

# Healthwatch Sandwell Insight Report

## August 2023

### This month we have...



Reached 2723 people digitally



Signposted 25 people



Engaged with 407 people



Held 3 Focus Groups



Attended 19 groups



Carried out 2 Enter and View visits

### Patient Experiences



### Diabetes: patient experiences of health, care and support services to help manage the condition

We have been hearing about changes as people age, especially the frail elderly – some individuals develop other health conditions, lose mobility or memory – all of which can have an impact on diet management and the ability to exercise to maintain good health with diabetes. Ensuring good support and understanding of diabetes by those providing care and support is crucial for this vulnerable group of people. The project report will make recommendations based on insight gathered.

People of South Asian, African and African Caribbean ethnicities have a higher prevalence of developing diabetes and at a younger age 25 years compared to 40 years in White ethnicities. A conversation with some members of the African Caribbean community was very well attended. Insight shared included thoughts on cultural diet. A need for culturally appropriate information for management of diabetes and preventative awareness raising was identified by the group and will be included along with recommendations in a specific report as part of the project outputs.

### GP issues

Issues accessing GP appointments is still the largest issue Healthwatch Sandwell are hearing about.

***“They need to be more considerate to the elderly. Offering telephone appointments when people are not used to it. Most elderly have a hearing issue or starting to get one and depend on lip reading. Face to face appointments need to be offered.”***

We were contacted by a patient who was due an operation and their medical notes had been lost by the GP. The patient was concerned as information from their medical history was required to confirm suitability for the operation. We advised the patient to make a formal complaint and they consented to be referred to POhWER. After several months support from the advocate, the notes have been located and patient will receive a copy of notes.

***“Thank you, I never would have known that I could make a complaint if I hadn't been for you. I would have just left it and lost my notes”***

The patient is now getting the treatment they need.

## GP issues continued...

Healthwatch Sandwell were contacted by a patient who told us they were finding it hard to get an appointment for a health issue, after waiting for some time they decided they would have to pay private and so paid £200 for a private x ray. The private clinic was able to diagnose, and the patient was referred to their GP for treatment, unfortunately they still have not been contacted. We have advised this patient to make a formal complaint via POHWER and will support them.



*“Nothing has happened, very disappointing.”*



Positive feedback - Oldbury Health Centre – *“Very good. It has improved. They have more doctors, and you can get 20-minute appointments now.”*

## Enter and View

Feedback	Actions
<p><u>The Diabetes Clinic – Sandwell General Hospital</u></p> <p>Some patients found parking difficult, a blue badge holder described having to pay for parking. Patients suggested to improve parking at this venue.</p> <p>There is no loop system for hearing impaired patients.</p>	<p>Healthwatch Sandwell (HWS) made recommendations to Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust in Enter and View report to address these issues.</p>
<p><u>The Eye Clinic – Sandwell General Hospital and the Outpatients’ clinics at Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre</u></p> <p>Patients attending <b>both</b> these services described negative experiences of the West Midlands Ambulance Service (Passenger Transport), this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being very late, this included times when the Eye Clinic had closed, and patients are left waiting to go be taken home.</li> <li>• It was described as ‘unreliable’ and not meeting patients’ needs e.g. provision of ramp to board the ambulance.</li> </ul>	<p>This matter is being discussed with the Black Country Integrated Care Board.</p> <p>HWS made recommendation to Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust in Enter and View report to address this issue.</p>
<p><u>Neptune Health Park and Victoria Health Centre – Phlebotomy</u></p> <p>GP/pharmacist sends patients for blood tests but do not send a referral form to the clinic, which cause delays for patients. However the service will always fit them into their busy schedule but the patient has to wait and can at times be frustrated.</p>	<p>HWS will make a recommendation to Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust in Enter and View report to address this issue.</p>

All our Enter and View reports are available on our website at [www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)

For further information you can contact us at [info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)