

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

14 MARCH 2017

Chair:	Councillor Vina Mithani (Vice Chair in the Chair)	
Councillors:	Niraj Dattani * Margaret Davine	* Ajay Maru (2) * Chris Mote
Advisers:	† Julian Maw Dr N Merali	- Healthwatch Harrow - Harrow Local Medical Committee

- * Denotes Member present
- (2) Denotes category of Reserve Members
- † Denotes apologies received

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

98. Access to primary care in Harrow -findings of members' visits to WICs and Healthwatch survey of GP surgeries

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Divisional Director, Strategic Commissioning, which set out health scrutiny Members' findings and recommendations from their work on access to primary care within the borough over the last 18 months.

Healthwatch Harrow had shared its research findings on GP accessibility, and this had been important in informing the observations and recommendations set out in the report.

Why did 29% of GP practices not use a text reminder service? Was this due to the costs involved and were these smaller practices?

The representative from Healthwatch Harrow advised that it was likely that the 29% consisted of smaller GP practices for whom cost may be an issue. She added there was evidence to show that sending text reminders of forthcoming GP appointments resulted in fewer DNAs (did not attend).

A Member stated that there was evidence to suggest that children whose parents who did not speak English could be disadvantaged in situations where a translator was not available or when those parents tried to access the NHS 111 non-emergency service. Often these parents could not easily communicate with medical staff or give consent for their child's medical records to be shared with relevant clinical staff which meant that their children were at risk of experiencing delays in receiving treatment.

The representative from Healthwatch Harrow advised that there had been significant cuts in ESOL (English as a Second Language) provision in the borough. She concurred that the Council and Health providers had a duty of care to all residents. She also pointed out that translation services could sometimes compromise patient confidentiality.

The representative from Healthwatch Harrow advised that Healthwatch Harrow would be publishing a further report about GP accessibility in July 2017, which would be shared with the sub-committee.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

That:

1. it consider and endorse the report from health scrutiny members;
2. it forward the Review's report and recommendations to the relevant agencies, as identified in the recommendations, for consideration and response;
3. it agree that the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee revisit primary care access and the implementation of the report's recommendations in its work programme for 2017/18.

Background Documents:

Appendix 1 - Access to Primary Care in Harrow: Report from Health Scrutiny Members

Appendix 2 - Access to Primary Care in Harrow: Report from Health Scrutiny Members