

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Date: Thursday 26th March 2015

Report Title: HEALTHWATCH BROMLEY REPORT – GP ACCESS IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

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1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is to give an update of a study into GP Access in the London Borough of Bromley carried out by Healthwatch Bromley prior to the publication of the full report at the end of March.
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2. REASON FOR REPORT GOING TO HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

- 2.1. This report and presentation is to inform the Board of the ongoing work of Healthwatch Bromley. Healthwatch Bromley is the independent consumer champion for health and social care and works on behalf of patients and the public to ensure their voice is represented in the setting up, provision and scrutiny of health and social care services in the borough.
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3. SPECIFIC ACTION REQUIRED BY HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD AND ITS CONSTITUENT PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

- 3.1 The Board is asked to note this item and receive the update on key findings of the report.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not applicable.
2. Ongoing costs: Not applicable.
3. Total savings (if applicable): Not applicable
4. Budget host organisation: Not applicable.
5. Source of funding: Not applicable.
6. Beneficiary/beneficiaries of any savings: Not applicable.

Supporting Public Health Outcome Indicator(s)

4. COMMENTARY

Introduction

- 4.1. The presentation to be delivered by Linda Gabriel, Chair of Healthwatch Bromley to the Health & Wellbeing Board at the meeting on a study carried out by Healthwatch Bromley on GP Access in the London Borough of Bromley can be found in **Appendix X?**

The Study

- 4.2. Healthwatch Bromley is the independent champion for health and social care services for children, young people and adults. We work to help improve services for people who live or access services in the borough. We provide information about and signposting to local health care facilities and services.
- 4.3. To help shape the landscape of local health and social care in the borough to be truly representative of the population's needs and wants, Healthwatch Bromley works hard to ensure that health and care services are "more responsive, efficient and accountable," in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It offers a network to individuals and organisations to coordinate their response to local health and social care services.
- 4.4. A visit to the GP is often the first point of access to the health system and the part of the health service that many people in Bromley use most often. GP services are part of Primary Care, an area that has an enormous influence on outcomes for patients, as well as on their perceptions of the health system as a whole. Through our information service Bromley residents told us that GP services were a high priority in the borough in their health and wellbeing. This included specific feedback about problems getting an appointment.
- 4.5. In line with the Healthwatch Bromley remit to listen to the voice of the people of Bromley and provide evidence based feedback, it was decided to investigate the concerns further and give patients the opportunity to comment on how easy or difficult it is to access services at their GP surgery.
- 4.6. We surveyed 409 local people from all 47 GP practices in the borough about their experiences. In addition we held two focus groups with specific communities i.e. Bromley Sparks and Deaf Access and one with young people from Bromley College of Further and Higher Education. Through these focus groups we spoke to a further 80 residents.
- 4.7. Our findings show that whilst the majority of those surveyed were either 'Very Satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with their GP opening hours, there is frustration with appointment booking systems, difficulties with obtaining appointments and extended waiting times when attending the surgery.
- 4.8. The difference between opening hours, surgery times and appointment slots were often unclear to patients. Of those surveyed 10% of people were able to book their preferred appointment time and 15% were able to book a named GP.
- 4.9. Fifty percent of those who reported the need for additional support to access their GP practice received this support.
- 4.10. Some respondents expressed satisfaction and support for their GP Practices, understanding that they are operating in increasingly challenging environments.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial, legal
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Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	None.
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