Wigan Borough Locality Plan (2020 -25)

Our conversations with patients and residents
September – October 2019

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Introduction

The NHS and Wigan Council are working together on a joint plan for health and social care services. The plan describes how, through the Healthier Wigan Partnership, we will radically improve residents’ health and wellbeing and transform services over the next 5 years.

Our vision for local services remains the same. By 2025 we will have health and social care services that...

- Support people to be well and empower them to look after their own health and wellbeing;
- Are easily available, supporting people at home through digital technology as much as possible, or in convenient places in their community, keeping our hospitals for when they are most needed;
- Are the best they can be, all working together to make sure services are safe, sustainable and delivering great care.

The plan builds on many conversations we’ve had with patients and residents over the past few years about how we can improve health and social care services.

In September & October 2019 we spoke to patients and residents about the draft plan and this report summarises what they told us. We will incorporate the feedback and suggestions into the plan.
How did we engage with people

Face-to-face activities:
We visited the following community groups to talk to local people:
• Pensioners Link Coffee Morning;
• Armed Forces Hub Coffee Morning;
• Think Ahead Stroke event;
• Wigan & Leigh Carers Centre Coffee Morning;
• Dementia Carers Support Group;
• Wigan & Leigh People First weekly group for learning disabilities;
• Wigan & Leigh Young Carers.

We set up a stall at the following locations and spoke to members of the public:
• Atherton Health Centre;
• Tyldesley Library;
• Chandler House;
• Ashton Library;
• Higher Folds Community Centre;
• Shevington Library;
• Community fun day at Westleigh High School.

We discussed the plan at the following meetings/events:
• Wigan Borough Engagement Group;
• Patients Forum;
• Maternity Voices Partnership.

Online activities:
• We published the leaflet and a link to an online survey on the CCGs website;
• We sent a newsletter out to our engagement membership and local patients groups (+400 contacts);
• We posted about this regularly on our social media pages.

We gathered over 225 individual comments through our face to face engagement activities.
Our online information about the plan was accessed 347 times and 11 people completed our online survey.
Our social media posts reached over 4,000 people.
What people told us

People were generally positive about the plan and that we were asking for their opinions about it. There is support for the NHS and Wigan Council to work together on health and social care to make sure we have the best services possible.

We gathered over 225 individual comments and pieces of feedback during the engagement work. For the purpose of this report we’ve summarised the key themes or suggestions people had relating to different sections of the plan. Individual comments about particular services or members of staff will be passed on to them.

1. Our 7 places:
   • People are supportive of services working around the 7 places and understand the benefits of this;
   • We had conversations with some people about rebuilding a sense of community in their local area;
   • People talked to us about how difficult it can be to travel across the Borough and how they would like to see more services in their local community, e.g. Blood clinics.
   • The cost of public transport can be a barrier for people who don’t drive. People want us to really think about transport and how people travel when we plan services. Ring & Ride has restrictions in that you have to plan a couple of weeks ahead and they only travel a certain mile radius;
   • Some people also told us they had to travel into the centre of Wigan or Leigh to attend different community groups.

2. Starting Life Well section:
   • Our Maternity Voices Partnership group felt the maternity section might sit better in the hospital section, as this is about health or parents and children not just the child;
   • Our Maternity Voices Partnership group feels our priorities around improving maternity services should be 1. Antenatal support/sessions, 2. Digital technology and 3. Mental Health;
   • The young carers group highlighted the importance of health and wellbeing support in schools. Mental Health support is particularly important & they reported access to counsellors is not consistent across schools.
What people told us

3. Staying Safe & Well section

• There was support for cancer being one of our priorities, particularly around raising awareness and early detection. We spoke to a couple of people who had experience of loved one’s being diagnosed with cancer late on;
• We had lots of positive comments for services like Healthy Routes and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles – people feel lucky to have these services in the Borough and want to see them continue;
• People would like to see services do more outreach into the community to reach people and promote their services;
• People like how GP practices are getting more proactive and calling people in for Health Checks which can detect issues early;
• It was suggested one of our priorities should be around supporting and encouraging people to join different groups and activities in the Borough – these can have a positive impact on wellbeing;
• Health checks have motivated some people to make positive lifestyle changes to get healthier. People need to understand more around the reality of living with some long terms conditions, e.g. diabetes which could encourage change.
What people told us

4. Primary Care section:

• Many people we spoke to had experienced issues getting through to their GP practice on the telephone and/or getting an appointment in a reasonable timeframe. Whilst people were happy to see “7 day appointments” in the chapter there is a feeling that we need to work on improving how people can get through and make appointments;

• People were supportive of GP practices working together in the 7 areas and we talked to some people about the different projects;

• People are supportive of the need to reduce medicines waste and we heard some individual stories from people who had family or knew people who waste medicines. They think this is an area we should do much more work around and then reinvest money into services;

• People were supportive of having Digital (online) services in the plan, however, for those who can’t or don’t use the internet they don’t want a reduction in any face-to-face services (this reflects our engagement work over the summer);

• People are supportive of 7 day access. We spoke to many people who have used the Extended Hours Service and we gave out the details for those who hadn’t heard of it. This service is really helpful for people who work or have other responsibilities during the day;

• Some people had concerns around when the receptionist in the practice asks questions before allocating an appointment. They want us to make sure that the receptionists have appropriate training to do this and to follow a set process/procedure;

• There is support for us working on GP workforce and introducing new roles;

• The issues of not being able to get through on the telephone is a real barrier for some groups, particularly those with communication difficulties, caring responsibilities or veterans who can feel more frustrated;

• We have some GP practices who struggle to offer a consistent GP and this is really important for some people, particular those with more complex issues;

• We met some people who had positive experiences with community link workers and would like to see more of this approach;

• Some people would like to see something in the plan around accessible information and reasonable adjustments across services, there are real barriers for some groups;

• Patients at practices with “drop in clinics” really appreciate this approach.
What people told us

5. Help in your community section

• A few people mentioned to us that they would like to see us improve access to therapies and mental health support for people with Long Term conditions and remove the need for constant re-referral from the GP;
• There was support for us including “dying well” in our plans and making sure we meet the wishes of residents;
• People think we should prioritise improving the waiting times for some services like Physiotherapy and Ear Care Service;
• From certain locations people have to travel a way to access some community services, for example in Chandler House a few people told us they travel to Boston House for various things. We were asked whether the location of community services was “fair” across the Borough;
• Some people feel that certain areas of the Borough could have more voluntary community sector groups, for example one lady who lives in Hindley has to travel into Leigh to attend her group which is quite a way. There may be vulnerable people who are unable to travel who need groups/services closer to home;
• Respite care is lacking and difficult to access and this should be a priority in our plan.
What people told us

6. Mental Health services section

• A few people mentioned to us that they would like to see us improve mental health support for people with Long Term conditions;
• People would like to see more money going towards mental health services in general;
• Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) absolutely should be a priority for us to improve;
• People would like to see GP training around mental health within this section, we heard good and bad experiences about the support from GPs;
• People think members of the public in general should have more awareness of mental health and how to support each other;
• People would like us to invest in more counselling services in the Borough. Young carers highlighted school counselling services have been reduced;
• When we spoke to people with caring responsibilities they think we should have mental health services for carers as a priority within this section;
• Our Maternity Voices Partnership group felt perinatal mental should be a priority for us locally.
What people told us

7. Hospital without walls section:
   - Some people didn’t understand the title “hospital without walls”;
   - When talking to people about the hospital many people mentioned Accident & Emergency and they would expect us to have something in our plan around improving this. We heard some individual stories and experiences, good and bad;
   - In terms of moving services out in the community, people want us to make sure we choose appropriate locations with the appropriate equipment;
   - People would like us to focus on sorting out waiting times for some services like Cardiology & Dermatology;
   - Some people feel we need to invest in the hospital buildings, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary and Leigh Infirmary;
   - There is some concern about potentially having to travel out of borough for some hospital services, in particular people talked to us about Dermatology and Breast services that they would like to keep local.
What people told us

The points don’t necessarily fit into a particular chapter / more general points.

8. Other points:

• People would expect to see something around the ambulance service within the plan;
• In terms of travelling further specialist service, people would expect to see our plans around communication/record sharing with out of Borough hospitals;
• If the voluntary community sector is a part of our plan people would like to understand what our plans are to invest in the sector to ensure it’s sustainable;
• People are interested in our specific plans around social care, this is a huge concern for many people;
• One of our priorities should be around training doctors and nursing (in GP practices and the hospital);
• Our Patients Forum would like to understand what we’ve achieved in the first 5 years of our plan and how much progress was made – they think this would be good for local people to see and we should celebrate our successes;
• Does our plan cover services for older people? We have an ageing population;
• Dementia is a huge issue, does this feature in the plan?;
• We could speak to patients and residents about their ideas on how we can save money or make services more efficient, e.g. people trying to give hospital equipment back like crutches and Zimmer frames and being told we don’t want it back;
• We spoke to some staff who were out and about in the locations and they didn’t know about the Locality Plan and think there could be more engagement with front line staff around this;
• Wigan Borough Engagement Group would like to understand more around how the different programmes will engage and involve patients and be held to account for this;
• Reasonable adjustments and accessible information standards should feature in our plan. For example, there could be more easy read health information in services as they group at Wigan & Leigh People First struggle to get this.
• The design of the plan was commented on and people liked the use of pictures, it would however be helpful to explain who the different organisations are and what they do.
Online responses

Most of the respondents think the plan is good (7/11). 3 people are not sure about the plan and 1 person thought it was bad.

The strengths of the plan were around improving things for people within the 7 communities and understanding the different needs. There was also comments around the strengths of working across organisational boundaries for the benefits of local people.

Some of the concerns expressed were around how we would implement the plan in reality and whether we are getting more funding to do so.

Some of the areas respondents felt were missing in our plan or should be the priority were:

• Improving access to GP practices (on the telephone and getting appointments);
• Increasing mental health services;
• How we are planning for the ageing population;
• Improving waiting times;
• More care services for elderly people;
• Transport and accessibility of different services and how we will consider this in our planning;
• Dementia services;
• Plans to educate children and young people to look after their health and wellbeing.
Next Steps

1. This feedback will be shared with the staff responsible for writing the plan;
2. The feedback and suggestions will be considered and the plan updated as necessary;
3. Once we’ve finished this process we’ll publish a “You Said, We Listened” document to describe how our conversations influenced the final plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about this report or if you would like to sign up to our engagement membership.

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