



healthwatch
Bristol

ESOL FOR HEALTH

23 NOVEMBER 2015

Healthwatch Bristol facilitated two workshops as part of the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for Health courses delivered by Wellspring Healthy Living Centre and City of Bristol College. The workshops introduced participants to Healthwatch and supported them to comment on the health and social care services they have accessed.

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What is ESOL for Health?

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for Health, is a course for anyone with low-level English. Participants learn how to appropriately use NHS and other health services, acquire medical and health-related vocabulary and meet and talk with visitors including health trainers, GPs and medical students, mental health workers, first aid trainers and Healthwatch workers. Classes are usually twice a week, for eight weeks. The classes are delivered at Wellspring Healthy Living Centre in partnership with the City of Bristol College.

For further information contact Tomaz:

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How was Healthwatch Bristol involved?

Healthwatch Bristol delivered two workshops, the first to the beginners course and a second workshop to the more advanced course. Both groups were in their sixth week of the eight week course. The workshops were two hours long and each comprised of three activities. The activities were designed to help the participants think about and practice commenting on health and social care services they had accessed. The workshops also provided the opportunity for participants to learn more about Healthwatch and the health and social care services they use and feedback mechanisms.

Activity one: Vocabulary

This required the group members to fill in the gaps in sentences such as ‘the hospital was.....’ and ‘it is to get an appointment to see a GP.’ It also functioned as a prompt to discuss the participants’ experiences of different health services and knowledge of what support they were entitled to receive, for example, access to interpretation services.

Activity two: Speaking

The group members were put into pairs and given questions to ask their partner, for example, ‘What was it like when you went to the doctors?’ The other person then had to answer using the phrases and words learned in the first activity.

Activity three: Writing



The participants were each given a Healthwatch Bristol Tell Us Your Story leaflet and supported to write feedback about an experience they had had of using a health or social care services.

Who took part in the workshops?

There were seven people in workshop one, three men and four women. Five of the group were originally from Poland.

There were four people in workshop two, all female with two attendees from Poland and two South Asian.

You Said.....

In addition to the written feedback shared with Healthwatch Bristol by the group members on Tell Us Your Story leaflets, the second workshop also participated in general discussion about their experiences of health and social care services, how and when people can access different services.

The general theme of the experiences shared from workshop one were about GP's and were all positive. Due to the low level of English, discussion was limited, and there was a mixed level of knowledge regarding accessing translators for health and social care appointments.

All feedback from the workshops has been recorded on the Healthwatch Bristol Feedback Feed Forward database. The theme from the second workshop's comments was about difficulties accessing GPs and the attitudes of GP's generally being friendly and helpful.

One particular comment was about the respondent needing to complete a form regarding refunding of treatment as they have a procedure coming up which has been booked for a long time in their home country. They need the procedure to happen, but have been told it cannot happen without a letter from their current GP regarding the funding. The GP, however, was unable to help them not knowing what the form was.

Discussion in workshop two concerned the differences in services provided in home countries to those in the UK, the attitudes of people and the different services available to them in the UK. For example:

- In Poland waiting times for appointments are so long unless you pay that people often do not bother to go for scans or exploratory checks. One respondent spoke of their mother having to wait four years for a MRI scan. This means health awareness messages are often not given the significance they should be.
- What to do 'out of hours' was discussed with no one being aware of 111 and the participants felt that if they had a problem over the weekend they would just go to Accident and Emergency (A&E).

- Use of translators and language line was discussed with there being mixed knowledge of when someone can access a translator and how they do this.
- Mental health services were also discussed in terms of what organisations were operating and how people can access them.

Healthwatch recommendations

- Availability of language line and Health LINKs translators needs to be promoted to ensure those with English as a second language are not struggling to communicate and missing important information which can impact diagnosis and patient understanding.
- With the influx of migrants and refugees, issues around funding for treatment and refunding treatment could increase. Healthwatch Bristol recommend greater training/information is available for health professionals on the availability of treatment and funding or where to signpost patients.
- Greater promotion of different services and their appropriate use is continually needed so that people know when it is appropriate to use their own GPs, pharmacies, 111 services, minor injuries units and A&E.

Healthwatch will.....

All the feedback provided by the group has been inputted to Healthwatch Bristol's Feedback Feed Forward database and will be included in the quarterly report. Healthwatch will be sharing this report with Healthwatch partners including Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group, Bristol City Council, The Care Quality Commission, NHS England and Healthwatch England. The report will also be presented to the Healthwatch Bristol Advisory Group to propose further uptake of the issues identified in this report. The report will be available on the Healthwatch Bristol website (www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk) and circulated to our mailing lists via the monthly e-bulletin.

Looking forward....

Plans for future work between Healthwatch Bristol and the ESOL for Health courses:

Healthwatch welcomes and encourages ESOL for Health group members to continue to contribute their feedback to us using the communication methods included at the end of this report and/ or via our Tell Us Your Story leaflets. Healthwatch Bristol will return and deliver workshops with future ESOL for Health groups as requested by the course leaders.

Healthwatch also supports members of community groups to become Volunteer Champions so that they can represent the experiences and needs of their community group. If you

would like to find out more about volunteering with Healthwatch, please contact us using the details below.

Tell Us Your Story...

Healthwatch Bristol want to hear from you about your experiences so that we can tell services your needs to create the best local services.



Text us - text bris followed by your message to 07860 021 603



email us at info@healthwatchbristol.co.uk



Call us: 0117 2690400



Write to us at: Healthwatch Bristol,
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Or visit our website to see more at: www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk