

Harlow Clinical Commissioning

Report to Corporate Parenting Panel on the Introduction of Health Passports in Harlow

This report to the Corporate Parenting Panel will provide a brief description of the process to introduce Health Passports in Harlow.

The concept of providing a Health Passport was discussed with NHS Harlow and the health providers for looked after children following the CQC Inspection in May 2012. It was recognised that Care Leavers, particularly if they have experienced unstable placements or had been placed out of borough, were vulnerable to not having sufficient information about their own health as well as having limited information about their family and any significant medical history. The Health Passport was identified as a means to provide a concise account of their health and any significant issues.

Planning:

In December 2012 a planning meeting was held with the Looked After Children Nurse, the Designated Nurse and the Youth Participation Officer from the Local Authority. It was very important that the project involved young people who had experienced living in care and who were young care leavers. The views and thoughts of these young people were the most important part of the project, because it would be their views that determined the final model of the passport.

Consultation:

The first consultation with young people took place on the 24th January 2013 at a cooking event for Care Leavers that had been organised by the Youth Participation Officer. There were 14 participants and the Looked After Children Nurse met with them in 2 smaller groups. The LAC Nurse encouraged the group to consider all the factors that might influence their health and there was a lively debate. She then led an exercise where the young people had to place a number of statements related to being healthy in the order of what was most important to them. Following on from this, she encouraged them to consider all the health information that they may need to know in the future and from this, the concept of having a Health Passport was explored. The response was very positive and a number of the young people agreed to work further with the project.

The second consultation took place at A Healthy Minds event on the 20th February 2013. During this event, young people were asked what was the most important and significant health information that they would want to see in a Health Passport. There were a number of responses, but they generally agreed that information about their birth, immunisations and development would be most useful.

During this period, a number of examples of Health Passports were looked at to see what worked well and what did not. The LAC Nurse also spoke with a number of young people individually when carrying out the Review Health Assessments for a number of Care Leavers. Around 50% of these expressed no or little interest in the Health Passport, but following further discussion and explanation, most agreed it would be a useful document to keep.

Model Developed:

Following on from the consultations, a draft Health Passport was developed and discussed with a group of interested young people in April 2013. Feedback was useful from those who attended; with them wanting an extra page for any additional notes and local information. The young people also wanted an introduction to be included about the purpose and use of the document. The comments about the health document were helpful and positive. They felt it was a good idea and one commented that it was good to have a tidy set of information.

Implementation:

It was agreed that the new passport would be piloted in June 2013 with the Care Leavers. It will be the responsibility of the LAC Nurse to ensure it is completed with as much health information as possible. It will be reviewed after 6 months.

Conclusion:

It has taken a while to develop a Health Passport in Harrow and it will be interesting to see how it is received by the young people as they leave care. It is hoped that it will make a difference to the young people and the knowledge that they have about their own health history. If the pilot is successful there may be the opportunity to extend the use of Health Passports. In some areas the Health Passport is used as a continuation from the Red Book that is provided for all the under 5's and it is maintained by the Foster Carer. Following the evaluation of the pilot for Health Passports used with Care Leavers, some consideration will be given to whether Harrow wants to introduce them for all children in care over the age of 5 years.

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