

healthwatch

Redbridge



Healthwatch Redbridge's response to the proposed changes to stroke rehabilitation services in Barking, Havering & Redbridge

March 2016

Introduction

Healthwatch Redbridge held a consultation event on Wednesday 9 March 2016 in order to gather people's views prior to responding to the consultation regarding the proposed changes to stroke rehabilitation services across the Barking, Havering and Redbridge boroughs¹.

Fourteen people attended the event and were given the opportunity to listen to a presentation by Clare Burns, Stroke Lead for Barking, Havering & Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Groups (BHR CCGs) and Zoe Anderson, Senior Communications Manager, North East London Commissioning Support Unit (NELCSU).

Response

Our response is a summary of the discussions which took place and other input from people who could not attend but have provided additional comments.

This response represents the views of Healthwatch Redbridge.

Rank the following inpatient (care in hospital) stroke rehabilitation services in order of how important they are to you

1. Rehabilitation facilities such as a gym
2. Specialist stroke staff
3. Pleasant environment and surroundings
4. Easy to get to by public transport
5. Easy to get to by car
6. 24/7 medical cover

In patient stroke rehabilitation should be provided at one specialist rehabilitation unit

- Most respondents felt in favour of this proposal.
- Some felt that, at present the Wanstead community is poorly served by any services.

Comments:

- What is the role of Whipps Cross Hospital; there seemed to be some confusion in regards to the consultation not fully recognising the need to acknowledge the services which are already being provided (and will continue to be provided) at Whipps Cross Hospital.
- Some felt there was a need to define stroke symptoms better as some are not 'the classic signs' which can mean some people may be misdiagnosed and therefore not treated early enough.
- FAST leaflet is inadequate.
- There are delays (at Queens A&E) in getting to the stroke unit in time to maximise chances of recovery because the system is confusing.

¹ <http://www.redbridgeccg.nhs.uk/About-us/proposed-changes-to-stroke-rehabilitation-services.htm>

If you are in favour of this, where do you think the specialist inpatient unit should be?

- There was a long discussion on the preferred option being based at King George Hospital.
- As the other option was Grays Court; this appeared to be ruled out as it was difficult to get to by public transport, did not have full medical cover and was described as 'not being designed for stroke rehabilitation'.
- Concerns were raised in regards to transport links to KGH from Barking & Dagenham and Havering which were seen as 'very poor'. People felt this would impact on those needing support.

Comments:

- It was raised a number of times as to the input of Barts Health (and Whipps Cross Hospital in particular) due to the number of potential users in the West of Redbridge.
- Most participants felt that the relationship between the commissioners, Barts Health and BHRUT was crucial to the success of the proposed changes.

All stroke patients should have access to the same stroke rehabilitation services, regardless of where they live

- No one disagreed with this proposal. All felt that patients should be able to access a service regardless of where they lived, however some felt the service needed to be close to their homes to allow for families and friend to be part of the rehabilitation process as much as possible.

Comments:

- One participant commented that the whilst theory was good, he had been left with a gap between the two week intensive support from the early discharge team and being handed over to another team. It caused an unnecessary disruption.
- There is no early supported discharge from Wanstead; will the new provision resolve this?
- Some patients need more than the maximum of 12 weeks support. Will this be factored in to the new service?
- There were concerns that Local Authorities took too long to complete care plans; in one case it was over six months before a Care Plan was completed. Will the new service support the completion and review, of care plans?
- Speech and Language Therapies (SALT) needed radical improvement. Some participants felt the services already lacked capacity. Although it was proposed to increase access to this service, participants were concerned that recruitment (of therapists) would be an issue.

The local NHS should provide more stroke rehabilitation services in patients' homes, provided it is safe for them to be there

- Most participants were in favour of this proposal.

Comments:

- Some participants commented that although they might feel safer in hospital, they also welcomed services being offered within their home environment provided that the service could meet their planned needs.
- Some recognised that people may recover faster at home however their experience of the transfer process was poor.

The local NHS should reduce the number of stroke beds if it can be shown that they are not used and are not needed

- Most participants were strongly against a reduction as there were no identified bed numbers within the consultation document; it was difficult to agree a reduction in bed modelling until further work had been completed.
- Most participants cited the recent concerns raised over bed reductions in the Intermediate Care proposals².

Please tell us anything else about our stroke rehabilitation proposals that you think is important for us to know

Comments:

- Some participants questioned whether there was an overlap with Intermediate Care rehabilitation services at KGH. Healthwatch Redbridge recently carried out an Enter & View visit to Foxglove Ward where in response to a query, they were told that a number of patients had had a stroke. Further information has been requested in regards to this concern.
- Some participants wanted to understand why only three boroughs were working together on the proposals. Some considered that there should have been more joint working across the North East London localities.

² <http://www.redbridgeccg.nhs.uk/intermediatecare>

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