

REPORT OF HERTFORDSHIRE HEALTH SCRUTINY (HSC) TO THE GROUP

July 2022

1. The Hertfordshire Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) met on the 1 July 2022. The Webcast of this meeting can be found [here](#). At the meeting we welcomed new county, district and borough colleagues joining the committee:
 - Teresa Heritage (Herts County Council)
 - Val Bryant (North Herts)
 - Lynn Cunningham (St Albans)
 - Simon Feldman (Watford)
 - Caron Juggins (Welwyn Hatfield)
 - Stephanie Singer (Three Rivers)
 - Anthony Spencer (Hertsmere)
- 2.1 The Committee considered Long Covid. Members heard from the area's two community providers: Central London Community Health (CLCH) and Herts Community Trust (HCT). Members were informed there is considerable amount of research underway into long covid and the rehabilitation needs. Long-covid services provided by CLCH and HCT were for adults over eighteen; services for children with long-covid were provided by paediatricians at hospitals. Both trusts worked with specialist teams in secondary care and for patients with learning difficulties. The trusts are keen to work with local authorities to educate residents about long covid.
- 2.2 90% of referrals were by GPs and 66% of those referrals were female but it was clarified that becoming unwell with, or dying from covid was higher among men. Patients are referred after 12 weeks if they were experiencing covid symptoms. Diagnosis has become more difficult because fewer people are now testing for covid. The trusts are working with faith groups to ensure information is available diverse minority groups.
- 3 HSC continued its focus on GP access following last year's topic group scrutiny.
 - 3.1 Health organisations were asked to provide an update following the deep dive into GP access and the detailed discussion at the Impact of Scrutiny Advisory Committee. Members were provided an overview of the issues, progress to date and some key messaging that councillors were encouraged to share with their communities. The report was prepared with input from a range of leads across Primary Care Directorate, Communications and Engagement and Digital.
 - 3.2 The committee explored the issues highlighted in the report and agreed that progress was being made; however, it remains concerned at the pace and variability across practices. HSC will return to the issue at future meetings.
- 4 Healthwatch Herts (HwH) had been invited to describe to the committee its work on co-production and its involvement in the Community Assembly.
 - 4.1 Co-production is when service users, carers, and communities work in an equal partnership with professionals, sharing power, influence and responsibility in the development, design, and delivery of services. Effective coproduction involves people who use services being

included and working from the start to the end of any project that affects them. Decisions made are owned by all those involved. Coproduction also embodies the belief that everyone has an important contribution to make to improve the quality of life for people and communities.

4.2 The Committee saw this as a significant move forward from previous consultation methods. It was noted a lot of work with BAME groups had been carried out and the Co-production board was also using digital systems to get a broader range of people joining in participation. Co-production workers also have reviewed how carers were involved in the participation groups.

4.3 Members were informed the NHS was undertaking work with young people with learning disabilities around them having a specialised health app on their mobile phones. It was noted that people with learning disabilities have been involved in other streams of work.

5. Scrutiny Work Programme

5.1 Members heard that one of the recommendations from the BAME (Black Asian & Minority Ethnic) Health Inequalities Topic Group was for a scrutiny of the experience and outcomes of maternity services for BAME patients, to take place. It was noted the title for this scrutiny topic group had been changed to Inequalities in Maternity Services scrutiny topic group. This topic group has been scheduled for 12 Sept 2022.

5.2 The Committee noted the Impact of Scrutiny Advisory Committee met on 21 June 2022 to assess progress on the recommendations regarding BAME (Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic) Health Inequalities and GP Access. ISAC signed off all recommendations. ISAC referred several items to HSC to consider adding to the work programme:

- to consider the impact, risk and mitigations relating to medical equipment and/or treatment that is not suitable or as effective for BAME communities
- ensuring all women have agency and a voice in their health and wellbeing matters through the development of a workstream focusing on women, led by the Integrated Care Board.
- to consider scrutiny of all health partners ensuring the focus is the patient/service user when designing, delivering, and communicating health interventions.

6. **Bulletins**

No bulletins have been issued since the last update.

If you have any queries, please get back to me or Natalie Rotherham
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