

Meeting

Southport & Formby Community Champion Network Meeting
10am on Thursday 23rd September 2021

Theme: Sefton Affordable Warmth Scheme, CCG updates, GP website survey update

Chair

Brian Clark OBE (BC)

Ainsdale and Birkdale Locality Representative

Attendees

Tony Wright (TW)

Southport Centre for the Deaf

Anne Major (AM)

Locality Representative Southport Central

Jenny White (JW)

Galloways, Southport

Jan Stirling (JS)

Locality Representative Formby

Andrea De Cort (AD)

PPG representative for Ainsdale Medical Centre

Ken Lowe (KL)

Ainsdale Lunch & Leisure

Hannah Bland (HB)

Community Connector

Shannon Bryan (SB)

Parenting 2000

Healthwatch staff member(s)

Marguerite Dawson (MD)

Healthwatch Sefton Engagement Officer

Amanda Williams (AW)

Healthwatch Signposting & Admin Officer

Guest Speakers

Christina Chislett (CC)

Sefton Affordable Warmth

Clare Touhey (CT)

CCG

Amber Hirshman (AH)

NHS Informatics

Louise Taylor (LT)

NHS Informatics

Apologies

Terry Nicholson (TN)

Asperger's Support Group

Clare Johnson (CJ)	Sefton Carers Centre
Rebecca Gomersall (RG)	Ainsdale Lunch and Leisure
Joanne English (JE)	People First Merseyside
Lesley Curran (LC)	People First Merseyside
Simon Walker (SW)	People First Merseyside

1. Introductions & Housekeeping

BC welcomed all members to the September 2021 Southport & Formby Community Champion Zoom Meeting. The last Southport & Formby Community Champion meeting was held on the zoom platform in July 2021. The theme for the July meeting was Shaping Care Together and Talking Matters Sefton. Introductions were made by all attendees.

2. Code of Conduct / Declarations of Interest (in line with agenda items or changes)

BC asked all members to abide by the Kindness and Respect guide and members were asked to keep mute on until it was their turn to speak. BC reminded members attending today's meeting to abide by the Healthwatch Sefton Code of Conduct policy. BC informed members they will have received the draft meeting minutes from the July meeting from MD for amendments and to be agreed later in the meeting. BC informed members that our themes and guest speakers this morning are the Sefton Affordable Warmth Team, a General Practice update from the CCG and the NHS Informatics GP website survey update. A declaration of interest was declared by AM that she is a volunteer with the hospital discharge team at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital Trust. No further declarations of interests were made.

BC then handed over to Christina Chislett

3. Christina Chislett- Sefton Affordable Warmth Team

CC introduced herself and explained that the Sefton Affordable Warmth Team consists of herself and two other case workers. CC said that keeping warm has an influence over our physical conditions and our mental health conditions. CC stated it is essential to keep your home warm and not being warm enough in our homes ultimately creates illness and extras deaths.

CC explained that grants are available for keeping warm and that people can be referred to services to support them. People often dismiss themselves as they think they will not be eligible but that if they are struggling they should be referred to the team. CC said that help is available from the team for people's boilers and heating, fuel debts, pre-payment meters problems to help ensure that heating is on at home.

Support is also available for disputes and advocacy with fuel suppliers. The warm home discount funding is also available for people receiving certain benefits or on low incomes. People who are on pension credit are eligible automatically for the warm home discount funding. CC told members it can also help people to go on the priority service register and that smart meters are now being rolled out in homes.

If people are in a no heat situation for example no boiler or central heating then Sefton Affordable Warmth can help by providing oil filled radiators and other small measures to help ensure maximum heat is retained in the home such as draft excluders, radiator reflectors and other energy efficient measures.

CC said that home visits and consultations on the phone are available from the Sefton Affordable Warmth Team and that they can also visit community groups, volunteer, staff and team meetings etc.

CC informed network members about Keep Well and Warm Events both in November at Bootle Cricket Club and The Atkinson in Southport. CC said she has information and leaflets that she would like to share with groups. **Action: MD shared information and leaflets on events with all network members following the meeting which show how they can book on them to attend.**

CC also updated members on the Affordable Warmth partnership meetings and that guest speakers attend. The Affordable Warmth Team also have reactive services and have set up the retro team, also looking at preventative measures.

The Affordable Warmth Team have stock ready for use. The direct telephone number is 0151 934 2222.

BC asked members if they had any questions for CC.

Q. BC asked if there has been an increase in calls due to the changes in power companies.

A. CC said that only in the last few days an increase has been noticed but that there will be a higher demand during winter.

Q. BC asked if stalls and events will be taking place during the flu season?

A. CC said she was not sure as many stalls are allowed at events due to covid.

Q. AD asked about spam emails and cold callers and how will people know if they are approved contractors?

A. CC stated that people can always call the affordable warmth team for help and advice and there will be a press release soon for cavity wall.

Q. AM asked if they ever get any problems with smart meters?

A. CC explained that problems have lessened and that the team can also liaise with meter providers.

BC thanked Christina Chislett.

BC handed over to Clare Touhey

4. Clare Touhey-CCG General Practice Update

CT thanked network members for the invite and proceeded with a general practice update. CT shared a presentation on the zoom screen and was happy to share the presentation with network members. **Action: MD shared the presentation with all network members following the meeting.**

CT updated on the recent 'Big Chat Events' that the CCG held to engage with Sefton residents and discussed the issues being faced by GP Practices and the CCG during covid.

The challenges have included: keeping patients safe, coping with the rising demand and being busier than they have ever been.

There are now more telephone and video consultations appointments which has particularly helped to reduce footfall in GP Practices and care homes to ensure that patients could be kept as safe as possible.

How have we been working?

Covid Hubs were created during covid to enable patients with Covid symptoms to be seen safely and separately from non-Covid patients. GPs have also delivered the Covid vaccine programme.

Home visits were also offered to make sure that staff and patients have been kept safe. Practices have been following national guidance to triage patients first to ensure patients were being referred to the right healthcare professional at the right time or to another service if needed.

CT went on to share the results from the national patient's survey which showed a high percentage of patients feeling satisfied with their health care services and access to appointments and the treatment and care they received.

CT shared honestly with members what the CCG have been hearing. Some of this included feedback that patients are concerned that some GP Practices have not been open during covid. Some patients only want to see a GP and not another healthcare professional, concerns that no face to face appointments are available and that you can't call in to the reception anymore. Also, that e-consult works for some people but not for those without access to digital technology.

CT informed network members on the next steps for general practice. CT reiterated that GP Practices are still here for patients and have been throughout the pandemic including face to face appointments when needed. CT explained that staff may need to ask patients more questions to help ensure the right care is accessed. GP Practices are working harder than ever to make sure patients get the care they need and the CCG are asking for people's patience and kindness. They are also constantly reviewing how services are delivered to try to improve things for patients.

CT confirmed that GP Practices will be asking patients to share feedback on their experience of services since covid began through a GP Access survey.

CT explained that practices will then discuss this patient feedback with their patient participation groups to help make adjustments on how services are accessed in the future.

CT thanked network members for their time and shared the email address communications@sefton.nhs.uk if they have any further questions following on from today's meeting.

BC asked members if they had any questions for CT.

A question and answer session took place.

Q. KL thanked CT for the presentation and asked a question about e-consult and explained that e-consult works for some people but not all. Is e-consult working? How do we get the practice up and running again?

A. CT acknowledged the points and explained that GP practices have sometimes struggled with telephone lines and that e-consult is a reasonably new technology and that the Southport & Formby CCG are supporting patients to access e-consult and that it has been valuable in managing the risk of covid and offering patients an alternative way to contact their GP practices.

Q. JW thanks CT for the presentation and raised the issue of sight loss and how to support visually impaired people unable to access telephone lines. JW also raised the issue of visually impaired people who are struggling to use e-consult. JW explained that video consultations are frequently not accessible for all including those with a visual impairment or learning disability. Simplistic language needs to be used and a sign language interpreter available. JW explained Galloways supports people with sight loss.

A. CT acknowledged the important points and stated that GP's are obliged to support people with all needs. Translators support is available and support in overcoming barriers. **Action: following the meeting CT and JW were in contact by email to share and discuss accessibility for the visually impaired and any improvements for the CCG. MD was included in the correspondence.**

Q. JS asked if the GP access survey will be just available for online? As those with dementia, visual impairments or a learning disability will find it difficult to access.

A. CT said that she will follow this enquiry up and action it to ensure paper copies are available.

Q. AW asked about telephone access to the GP access survey to ensure accessibility.

A. CT agreed the survey needs to be accessible for all and will action and look in to this and ensure lots of options to access the survey are available.

Q. AM asked, are we missing something here? As when people can't access GP appointments they then end up as a result end up at a & e. How can we survey them?

A. CT answered that constant liaison is taking place between primary and secondary care to monitor this and acknowledged a lot of work needs to be done.

Q. KL asked about the 111 service and is this working? Has it been marketed well? **Action: Healthwatch continue to ask for feedback experiences on 111 services.**

A. CT acknowledged the points made and noted the importance of communication and marketing of services.

Community champions then shared a few personal a & e experiences, some positive and others not so positive.

BC and network members thanked CT.

BC handed over to Amber Hirshman and Louise Taylor

5. NHS Informatics GP website survey feedback update

AH and LT introduced themselves and explained that NHS Informatics provide support specifically through GP Practices. AH briefly explained that they had previously attended a community champions meeting a few months ago when they asked initially for feedback on the accessibility of the GP website survey and then once the feedback was agreed and finalised MD then shared the survey link with members to complete the survey on their own GP practices website on the 5th June. 5 responses were received. The survey deadline was then extended and then shared again on the 13th July to allow for more completed responses to be completed. 9 responses in all were received from the South & Central and Southport & Formby community champions.

In summary, most respondents visit their doctors practice website once a month and the majority of respondents used their smartphone for this.

Respondents said they can search for their practice website using google. Respondents also requested that font size needs to be bigger and that font size was too small. Respondents also shared feedback that the colours used on GP practice websites need to be bolder and that information would be better with less text and instead in bullet points. Easy links on websites would also be helpful.

75% of respondents said they could easily access information on how to book an appointment and order a prescription on websites. However, 57% said it was difficult to access e-consult. Feedback on e-consult ranged and some people found it repetitive with a lot of questions to answer and that it may not be easy to access for those not familiar with IT. The majority of respondents answered that they can find out when their GP Practice is open or closed. LT and AH explained that the use of and navigating a smart phone and laptop can sometimes make it difficult to navigate GP websites.

In answer to the question on whether respondents were able to navigate their GP website and find information?

- 57.7% said yes.

- 33.3% said no.

Overall very useful comments were gathered about navigating GP websites and that much information is held on hidden windows on a three-bar tab that many people will not be aware of. AH and LT said they found this information very helpful and it will be shared as feedback to see if an alternative can replace the three-bar tab.

AH and TL again thanked network members for their help and contribution and asked community champions a request for a further NHS Informatics project and that they would like to return to a future meeting to engage with network members again and ask for their feedback.

A questions, comments and answer session then took place.

Q. JW asked a question about accessibility and font size in order to help people with visual impairments. JW offered advice on national guidelines for accessibility being font size 14-16 in Ariel comic sans and also to look at text colours and contrasts.

A. AH acknowledged this and thanked JW for the helpful information.

Q. BC commented that he was not able to find the practice manager email address on his GP Practice website.

Network members also shared feedback on GP websites that work well and were easy to navigate and find information on such as Ainsdale Medical Centre.

A. AH thanked BC and members for this feedback.

BC thanked AH and LT.

BC asked community champions to share any updates.

6. Community Champion updates

KL shared good news that Ainsdale Lunch & Leisure has began welcoming people back and started opening up again. Lunchtime meals are available and have to be booked. An outside café is being built and a lovely garden is available for activities and groups.

Sefton Opera shared news that they have IT courses running.

BC handed over to MD for Healthwatch updates.

7. Healthwatch Sefton Updates

MD shared updates.

- SOHT- MD shared updates following attendance at the recent SOHT AGM including the merger with SKHT.
- Patient Participation Groups- future steering group and networking meetings are being planned for future dates to approve the support packs for PPG members and practice managers.
- GP access survey- see notes and group discussion above.

- MD asked network members if they would like to take part in online engagement session to contact her.
- MD asked for network members help with the Broadening our engagement work if they know of any groups/ organisations or individuals who would like to sign up as Healthwatch members or community champions.
- MD to set dates for community champions meetings in 2022 and share with members.
- Healthwatch are still encouraging new healthwatch members to join from diverse communities and to share individual feedback on the Healthwatch Sefton website. The Healthwatch Sefton Freephone number is 0800 206 1304 and email info@healthwatchsefton.co.uk.

8. Emerging Health or Social Care themes

Accessibility for all to GP practices and health services.

9. Community Champion network notes for approval

The notes from the meeting held on Thursday 23rd July 2021 were previously circulated to all members for comments or amendments. An amendment was noted and then agreed as accurate.

10. Previous emerging issues / questions taken forward to Healthwatch Steering group.

The dermatology pathway was raised by AM at the previous meeting. Action: **MD has invited community dermatology to the November community champions meeting.**

DNA's (Did not attend) was raised at the Healthwatch steering group. To look at how they are recorded and which issues have an impact on patients being unable to attend appointments. **Action: DNA issue raised at steering group.**

11. Information exchange/ any other business

MD to confirm and consult with community champions regarding 2022 meeting dates.

All Community Champion members were thanked for attending.

Date and Time of Next Meeting:

Thursday 11th November 2021 at 10am

Venue: ZOOM