



**#SpeakUp Small Grants
Programme 2017-18
Summary Report**

August 2018

Background

Healthwatch Sheffield is the city's local consumer watchdog for health and social care services. The organisation exists to help adults, children and young people to influence and improve the way health and social care services are designed and run in the city. Healthwatch Sheffield is completely independent from the NHS and Sheffield City Council.

In 2017-18 Healthwatch Sheffield ran a small grants programme called #SpeakUp. The programme was designed to enable local organisations and community groups to gather views and experiences of health and social care services from Sheffield residents, especially from those who do not traditionally have a voice. The aim was to ensure that health and social care decision makers in the city hear from a diverse range of people about their experiences of services.

Sheffield-based voluntary and community sector organisations were invited to apply for a small grant of up to £500 to run consultation and engagement activities.

The grant application process opened on 4th January 2018 and closed on 31st January 2018. A total of 32 applications were received and 15 grants were awarded. Activities had to take place before 31st May 2018.

In total organisations gathered the views of around 540 people.

They have heard from a very diverse range of people, including:

- Asylum seekers and refugees
- People with lived experience of mental health distress
- People with learning disabilities
- People with physical disabilities including amputees and wheelchair users
- Young people
- Young men from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) communities
- Women from BAMER communities
- Members of the Chinese community

This was the first time that Healthwatch Sheffield had run a small grants programme for this purpose.

This report provides a snapshot of what 11 of the grant recipient organisations did and their key findings and recommendations. Four organisations had not completed their projects at the time of writing. The report also explores cross cutting themes that emerged from the projects and the impact of the programme.

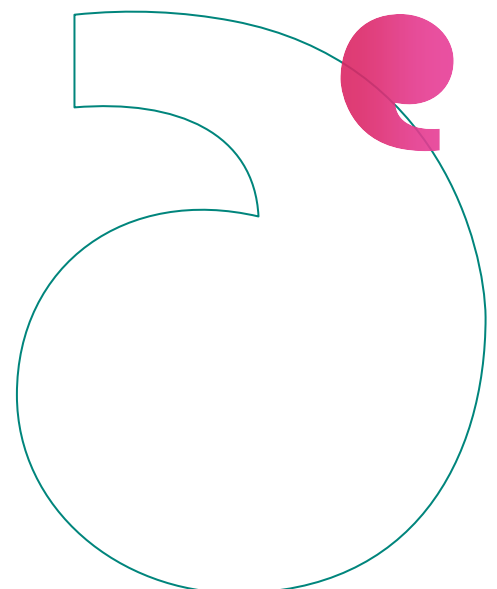
Cross cutting themes

The results from the #SpeakUp projects reveal some common, cross cutting themes. These include good experiences; the provision and accessibility of information; communication challenges; access to services; flexibility of services and the importance of community.

Good experiences

It is important to recognise and celebrate the fact that projects identified positive experiences as well as challenges and suggestions for change. These positive experiences are summarised below:

- A good number of people with learning disabilities knew their doctor or surgery by name and 2/3 of those consulted either didn't mind or actually liked going to see their GP.
- People with lived experience of mental health distress were able to cite examples of good service provision.
- Asylum seekers and refugees expressed an appreciation for cooperative and caring health professionals.
- People with physical disabilities reported good satisfaction levels with three out of four of the GP practices in their area of Sheffield.
- Residents in Foxhill value the advice that they get from local pharmacies.
- Members of the Sheffield Chinese community have good levels of satisfaction with their GP practice.
- Young people were able to cite examples of good mental health support services.
- Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) women gave positive examples about accessing health services. For example, one woman talked about how a female GP really listened to her.



Provision and accessibility of information

Some groups talked about difficulties finding out about services including how and when to access them.

Mental health: Adults and young people, including those from BAMER communities, were asked about mental health and mental health services. All of these groups talked about difficulties finding out about services and how to access them, and some demonstrated a lack of knowledge about services.

Health literacy: refugees and asylum seekers find the health system confusing and do not know about the different services available to them. Printed information is often too full of text as are letters sent to individuals. BAMER women also found printed information and letters about clinical information difficult to understand.

Social care services: members of the Sheffield Chinese community who had experience of using social care services in the last 12 months, found it hard to find out about services.

Communication challenges

The projects identified a number of communication challenges, especially for people with limited English.

Interpreters: for people with limited English, the use of interpreters is helpful. However it is important to make sure that interpreters speak the same dialect as the person they are interpreting for otherwise this can lead to confusion. This can be an issue with Language Line. If interpreters are being used, then appointments need to be long enough for people to speak through an interpreter. If interpreters are not being used, then healthcare professionals need to speak slowly and listen carefully to their patient.

Jargon: young people found the language and jargon associated with mental health services confusing and intimidating.

Poor communication: two individual services were identified as having poor communication practices. These were the prosthetics and wheelchair services at the Mobility and Specialised Rehabilitation Centre at the Northern General Hospital.

Access to services

Availability of GP appointments: difficulties getting GP appointments were raised by a number of groups consulted. This was cited by BAMER men as a reason why they do not attend the GP. Others talked about their frustration with the triage system in place whereby GP practice receptionists determine how urgent a patient's need to see the GP is.

Mental health services: difficulties accessing mental health support services were raised by both adults and young people. Adults talked about difficulties with crisis services and young people explained that they felt they were 'the wrong level of ill' - they had to get more unwell before they were treated. The transition between Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and adult services was raised as an area for concern. BAMER men did not know about mental health services and said that they would not visit a GP to discuss their mental health unless they had symptoms that were uncontrollable or posing a risk.

Flexibility of services

The need for services to be more flexible was raised by more than one group. This was either in terms of where and when services were offered, or it was about opening up choice about services. So, Burton Street Foundation would like to see annual health checks for people with learning disabilities offered in community locations along with flu vaccinations; young people would like mental health services to take into account school timetables and exams; some members of the Chinese community would like more choice in terms of the type of support they receive from social care services.

Importance of community

Several groups consulted reflected on the importance of feeling part of a community and the impact this has on physical and mental health. The men from BAMER communities talked about turning to friends and family members for support. Asylum-seekers and refugees reflected on the fact that the lack of a social network in this country can have an impact on their mental health. People who attended the Sheffield Mental Health Challenge Day also spoke about what community means to them.

Summary of findings

Burton Street Foundation

Burton Street Foundation delivers disability services from their community hub in Hillsborough. Around 250 people use these services each week.

Project: Learning Disability Voices Project

The aim of the project was to try to better understand:

- What people's relationship was like with their GP.
- Whether they had any health concerns themselves.
- If there was anything they felt Burton Street could do to help.

They used a questionnaire to gather the views of 32 people who use their services. These people have mild to moderate learning disabilities.

What they found

Reason for visiting GP: of the 22 people who said that they had been to see their GP in the last year, most of them had been for their annual health check. This was encouraging because Burton Street Foundation is aware that many of their service users with learning disabilities do not have the annual health check that they are entitled to and if they do, they do not understand the implications of the results for their own health.

Relationships with GP: a good number of people either knew their doctor by name (41%) or at least the name of their surgery (34%). When asked how they feel about going to the doctors around one third responded that they liked to go, another third that they do not like to go and another third that they don't mind going.

Health worries: when asked whether they have any worries about their health, 63% stated that they have no worries about their health. However, the project worker who carried out the survey felt that this may not be an accurate picture as some people with existing health conditions needed prompting about these.

Additional support: when asked what additional support they would like from Burton Street, the most frequently mentioned ideas were around information about exercise and how to eat healthier food.

Recommendations

1. Increase the uptake of annual health checks by adults with learning disabilities by offering those checks at community locations such as Burton Street.
2. Learning disability charities and statutory services should work in partnership to educate adults with learning disabilities about their own health.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about Burton Street Foundation: www.burtonstreet.co.uk



Challenge Sheffield and Survivors of Depression in Transition (SODIT)

Challenge Sheffield and Survivors of Depression in Transition (SODIT) are both user-led organisations for people with lived experience of mental health distress.

Project: Sheffield Mental Health Challenge Day

The aims of the project were:

- To hear the experiences of people who live with mental health distress in Sheffield and their carers, and to hear their views of services.
- To discuss how we can work together with providers in a more meaningful way
- To learn how we can create and develop more connected communities.

The day consisted of three workshops on 'experiences of services'; 'working together, co-production and involvement' and 'community'. The day was attended by 35 people.

What they found

Information about services: workshop participants felt that there is a lack of information about what services are available and how and where services can be accessed. Certain services were found to be particularly hard to access, notably crisis services.

Holistic approach: people mentioned a need for a more holistic approach that does not rely solely on medication and the need to link physical and mental health.

Range of services: people want to be able to access a wide range of service-providing organisations, in particular those provided by the voluntary sector and small organisations. In addition people feel that there is a lack of specialised services.



Healthcare professionals: whilst some people cited examples of good practice from medical professionals and described effective services, others felt that they had not received enough information or communication or enough input into decision making.

Involvement and co-production: people felt that there is not enough involvement or co-production in Sheffield and that there is a lack of understanding about these subjects.

Community: this was important to everyone and held a range of meanings for people.

Impact of service changes and closures: the impacts of closures and changes were discussed and the particular effects on people's mental health.

Recommendations

1. Continue to develop better connections and collaborative working.
2. Enhance and strengthen communication and information systems.
3. Increase understanding and awareness of involvement and co-production.
4. Develop and support a range of involvement and co-production initiatives.
5. Support smaller and user-led organisations to increase diversity.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about SODIT: www.sodit.org



City of Sanctuary Sheffield

City of Sanctuary is a movement to build a culture of welcome and hospitality for refugee and asylum seekers. In 2007, with support from Sheffield City Council, Sheffield became the first City of Sanctuary in the UK. City of Sanctuary Sheffield runs The Sanctuary, a place where refugees and asylum seekers can come for information, advice and support.

Project: Health at the Sanctuary

The aim of the project was to hear about the experience of healthcare locally, identify problems the organisation might address and good practice they could share. In partnership with other organisations (New Beginnings Project, ASSIST Sheffield, The British Red Cross, University of Sheffield School of Nursing and Midwifery, Buzz, Sexual Health Sheffield, Open Kitchen) City of Sanctuary Sheffield ran two events focusing on the health needs and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in Sheffield. Between 20 and 30 people attended each event.

What they found

Expectations and experiences of services: both positive and negative experiences of health services were shared. On the positive side, there was appreciation for co-operative, caring health professionals. On the negative side there were

“The doctor did not listen to me and just came to a conclusion about my symptoms based on my nationality.”

complaints about waiting times and difficulties making appointments at GPs.

Communication can be difficult though interpreters do help.

However, interpreters are not

always trusted especially if they come from within the same community. What's more, interpreters are not effective if they do not speak the same dialect.

Stereotypes and negative attitudes: participants often feel stereotyped and misunderstood. They also find that some health professionals tell them how expensive treatment is as if they will have to pay for it.

Trust: whilst trust is essential to good healthcare, the fact that people do not have a single family GP makes it difficult to build trust. Different GPs give conflicting advice.

Health literacy: people find the health system confusing and are not aware of services such as the Walk-in Centre. Printed information and letters are often too full of text. Some suggested that mobile technology could help overcome this issue.

Mental health needs: the causes of mental health distress amongst these groups are linked to the asylum process itself, traumas experienced in home countries and a lack of support networks in the UK.

Recommendations

City of Sanctuary Sheffield made detailed recommendations as a result of this project. These are summarised here.

- 1) Help people new to the UK understand the NHS and how it works.
- 2) Think about communicating effectively with people whose first language is not English.
- 3) Find out more about what works well and share it.
- 4) Educate and raise awareness of NHS staff about the lives of asylum seekers and refugees.
- 5) Improve mental health support.
- 6) Increase clarity over NHS charges and challenge the 'hostile environment'.

Read the full report for more details:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about City of Sanctuary: www.sheffield.cityofsanctuary.org

Disability Awareness With Sport (DAWS)

DAWS run a community gym that specialises in supporting people with disabilities and health conditions to get active and to improve their own health and wellbeing.

Project: 'Ampu Tea and Chat'

The aim of the project was to understand the experiences that people with physical disabilities had of health services. In particular they wanted to find out more about people's experience of the prosthetics and wheelchair services at the Mobility and Specialised Rehabilitation Centre at the Northern General Hospital. In addition, they wanted to understand their members' experiences of their GP practice. DAWS used a survey at an event 'Ampu Tea and Chat' to gather views of the prosthetic service and a survey with users of the wheelchair service. They used the Healthwatch Sheffield feedback form to gather views and experiences about local GP practices.

What they found

Prosthetics service: there is a high level of dissatisfaction with the prosthetics service. Attitudes both at a senior level and technician level are not helpful. People do not feel well supported or treated as individuals. There is a lack of good information and advice before and after receiving a prosthetic limb. People would like to complain, but do not for fear of reprisals and being labelled a 'trouble-maker.' They fear that they will be put at the back of the queue when it comes to maintenance and adjustments to their prosthetic limb.

Wheelchair service: there is dissatisfaction with the wheelchair service. Users of the service feel that they are not listened to. They feel that staff lack people skills and good communication skills, and that staff carrying out assessments do not see people as individuals. Wheelchairs are of a poor standard and there seems to be a 'one size fits all' approach within the service.

GP practices: gym members provided feedback about four local practices - Hackenthorpe Medical Centre; Mosborough Health Centre; Moss Valley Medical Practice; Southall Health Centre. Three of the four practices were rated 'good' or 'very good' by survey respondents. Most people were likely to recommend their GP practice to family and friends. Issues raised were to do with difficulties making appointments.

Recommendations

The most notable issues discovered through this project were to do with the quality of services provided for people requiring prosthetic and wheelchair services at the Mobility and Specialised Rehabilitation Centre at the Northern General Hospital. DAWS therefore recommend:

1. Working with Healthwatch Sheffield to explore how people who use these services can provide feedback to them without fear of reprisals.
2. Working with Healthwatch Sheffield and service commissioners to deliver improvements to these services that ensure that individuals feel respected and supported and that they are provided with good quality information and advice.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about DAWS: www.dawssheffield.co.uk



Darnall Community Development Centre (DCDC)

DCDC runs a community building that offers a community gym, fitness classes and café.

Project: Young Men Speak Up about Men's Mental Health

The aim of this project was to explore the stigmas and barriers young men face in seeking support for ill-health and the expectations on men to 'show no weakness' and to 'man up'. DCDC ran three workshops as part of this project. A total of 26 men participated in the workshops. All participants were members of Empire Boxing and Thai Boxing Club. Most of the participants were from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee communities (BAMER).

What they found

Masculinity: when asked 'What is a man expected to be?', participants responded with roles and responsibilities such as: "a family man", "married", "a father", "provider for your family", and physical descriptions of a man included: "big", "strong" and "muscly".

Accessing support: in all three workshops, men stated that they would only use health services if they required urgent care and would go to A&E. Most would not use a GP practice and some were not sure if they were registered with one.

GP appointments: reasons given for reluctance to visit the GP were to do with difficulties with making appointments, difficulties getting appointments that fit around work and family commitments, waiting times and cost of parking. They were not to do with fear or nervousness.

Mental health: workshop participants would only seek help from their GP or other medical professional if the symptoms were uncontrollable, visible to others and/or posing a risk or causing problems that affected others. Instead they would seek support from 'someone close that you can trust.'

Attitudes of professionals and employers: another commonly reported reason for not seeking support for both physical and mental health advice or care from a GP was the fear that the doctor would be dismissive. There was also concern that a mental health condition would have to be declared to employers and would go 'on your record'.

Social media and role models: there was agreement that social media has played a positive role in helping younger men understand mental health and that the use of positive, sporting role models with experience of mental health difficulties is effective.

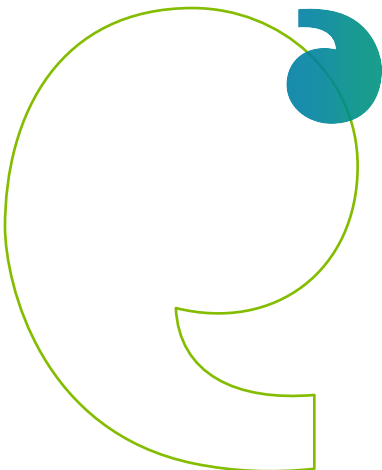
Awareness of mental health support services: none of the participants was aware of mental health support services or charities such as Mind, Young Minds or the Samaritans. However most felt that they would still prefer to speak to someone they know rather than one of these organisations.

Role of DCDC: although most favoured the idea of informally supporting one another, others did suggest trialling a men's support group/health group in the community centre where men could openly discuss any worries, pressures and stress.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about DCDC: www.darnallcentre.co.uk



Foxhill Forum

Foxhill Forum is a community organisation based in North East Sheffield. The organisation offers services across the four themes of health and wellbeing; active involvement; community learning and employability support.

Project: Foxhill Speaks Up

The aim of the Foxhill Speaks Up Project was to deliver a range of engagement events and community 'get togethers'. The project provided local residents with a comfortable and relaxed environment in which to feed back about their views and experiences of health and social care in Sheffield. Staff at Foxhill Forum spoke to residents during the project period by engaging them in activities such as crafts or chairbics. They also visited local community venues such as Foxhill Medical Centre and the library to run mini engagement events. A total of 67 residents took part. Foxhill Forum experienced reluctance amongst some residents to take part in the consultation.

What they found

GP practice appointments: residents said that they can find it hard to get appointments and that they do not like having to explain or justify why they need an appointment to the receptionist. Some felt that appointments were not long enough and that doctors only have time to consider one condition rather than the whole person.

Hospital appointments: residents stated that hospital appointments are not always convenient for them, but worry about rearranging them in case they are seen by healthcare professionals as not urgent or important. They also find getting to the Northern General by public transport difficult due to timetable changes and reduced services. Those who drive find it hard to park.

Pharmacies: feedback about pharmacies was good. Many residents value the advice and support they get from pharmacies.

Dentists: some residents find the cost for NHS dental treatment too high and this puts them off attending appointments. Others were confused by the fact that some polish their teeth as part of a routine appointment and others do not.

Recommendations

As a result of this consultation, Foxhill Forum recommend the following:

1. There is a need to encourage greater involvement and participation by patients in GP medical centres/practices to help overcome the issues around appointments.
2. GP practices need to provide clarity/guidance for patients about wait times for appointments and what they can expect.
3. To address the reluctance of residents to get involved in this project, it would be helpful to run awareness campaigns around the role of Healthwatch in the local community.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about Foxhill Forum: www.foxhill-forum.co.uk



Sheffield Chinese Community Centre

The Sheffield Chinese Community Centre offers a range of services for residents of Chinese origin or descent. Services include education and training as well as welfare advice. They also organise events, workshops and festivals celebrating Chinese culture.

Project: Chinese Voice Project

The aim was to engage with members of the Sheffield Chinese community to understand their views and experiences of health and social care services. The Sheffield Chinese Community Centre conducted surveys and one to one interviews, held two workshops and a focus group meeting with community members to obtain feedback. A total of 127 people completed the survey questionnaires and three people attended the focus group meeting.

What they found

Health services

GP practices: they found that most respondents rated their GP practice from 'average' to 'good'. They also found that 80% of respondents prefer to visit their GP practice rather than the Walk-in Centre or the A&E department in hospital.

Hospitals: most respondents rated their experiences at hospitals from 'average' to 'good'.

Other services: about 1/3 of respondents had received medical care from other sources and the reasons for them to do so included mainly language barriers, unavailability of their doctor, seeking a second opinion and their belief that Chinese medicine is more effective.

Attitudes to medical professionals: most respondents agreed that nurses and doctors are friendly and courteous and they have enough time to discuss their medical problem with the medical professionals. However 12% of respondents found it difficult to communicate with the nurses / doctors.

Social care services

It is important to note that only 12 of the 167 people surveyed had used social care services in the last 12 months.

Satisfaction with services: most respondents were satisfied with social care services. However, 10 of the 12 people who had actually used social care services, felt that they do not have enough choice over the care and support services that they use.

Information about services: the majority of those who had used social care services stated that it was hard to find out information about services. Instead, they turn to other service providers such as The Sheffield Chinese Community Centre and Citizens Advice Sheffield.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about Sheffield Chinese Community Centre:

www.sheffieldchinesecommunity.org.uk



STAMP (Support, Think, Act, Motivate, Participate)

STAMP is a group of young people aged 14-25 years who are passionate about making a positive change around mental health in Sheffield.

Project: YOUth Matter

The aim of the YOUth Matter project was to give young people the opportunity to speak up and influence change around mental health. The group designed a fun event that would capture the views and experiences of other young people. They targeted under-represented young people aged 14-25 years. Twenty-one young people attended the event.

What they found

Only three people at the event had not accessed some kind of service (voluntary sector or statutory sector).

The event gathered a wealth of information about young people's experiences and ideas about mental health services. In particular, they found out about barriers to accessing services and potential solutions, what perfect support would look like and what a perfect service would look like. Key themes that emerged were around the need to create friendly and relaxed spaces, and offer flexible, timely long-term support delivered by friendly, kind and understanding professionals.



Recommendations

STAMP made detailed recommendations as a result of this project. They are summarised below.

Access to mental health services

1. Cut down waiting times for mental health services for young people.
2. Improve information about what services are available and how to access them.
3. Improve the flexibility of services by delivering support in different locations.
4. Support/train young people to become 'young verifiers' so they can use the national 'You're Welcome' standards to assess services.¹
5. Improve the way young people are supported to talk about their experience of mental health by implementing a mental health passport.
6. Carry out an evaluation of the transition pathway from child to adult services.

Perfect support

- 1) Improve the quality of mental health support for young people. Ensure recruitment and training procedures result in a workforce that has the attributes identified by young people as important in a support worker.
- 2) Involve young people in the recruitment process for both child and adult services.

Perfect Service

- 1) When designing services think about what young people want from that service.
- 2) Ensure young people are meaningfully involved in the design on services.
- 3) Fund more beds for children's and adults' services.

A full version of the report can be found here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about STAMP: www.chilypep.org.uk/stamp

¹ 'You're Welcome' is a set of quality criteria for young people friendly health services. This quality standard is supported by Public Health England, NHS England and the Department for Health. More information can be found [here](#).

Shipshape

Shipshape is a community health organisation based in the Sharrow area of Sheffield. They offer a range of one-to-one and group health and wellbeing services.

Project

Shipshape gathered the views and experiences from people who are supported by their services. They ran workshops with people who attend their existing services including a Women's Health Group, Moor Market Community Hub Group, Broomhall Peer Support Group and Man Friday Group. At these workshops they used a questionnaire and a creative mapping tool to gather feedback.

In total they reached 118 people. They spoke to men and women ranging in age from 29 to 80 years. The majority of people consulted were from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (BME).

What they found

Communication: women in particular raised the fact that they find it difficult to communicate with healthcare professionals due to a lack of English language.

Health literacy: they spoke to older people about their experiences. They felt isolated and struggled to understand the basics of what to do in an emergency when they are left on their own. Some said (mainly individuals from BME Communities) they didn't know where their GP practice was and how they would make an appointment.

Experiences of GP practices: there was positive and negative feedback about experiences of GP practices.

Urgent care: many people they spoke to expressed worries about the Clinical Commissioning Group's proposed changes to urgent care services and how to access services.

Men's health: a number of men stated that they avoid attending health services as they worry about being told they are unwell or being diagnosed with a condition. Some men felt that mental health services were very poor and that they are just pushed from one service to the next.

Recommendations

1. To address low levels of understanding about health services and how to access support, Shipshape will run a workshop around 'Knowing your Healthcare Services.'
2. Provide information to local communities, especially to people who are vulnerable and isolated about the changes to urgent care services.
3. Enable local people to meet with health service providers, especially mental health services, to allow them to gain answers to their questions and concerns about services.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about Shipshape: www.facebook.com/ShipshapeSheffield



The Link Community

The Link Community is a community hub based in South East Sheffield. The Link Community runs a nearly new shop and delivers other activities and services to support local people.

Project: Better Care, Better Health

The aim of the project was to talk to local residents about their experiences of health and social care services. They spoke to 30 people in total. A questionnaire was used to gather views at first and then they carried out one-to-one interviews and group discussions.

What they found

Experiences of GP practices: in general people said that they were happy with the service they received although the older age group felt as though GPs and nurses did not always give them the time and help they needed because of their age.

Experiences of hospitals: many people felt that older people are not treated with respect at hospital and that they did not have their dignity taken into account.

Mental health: some people consulted who had mental health conditions felt that they were not taken seriously by their GP. Many raised concerns about cut backs to services. Two young people had experience of using Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and raised concerns about the transition between CAMHS and adult services and the age at which young people are expected to move to adult services.

Importance of community: Everyone said what a difference having a support network around them made, whether it be family, friends or community organisations such as The Link Community. They all said that on many occasions if they did not have this support they would not bother looking after their health as much. They also said if they did not have the local support of The Link Community to offer them advice on how to access benefits, treatment and support they would not know how to get this information and help.

What next

Below is a summary of what The Link Community would like to see as a result of this project.

1. They would like to go on to do further research and to develop as many case studies as possible to show how valuable support networks are in people's lives.
2. They would like to work towards there being much better communication between all organisations as people are often falling through gaps.

Read the full report here: www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about The Link Community: www.facebook.com/thelinkcommunity

Zest

Zest is a community enterprise based in North West Sheffield. Zest runs a flagship community building, The Zest Centre, and offers community, leisure, health and work support services.

Project: Your Voice, Your Health

This project was designed to find out more about local Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) women's experiences of health services. Zest ran two consultation events. The first attracted 39 women and the second 22. Some women attended both sessions.

Zest used a visual scribe to record the ideas and experiences discussed.

There was an Arabic interpreter present at each event and Arabic speaking volunteers were also present.



What they found

The first event explored the barriers to accessing health services and what works well to enable women to access services. The second event explored how people access services and how improvements to access could be made.

Communication difficulties: these arise especially when women do not speak English. There is often not time to explain what's wrong and doctors/healthcare professionals do not always speak slowly. Issues with Language Line were identified. It is important that interpreters speak the same dialect as the people they are interpreting for. Also, a single appointment is not long enough for a patient who brings an interpreter with them.

GP appointments: some people found it difficult to get an appointment at their GP practice for urgent matters; others were not aware that they could change their GP or that they could request a female doctor.

Recommendations

Communication

- Healthcare professionals need to enable people for whom English is not their first language enough time to explain their symptoms and professionals should speak slowly so that they can be understood more easily.
- Offer double appointments to people who need to bring an interpreter with them.
- Use text messages to communicate with people who do not have much English instead of lengthy letters or phone calls.
- Offer the opportunity to discuss clinical information face-to-face to ensure that the person understands.
- If using language line for interpretation, check that the interpreter speaks the same dialect and the patient can understand them.
- Provide written leaflets/information in community languages where possible.

Appointments

- If not already doing so, set aside some appointments for urgent cases/emergencies to enable people to see a doctor quickly.
- Ensure patients know they have a choice of GP practice and can request a female doctor.
- Enable women to see a female doctor whenever this is requested.

Read the full report here:

www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk/speakup-small-grants/

Find out more about Zest: www.zestcommunity.co.uk

#SpeakUp Grants Impact

The #SpeakUp grants 2017-18 have had a significant impact. The programme has enabled a diverse range of Sheffield residents to share their views and experiences of services. Healthwatch Sheffield will work with the grant recipients to share the results and recommendations with health and social care commissioners and decision makers. This work has already started.

For some organisations it has been a chance to start talking about health and social care with a specific group that they work with. For example, Burton Street Foundation used this funding to start conversations with people with learning disabilities that they support and have now got funding to continue this work for two years. For others it has had a significant impact on the people involved in the project. For example, Darnall Community Development Centre who focused on discussing mental health with young men and boys, noticed afterwards that this project has helped to break down barriers between the adolescent boys and the men who use their boxing gym. Chilypep felt that this project has helped to build the capacity of the young people in the STAMP group who planned and delivered it.

As a result of these grants, six organisations spoke to people they had not spoken to before. The other organisations felt that, although they had not spoken to new people, they had been able to have deeper conversations about health and social care in a way that they had not been able to before.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Sheffield would like to thank all organisations that applied to the #SpeakUp Grants Programme in 2017-18 and in particular those who received grants to carry out projects. We would also like to thank all individuals who took the time to share their views with successful grant recipients.

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