagement Strategy**

A review is currently underway of the communications and engagement strategy. The review will take into account and use the feedback gained from the annual survey. The strategy will be presented at our Annual Public Meeting in October. The Board are currently working with a local resident with marketing skills to determine what more can be done to engage a broader spectrum of local residents. The preliminary results of the recent survey, suggest there is more to be done in this area.

## **7.3 Annual General Meeting**

In October Ian Thomas, Town Clerk will be our main speaker at HWCoL AGM. This will be held at St Giles Church, Cripplegate on 19<sup>th</sup> October at 10am.

## **8 Projects**

### **City and Hackney COVID rehabilitation Service Project**

The aim of this project was to improve access to Long COVID services for residents, particularly those from underrepresented populations, living in City & Hackney.

The City & Hackney COVID Rehabilitation (CoRe) Service provides an established multi-disciplinary, community-based, therapy-led assessment and rehabilitation outpatient service for individuals experiencing the impact of symptoms associated with Long COVID.

The service currently offers flexible rehabilitation options in keeping with current NICE guidelines for managing the long-term effects of COVID-19, including input from a GP, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychological therapy, and speech and language therapy.

The CoRe service also provides care-coordination in navigating any employment and financial impact of Long COVID. By helping individuals understand what support is available to them and guiding them through the complex process of application forms, patients have avoided eviction, managed rent payments, bought food, paid for travel to appointments, and were provided with access to digital devices to facilitate engagement with healthcare.

Since its establishment in January 2021, it has become apparent that the demographics of patients accessing the City & Hackney CoRe Service does not accurately reflect the population of City & Hackney, with underrepresentation from marginalised groups including Black, Asian and other ethnic minorities.

However, it was crucial to understand the scale of the impact of Long COVID in the community and the degree of unmet need amongst the local population. For this purpose, the City & Hackney Long COVID 'deep dive' survey was initiated as a collaboration between the City & Hackney CoRe service, Healthwatch City of London, and Healthwatch Hackney.

The set of recommendations devised from the report are designed to enhance support structures for Long COVID patients. The primary focus of these include Awareness and Education, Enhanced Referral Process and Care Coordination, Support for Self-Management, Collaboration and Partnerships, and Inclusive Support Services.

It is hoped that the implementation of these strategies by the CoRe Service and partner organisations promises to improve care coordination, patient empowerment, and foster stronger collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

The full report from the project is attached as an appendix to this report.

## **9 Enter and View programme**

Healthwatch services have a statutory function to carry out Enter & View visits to health and care services to review services at the point of delivery.

The team at HWCOL have now received full Enter and View Training and are now authorised to complete visits. A training session for new volunteers is scheduled for late September.

The first enter and view visit will take place, in association with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, at the Goodman's Fields practice in mid-September. A report will be given to the HWB at the next meeting.

Other settings to be visited this year are the Neaman Practice, Barts Health and Moorfields Eye Hospital.

## **11 Q4 Performance Framework (Contractual Obligations)**

There has been no significant change in performance as measured by the Key Performance Indicators.

## **12 Work with NHS North East London ICB**

In Q2 HWCOL supported the 'Big Conversation' led by NHS NEL. The project aims to bring together organisations working across health and care, including local government; the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector; the NHS and wider partners enabling them to plan and deliver joined up health and care services.

The Big Conversation is about listening to people in local communities, and understanding their views about health, care, and wellbeing in north east London. There will be an online questionnaire and local events across NEL hosted by Healthwatch. HWCOL hosted an event in July at the Golden Lane Community Centre and a focus group specifically for Older People in August.

## **13 Volunteers**

HWCOL have increased our volunteer base to 18 volunteers.

Projects volunteers are working on include:

PALS - provision, ease of access and effectiveness. A report on this will be submitted at the next Health and Wellbeing Board.

Dentistry – NHS accessible places; all the NEL Healthwatch will undertake this research to present a full picture for the NEL ICB.  
Enter and View at Goodman’s Field Surgery in September.

A volunteer team meeting is scheduled for mid-September with and Enter and View training session scheduled for late September.

#### **14 Planned activities in Quarter 3 2023/24**

In support of the delivery of the business plan during Q3 the team at HWCoL will:

- Refresh and reinvigorate the communications and engagement strategy.
- Refresh and reinvigorate the volunteer strategy.
- Recruit additional Trustees.
- Hold the Annual General Meeting where we will be joined by Ian Thomas, CBE; Town Clerk City of London Corporation.
- Hold Patient Panels on Cancer Screening and Mental health and wellbeing.
- Carry out an Enter and View visit at Goodmans Fields Surgery
- Attend the OPRG open meeting.

#### **11 Risks**

Trustees review the Risks and Issues Log at Board meetings. The Risk Log identifies financial pressures, and some concerns over security in the new office as issues rather than risks along with data security, non-compliance General Data Protection regulations as key risks. HWCoL currently lack a Data Protection Officer (DPO) and HWCoL is in the process of securing access to a DPO. Advice has been sought from Healthwatch England, who are in the process of developing training for both officers and Board members, this however, will not be available until later in the year. HWCoL will explore online training in the meantime.

#### **12 Conclusion**

With the new team in place HWCoL is actively increasing presence in the City, especially in the east of the City. The team will engage with GP Practices on the edge of the City who serve some City residents, namely Goodman’s Fields Surgery and increase collaboration with Barts Health and UCLH.

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