



# Engagement Report January – March 2020



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Updates .....	3
Engagement activities .....	3
Themes and Trends .....	5
New Parents .....	5
GPs .....	5
Hospitals .....	6
Dental .....	7
111 Service .....	7
Other .....	7
SEN .....	7
Parent/Carer's Views .....	7
GPs .....	7
EHC Plans .....	8
Communication .....	8
Other .....	8
Children's Views .....	9
Doctors .....	9
Hospitals .....	9
Ambulance services .....	9
111 Service .....	9
Dentist .....	10
Follow-up activities and next steps .....	10

## Introduction

[Healthwatch Ealing](#) is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public. We play a role at both local and national levels to make sure that experiences of health and social care are taken into account by the service providers.

Healthwatch Ealing gathers insights from local people about their experiences with local NHS services - including but not limited to hospitals, GPs, dentists, and social care providers. This gives us a chance to find out what is working well, what isn't and what needs to be improved - which can be relayed to the appropriate service, Trust and CCG.

This quarter Healthwatch Ealing focused on Social Care, to help bolster our understanding of patient experiences beyond just the clinical, and of those who have specific needs. This was achieved by attempting to build relationships with community groups in the Ealing that focused on older people, carers, disabilities, and others.

It should be noted that due to the nature of this engagement work, most people tend to express concerns more than they mention examples of good practice. Therefore, for a balanced view of patient views, this report should be read alongside Healthwatch Ealing's [Patient Experience reports](#). This engagement report is also a way to channel concerns into helping to find solutions, finding out what service users would like and where they think improvements need to be made.

## Updates

Feedback from the Q3 report has also been shared with the team at LNWUT at with Ealing CCG and can be found online [here](#).

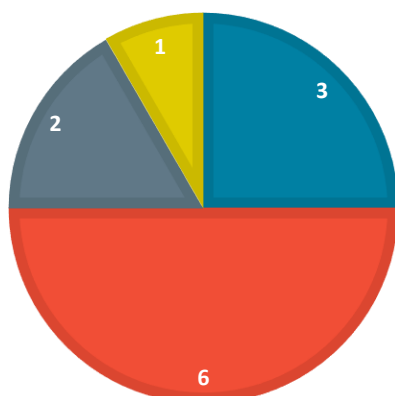
## Engagement activities

Healthwatch Ealing have been to 12 engagement meetings and events this quarter, just under our target of 13 engagement events per quarter due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The meetings this quarter were introductory, catch-up, planning and feedback meetings with community services and London North West London NHS Trust. We attended community groups, including Ealing Parent and Carer Forum, Mencap, local play and stay sessions and others. We express our thanks to all those visited for helping to provide information and insights.

## TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT

■ Meeting ■ Community Group ■ Workshop ■ Forum



Engagement Event	Description	No. of people engaged with
Trust Service User & Carer Experience Sub-committee (WLNHST)	Meeting	15
MH - HWE/WLNHST meeting	Meeting	2
Woodend Stay and Play session	Community Group Engagement	5
PESTs	Community Group Engagement	4
LNWUT Patient Forum	Workshop	~15
Stay and Play session - South Acton Children's centre	Community Group Engagement	5
Mental Health Forum	Forum	~20
Public Health Ealing Focus Group with CYP	PHEaling Workshop with local CYP	~25-30
Ealing Parent Carers Forum	Community Group Engagement	~25-30
Mencap After-school club	Community Group Engagement - Focus Group	~10
Youth Centres - Young Adults Centre Southall	Information/Introductory Meeting	3
Stay and Play session Perivale	Community Group Engagement	4

## Themes and Trends

Due to the different nature of the groups visited this quarter, the themes and trends will be split by group as each experience's health and social care services differently, have their own main issues, and we want this to be accurately captured. The main groups the report will be split into are, "New Parents" and "SEN: Children's views and Parent/Carer's views".

## New Parents

### GPs

There were mixed reviews regarding GPs from new parents. Predominantly doctors and staff were considered "*good and friendly*" and explained everything they needed to know, they also found appointments easy to get for their children's check-ups. However, some had difficulties with their trying to make appointments, saying it's "*not fair - if we're early then they can make you wait 30-40 minutes but if you're 10 minutes late they'll cancel your appointment*", or that they find it difficult always going through the calls system to book follow-up appointments for their baby's check-ups and would prefer to be able to pre-book these.

Some parents mentioned that they have GPs from out of the borough, for example, one lived in Acton but had a GP in Hammersmith because they had built trust with them.

- Barnabas Medical: "*The doctor is a little rude and not the most friendly but he is good with my child and I can get appointments quickly which is good because we go regularly*" (child <1 years old)
- Elm Street Greenford GP: Regarding the 8/8.30am call to GPs to make an appointment - "*they never pick up the phone, you have to call so many times before they pick up*"
- Crown St GP Surgery: The parent thought they were good with young children, and has had no trouble so far after being with them for many years. They are "*not bad*" at giving appointments - "*It's understandable they can be busy, and I do ask to see the GP that I want and am familiar with which they do try to accommodate if there's availability*".

### CASE STUDY:

Acton Vale GP: A parent described having "*mixed experiences*" and said "*they're good at giving appointments straight away for their baby*" for check-ups, but finds the GP themselves "*a bit blunt*". They said the GP was "*not really a people person*", found them "*abrupt and to the point*" and they "*never looked up from the computer*". Additionally, the GP did not ask after the mother's wellbeing, knowing she had been in and out of the GP post-birth for infections. Whilst they were helpful with regards to the infections, they did not provide any support with her breastfeeding problems and did not ask after her mental health at all. She said that the GP did not seem to know about any community services. The mother found out about a good community breastfeeding service from their health visitor, after about 8-10 weeks of struggling which their GP knew about. She was very "*grateful*" for the Health Visitor's information.

## Hospitals

Ealing hospital does not have a maternity ward, and therefore Ealing residents travel to other hospitals to give birth. Their experiences at these out-of-borough hospitals have been collected to give a picture of how this affects residents.

### Ealing hospital:

Generally, parents found that Ealing hospital had friendly staff who were helpful to their young children, they did not have to wait too long for appointments at the walk-in clinic, and they found it easy to get referrals to the hospital. However, some have had to wait extended periods of time for their appointments, and noted that this is especially difficult for babies and young children. One parent assumed that Ealing hospital would be busy in A&E with a long wait so they took their child to St Mary's in Paddington even though it's a little further away in the hope that the bigger hospital with more staff would have less of a wait. However, the parent was also unaware that Ealing hospital did not have a children's A&E service.

### Northwick Park Hospital:

There were mixed reviews about maternity at Northwick Park, some described it as being "okay", and had no problems, however others had some negative experiences.

CASE STUDY: *"I had an awful experience during delivery. I was in pain for 5 days so I went to the hospital and they broke my water. My baby ended up being without water for 18hrs. When I gave birth, he couldn't breathe properly and was in an incubator for 15 days. At the same time, I had a C-section the wound was not properly looked after or disinfected. They only gave me wiped to clean it myself. They did not change the bandage after I would shower and I ended up getting an infection. they discharged me anyway. I was then almost immediately readmitted by a different doctor who was very surprised that I had been discharged in the first place. I was then in the hospital for 5 more days. Additionally, staff were very delayed in coming to help me when I pressed the help button. I also don't trust the student nurses because was it their fault I wasn't being looked after properly?"*

### Queen Charlotte's Hospital:

One woman had her delivery at Queen Charlottes, the other siblings had also been born there, she was given options by her GP and chose to go there. Another said they had a good experience with them in terms of staff, they were there for a while so got moved to a private room eventually which made things better, but the midwives were good and so were the ones that came to visit the day after she got home.

### St Mary's Hospital:

One mother had her delivery at St Mary's with her first child. She had a good experience - the staff was very friendly, gave her a lot of support and "tried to do the best" for her. She said St Mary's was actually closer to her home than Ealing Hospital anyway, so did not mind that they did not have a maternity unit. They continue to go to St Mary's for follow-up appointments, and when their baby had a cold, the GP referred them to St Mary's who saw them quickly.

## Dental

For babies, parents found that there was “*not much*” messaging around children’s dental health, one parent was using a gum brush but was unsure if they should be and when to start using toothpaste. They think they will take their child to the dentist soon because neither the GP nor the Health Visitor has said anything.

Parents with slightly older children were told by the paediatrician to register their child with the dentist when they started getting teeth, and took their children to the dentist every 6 months.

## 111 Service

A parent said they had to call the service a few times for their baby and found they were “*normally quite good*” at helping and providing advice especially what to do when their baby had a reaction to eggs. They were told to administer Piriton and to make a follow-up appointment with their GP for allergens advice. However, their GP was not helpful and they sought further advice from Allergen UK. When another parent called, they were told they had to see a doctor that night so 111 made an emergency appointment for them but when they arrived at the GP, the practice was closed with no one there.

## Other

- Information for new mothers: New mothers are told to download apps to get pre- and post-natal information these included Bonnty, Emma’s diary, Pampers club, which they did find useful. However, no nurses or doctors recommended or gave information about Mental Health services/issues when they were pre- and post-natal, which they felt they should.
- Overall, parents described the health services in the borough as being generally good.

## SEN

### Parent/Carer’s Views

#### GPs

A general comment made was that people waited a lot for appointments but “*if you get there a little late, they cancel the appointment or they make you wait till the very last appointment or try to fit you in somewhere*”.

Parent-carer’s felt that GP’s should refer families to Early Years more as some children are not seen and that many get lost and go without the support that they need. They noted that these children often turn up very late usually at a transition age.

One big difficulty parent-carers pointed out was trying to get a diagnosis for their child. They noted that “*you do not have to fight for a diagnosis for conditions such as Down’s syndrome for which children are referred easily to speech and language therapy and physiotherapy*”, but they said that sometimes parents have to fight for the correct diagnosis to be made for other conditions which increases the stress on parents. They also felt that children with undiagnosed needs fell through the gaps, and that there are sometimes cultural barriers to diagnosis.

## EHC Plans

There were generally ongoing concerns with EHC Plans, parent-carers were concerned that the “vast majority of children don’t have plans” leading them to be “neglected within the system”. They felt that EHC plans “*get lost*”, or are “*hard to get in the first place*”, and sometimes “*don’t get updated properly*”. They also noted that toileting needed to be in the EHC plans in order for school teaching assistants to go and help their child, otherwise parents would need to come in and change nappies themselves.

## Communication

- If children go to many different clinics, then parents are usually “*responsible for keeping everything together*” which can be overwhelming for some. Parent-carers felt that professionals do not speak to one another, especially across different hospitals and different clinics. They also do not have all the numbers and emails of the health professionals that they visit, making it harder to provide updates and get necessary information. Therefore, good communication is very important to them.
- Parent-carers noted that having a good relationship with health workers was important to them, and that they needed support as much as their children - “*even a few kind words*” made a difference to them.

## Other

- Parent-carers believe that **co-production** is very important on a strategic level. Some have been involved in projects where they felt listened to and could challenge what was happening.
- Parent-carers also agreed that the **young people’s voices** should be listened to because, as parents, they “*aren’t always focused on the same thing*” as their children.
- Parent-carers are very grateful for the **Early Years Inclusion Team** and others who provide them with emotional as well as practical support. They find it very helpful that these services look holistically at the whole family as everyone is involved not just the child with SEN.
- Parent-carers would like **health visitors** try to help with feeding.
- Parent-carers said there needed to be more ease of accessibility to **information** and clearer **signposting**.
- Some carers felt they did not receive the right service at the **dentist** so they stopped taking their children there entirely.

## Hospitals

- Carers said that the cleanliness in Hammersmith hospital had improved.
- Moorfields Ealing was said to have a good service and know how to distract the children and parents also use distractions methods when they take the children to the dentist.



- Carers said the orthopaedic hospital in Stanmore was very attentive, had good aftercare and high quality of care especially post-operation.

## Children's Views

The children at Mencap's After-School Club spoke to us about their experiences with health and social care services. They talked about how different settings and professionals made them feel which we consider invaluable feedback especially regarding how professionals could adapt conduct for their needs.

## Doctors

The children said they found it can be a bit embarrassing and awkward sometimes when talking to doctors, "*some Doctors ask too many questions - it's almost too much and can get a bit uncomfortable*". They said they get "*shy*" because it's "*a stranger asking you questions*", and would like a better approach to help combat this. The children noted that sometimes people are "*afraid to tell doctors about all the conditions they might have in case they are treated differently*".

Some found visiting the doctor "*very boring and not interesting*", additionally they found it "*weird that there's a doctor who visits the school*" because they are used to going to a doctor's surgery. It seems as if explaining what was happening to children and keeping them in the loop is something they would appreciate.

## Hospitals

For hospitals, there were some mixed reviews.

- Ealing hospital was fine when they went there, although some found the MRI room noise "*irritating*" and said it can make them feel "*anxious*". They also thought the nurses there were very kind, they were seen very fast and it was a quick visit. Another's experience at Ealing was described as "*sort of okay*", and that they went there because it was close and that they were helpful.
- One child said they thought the food at Northwick Park hospital was "*delicious*" and that the nurses there were kind and aware of all their conditions, whilst others thought hospital food was generally "*poor*".
- The children noted that generally hospital beds are uncomfortable.

## Ambulance services

Ambulance arrival times differed for people. Some said they took them very quickly when they had to go to Northwick Park and another time to Ealing hospital. One child said that the ambulance did not come quickly enough when their brother was having a seizure and it was over before they came so they didn't need it anymore. However, they figured that ambulances could be delayed due to traffic.

## 111 Service

The children thought that the advice given over the phone by the 111 service did not always work, and some of the advice was too hard to follow. They also felt that because they did not know who they were talking to, it was a bit scary.

## Dentist

Visiting the dentist felt a bit challenging for the children, because some do not like people touching their face as it makes them uncomfortable. Some said they “*find it hard to sit still and the machines they use are scary*”, but they like the chairs. They felt it would be easier to have the dental check-ups in hospitals as they are more familiar with the staff. Others said they were fine with going to visit the dentist whilst some “*get sad*” when they know they have to go.

One child had been waiting for more than a year for a hospital appointment to get a tooth out.

## Follow-up activities and next steps

Before engagement activities were suspended due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, there were engagement sessions planned with the local Youth Centres. However, these did not come to fruition, and will be followed-up with once centres re-open and in accordance to public safety guidelines. After discussing possible areas of concern, in regards to health, with those that run the youth centres, these sessions will focus on impacts of social media, eating habits, and confidence in accessing services especially sexual and mental health.

The next steps from this quarter are to continue to visit, and include, young people in our engagement work so they are regularly given space to air their concerns and issues with health and social care in the borough.

This report will be published on our website, sent to relevant partners and presented at relevant CCG, Local Authority and Service Provider committees and meetings.