

NHS Community Voice meeting.

How to see a GP at night or at the weekend, how to see a GP if you are not registered with a GP and when to call 999 or 111.

More than 30 people attended the NHS Community Voice meeting on the out of hours and evening and weekend GP services at the Lawson Practice on Monday 30 March from 10am-12pm. The meeting which was chaired by Patient Representatives Roger Till and Heather Finlay was a lively discussion between commissioners, service providers and patients. Attendees said they found the meeting informative and action orientated and asked for more meetings like it.

Ryan Ocampo who is the CCG Urgent Care Programme manager started by giving people an over view of the Urgent Care services commissioned by the CCG including 111, CHUHSE and Doctors of the World. He told service users that it is important that GPs are always the first point of call for patients but where this is not possible, for example during the weekends and evenings; they have recourse to the local out of hours service. He added that the commissioners took time in listening to patients needs and it took a year to commission the Out of Hours Service.

Julia Brown from CHUHSE talked about the Out of Hours service which is staffed by clinicians and based at the Homerton, Kate Adams then explained the 111 Triage service where patients are advised and signposted to the appropriate service.

Maddie Guerlain from Doctors of the World spoke about their project in Hackney which aims to help people who may experience barriers in registering with a GP including those without a fixed address. The groups they work with include homeless people, sex workers and migrants.

Sonia Hall from the GP Confederation spoke about the duty doctors who are named individuals within a GP who are available Mon-Fri from 8am-6.30pm, though there were questions about how the messages about duty care doctors are communicated to patients.

Nana prempah who is a Hackney patient and mother recounted her experience with the out of hours service, although she said that she was grateful for the service, she said that the meeting was also about improving services and had particular questions about the links between local pharmacies and the Out of Hours Service and more immediate access to prescriptions.

Dam Van Huynh from the Vietnamese, Laos and Cambodia community centre shared the findings of a research project by the VLC late last year about barriers to accessing health care including the lack of awareness of the Out of Hours service amongst the Vietnamese community in Hackney largely due to language. The key findings of that research are summarised below.

VLC Key findings

The VLC conducted face to face and online interviews with saw 88 Vietnamese speaking Hackney residents aged over 40 with most being over 65. The key findings were that

- **Language is the biggest issue**
 - Two thirds said could read, write and speak English “a little bit”
 - Less than 10% said could speak English fluently
 - Not a single person said could read/write English well

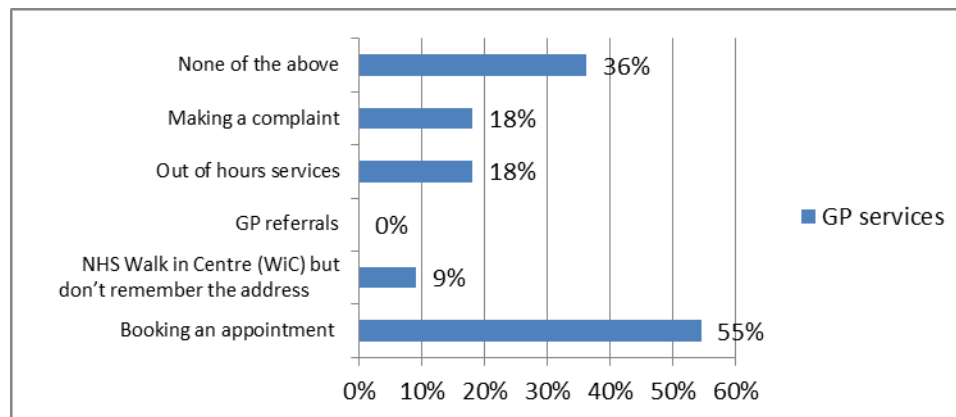
- **111 and 999 service:** respondents were asked if they knew when to ring:

111	
Yes	45.5%
No	54.5%

999	
Yes	73.7%
No	27.3%

- **Out of Hours Service**

Less than 1 in 5 people knew there is a GP Out of Hours Service



NHS Community Voice recommendations to commissioners

There was a general consensus at the meeting that whilst people's experiences of the services are good, there is scope for improvement and service users came up with a set of recommendations for the commissioners and service providers to consider:

Recommendations

1. Clear - and stable/longterm - message about the doorways to all Primary out of hours care
2. Information centred around patient rather than individual service - one leaflet explaining simply how to access all Primary care out of hours (including pharmacies and emergency dentists)
3. Priority to make sure these clear messages reach those who do not speak English well or at all, or have other communication needs. And that there is explanation and support to then reach the service
4. Request to CCG to look at satellites for Out of Hours so people don't have to go cross borough to Homerton
issues people face are: a) taxi fares b) distance c) may well go to A&E anyway once got there)
5. Clarify for patients the Duty Doctor Service - including cover and opening hours.
6. General request that services approach community organisations to reach more marginalised residents.
7. To go back to the VLC (Centre for Refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) in 1 year to ask the same questions as in the current research to see if there is better knowledge of Out of Hours Care.

Other points raised:

1. Pharmacies - patients generally didn't know that pharmacies could issue medicine without a doctor's prescription - eg for the 48 hours after a repeat prescription had run out. CCG to talk to Local Pharmacy Committee about sending a reminder to Pharmacies. Would it also be good for information to go to patients about this?
2. Pharmacies again - some people had text messages from pharmacies when their new prescription was due, and found it very helpful. Others were surprised to hear this
3. Homerton Pharmacy - question if this could provide support to the Out of Hours service?



4. Question raised about how patients with a mental health issue are dealt with by Out of Hours services

NHS Community Voice is led by City and Hackney patients who want to engage with health service and commissioners on the health issues that matter to them.

If you have any questions about NHS Community Voice, including how to get involved, please contact:

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