



healthwatch

South Gloucestershire

SINGING FOR THE BRAIN

A Healthwatch South Gloucestershire volunteer champion visited Downend singing for the brain group in January 2017 to hear patient experiences. Information about their experiences will be fed back to health and social care providers through this report.

SINGING FOR THE BRAIN

THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

Healthwatch South Gloucestershire visited to:

- hear the views of patients, staff and visitors about health and social care services;
- inform the community about Healthwatch South Gloucestershire;
- encourage members of the public to volunteer with Healthwatch South Gloucestershire.

Healthwatch focused on;

- experiences of using local services, particularly acute services (in the run-up to our Winter project)
- links between community services and acute services
- ease of service access

You Said.... 26 comments were received relating to Southmead Hospital; Yate West Walk GP, Lodgeside GP, Close Farm GP, Lloyds, Well Chemist, Billings Pharmacy, Emersons Green, Downend Clinic, Primary mental health care team, Care homes, Carers Support Centre, Podiatry services.

DEMENTIA OUTCOME

Spouse of member with other representatives from the Alzheimers Association, campaigned to raise awareness of dementia within services. A Dementia support adviser is

now based at Portishead police headquarters.

Feedback

1. Patient experiences, staff attitudes, length of waiting time for A&E services at Southmead Hospital

Commentator had waited over eighteen weeks for a post colonoscopy follow up appointment; however the Specialist was excellent and very reassuring. As had waited so many weeks, specialist went out of room and found a dietician who was free there and then, to avoid weeks of waiting for dietary advice.

Appointment for volunteer to have removal of a lesion on back-referral had been made by GP. Shown into treatment room and nurses proceeded to open all sterilised packs before back was examined. Specialist then noted that this crusted lesion had been scratched off and no treatment needed. Need to introduce skin check prior to sterile preparation packs prepared.

Feedback includes hospital nurses described as 'unsung heroes'.

Commentator rang NHS 111 at 7.20pm on a Sunday as their spouse with dementia had had a fall. A checklist was completed over phone and caller and spouse advised to go to A & E, and to not to eat. At A & E, informed that they could not prioritise those with dementia. Waited 3 1/2 hours to be seen without food.

Commentator suggests there is a need at A & E to divert minor injuries to a quicker stream. Her and her spouse were at A&E on a Sunday night, so no GP surgery was open. This length of wait was so tiring for both of these older people, that it will prevent wife ringing NHS 111 for advice on falls again.

2. GP appointment systems; waiting times for treatment, prescriptions

Some GP surgeries require people to queue first thing for same day appointments, leading to elderly patients standing outside in the cold and rain before the surgery opens in order to secure an appointment.

GP appointment system. Found re-arranging an appointment, to be very difficult. Messages left on answerphone system are not responded to.

GP lack of time. General feeling that GPs' do not know their communities well these days as they do fewer home visits, do not live locally and are confined to surgeries for very long hours.

Prescriptions. Question whether GPs are now only prescribing for one month at a time. Concern that this leads to people paying for more prescriptions

Emersons Green Surgery

A perceived improvement in staff- more friendly and welcoming.

Locum appointment- seen within a week. Good experience. Blood tests and then follow up phone call the next week with results.

On 23 November 2016 a patient was informed they have to wait five weeks for a GP appointment.

West Walk Surgery, Yate

Waited weeks for a call back-re a shingles injection and PSA blood results.

Lodgeside Surgery

One very elderly husband reports his GP Dr Staples has an interest in dementia and so is understanding of wife's condition, and him as a carer.

Close Farm Surgery, North Common

Eighty year old spouse with dementia was in Callington Road hospital for four months, has been home for four months and the spouse feels they should have been contacted by their own GP. The spouse is on the Carers register at surgery.

3. Pharmacies: closing and promotion, experiences.

There is general concern re chemists closing. A suggestion has been made that pharmacies must self promote and broaden or advertise their skills such as administering flu jabs.

Well Chemist Kingswood

Felt very unapproachable, and not acknowledged by staff with a slow service. So the commentator switched to **Billings** where they found a good service with home delivery, and approachable staff.

4. Social Care services, hospital discharge for dementia patients.

Elite Homecare

A spouse with dementia has carers six days a week. Their spouse finds them to be a well run agency with approximately fifty carers.

Fourways Homecare

A new company. Patient initially was regularly sent the same people, but now company expanding, has new carers more often. Feels people with dementia need continuity of care. Changed from **Stepping Stones** who carer felt were very lacking.

This same commentator feels that when a person with dementia is admitted to hospital, usually due to a crisis, hospital professionals are too keen to plan discharge to a nursing home, rather than believe it possible for spouse and a package of care to allow discharge home. Her husband did not recognise her when she would visit him in hospital but as soon as back in his own home, recognition returned. She had to fight to get husband home, with help of one Occupational Therapist.

The commentator says that a health professional has since admitted that he was wrong and that husband is in the right environment at home and wife has coped at home.

5. Podiatry Services; home visits, appointment at clinic

The podiatry service for housebound appears to be at capacity. Podiatry are unable to visit at home, although the patient is in a wheelchair and has dementia.

A commentator is pleased with their prompt appointment at **Downend Clinic**.

6. Primary Care Liason Team

Following a GP referral, within two days an Assessor had contacted to make an appointment and visited to assess within ten days. The patient has been referred to a Community Mental Health team for an assessment by a Psychiatrist and support from Mental Health Nurse.

7. Carers Support Centre

An Assessor helped the Carer of a patient with dementia, to have a Support Worker and also suggested day centres and respite. The Carer believes the Support Worker is to accompany her to view these places.

8. South Gloucestershire, BANES, and Bristol Council Dementia awareness

Spouse of member with other representatives from the Alzheimers Association, campaigned to raise awareness of dementia within services, e.g. police, social services. A Dementia support adviser is now based at Portishead police headquarters, to advise in cases where there is dementia involvement e.g. when a person with dementia has made accusations against a family member, or another family member makes an accusation against a spouse caring for someone with dementia. This spouse is not yet sure if social services are increasing training for dementia awareness for all its workers as one member had a very difficult time re Safeguarding issues.

Tell Us Your Story...

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



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



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