

Report to: The Health and Wellbeing Board

Report from: Graham Hawkes, Chief Executive Officer

Date: 14th October 2013

Subject: Report on the Healthwatch Hillingdon Launch Event

Introduction

In our last written report to the Health and Wellbeing Board of 30th June 2013, we advised that we were planning to hold an official launch in September 2013. This report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board on this event, which was held on 18th September 2013.

Overview

From the early stages of the preparation and planning for the event the Board recognised that for Healthwatch Hillingdon to be successful it required a commitment from all stakeholders to support and work with us. The event was the perfect opportunity to gauge current support and promote further commitment. It was essential to ensure that we did not just use the event to inform the delegates of the functions and aims of Healthwatch Hillingdon, but to explore with participants what they wanted from their Healthwatch, the key areas of health and social care in Hillingdon that they would like to see improve, and regardless of which stakeholder group they represented, how they could work with Healthwatch to achieve this.

These factors were taken into account when setting the agenda. The presentations to inform about Healthwatch, from ourselves, VoiceAbility the commissioned advocacy service, and Healthwatch England, were kept succinct, with the emphasis being placed upon delegate participation, and the two facilitated group sessions. The first of these sessions giving attendees the opportunity to inform and influence Healthwatch Hillingdon's work plan priorities; and the second focussing upon the attendees and how they individually, or the organisation they represent, can work with Healthwatch to improve the health and wellbeing of the adults, young people and children of Hillingdon. The finale of the afternoon was a period of questions and answers to the Healthwatch Hillingdon Board.

Event

The event was well attended by over 150 people representing the public, community groups, voluntary sector, Local Authority and NHS organisations. Their participation was very enthusiastic and extremely encouraging throughout the afternoon.

Feedback from the participants has been very positive with 84% of attendees giving the event an excellent or good rating. There were scores in excess of 80% for both group sessions and particularly pleasing is that 83% of people advised that their understanding of Healthwatch was now excellent, or good, following their attendance at the launch.

The information gleaned from the event is currently being formulated into a report which will be published in November; as will the film taken of the launch by the students of Uxbridge College.

Outcomes

The information captured at the launch event will be used to inform the on-going piece of work being carried out by Healthwatch Hillingdon to compile our work plan and engagement strategy.

First group session

The full outcomes of the event will be defined in the November report, but initial findings show that the following are key areas, outlined in the first facilitated group session, for consideration on the work plan:

- Poor access to GP practices and triaging by GP receptionists
- The fear of complaining about poor service because it may result in future detrimental service provision
- Communication, between different organisations and with patients and carers by organisations
- Domiciliary care services require improving
- More joined up services for patients

Second group session

The second group session saw many delegates express a commitment to help Healthwatch. This has seen us being invited to speak at organisations meetings and events, our leaflets being distributed and a link to our website being placed on other websites. We also received an encouraging opportunity to work in partnership with an organisation to collect experience of services from their clients.

We were also provided with a number of ideas of how we can engage and although many of these are areas already known to us, there were some new ideas which we will be investigating in more depth as we formulate our engagement plan.

Conclusion

Although all information has still to be fully interpreted, our initial thoughts are that the launch event has been a success. A large number of people attended, representing a wide range of stakeholders and their feedback has been very positive. We have improved our profile, increased the understanding of Healthwatch, started new relationships and feel that there is a new accord and connection made with stakeholders that can now be built upon to help Healthwatch in Hillingdon be successful.