

Local peoples' views and feedback

Rural North Chichester Integrated Health Hub



Healthwatch West Sussex supporting wider engagement to inform the development of the new health hub in rural north Chichester during Winter 2019/2020

February 2020

Introduction

Healthwatch have supported some of the wider independent engagement for the Rural North Chichester Integrated Health Hub Development. During November 2019, Dr Emma Woodcock and Cheryl Berry (Healthwatch) were invited to speak with the Patient Participation Group (PPG) at Pulborough Medical Group. We also spoke with people in the waiting room of Riverbank Medical Practice about the project, here we were supported by two members of Midhurst League of Friends.

Our engagement was supported by the Healthwatch update [video](#) of Dr Emma Woodcock.

And, the Sussex and East Surrey Clinical Commissioning Groups update.



[Making Midhurst Integrated Community Health Hub a reality](#)

By Dr Emma Woodcock, senior local GP and Clinical Director for the Rural North Chichester Primary Care Network

It was thrilling to see so many people engaged and excited about the future of a new Integrated Community Health Hub for Midhurst and the surrounding area at the public meeting last week. We were joined at the South Downs Centre on 8 October by more than 75 people, who came to hear about our plans and join in the discussion.

It's so important to our local doctors and nurses that we make sure the needs of the individual patient, carers and families are placed at the centre of our service, and that they become known and supported by key workers within the team.

During our engagement, people told us that one of the main problems is Community Transport, so during November, we used the following questions as prompts during our engagement:

- Do you think the community transport services in your area are satisfactory?
- What do you normally use community transport for and what is available?
- Describe your experience of using community transport?
- Are bus and rail services satisfactory in your area? If not why?

This report consists of the insight captured from engagement events in November 2019, and emails received. We engaged with 78 people and captured 152 views, experiences and stories.

We would like to thank all who took time to speak or contact us, as your views are important to this project.

Patient Participation Group at Pulborough Medical Group.

Dr Emma Woodcock, GP Loxwood Surgery and Cheryl Berry Healthwatch West Sussex joined members of the Patient Participation Group at Pulborough Medical Group. Dr Woodcock provided an update about the Integrated Hub project, followed by a question and answer session.

Question

If someone is referred to the Hub who takes responsibility for that patient?

Answer

Their GP remains the main lead.

How does the information about the patient flow to make the Hub work?

The IT systems will be linked which is why it is important that patients give access to their records.

Do all four GP practices know about this project and how to refer into the service?

Yes, they are part of the Task and Finish Group set up for this project.

Will the hub be a physical presence or virtual?

A bit of both really, but in phases over a period of time. Yes, physical will include dementia but others like community groups may also be part of it virtually or both but in stages over a period of time.

What will be the different healthcare professional making up the Hub?

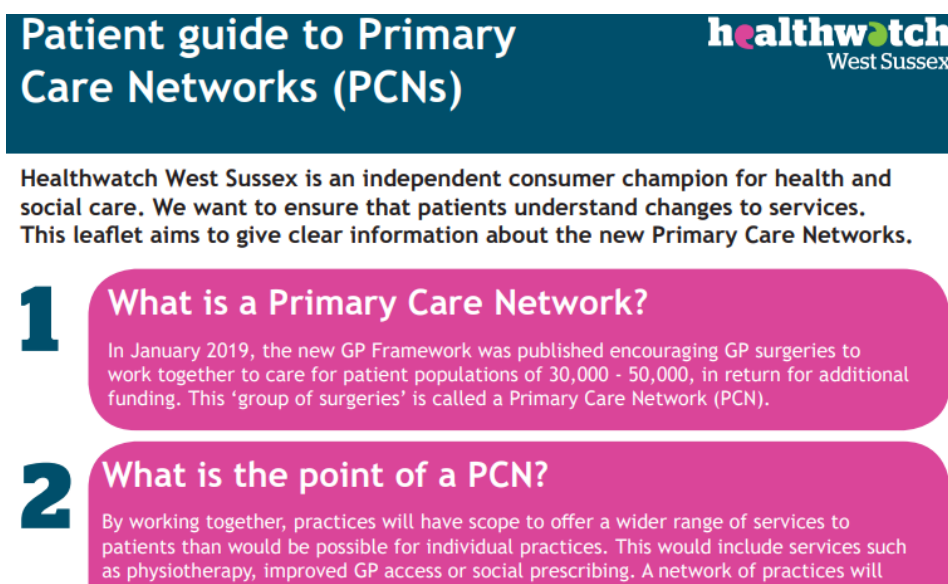
Phase 3 will be aiming to provide a reactive service for elderly frail patients whose health is deteriorating more rapidly. It would be a new service and as such would need to be commissioned. This has not been discussed with or agreed by the commissioner as yet, because the hub needs to be up and running and working effectively first. We would aim to have a senior GP, prescribing nurses, supporting those with complex needs. Support at Home from Age UK, Crossroads, Macmillan etc. As it is better for people to remain at home than be in hospital.

How long will it take to be seen?
Have these types of Hubs been set up before?

Our aim is between 2 days to 2 weeks.
Yes, there have been many in town settings but not to serve a very rural, widely dispersed population.

- Where will the money come from? Some will potentially be re-directed from other areas of the NHS; some will be applications to charities or accelerator funds.
- Will Midhurst hospital still be there? Yes - explained that Midhurst hospital unit is not currently being used and would be ideal for an integrated Hub.
- So only the capital budget has been removed? Rent does need to be paid and negotiations are being completed at present. All will be NHS money.
- Will social prescribers be at the Hub? Social Prescribers are practice based but we would like to have one present at the Hub, and this is being considered.
- What are the timescales for the project? We are aiming for mid-April to bring together the staff and set up.

We also discussed the newly formed Primary Care Networks - our guide <https://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/advice-and-information/2019-08-27/patient-guide-primary-care-networks-pcns> was circulated.



Patient guide to Primary Care Networks (PCNs) **healthwatch** West Sussex

Healthwatch West Sussex is an independent consumer champion for health and social care. We want to ensure that patients understand changes to services. This leaflet aims to give clear information about the new Primary Care Networks.

- 1 What is a Primary Care Network?**
In January 2019, the new GP Framework was published encouraging GP surgeries to work together to care for patient populations of 30,000 - 50,000, in return for additional funding. This 'group of surgeries' is called a Primary Care Network (PCN).
- 2 What is the point of a PCN?**
By working together, practices will have scope to offer a wider range of services to patients than would be possible for individual practices. This would include services such as physiotherapy, improved GP access or social prescribing. A network of practices will

What people told about transport issues

As local residents, people were very familiar with transport concerns. Some people stated that they, really worry about what would happen if their partner had to stop driving or had to rely on family and friends.

“ Transport to get to places is a real problem. My husband has been sent to Southampton hospital and we do not know how we will get there.

Queen Alexandria hospital is used for radiotherapy and the appointment system means that you have to attend 15-21 days consecutively. This procedure is very tiring and there is a real need for better co-ordination between transport and the appointment.

”

People spoke about the stress of having to rely on buses, for appointments and fearing not being able to get home when an appointment runs late. There are not enough buses and they finish at 6pm.

Others said they would not phone for a taxi, as it costs too much (particularly if living on a pension or low income).

Local voluntary transport services are good but, are not as reliable as they do not have enough drivers.

“ If the intension is for the service to come to the patient and not for the patient to go to Midhurst. This needs to be made more specific in communications.
I believe that people on low incomes will have to pay for community transport, this will be a barrier.
We do have the Stagecoach Number 1 bus, but the nearest stop is still half a mile from the Hub.

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It was suggested that if the hub could give appointments in advance, then community drivers could be found. Maybe just 1-2 days in advance.

For getting to Midhurst:

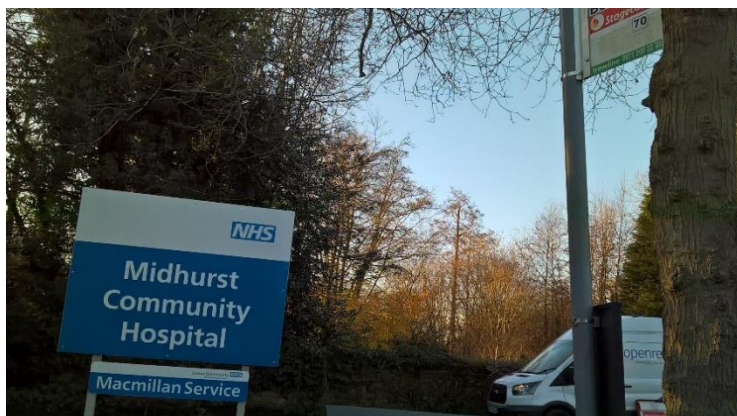
- The distance to Midhurst, for those who can no longer drive, with people recognising there would come a time when they could no longer drive. This was also linked to a fear of becoming isolated and loneliness.
- Two buses needed - if you miss one there is a long wait for the next. (You can wait up to an hour for a number 1 bus).
- The bus services are infrequent and expensive.

“ It is a long walk from where the bus stops to the hospital - with some saying they could not do this walk.

- There is no shelter at the bus stop.

”

- Getting from Petworth to Midhurst is a problem, as there are no buses, and when they do run, they do not keep running.
- The community service is ok, but it needs to be more integrated.



The number 70 bus stop without any form of shelter

For getting to other local areas

- Patients at Riverbank Medical Centre informed us that they are good at aligning appointments around bus times.
- We need bus information for the afternoons for social meetings.
- We need a phone service for information on local transport services.

Train services

We met with few people who use train services, but those who did rated them as adequate.

How the Health Hub will work

People spoke about their confusion as to how the Hub will work and how much they need to travel to the Hub and how much the staff from the Hub will come to them.



One point is not clear. From what I have heard the Hub is to bring together the services to help the frail. What is not clear is how much this is the service staff working together in Midhurst to help people in their own homes and how much the elderly and frail will need to visit the Midhurst Hub.

There is concern in Pulborough that Midhurst is not easy to get to and even with Community Transport. The communication needs to be more specific if my understanding is correct - that the patient will not be going to Midhurst, but that Midhurst will come to the patient.



Information from Dr Emma Woodward - Loxwood Surgery

We realised after doing a number of patient engagement events that problems with transport in the rural area are worsening and are causing a great deal of concern to our patients. We feel that this is something that we should try to address as a community, as without this, some patients will be unable to reach health services or community groups that come together to help those who feel socially isolated.

To address this issue, it will require a number of health and transport providers to work together and ensure that transport services are able to maximise their potential. This work is just beginning.

Community Transport Sussex is working with Voluntary Action Adur and Chichester, the County Council, local transport providers and Rural North Chichester Primary Care Network to develop a business case for a service that would be piloted in Rural North Chichester and hopefully will then be able to extend across West Sussex, dovetailing with other community transport services already in place and providing a means by which we can all make the most of what is available.

What people said would make it easier to get the most from the Health Hub?

People spoke about the various volunteer driver services such as in Tillington and Pulborough areas.

Other suggestions included:

- I would like to see an **integrated approach so that we do not have to have so many visits.**
- Better joined up working for the medical appointment and for social activities.

Others said they could not use the new hub, as they would not be able to get themselves to Midhurst.



Having consultants see you at the Hub.
Be a local minor injuries unit.



What people wanted the Health Hub to provide?

People believe the hub needs to be integrated and **offer prompt access to NHS services and social care** - from statutory services and community/voluntary organisations - as it important to work more closely together.

One person questioned if the GP is really the right person to realise that someone is not coping. As when we become older, we become more private and insular.

Support for people with dementia - recognising that older people need a dementia unit.

Information about services - information about local services that is up to date and in the right format.

Community/Voluntary organisations - need to work closer with the likes of Age UK and Crossroads Care who visit the elderly and brake up their day and stops isolation and loneliness.

What people said would help them and their family to stay as healthy and independent as possible?

People spoke of their personal situation, but key areas was having:

- people to support them to access services and for family and friends (who often have to access services on their behalf)
- timely access to support from the NHS, social care and community services
- access to specialists at home, for housebound and also when needed.
- access to services to keep people healthy such as walking groups, Pilates, luncheon clubs, and board games.

People told us service information is important.

People want to have information in the printed format, as many elderly people do not have access to computers. Information on all NHS, Social Care and community services is needed. But this information does need to be up to date. It would be great to have someone available who can explain the service and how to access, either face to face or by telephone.

Some people spoke about having sexual health information available, as they have read that sexual health issues are on the increase for older people. Also, how to stay healthy such as, information about alcohol and drugs.



I am trying to teach my mum how to use a Mobile Phone!
How to obtain food, repeat prescriptions, and who do I contact for what?
Need someone to explain what the services do and how to access.



Other general comments about health and care

About the proposal:

- The hospital is currently being wasted so this would help to bring it back to life.
- It will be a helpful addition to the local communities.
- I think this should be for the more vulnerable and not just frail elderly. I am young (30s) but I am frailer than many older people.

- Mental Health services are not satisfactory, you do not have long enough and no on-going support. I would like to see more mental health support at the hub.

Other comments:

- Planning applications for annexes for older people need to be made more easily than currently.
- Elderly people need the right type of accommodation and Abbeyfields is a good example of this.
- We need 'good neighbour scheme' so that we can look out for one another.
- We need something that we can move in and out off as needed.
- More preventative screening.

Comments on staffing:

- Staffing could be an issue, as there is already a lack of staff in the area.
- Will this mean new staff?

Appointment concerns:

- I have diabetes and see the diabetes nurse, who is also a prescribing nurse, so I do not have to take-up the GPs time.

Information from Dr Emma Woodcock Loxwood Surgery

For the first phase the Hub will bring workers together located on one site to improve coordination of patient care through easier conversations between different provider organisations and their workforce.

There will also be strengthened links between the practices and the Hub and the other community workers such as the community nurses. At this stage most patients needing support would receive this in their homes. As the Hub develops in phases 2 and 3, more services will be available on the site of the Hub as well as in patient homes. We would like to strengthen the services that support patients to remain in their own homes.

Other engagement/communication

Both this and the previous October Engagement Report has been sent by email to:

- Parish Councils
- GP Practice Managers
- Patient Participation Groups
- Social Prescribers
- Pulborough Wardens
- West Sussex County Council Communities and Partnership Team
- Community Transport Lead
- Local Charities and Community Groups.

Information about the project was also published in the December issues of

- Village Tweet
- Midhurst Local.

Recommendations

- To follow up on the local transport plan for the Rural North Chichester area.
- To devise a recruitment campaign for volunteer drivers
 - Support from GP surgeries to actively promote this for people who have stopped working to support their local community
 - Support from Social Prescribers to discuss this type of opportunity
 - Devise a 'myth' busting style of promotion about volunteer drivers
- For a specific covered bus stop to be added at Midhurst Hospital.

Next Steps

- Present this intelligence to the Midhurst Task and Finish Group meeting in January 2020.
- Follow up on recommendations.

Healthwatch is here to make care better

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need.

We also help people find the information they need about services in West Sussex.



Here to help you on the next step of your health and social care journey

We have the power to make sure that the government and those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

You can review how we performed and how we report on what we have done by visiting our website www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Contact us

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Healthwatch West Sussex works with Help & Care to provide its statutory activities.



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