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Dear Rory

Comments on the North West London ICB Engagement on same day General Practice (GP) access

We are writing to you to share some comments and questions concerning the recent engagement activity carried out by Primary Care Networks across North West London (NWL).

While we welcome the ICB's decision to carry out an engagement process before implementing any changes, we feel that the engagement carried out to date has had significant barriers which will have stopped many patients taking part. This includes lack of notice for engagement events, reliance on online methods, and lack of targeted engagement with groups more likely to face health inequalities.

Our hope is that we will be able to work collectively and in genuine collaboration to improve the health and wellbeing of residents across North West London, and ensure that meaningful engagement is carried out before any changes take place.

Initial patient survey:

The overall number of respondents to the patient survey was 95,000. This is a real achievement on behalf of the 45 PCNs within the NWL ICB, however response rate varied significantly between boroughs. While several PCNs in Hounslow and Hillingdon did well, Brent was very poorly represented.

- 1. What action will the ICB take where PCNs have failed to meet the 5% target which ensures their patients' views are properly represented?**
- 2. How has the ICB facilitated joint working, and what systems are in place to aid alignment in service and best outcomes for residents?**
 - As all boroughs are served by several PCNs we would like to understand what has been done to enable joined-up working and borough-wide/ cross borough perspectives?

3. What participation did residents have in the coproduction of the questions? In particular, what was the involvement of those more likely to be facing health inequalities?

- Some residents who participated in the survey felt that the questions were leading, or that they didn't ask for enough information to get a true picture of how patients experience primary care.
- Brent Patient Voice offered suggestions for the design of the survey and its implementation a week after the plans entered the public domain in October, but were told it was too late for their input to be considered.

4. What methods of engagement were used to hear from digitally excluded residents, those who do not speak English or have English as a second language, and residents who have learning disabilities or are neurodivergent?

- Much of the feedback was provided online. At the Brent online resident engagement session residents were told that this was necessary to ensure the ease of analysing such a large response rate. This is understandable given the scale of engagement, however it led to questions around accessibility for digitally excluded groups.

Engagement events:

Our representatives attended a number of PCN engagement events and found that the scale and effectiveness of these events varied significantly. We would raise the following questions.

5. Please confirm what resident / community engagement events were carried out by each PCN?

6. Did every PCN undertake the engagement exercise?

7. How were these events advertised to local residents, and with how much notice?

- We noted that local Healthwatch in some areas were not made aware of the events.

8. How will the data from the event be collated across NWL and used to influence the decision making of the ICB?

9. Why was there such a tight timescale given for this important engagement exercise?

10. Were local community leads consulted about the tight timescales so they could raise awareness amongst their grassroot members?

11. How did the ICB support the PCNs to ensure they had the right skills / competencies to facilitate a meaningful and fruitful engagement exercise?

- The amount of National Health Service (NHS) jargon used at some events was excessive. For instance, facilitators spoke about Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) without explaining in plain English what this role entails.

12. How have the suggestions/ questions/ ideas and examples of best practice gathered at these sessions been collated? Is it possible to have a copy of this?

We look forward to receiving your response on the questions above. Responses can be sent to Patricia Zebiri, Healthwatch Manager Brent:

Patricia.Zebiri@healthwatchbrent.co.uk. Patricia can also be contacted on 07930101221.

Kind regards



Brent Patient Voices



Westminster Patient Voice (WPV)
