

healthwatch Wirral



Healthwatch Wirral
Healthwatch on Road 2021

Supporting Wirral Council with LFT Mobile Community Testing

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'Foundations of Quality Improvement should always have what patients tell us about their treatment and care at the heart of everything, as a system, that we plan and do. We must be able to evidence that all actions and decisions made come back to this, making certain that everyone feels respected, involved and valued at each and every part of the journey. We should all feel confident that we are either giving or receiving quality care.'

Healthwatch Wirral, Age UK Wirral, NHS England and ECIST, Wirral System

This report is to share Healthwatch Wirral methodology, support and findings (including recommendations) of Lateral Flow Mobile Community Testing undertaken by Wirral Council in partnership with Healthwatch Wirral between April and June 2021.



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Foreword

This Report has been compiled to feedback on the findings, by Healthwatch Wirral (HWW), in relation to Mobile 1 (HWW Van) when we supported the Mobile Community Testing between April and June 2021. It is a representation of the people, who used the service and staff who provide the service, we spoke with over the 3 months and should not be interpreted as being representative of everyone who lives, or works, in Wirral.

Purpose

The purpose of using HWW Van was to support, the initiative by Wirral Council, in the provision of Assisted Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) and the distribution of LFT Home Testing Kits via Mobile Units within communities; enabling Wirral residents to access testing much easier and closer to home and to support the Wirral agenda relating to inequalities.

Methodology

We had anticipated, and planned, a fortnight outreach in March 2020 using the Van to travel across Wirral to:-

- learn what services are available for people in our communities
- gather experiences and views from people about health and care
- share information/signpost people for support

In early March we recognised that, due to circumstances that were arising, this was not going to happen. Later in 2020 we, therefore, offered the use of the HWW Van to Wirral Council.

Working with Karen Boulger - Senior Manager - Organisational Design (Wirral Testing Lead for Wirral System), and her team, we shared the list of contacts that HWW have across Wirral, such as the big supermarket leaders and some clinical sites; and a timetable was quickly established - with some tweaks as things developed.

We met to have a trial run and to meet the teams. Mobile 1 (HWW) was the first van out. The Teams supported each other very well and the Connectors joined, daily. We arranged for other 3rd Sector organisations to support Mobile 1 such as Mencap, Wired, Barnardos, Wirral Change, Energy Projects Plus, Maternity Voices, Older People's Parliament and AgeUK.

Wirral Council team performed the Assisted Tests whilst HWW gave out the LFT kits. We encouraged people to take an 'on the spot' test to ensure they knew how to self-test, correctly. Community Connectors spoke with people that may have been missed as on some sites there were various exits and people sometimes left in different directions

One pack of 7 tests, per person, was to be given but more if the person said they lived in a larger household.

Whilst speaking with the public we also took advantage of the situation to encourage people to spare 5 minutes to allow us to gain insight into their experiences during Covid.

Experiences ranged from difficulties accessing their GP and planned care in hospital - to food shopping, mental health and wellbeing and dilemmas over who to call eg. 111, GP or just turn up at A&E.

Daily figures were collected on:

- How many people took an Assisted Test - **1,861 tests were taken by Council team**
- How many people tested negative or positive - **Council has this information**
- How many LFT kits were given out and to how many people - **9,135 Home testing kits were given out**
- How many people, in total, did we engage with and support- **8,363 - we found out what mattered to people and gave wider information on services.**

A gazebo for HWW team to distribute the LFTs was put up daily next to the Van. Assisted Tests were taken behind a screen and processed inside the Van. There was plenty of room to lay out everything that was needed. Everything was kept separate so that we could assure all of the 'team' that, should a positive test be found, a full clean down of the area could be done and everyone was as safe as possible. PPE was worn at all times, and the necessary resources were made available such as visors and gloves, should a member of the public need them. We also ensured that the information was available in different languages, these were supplied by Wirral Change.

Insurance documents and Risk assessment for HWW were displayed on the Van and in the gazebo. The Risk assessment was amended as issues arose, such as high wind and ensuring that the gazebo was weighted down; or taken down should it become too blustery.

Protective and appropriate clothing was sourced. All staff were advised of who would be there on any given day and mobile numbers were exchanged for communication.

A process was drawn up so that if there were new HWW staff/vols supporting the Mobile Testing they would know exactly what to do on any given day. Each day, refreshments and toilets were located.

Information Leaflets on LFTs were given out and all staff spent time with people to promote confidence, reduce fear and ensure people were happy and understood what was happening during Testing. We signposted to Wirral Infobank and the Connectors; if we identified a person who was lonely, or afraid, HWW dealt with wider issues relating to health and care and recorded their issues on HWW Feedback Centre.

Findings

Education and Communication

- It was not clear what people should do if they did not get their results.
- People arrived at 4.30 (it was advertised that we would be on site until 5).
- Better communications informing people, who are double jabbed, of the importance of their continuing to test at least twice per week at home (or at a mobile site).
- HWW staff had to sometimes escort people to have an Assisted Test due to their fear and lack of understanding of when and where to be tested.
- People were still unclear when to take a PCR and/or LFT and whether they needed to book an appointment or just turn up.
- Encouraging people to test regularly is fundamental and Testing Sites that were linked to Vaccination Sites appeared to do better; this could be because Vaccination Staff were raising the public's awareness of the importance of regular testing as people were receiving their jabs.
- There was no clear understanding of whether Dom Care Agencies had a process for staff to be regularly tested. Dom Care Staff who attended the sites for a test said that they 'took it upon themselves'

Recommendations

HWW would recommend that:-

Locations

- Mobile Testing continues, but it would be better to align with one store, or business, like Tescos. eg. B&Q by Halfords, although a good spot, it is not in the direct walking route for people who are going back to their cars.
- Where possible, access Double aspect Sites where people can be tested and vaccinated appears to be a good option. Vaccinators, on the Birkenhead Medical Centre site, were encouraging those who were being jabbed to pick up their LFT kits before they left and to get an Assisted Test so that they fully understood how to self-test at home.
- In future comms, we should add 'close at 5pm but last test is 4.15' so that people are not disappointed. (some people were asked to come back the next day).

Teams

- Not all staff who were administering the tests were double jabbed. HWW would recommend that this should be a requirement of the role.

Engagement

- There were some really good examples of individual team members who went out of their way to motivate people to take a test - Mobile Testing Teams should engage with the public more to encourage uptake in testing.

Broader Feedback from the public

Spare 5 by Making Every Contact Count MECC; we took the opportunity to speak with the public about the things that had worried them over 2020.

Issues relating to GPs and Primary care

- Accessing GPs came out as the top of their concerns.
- Delays in response to E-consult, obtaining an appointment (either face to face or virtual) and obtaining test results etc. were the 3 points that we heard the most.
- There appeared to be, in some cases, no contact from the GP when a person was discharged home following a stay in hospital.

Issues relating to Hospital

- Discharge to home from hospital without the appropriate care in the community
- Transport home issues relating to discharge.
- Concerns about why a relative had been sent to a care home, not home? Not understanding what T2A or temporary care was and what would happen next.

Issues relating to out of hospital care

- There was no clear understanding of whether Dom Care Agencies had a process for staff to be regularly tested. Dom Care Staff who attended the sites for a test said that they 'took it upon themselves'.
- Concerns about why a relative had been sent to a care home, not home? Not understanding what T2A or temporary care was and what would happen next.
- There was no evidence that people who left hospital were given the appropriate information to self-help, to prevent re-admissions or attendances at A&E.

It is also worth noting that we received far more, than average, issues relating to dentistry and mental health. This information has been shared by HW Wirral at Committees, Group meetings and Covid response Cells.

Wider support including free resources given out

HW Wirral played a valuable role in providing information and education to the general public in relation to health and care in a wider sense. Every person who attended Mobile 1 (HWW van) received a free Home Testing Kit provided by the Council. HW Wirral provided a resource bag full of useful freebies such as hand sanitizers, anti-bac pens, notepads, weatherproof poncho, tissues. We also gave away face masks when necessary. The resource bags also contained information leaflets, such as:

- The NHS 111 First National leaflet
- Local Pathways leaflet to accessing healthcare and treatment (copy below)
- Healthwatch Feedback Centre leaflet - (the Feedback Centre partner brochure can be found on this link - <https://speakout.healthwatchwirral.co.uk/>).
- Testing and Vaccination leaflet to gather experiences

- Carers information from Wired
- AgeUK resource packs
- Community Connectors information
- Energy Project Plus information and freebies



Social Value

Social Value is everyone's business. As part of our contractual arrangements we are recording our social value within our reports. During the outreach work we discovered:

- A new placement who will work with HWW on Outreach and within our Enter & View plans.
- New volunteers who were recruited
- That we could provide short term contracts for 4 of our volunteers who were seeking temporary employment

Acknowledgements

- Junction One, Bidston - John and Laura
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- Wirral Change
- Wirral Multi Cultural Organisation
- Mencap
- Wired
- AgeUK
- Barnardos
- InvolveNW
- Wirral Maternity Voices
- Energy Project Plus

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