Healthwatch Derby – Insight Report – Virtual appointments and Consultations

Reporting to:	JUCD
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Date periods covered in the report:	April 2020 to July 2020

Overview of the Report

This report covers feedback from April to July. The majority of this feedback is via our on-line survey though some has come directly through our website or our phone lines. The survey includes experiences from Derby city as well as Derbyshire areas.

This feedback is mostly taken from an on-line survey so please keep in mind that it may not be inclusive of those without access to electronic devices.

This report has been split in to sectors to look at the virtual experiences from the different areas. The main area people reported having virtual experiences in was in primary care - GP services.

Sectors

Primary - GPs

Telephone appointments

By far the most common GP method of communication spoken about was telephoning services. People spoke about this mainly in regards to consultation, (advice and reviews) and some in regards to triage.

Positives themes

Almost all of these experiences were positive and during this time frame have captured around 30 comments about these positive experiences. When looking in more detail the main theme was:

- Easy to access and had a fast response

Others themes noted were people said they were:
- Happy with the services, treatment and found it efficient
- Found it saved time in respect to not having to travel, take time out of work or arrange childcare. (also in relation to video and photo methods)

Negatives

There were a few negative comments these issues appear to be around unclear communication with patients. These are the individual issues:

- Long waits on telephone lines of GP practice
- Long wait on call back and communication issues around not being told who is calling them and not given the opportunity to ask questions.
- Unhappy with the advice given and staff attitude
- Felt that things were missed – blood pressure not checked
- No further instructions given (how to get a blood test)

Submitting Photos and video consultations

We received 6 comments in regards to photo and 3 in regards to video consultations, of which 8/9 of these experiences were positive with people using words such as: saves time, fast, simple and fuss free, they were happy that they were able to do this. 1 person hoped that these types of methods are kept going forward.

There was 1 negative comment in regards to issues around submitting a photo but this was sorted out with the GP practice.

Emailing

There were 3 comments around emailing services – all positive, these were around having a fast responses and good communication of conditions and there was 1 expression to keep this service in place.

Other messages
3 people stated they would of preferred face to face appointments with 1 persons stating that they felt that they would have been able to get a diagnosis with a face to face appointment.

Acute services

We did not receive many experiences about virtual appointments in acute settings so are unable to draw any themes from these. Some comments we had were:

Telephone conversations/consultations
3 positive comments with individual comments around being rung on time and them being convenient.
2 negative comments - feeling that they would of preferred face to face or felt that they should have been seen face to face. With individual comments regarding – waiting a long time for phone call and connectivity issues in rural areas.

Photos
One positive comment about having the ability to able to submit photos.

Mental Health Services

Telephone services
4 people gave positive experiences. Though please note that 3/4 of these people said they understood why services went to telephone services and that they were happy with the service they received but would of preferred face to face sessions. This was in regard to CPN and counselling/therapy services.

There was one negative comment about the psychiatrist appointment being shorter and less thorough.