

COVID related Public Feedback Weekly Summary report 10th April - 17th April 2020

Healthwatch Kent, Healthwatch Medway and Kent’s User Forums are actively gathering feedback from the public about their experience of Kent & Medway’s health and social care services during the COVID epidemic. We are expanding our networks each week to reach more and hear from more communities.

This report summarises everything we have heard this week.

Going forwards we will be sharing this feedback every week. If you wish to receive a copy of the report directly please let Madara know on madara@healthwatchkent.co.uk

SOURCE	TYPE OF DATA	Number of respondents
KiND consortium via CILK	Anecdotal themes	feedback received
Kent Association for the Blind	Anecdotal Themes	feedback received
Healthwatch Covid surveys from the public re Physical Disability	Qualitative and Quantitative data	4
Healthwatch Covid 19 surveys from the public	Qualitative and Quantitative data	0
Healthwatch Covid 19 surveys from the public re Mental health	Qualitative and Quantitative data	5
series of Healthwatch Covid 19 surveys for targeted ethnic groups	Qualitative and Quantitative data	Not live yet
Nepalese community survey		not yet live
Polish community survey		live now
Mental Health User Voice	Qualitative and Quantitative data	16
Healthwatch Kent and Medway Helplines	Qualitative and Quantitative data	6
Carers organisations	Anecdotal themes	not yet live
Carers Support		not yet live
Crossroads		not yet live
Imago		not yet live
Involve		not yet live
Carer focused social media	Qualitative and Quantitative data	not yet live
Hi Kent	Anecdotal Themes	not yet live
Autism support networks	Anecdotal Themes	not yet live
Victim Support	Anecdotal Themes	not yet live
Domestic Abuse	Anecdotal Themes	feedback received
Foodbanks		not yet live



Theme: Impact on Physical Disability

- “We are concerned that specialist care is stopping for disabled children, especially EHC children. For example, Physio now can’t be accessed, and the children are in pain”
- Extremely high risk shielding employing PAs - “CCG told me to find PPE myself but it’s not possible. Also no testing being offered to my care staff”
- People are having difficulties getting a shopping delivery slot - they are too young for Age UK and have been referred to Kent Together Helpline.
- Thanet Council have their neighbourhood complaints reporting service online, rather than over the phone, which was not accessible to a visually impaired client. The client would normally have done this over the phone but instead we did it on his behalf online.
- Client has a broken boiler and finding it difficult to get fixed, therefore has no heating or hot water.
- A couple were taken into hospital by ambulance very unwell leaving a 6 and 8 year old at home unattended. The parents were carers to the disabled children and because they were upstairs it was not noted until later

Theme: Support from secondary mental health services

- *‘I have felt suicidal at times. The repeated service rejection, despite my GP believing I needed to be sectioned, has worsened the self-harm and resulted in greater attendances at A&E and MIUs in recent weeks.’*
- *‘There is an absence of help for self-harm - unlike with alcohol and drug issues, it feels like there is no formal help for self harm. Self harms often don't fall into shielded, elderly or vulnerable groups, so get missed.’*
- *“I have been under the Beacon in Ramsgate and the KERS team and they have told me that at this time of the pandemic that I won't be discharged - which I feel is good. also they say that when I am discharged I will be referred to Invicta Health rather than be abandoned into the community and the GP - which I also think is very good ”*
- *‘I now have help for my mental health from the Single Point of Access who have been in touch to say someone from the CMHT will be in touch this afternoon as I have been self harming and need help claiming benefits.’*
- *‘Following the covid 19 restrictions I was contacted by my care coordinator, from Canterbury CMHT and advised that face to face visits were no longer being offered apart from in emergency cases but that they would be undertaking appointments over the phone instead. I have received fortnightly calls to check in with me and ensure I am coping which is making me feel less anxious in this uncertain time and more supported’*

Theme: Impact on physical health

- A mental health service user was taken to A&E on Friday due to breathing difficulties and was diagnosed with COPD. The hospital tried to discharge him but he was unhappy and confused about the care package that KCC put in place for him. Therefore he refused to leave hospital.



- Concerns raised by Carer Organisation about people avoiding using health services to avoid either risk of contracting Covid 19, or not wanting to 'bother' the services, resulting in increased risk of self neglect
- A mental health service user broke front tooth on Easter Mon. Dentist can't see her due to her age as she falls into the seniors isolation group. They are managing to cope with the broken tooth and not in pain. Reassured that they need to continue to shield but if situation changes emergency dental treatment is now available.

Theme: Increasing impact of social isolation

- *'With the lockdown because of Coronavirus I am going stir crazy as the government have said we can only go out once a day and the police are able to arrest people. I live in a one bedroom flat and am going stir crazy.'*
- Physical Disability feedback indicates a general sense of increasing loneliness amongst people
- KAB feedback indicates a general sense of increasing loneliness amongst people
- *'A service user prior to COVID19 took a volunteer helpers position in Dementia group that was being privately run by an ex CPN Nurse who had retired. Person is feeling sad that they had not had any support phone calls having been a volunteer for awhile. I guess we can often forget what just one phone call to explain a situation can mean to someone so that they do not feel forgotten about.'*
- I am concerned I'm not able to visit my friend (aged 80)

Theme: Support from Children and Young People mental health services

- *'I'm turning 18 soon and haven't been told about what the process is to move to adult services. I haven't had an assessment and CAMHS told me they are dealing with it, but I haven't heard anything from them for weeks. I turn 18 in May. I need medication and some kind of therapy because of my condition as I'm not coping well'*
- *'I have phoned CAMHS due to feeling low and suicidal. Nobody answered the phone. This was at 9am and even after leaving a voicemail to call me back nobody has. On Friday my mum went in and they refused to speak to me but would only talk to my mum and told her to tell me to think happy thoughts. I feel like I'm receiving a minimal service'*

Theme: Confusion about Government messages

- Mental health service user had letter from GP on Monday saying they should isolate for the next 12 weeks and received government text following day telling the same. It has taken time to get these, the delay added to their anxiety. *"I did not fall within the governments conditions and therefore unless I lied, I couldn't registrar online for help. Government did ask GP's to go through their patients and find patients who need to shield, they forgot about us, it seems'*

Theme: Finding it difficult to ask for help

- *"I have wondered, in the past, why older people didn't want to ask for help when they needed it. Now I find myself in that position of not being able to do the things I used to take for granted, it is hard. I know it is better to get help early, and that once I have asked local volunteers to help, I will feel better about it. I*



have only felt helpless like this a couple of times in my life, both times associated with ill health, with family and friends to help and visit.'

Theme: Concerns from Domestic Violence

- Concern raised by Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services in West Kent, "we are dealing with clients with much higher stress levels than normal and especially for those clients already struggling with mental health issues. We also have concerns for younger children, esp. primary school age - what they are seeing and hearing."

Theme: Issues around collecting medication and changing medication

- Can't collect meds in dosset box as usual as staff not got time to set it up. In addition some meds this month were from different supplier therefore tablets were different colour and shape. This caused a service user to get in a muddle and escalate their OCD & paranoia about taking the wrong tablet on wrong day or overdosing.

Theme: Concerns raised by staff working in Health and Social Care

- 'I was asked to return to work after a trip to Thailand before the results of my Covid 19 test arrived'
- 'I am unhappy that all NHS annual leave has been cancelled'

Frustration with NHS processes

- Returned from holiday with symptoms and got tested based on advice from 111. They thought they would receive results in 4-5 days but it's been 19 days. Self isolated for 14 days and have been told can now go back to work but employer won't allow me to without documentation. "I cannot get a doctor's letter at my local GP until I have received the all clear from my coronavirus test. I'm really in the dark here, I do not receive any sick pay and am scared about how much income I'm going to lose because of this whole incident.
This is what I tried: I have continuously called: 111 they don't give results and state it will be with my GP. The hospital/A&E where I took the test are saying it's with my GP. My GP says they can't and won't chase up any results that weren't done by my local GP. They said that public health tried to contact me. But after contacting public health they told me my results will be with my GP. The health protection team tell me to call 111. The hospital PALs team tell me it's going to be at my GP. Public health; I've emailed and called and they state that my results will be given to my GP. They cannot be given over the phone."
- Told to shield for 12 weeks by GP because of COPD. "Tried to register as a vulnerable person but can't because letter hasn't arrived yet. GP says they can't really help because it's down to the NHS to send through the letter. I'm running out of food and may have to put myself at risk to feed myself. It's starting to affect my mental health"
- Complaint meeting with practice manger to discuss the care client has been receiving has been cancelled due to Covid. Client not sure where they turn now.

Theme: Breaks in regular treatment

- Client with COPD refusing to attend usual hospital appointment (despite insistence from hospital) due to concerns about the risk of contracting Covid.