

H A R I N G E Y

Fairness Commission

What We've Heard

A summary of Fairness Commission Table discussions at the
Haringey CCG Public Meeting

11th October 2018

Tottenham Green Leisure Centre, Haringey

HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

On 11th October 2018 the Haringey Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) put on a public meeting, to hear from residents about issues relating to Health. Fairness Commissioners and Officers attended, running a table discussion with attendees about issues of fairness and equality.

The main points were raised by participants were:

- Inequality has a direct impact on health outcomes;
- Pay and housing also have an indirect impact on the health sector;
- Link up the community and community services better to reduce loneliness;
- Support disabled people to get out of their homes more;
- Introduce socio-economic status as a protected characteristic;
- Consider language and attitudes around the Council-resident relationship;
- Those who aren't online find dealing with the Council particularly difficult;
- Treat residents as experts.

More information about each of these areas, and other issues that were raised, is below.

INEQUALITY HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON HEALTH OUTCOMES

Participants said there is an important link between equality and health, because levels of deprivation have a direct impact on residents' health. As a result, unfairness in other areas of people's lives leads to health inequalities.

Housing was raised as a particular concern, with participants saying that poor quality housing affects health and wellbeing and is an important equality issue. They say that more good quality housing needs to be built, as well as a larger amount of housing that is genuinely affordable.

PAY AND HOUSING ALSO HAVE AN INDIRECT IMPACT ON THE HEALTH SECTOR

Although the Council is a London Living Wage employer, residents want it to do more to ensure that its contractors pay the LLW.

More than one participant raised the issue of low pay in the health sector making it difficult to attract and retain good staff, and the negative knock-on impact this has on the health sector.

HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

One participant raised concerns that non-medical staff, who are essential to the running of hospitals and doctors' surgeries, receive minimum wage, rather than the London Living Wage. They said that if the hospital weakens at the bottom the whole structure is at risk. Not paying staff the LLW makes the sector's ability to attract and keep staff more difficult.

In addition, it was pointed out that issues in the housing sector also have a negative knock-on impact on the NHS. Rising rents are too high for much NHS staff to stay in the Haringey area. One participant felt that high rents are 'killing services'.

Participants wanted to see more affordable accommodation made available for key workers in the NHS. An alternative solution could be a housing top-up, with landlords who sign a 'Fair Rent' charter.

LINK UP THE COMMUNITY & COMMUNITY SERVICES BETTER TO REDUCE LONELINESS

Participants felt that silo working is too common in Haringey. They wanted more of a focus on building our communities and neighbourhoods, with the aim of reducing loneliness.

One participant pointed out that where community centres exist you can see the impact they have. For example, Lordship Hub in Lordship Rec is a cooperative of local people, with a governing board and six members of staff. They put on lots of activities, and they're helping to build the community.

SUPPORT DISABLED PEOPLE TO GET OUT OF THEIR HOMES MORE

One resident who was a wheelchair user raised the issue of a Haringey Council policy that prevents you having a parking bay if you're claiming PIP with enhanced rate. They felt that this essentially meant the Council was forcing them to stay in, and thought these sorts of policies should better support disabled people to get out and about.

More widely, the participant felt that the Council should produce a handbook for people who become disabled, to help them navigate these sorts of issues.

INTRODUCE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AS A PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC

The sheer range in mortality rates across Haringey was raised as a major issue, with residents saying that the problems are structural.

One participant wanted to see Haringey add a clause to its Equality Duty, to include socioeconomic status as a protected characteristic. They also felt that the CCG and Haringey Council see the equalities impact assessments as a tick box exercise, and want them to take it more seriously. London Borough of Southwark has added socioeconomic status to their equalities commitments, and they wanted Haringey to do the same.

In terms of equalities, it was pointed out that as well as adding this to its existing equalities commitments, the Council can also support people and help them exert the rights they already have, through its funding of Citizens Advice, though the Council's support for the Race Equality Council has stopped. This is also what the social value clause is there for, but it is often ignored when awarding contracts.

CONSIDER LANGUAGE AND ATTITUDES AROUND THE COUNCIL-RESIDENT RELATIONSHIP

The language of customer, client or patient is important and reflects a power dynamic. The Council calls residents its 'customers', but that implies that they have a choice about whether to use the Council's services.

Participants felt that the Council should remember that it is dealing with human beings at the end of the phone or email, and the impact that these interactions have on residents. They also wanted the Council to be better at asking 'How did we do?'.

THOSE WHO AREN'T ONLINE FIND DEALING WITH THE COUNCIL PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT

For people who aren't online, dealing with the Council can be frustrating. They say they have to wait 20 minutes on the phone before they get through to someone, and they'll often hear a recorded voice telling them to go online, which is not an option for them. They want the Council to create a better communications strategy for engaging with residents.

TREAT RESIDENTS AS EXPERTS

Participants wanted to see people with lived experience treated as experts and incorporated more into the relevant conversations. One woman in the group said that she had previously been obese, and she felt that fat people are excluded from the debate about obesity.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES RAISED ON THE DAY, IN CONVERSATION AND VIA FEEDBACK FORMS

- Loneliness;
- Young People at Risk – address issues around drugs and violence;
- Pockets of poor quality in general practice - staff attitudes were a particular issue. One participant wanted scores to be more publicly available;
- Opportunities for young people - set up support for young people who are interested in learning a trade. Instead of funds for training, supply the tools they need;
- Support and links to relevant organisations and services – this is currently hard to find;
- Health is wealth – if people are healthy and well, they can look after themselves and their families;
- Create a closer relationship between the CCG and Haringey Council.

Thank you to all those who came and contributed to the Fairness Commission's table discussions at this event. If you came along and contributed but feel your views aren't reflected here, please contact us either by email or telephone (fairness@Haringey.gov.uk / 020 8489 5336.