

The NHS Long Term Plan: Views from Hertfordshire

NHS England has launched a ten year plan setting out how the NHS will use its extra funding to improve health and social care services. Key priorities of the Long Term Plan include: improving how the NHS works, helping people to stay healthy, investing more money in technology and making care better. NHS organisations must plan how these priorities will be delivered at a local level.

Healthwatch Hertfordshire and Herts and West Essex Sustainability Transformation Partnership (STP) worked together to engage with Hertfordshire residents about the Long Term Plan.

Aims & Objectives

- To understand from local residents how they would like NHS and Social Care services to work and interact with them
- To seek views and experiences from local people with long term conditions to understand if these services meet their needs
- To identify how NHS and Social Care services can be improved
- To share the findings and recommendations of this report with decision makers

Key Findings

We carried out two surveys; one survey was more general and asked local people how NHS and Social Care services could be improved. The other survey looked at how care could be improved for those with conditions that the NHS has made a national priority - autism, cancer, dementia, learning disability, mental health, heart and lung disease and long term conditions.

We also held a focus group focusing on personalised care and how this should work in the future.

In total, 355 residents shared their views with us and unsurprisingly, they wanted future services to provide choice and flexibility of care that centered around the individual's needs. When asked what would be the biggest change to help them stay healthy:

- 88% (263 of 299) said timely access to help and treatment
- 84% (251 of 299) said staying in their own home for as long as it is safe to do so
- 75% (223 of 299) said having professionals listen to them, and for treatment to be a joint decision between them and the professional
- 57% (169 of 299) said better technology to give them easy access to healthcare professionals and their own health records, with an emphasis on keeping data secure

We also found that:

- Those with heart and lung disease (2 of 2) and long term conditions (8 of 14) had a more positive experience with support meeting their needs, compared with other conditions
- Those with mental health conditions (10 of 11) disclosed negative experiences of receiving support and emphasised a need for more local services

There was an overriding theme for NHS and Social Care services to do more to involve and help people make the right choices about their health, and for services to be integrated and built around the needs of the patients and public.



Response from Herts & West Essex Sustainability Transformation Partnership (STP)

“We very much welcome the findings of the Healthwatch report, which raises a number of issues which are critically important to people’s experiences of health and social care in Hertfordshire and West Essex. To secure a healthier future for residents and develop high quality, sustainable services, we must work in partnership with the people we serve. We will ensure that the report is shared with the clinicians and professionals responsible for transforming services across our area and ask them to respond to its findings and conclusions.”

- **Beverley Flowers, Joint STP Lead Officer**

“We can’t successfully transform health and care services without involving the people who use them.

We continue to work together with patient and Healthwatch representatives across many areas of health and social care delivery including the development of the ‘Personalisation’ agenda - an approach which seeks to focus services around the aims and goals of individuals.

The recent establishment of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) has been a major step forward to improve local services. By encouraging GP practices to work more closely together in groups, together with other health and care staff in their local area, PCNs will be able to provide more proactive, personalised, coordinated and joined-up health and social care.

We have our part to play in turning around the focus of the health service and social care from ‘rescuing’ us when we are ill or become dependent to supporting and encouraging us to stay well and maintain our independence. As individuals, we need to do whatever we can to take responsibility for our health and wellbeing whenever we can, supporting our friends and families to do the same.”

- **Denise Boardman, STP Director Lead for Primary Care**

You can find the full report on our website: <https://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/>

