

LISTENING TO WHAT OLDER PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT

THE CHANGES TO HEALTH SERVICES



A voice for older people in Rotherham

ROPF, working with Age UK Rotherham, looked at how older people can influence the new health structures which are now delivering our health services.

Between November 2012 and January 2013 we delivered four listening events across the borough with: Maltby 60+ group; ROPF members; Montgomery Hall Older Peoples Coffee Morning; Tassibee Older Asian Women's Luncheon Group. In all we recorded the comments of almost 100 older people.

The purpose of these events was to hear about older people's experiences of health services and to find out how they feel about the changes that are taking place. We heard both good and bad personal stories and many strong views and beliefs about our NHS. These have been broadly categorised and summarised in the table below. Another briefing will follow with responses and action points from some of Rotherham's strategic leads and organisations in Health.

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| <p>Experiences of our hospital services</p> | <p><i>If you push and are assertive you get a good service if you don't you are just left (view expressed by several)</i></p> <p><i>Type II diabetes - the treatment I had was very good</i></p> <p><i>Recent hospital operation: the food was awful, I was sent home without an assessment, not told what was happening and no follow-up</i></p> <p><i>There was no after-care when I came home (general feeling from several people)</i></p> <p><i>My husband was sent home to die. The Macmillan nurses were much better than the ones on the ward</i></p> <p><i>Had a great service at Barnsley Hospital</i></p> <p><i>Nurses worked flat-out, nothing but admiration</i></p> <p><i>Hospital care was excellent, least little thing was considered</i></p> <p><i>Was sent home only to be admitted as emergency 2 hours later</i></p> <p><i>Reminded of appointment by text, was very helpful</i></p> |
| <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People need to be assertive to get a positive experience • Problems with after-care and follow up – people not signposted to AgeUK Rotherham After Care Service • Variable experience depending on which ward • Staff are over-stretched | |
| <p>Experiences of our local GP services</p> | <p><i>The receptionist is rude and curt with patients</i></p> <p><i>If you are prepared to see any doctor you can get an appointment the same day</i></p> <p><i>Our GP has opened a chemist within the practice which is doing the local chemist out of business</i></p> <p><i>New telephone answering service is confusing</i></p> <p><i>We can't see the same doctor in the same practice, there is no consistency in treatment</i></p> |
| <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting a home visit is very rare • Don't like giving personal information to receptionists • Communication is important | |

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| <p>– GP’s need to take more time to explain treatment options and some GP’s have poor English</p> | <p><i>Struggle to understand because he doesn’t speak English very well</i> <i>My doctor is very good, he explained everything clearly</i> <i>People don't like telling the receptionist what is wrong with them</i></p> |
| | <p><i>No real problem but we didn't get a reminder for our flu injections</i> <i>Our GP is good but the appointment system is not helpful</i> <i>It is very hard to get a home visit (many people raised this issue)</i> <i>Our GPs don't listen to us, they give us no time to understand what they are saying</i></p> |
| <p>Other health services</p> | <p><i>The new walk-in clinic was very good. I had four x-rays, it was a smooth process</i></p> |
| <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community services are highly valued • Confusion about the walk-in clinic | <p><i>I had to have a treatment at the walk in clinic and it was the worst experience ever</i> <i>Don't understand what the walk-in centre is for now</i> <i>There is a lack of foot care services for older people</i> <i>We really value the dementia cafe (expressed by several carers)</i></p> |
| | <p><i>I was sent all the way to Barnsley for an eye clinic</i> <i>My husband attends Breathing Space which is fantastic</i> <i>Having to pay more for everyday services e.g. chiropody</i></p> |
| <p>Worries and concerns about the changes</p> | <p><i>We really don't know what is going to happen, there is lots of confusion and lack of information (most older people said this)</i></p> |
| <p>Key Messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication and understanding about the changes • Lack of knowledge about local PPG s • Belief there will be less funding so already overstretched services will get worse • Concern about GPs having budget holding powers • No-one had awareness of changes in Public Health or new Health & Wellbeing Board | <p><i>GPs supplying cheaper brands of drugs to save money</i> <i>PPG’s:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They need terms of reference to clarify their role</i> • <i>GPs are e-mailing but some older people don't e-mail</i> • <i>Don't understand PPG's, how do we communicate with them? (English not 1st language)</i> • <i>It will not be your average person on the PPG</i> </p> <p><i>How can GPs make decisions about services on our behalf when they don't know our community or talk to us?(BME)</i> <i>Worried GPs are not getting the training to be budget holders but they are spending millions on the changes</i> <i>I don't like what I hear, trying to privatise everything, don't want to go like USA</i> <i>Taking on new patients, will cost or age be an issue?</i> <i>What will happen to patient transport, district nurses and palliative care?</i></p> |
| | <p><i>Our NHS used to be the best but it is going downhill fast (strong, passionate view held by many)</i></p> <p><i>The present system is being overwhelmed by the numbers of people from Europe</i></p> |