

## Purpose of paper

To summarise for Health & Wellbeing Board members the emerging findings of conversations with Camden residents about the impact of Covid-19.

### Healthwatch Camden

Healthwatch Camden is an independent watchdog for health and care services, run by and for local people. During the Covid-19 pandemic we have been providing information on how to stay well and how to access services. We have also been listening to the impact of Covid-19 within different communities.

## Health & wellbeing during Covid-19

In April, Healthwatch Camden started a conversation with residents about:

- **Information about staying well during Covid-19:** including where people find information, and how easy it is to find and understand
- **Impact of Covid-19 on health and care services:** including what is working well and what is not
- **Impact of Covid-19 on health and wellbeing:** including direct and in-direct impacts of the pandemic

## Survey

### Online and telephone surveys

Promoted in a wide variety of places, including by our volunteers within Mutual Aid groups and through posters in local communities. Voluntary sector partnerships with African Health Forum, Age UK, Bengali Workers Association, King's Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association, and others, have enabled us to reach seldom heard groups.

System partners (NHS, Council, Public Health) have supported dissemination of the survey. Public Health commissioned Healthwatch Camden to undertake additional engagement work with BAME communities. Over 800 Camden residents have participated so far (19/06/20).

## In-depth interviews

### Weekly conversations with a diverse range of participants

In-depth interviews with participants with a diverse range of characteristics, including: BAME, transgender, Carer, parents of young children, long term health conditions.

## What we've heard

### Overarching themes

Clear themes emerged during an initial analysis conducted in early June:

- People are experiencing new and exacerbated mental health problems including anxiety and depression (Blog: [‘Lockdown’ not good for our emotional wellbeing](#)).
- Residents find COVID-19 related information confusing and contradictory. They want clear & consistent messaging around the virus, what lockdown means, and how to ease out of lockdown.
- People are stressed & nervous about starting to use health care services again.

### Carers

Use of services, fear, and Covid-19 testing

- Carers wanted access to Covid-19 testing (*it is now available*).
- Many Carers are living in heightened fear of catching COVID-19.
- Carers are more likely to have used services since Covid-19 emerged (Blog: [“We all live in fear now” - what we can learn from Camden’s Carers](#)).

### Digital access

Use of services, fear, and Covid-19 testing

- Almost half of respondents have used digital health services since COVID-19. Many have had positive experiences and found the services convenient and high quality, especially when ordering repeat prescriptions or checking in with GPs regarding long-term conditions.
- However, digital services were not adequate for many people seeking mental health support or for children with complex needs, and many reported long wait times during phone consultations and when dialling 111.

## Next steps

The survey will remain open until the end of June, and a full analysis of findings will be completed and communicated this Summer.

An interim analysis will be conducted on responses from BAME communities and some emerging themes, including fear of using services, in the coming days and weeks. We can provide organisation specific insights into a range of topics and communities for system partners. We continue to explore other areas of collaboration with system partners.

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